HALSEN Conference 2025: Abstract Booklet

Welcome

A warm welcome to the 2025 Health and Life Sciences Education Network (HALSEN) Conference. It is great to see so many colleagues of the new Faculty of Health and Life Sciences and other institutions attending our annual HALSEN event. The programme will cover many innovate ways to support our students in all aspects of their student journey and we hope that you will feel enthused by the presentations, discussions and group work. We have left ample time in the programme to get to know each other over coffee and lunch, and to share and discuss ideas with colleagues. We very much hope you will enjoy the day!

Professor Sheena Warman: Academic Director (Teaching Excellence)

Plenary Lecture: Educational Practice and Scholarship: It's in everything you do!

Professor Emmajane Milton

Abstract

What does it mean to be an educator in HE? What exactly are we teaching and what are our students learning from us and what we do? Given the current demands on the sector building collaborative, positive and reciprocal relationships and working in dialogic ways that build trust, shared understandings and promote sense-making perhaps have never been more important… This is equally important for us as educators as it is for our learners. This interactive session will present opportunities to think about the idea that *'it's in everything you do!!'* and explores some of the complexities and joys of being an educator, such as:

- What does collaboration mean? who are we collaborating with and why?
- What are some of the central tenants that contribute to making an effective environment in which to learn and how do these depend on collaboration and foster innovation?
- What is *'enquiry as a way of being'* and how might it inform and support educational practice and
- Where does scholarship fit and how it can often be more innovative through collaboration

Taking personal responsibility for educational practice and adopting the perspective that education is in everything you do ….. can be liberating, sustaining and really help in being the educator you want to be.

Biography

Professor Emmajane Milton has worked in Education for over 20 years, enjoying leadership roles within academia, policy development and the statutory school sector. Her interests are focused on educational practice, educator professional learning and enquiry and educative approaches to leadership and mentoring.

Emmajane is a Professor in Educational Practice and has a deep and sustained commitment to improving education practice in all spheres of Education, across all sectors and subject disciplines. She is a co-founder of the UK's National Learning and Teaching-focused Network and in 2018 she became an Advance-HE National Teaching Fellow. In 2025 she was elected to the Learned Society of Wales on the basis of her leadership and commitment to developing Educational Practice.

Morning sessions

Time	**Jessop room (ground floor)**	**Grace room (first floor)**	**Premier Lounge (second floor)**	Small meeting rooms (second floor)
10:05 – 11.00	**Oral presentations: Assessment and Feedback** **Dr Rose Murray** *'Empowering student agency in assessment and feedback in Biological Science'.* **Dr Gemma Ford/Dr Sally Dowling** *'Co-creation of a Peer Assessment Marking Scheme: A pilot study exploring the experience of PGT students implementing the new UoB marking rubric';* **Prof. Sheila Amici-Dargan** *'Feedback Engagement Fellows: Enhancing feedback-seeking behaviour and self-regulation'.*	**Workshop: Dr Alex Swainson and Dr Rob Thatcher** *'AI two ways – practical teaching activities for student feedback and role-play'.*	**Oral presentations: Bristol skills/ employability/transferable skills** **Dr Angela Hague** *'Using the Bristol Skills Profile to enhance Student use of Personal Development Planning in Dental Undergraduate Programmes to meet new Intended Learning Outcomes'.* **Dr Jessica Fielding** *'The Sprint Challenge: Collaborative and Innovative Community-Engaged Learning in Psychology'.* **Dr Kristopher Magee** *'Graduate Pathways: Inspiring Degree-Skill Awareness and Development Through Alumni Insight'.*	
11.00 – 11:30	**Coffee Break / Transition Time/Poster viewing**	**Workshop ends 11.25 to allow transition time**	**Coffee Break / Transition Time**	

Oral Presentations: Assessment and Feedback

Empowering student agency in assessment and feedback in Biological Science

Dr Rose Murray and Reinart Jensema

Abstract

Engaging our students and supporting them to develop agency in assessment and feedback is important for driving effective self-regulation. It is well documented that assessment is one of the key drivers of student learning. However, assessment and feedback continue to burden the HE sector with low opinion from the student body.

We will showcase novel initiatives we have introduced in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Bristol to improve student assessment literacy and engagement with feedback. We will introduce our 'Assessment and Feedback Portfolio' (AFP), an online set of tools including assessment landscapes and an interactive feedback engagement tool, to support student understanding and engagement with assessment and feedback. The AFP is supported by the 'Feedback Café', a regular drop-in stall run by lecturers and student partners. The Feedback Café provides students with an opportunity to discuss their feedback which enables better insight and understanding. Students can also discuss upcoming assessments with signposting to existing resources to support their development and allow implementation of lessons learned. Each initiative has been co-designed and evaluated by staff and student partners. We will present how we have embedded these initiatives within our programme and our findings from our evaluation into the student experience of these schemes. We will also share key steps on how you might include such initiatives into your own programmes, and any lessons learned from our own experience.

Biography

Dr Rose R. Murray is a Pathway 3 Senior Lecturer in the School of Biological Sciences whose pedagogic research explores innovative assessment and feedback practices. She has led the use of learner-generated media, such as student-produced films, to build creativity and digital skills, and co-developed the Assessment & Feedback Portfolio and Feedback Café to enhance feedback literacy and dialogue. Her work centres on empowering students to take ownership of their learning while drawing on research-informed teaching to enrich the student experience.

Reinart Jensema is a current undergraduate student in Biological Sciences and has worked with Rose as a student partner on the Assessment and Feedback Portfolio (AFP) project. Reinart has been a co-creator of the AFP tools and has provided valuable insight as a student into this project.

Co-creation of a Peer Assessment Marking Scheme A pilot study exploring the experience of PGT students implementing the new UoB marking rubric.

Dr Gemma Ford and Dr Sally Dowling

Abstract

A growing body of evidence supports student partnership and co-creation of assessments in HE to promote deep learning (1), but there is a paucity of studies investigating enablers and barriers to assessment co-creation within the postgraduate space. Adopting an "assessment as learning" approach, where students are engaged in the assessment process as an integral part of the learning, our study aims to explore the attitudes and experiences of students on the Reproduction and Development Masters programme, in the negotiation and thus co-creation of marking criteria. The criteria were co-created and then used to assess their performance in a group case-presentation during teaching block 2 (February 2025).

Students were already familiar with the UoB marking rubric, introduced to them during teaching block 1, and were provided with a pre-recorded briefing session as an overview to this activity. A facilitator-led workshop supported students in their understanding of marking as learning criteria. The whole class was given at least one week to negotiate, agree, test (practice with pre-recorded presentations from previous years, filmed and uploaded to Blackboard) and finalise the marking scheme. All students peer assessed and provided feedback on case-presentation performance using the co-created mark scheme.

Learner reflections on their experience in co-creating assessment criteria were explored using semi-structured focus groups, facilitated by an independent student research assistant. Responses have been transcribed and will be analysed using inductive thematic analysis(currently underway). Our BILT conference presentation will report on the results of our analysis. To our knowledge, this is the first study to enable MSc student partners to co-create a marking scheme using the new UoB marking criteria.

Biography

Dr Gemma Ford is a Senior Lecturer in Bristol Medical School and Programme Director (PD)for the MSc Reproduction and Development. She has a research background in neuroendocrinology and is currently interested in applying this to reproductive health. Scholarly research interests centre on supporting all students to thrive; working with students as cocreators and partners in the construction, integration and assessment of knowledge, and exploring student agency in assessment and feedback practices. Gemma is PI of a 2024-25BILT funded project looking at the experience of using the University of Bristol marking scheme to co-create a marking scheme for peer assessment of presentations. Gemma's work is split between her PD role and working as the MBChB Professional Mentor

Lead as well as a Senior Tutor in the Medical School for PGT and undergraduate intercalation students.

Dr Sally Dowling is a Senior Lecturer in Bristol Medical School with extensive experience both of working in the NHS and of teaching Health Professionals. Her background is in mental health nursing and public health and she is a social scientist. Sally works for the Health Professions Education Programme, is co-Programme Director of the MSc Reproduction and Development and is Year 1 Choice academic lead for the MBChB programme. She has been involved in three BILT-funded projects over the past few years, gaining experience of working with colleagues from across the university. She is interested in inclusive assessment, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and supporting others in writing for publication.

Feedback Engagement Fellows: Enhancing feedback-seeking behaviour and self-regulation

Professor Sheila Amici-Dargan

Abstract

'Feedback literacy', defined as the ability to understand, engage with, and use feedback effectively, is a critical skill in higher education. The literature to date has focused heavily on feedback 'provision', neglecting an exploration of feedback-seeking behaviour. Many students actively avoid seeking feedback, and there is an urgent need for us to encourage students to seek feedback in settings that feel psychologically safe (Young & Carless 2024). The Bristol Institute of Learning and Teaching (BILT) and Bristol Students' Union are working together on a formal university-wide project to enhance the feedback literacy and feedback-seeking behaviour. Student Feedback Engagement Fellows (FEFs) have been recently appointed to work with individual schools across the University, to co-design feedback engagement activities that are contextualised to local disciplines. The Feedback Engagement Toolkit (Winstone and Nash, 2016) which was developed based on Barnett and Coate's 'Knowing, Acting and Being' framework (Barnett and Coate, 2005) was used as a starting point for activity design. The Bristol Skills Profile (BSP) (Love 2024) was built around the same framework, which allowed us to directly map our feedback resources onto the BSP. We are currently also incorporating elements of a recently developed structured model to transform feedback practices into effective tools for self-regulation and active learning (Khuder, 2025). Our FEFs are supporting student peers across the university to seek and engage with feedback, and to use the BSP to develop action plans and build a portfolio of evidence to draw on for examples of skills when applying for internships and/or jobs. This talk will showcase the feedback tools that have been developed for schools in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences. Our FEF initiative aims to support students to recognise feedback literacy as a valuable graduate attribute, and to increase feedback-seeking behaviour.

Biography

Professor Sheila Amici-Dargan is a Professor of Life Sciences Education.

Workshop: AI Two ways - practical teaching activities for student feedback and role-play

Dr Alex Swainson and Dr Rob Thatcher

Session overview

This workshop will demonstrate the application of AI in two teaching activities; (1) how it can be used to generate feedback for scientific writing (2) as a novel way to present interactive research scenarios.

In the presentation on AI-generated feedback, we demonstrate how this can be authentically applied to student writing, but also how it can scaffold a more important discussion of AI literacy with an emphasis on critically evaluating the outputs of these tools. We will present our workshop developed for first year students supporting essay preparation. Participants will get hands on experience in how to guide student's use of AI tools to self-evaluate their work against a marking scheme in order to generate actionable and focused feedback prior to submission. This approach aims to promote independence and develop students' critical evaluation of both their own work and the outputs of AI to improve the quality of submitted work.

In the second demonstration, we show how AI chatbots can provide a convenient way of building interactive research scenarios which test the student's ability to 'ask the right questions'. Rather than using AI to analyse and generate, we demonstrate how we can use a chatbot to present our own accurately curated information step-by-step, such that students exercise investigative skills rather than simply consuming outputs. We will present an example of diagnosing a hypothetical patient in a doctor's office.

Participants will engage in interactive activities, gaining direct experience in designing and implementing these AI solutions. By the end of the workshop, you will be equipped with these ready-to-use methods for integrating AI into teaching and learning using freely available and accessible tools.

Learning objectives

1) To guide students in responsible and authentic AI use to evaluate their written work against marking criteria.

2) To describe the process of building interactive scenarios in AI chatbots using curated data to develop students' investigative skills.

Biography

Dr Alex Swainson is a Lecturer in Neuroscience, with a background in neuroscience and experimental psychology. Her interests include promoting undergraduate skill development and integrating innovative technologies into the curriculum. Recent projects include co developing an interactive essay-writing tutorial for first-year physiology students with colleagues from Bristol and Cambridge, and designing a scaffolded approach to teaching R coding for life sciences undergraduates. She is currently developing and implementing AI tools in undergraduate teaching, to promote students' AI literacy and critical evaluation.

Dr Rob Thatcher is a Senior Lecturer at the Bristol Medical School, predominantly teaching on the pharmacology programme. He graduated from the University of Glasgow with a MSci in Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry and spent a year working for GlaxoSmithKline developing positive allosteric modulators of AMPA receptors. After obtaining his doctorate at the University of York he moved to Bristol's school of Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience(PPN) to work with Professor David Jane, again on glutamate receptor ligands. As a teaching-focussed lecturer, Rob has a keen interest in digital education leading the implementation of the online learning environment in PPN. He is currently leading the development of AI use-case training for staff and undergraduates, as well as developing teaching activities for responsible AI use.

Oral Presentations: Bristol Skills/ Employability/ Transferrable Skills

Using the Bristol Skills Profile to enhance Student use of Personal Development Planning in Dental Undergraduate Programmes to meet new Intended Learning Outcomes

Dr Angela Hague

Abstract

The Dental School piloted Bristol Skills Profile (BSP) as a learning needs analysis within all 5years of the Bachelor of Dental Surgery in 2023-24. Students were asked to use the self-assessment tool to help them formulate a personal development plan (PDP). Personal development planning is embedded into the personal tutor system and this aspect of student support is included in personal tutor training. As personal development planning is a General Dental Council (GDC) requirement, students submit their PDP on Blackboard. While the percentage of students using the BSP tool was high (n=259; 67.6%), we did not have clear evidence that outcomes were used by students to formulate their PDP.

In 2024-25, the PDP form asked students to select three BSP priority areas for development. BSP mapping informed choice of development objectives for some, but not all students. Student feedback indicated that links to their development as a dental student could be

clearer. Submitted PDPs indicated a need for further student training in developing objectives with planned progress checks.

New GDC 'Safe Practitioner' intended learning outcomes (ILOs) are in effect for the 2025-26intake of students on all dental programmes. These include 33 behaviours that students are expected to exhibit by graduation. Behavioural ILOs are developmental and multifaceted, requiring continuous and longitudinal feedback. For 2025-26, the PDP form provides sections for learning goals in the nine BSP skill areas, with Safe Practitioner GDC ILOs overarching each section. Small group workshops use a flipped classroom approach for students to develop their PDP. Analysis of student PDPs informs our understanding of skills development requirements of different student cohorts (programme, year, entry - Direct, Gateway or International Foundation Programme - and protected characteristics). Alongside staff and student feedback, this helps establish how to further support student learning and development.

Biography

Associate Professor in Health Sciences Education, **Dr Angela Hague** works as Director of Student Support at Bristol Dental School. She is a Senior Tutor and lead for the Lifelong Learning and Wellbeing Themes within the BDS Programme.

The Sprint Challenge: Collaborative and Innovative Community-Engaged Learning in Psychology

Dr Jessica Fielding and Edie Dacosta Jackson

Abstract

Community-engaged learning is a powerful way to enhance student learning while creating impact for local organisations. However, students often lack structured opportunities to apply disciplinary knowledge in real-world contexts. This presentation introduces the Sprint Challenge, an innovative teaching approach adapted from business practice and developed as a community-engaged learning initiative built around authentic challenges from a local organisation, and presents outcomes from an evaluative research project examining its benefits and challenges. A sprint is a collaborative methodology in which teams work intensively over a short, time-boxed period to generate responses to real-world challenges. In the School of Psychological Science, we embedded this practice into our MSc Psychology Conversion programme as part of a formative assessment. Working in collaboration with a local health and social care charity, the teaching team developed briefs representing current challenges faced by the organisation. Students worked in groups over four days, using the sprint framework to apply psychological knowledge, evidence, and theory from their course in developing recommendations. These were presented in a poster session attended by charity representatives, providing opportunities for authentic feedback and discussion.

Recommendations and insights were subsequently shared on the charity's social media platforms and incorporated into project reporting, extending impact beyond the classroom. The associated assessment required students to produce a critical reflection on their experiences. Evaluative research included surveys with 21 students from the 30-studentcohort, 6 staff, and a focus group with 4 students to explore learning experiences and perceptions of benefits and challenges. Preliminary analysis of qualitative and quantitative data highlights the value of collaboration and peer learning, applying course knowledge in practice, and developing communication and presentation skills. Our findings advance evidence-informed approaches to teaching and learning in health and life sciences by informing the design of future community-engaged learning opportunities through co-designed, innovative approaches.

Biography

Dr Jessica Fielding Associate Professor, School Education Director, Programme Director MSc Psychology(Conversion).

Dr Kristopher Magee Lecturer, School of Psychological Science

Edie Dacosta Jackson Postgraduate student Psychology (MSc by Research) and Research Assistant working on this project.

Graduate Pathways: Inspiring Degree-Skill Awareness and Development Through Alumni Insight

Dr Kristopher Magee, Lana El Assaad and Evie Opie

Abstract

A persistent challenge in higher education is that students often struggle to recognise how the work they do during their degree develops transferable skills, where in their studies those skills are gained, and how these skills are relevant beyond university. This gap can limit students' ability to articulate their strengths to employers and to appreciate the broader value of their degree. Here we report on an ongoing collaborative project that addresses this gap by capturing the perspectives of psychology graduates on how their degree skills have supported their career journeys, and by feeding these insights back to current students through an evidence-informed careers resource. The project team includes a lecturer in the School of Psychological Science, a recent graduate, and a current student, working in partnership with the University's Alumni Engagement Team and Careers Service, with funding from the Bristol Skills Profile initiative. Alumni participation itself represents a significant form of collaboration.

The project uses a mixed-methods survey design, combining quantitative ratings with qualitative reflections. Alumni are surveyed about their current roles, career pathways,

challenges faced, and the value of their psychology degree. A central feature is the use of the Bristol Skills Profile (BSP): participants rate the extent to which they developed 27 skills during their studies and the extent to which they use them now. They then reflect on skills they consider most important, explaining where in the degree they were developed and how they have been applied in current workplace contexts. Data collection is ongoing, and in this presentation, we share emerging findings, highlight key alumni reflections, and outline plans for a "Psychology Graduate Skills and Pathways" resource. By presenting authentic graduate examples, the project takes an innovative approach that makes skill development more tangible for current students and reinforces the relevance of the degree beyond university.

Biography

Dr Kristopher Magee Lecturer, Careers and Employability Lead.

Lana El Assaad Recent graduate and research collaborator on this project.

Evie Opie Recent graduate and research collaborator on this project.

Morning sessions continued

Time	Jessop room (ground floor)	Grace room (first floor)	Premier Lounge (second floor)	Small meeting rooms (second floor)
11:30 – 12:25	**Workshop: Prof. Sheila Amici-Dargan** *'Supporting our students to use the Bristol Skills Profile (BSP) to seek, reflect and act on feedback'*	**Oral Presentations: Mixed themes** **Ali Almuhanna** *'The Computational Reproducibility of Psychology Learning and Teaching Research'.* **Sung Yeon Kwak** *'Interprofessional Simulation in Undergraduate Mental Health Education — A Role to Play'* **Dr Zuzana Deans and Chloe Freeman** (short update) *MIDIS Study: Exploring medical and dental students' perceptions of intercalated degrees.*	**Workshop: Dr Andy Wakefield, Dr Bronwen Burton and Dr Kiah Tasman** *'Exploring the links between climate change and human health: a collaborative workshop'.*	

Workshop: Supporting our students to use the Bristol Skills Profile (BSP) to seek, reflect and act on feedback

Professor Sheila Amici-Dargan

Abstract

This interactive workshop will demonstrate how you can support your students to use the Bristol Skills Profile (BSP) (Love 2024) to critically reflect on their feedback to develop their own skills and competencies and to build a portfolio of evidence they can use as examples

when applying for internships and/or jobs. Student and staff awareness of the BSP is increasing but students are not yet engaging with the most powerful feature of the BSP, the 'skills logs'. This workshop will demonstrate how we could use the BSP to empower our students to become capable of seeking and generating feedback for themselves rather than relying on others (e.g. staff or employers) to provide it. This initiative aligns to our university vision of "enabling students to gain future skills needed to thrive in a changing world" (UoB 2022). It would be helpful if you could bring an electronic device along to the workshop so you can log onto the BSP and play around with it during the session to maximise your ability to show your student show to use it effectively.

Learning objectives

1. To familiarise participants with the features of the Bristol Skills Profile.

2. To help participants support their students to use the BSP to critically reflect on feedback and develop personal action plans.

3. To help participants support students to develop a personalised searchable portfolio to evidence skills and provide examples when applying for internships and/or jobs.

Biography

Professor Sheila Amici-Dargan is a Professor of Life Sciences Education

Oral Presentations: Mixed Themes

The Computational Reproducibility of Psychology Learning and Teaching Research

Ali Almuhanna

Abstract

The open science movement encourages researchers to share all data, code, and materials used in their studies on publicly accessible platforms. These practices enhance the transparency of publications, allowing external researchers to assess computational reproducibility, defined as using publicly available resources to obtain results reported in published papers. Computational reproducibility studies in the psychological field have identified gaps in data accessibility and clarity of analytical procedures, suggesting that between 31% and 70% of statistical results have been successfully reproduced using shared materials. However, no studies have investigated the computational reproducibility of psychology learning and teaching journals, a field central to shaping students' understanding of open and robust methodological practices. To address this gap, we attempted to reproduce the key statistical results from 60 empirical studies across three psychology

education journals: Teaching of Psychology (ToP; n = 27), Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology(SoTL-P; n = 17), and Psychology Learning and Teaching (PLaT; n = 16). Using a structured two-phase protocol, we first extracted key claims and corresponding statistical results from each study before using publicly available materials to attempt to obtain results identical to those in the published manuscripts. In studies containing more than one result central to the claim, we randomly selected an extra result for validation. Results indicated that 72% of primary results and 73% of secondary results were fully reproducible. Discrepancies between reproduced and originally published results ranged from minor rounding errors to substantially different results. Benefits of incorporating computational reproducibility tasks into undergraduate curricula align with learning outcomes set by the American Psychological Association and the British Psychological Society (BPS). Such tasks also promote transferable skills that meet global workforce demands (e.g., analytical thinking and technological adaptability). The BPS funded and supported this study as part of the Undergraduate Research Assistantship Scheme.

Learning objectives

Benefits of incorporating computational reproducibility tasks into undergraduate curricula align with learning outcomes set by the American Psychological Association and the British Psychological Society (BPS). Such tasks also promote transferable skills that meet global workforce demands (e.g., analytical thinking and technological adaptability).

Biography

Ali Almuhanna Psychology BSc Undergraduate Researcher (3rd Year at Time of Conference)

Dr Peter J Allen Associate Professor in Psychology Education, School of Psychological Science

Interprofessional Simulation in Undergraduate Mental Health Education — A Role to Play

Dr Sung Yeon Kwak

Abstract

Background

Interprofessional education (IPE) prepares students for collaborative practice and enhances teamwork and communication between professionals (1). Interprofessional simulation learning(IPSL) creates a safe authentic learning environment with simulation being associated with improved patient outcomes (2). Despite this, IPSL remains underutilised in undergraduate healthcare education (3).

Methods

A mixed methods exploratory design study was conducted across two universities with 29 final year students (19 nursing, 10 medical) partaking. Participants undertook three mental health focused interprofessional simulations followed by structured debriefing. Pre and post session questionnaires assessed confidence, attitudes to interprofessional learning, and understanding of professional roles. Quantitative data were analysed using Wilcoxon signed rank and Mann Whitney U tests, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis using Clarke and Braun's six step analysis process.

Results

Complete paired pre and post data was collected from 29 participants. Statistical improvement was seen in all domains assessed post simulation. The largest improvement was seen in confidence in collaborating with other professions which rose from 25% to 82.1% ($p < .001$),followed by preparedness to respond to a mental health crisis which increased from 10.7% to85.7% ($p < .001$). Effect sizes ranged from moderate to large ($r = 0.47–0.83$). Nursing students consistently had higher post intervention scores than medical students, though both groups demonstrated significant improvements. Thematic analysis identified four themes: working collaboratively, understanding professional roles and skill sets, increasing confidence in managing mental health patients, and improving communication.

Conclusion

This study has shown mental health IPSL can improve student confidence in managing mental health crisis, understanding of professionals' roles, and collaborative working. The findings support the integration of IPSL into undergraduate curricula to prepare students for multidisciplinary clinical practice. This area would benefit from further research to explore the long term impact of IPSL on professional development and patient outcomes.

Biography

Dr Sung Yeon Kwak is an Internal Medicine Trainee (IMT1) and former Clinical Teaching Fellow at Great Western Hospital. She has a strong interest in medical education and simulation-based learning.

Dr Thomas Davies is a Core Surgical Trainee (CST) who has worked as a Clinical Teaching Fellow at North Bristol Trust. He has a strong interest in interprofessional education, simulation-based learning, and professional development.

Dr Laura Sevenoaks

MIDIS Study: Exploring medical and dental students' perceptions of intercalated degrees

Dr Zuzana Deans and Dr Chloe Freeman

Abstract

Background

The practice of medical and dental students undertaking an intercalated BSc or MSc degree in addition to their medical or dental degree is well established in the UK. The University of Bristol has a longstanding, successful intercalation programme for medical, dental and veterinary students but, like many parts of the UK, has recently seen a decline in enrolment. This trend is misaligned with feedback from intercalating students, who continue to rate the courses highly, describing first-hand experiences of the educational (1,2,3,4,5) personal, social(6), and career-related (7,8) advantages which are also documented in the literature.

The MIDIS study aims to gain a greater understanding of the factors that encourage and discourage intercalation, including barriers faced, and ways to remove them.

Aims

Our two primary research questions are (a) what do UK based medical/dental students see as incentives and disincentives of pursuing an intercalated medical degree, and (b) what enables and barriers do UK medical/dental student perceive in pursuing an intercalated medical degree. A secondary question is (c) what patterns exist between student demographics and intercalation enrolment across medical schools.

Methods

To address these questions, we have collaborated with medical students to design an online multi-centre iterative survey study inspired by Delphi-style methodology. We will send this to8 nominated UK universities who vary in their provision of intercalation and course structure.

We aim to recruit 30 students from each site (24 medical, 6 dental). Following initial responses, we will use thematic analysis to develop a further iterative survey. Surveys will be carried out via the REDCap platform, hosted by University of Bristol. Results will then be analysed using R. Students will subsequently be renumerated for their participation in the survey.

In December 2025 we aim to share our initial findings at the HALSEN Conference.

Biography

Dr Zuzana Deans is an Associate Professor in Bioethics at the University of Bristol. Zuzana Deans' areas of expertise include the ethics of non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT), research

integrity, clinical ethics and conscientious refusals. Zuzana also conducts education research in relation to medical ethics.

Dr Chloe Freeman is an Academic F2 Doctor currently working with Dr Dan Magnus and Dr Robin Marlow on the MIDIS study. She has previously carried out research exploring adolescent vaping patterns and its impact on mental health. Prior to working in medicine she worked in refugee and migrant health advocacy.

Workshop: Exploring the links between climate change and human health: a collaborative workshop

Dr Andy Wakefield

Abstract

Climate change and human health are deeply interconnected. It is increasingly important that health and life sciences students understand these complex relationships to acknowledge and address global challenges in and beyond the university. In collaboration with student partners and a multi-disciplinary team, we have co-created an interactive, collaborative workshop inspired by the Climate Fresk card game. Our workshop goes beyond the science of climate change to explore its multifaceted impacts on human health. Working in small teams, participants place visually engaging cards in a cause-effect sequence, building a visual map that illustrates the many consequences of climate change for human health including heat stress, changes to infectious disease patterns, altered respiratory health, dysregulated immunity, cancer, and mental health problems. The workshop invites participants to explore how different communities are affected, and to reflect on emotions arising from visualising the bigger picture of climate change and human health. The workshop closes with a solutions-focussed creative activity, highlighting successful innovations and encouraging participants to consider their roles in addressing these challenges, as individuals and within their communities (e.g. student/scientific/society). Early evaluation of pilot workshops indicate that this approach is engaging and effective, fostering active learning through collaboration. In this interactive session, you will experience elements of the workshop and contribute feedback to support its ongoing development. Our ultimate goal is to embed this workshop into the biomedical sciences curriculum, and to share the workshop resources across disciplines, in and beyond the university.

Biography

Dr Andy Wakefield Associate Professor in School of Biological Sciences

Dr Bronwen Burton Senior Lecturer in the School of Cellular and Molecular Medicine

Dr Kiah Tasman Lecturer in the School of Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience

Afternoon sessions

Time	Jessop room (ground floor)	Grace room (first floor)	Premier Lounge (second floor)	Small meeting rooms (second floor)
13:15 – 14:00	**Posters available to view**	**Plenary 2: Keynote Speaker Dr Ben Hobbs** (University of Bristol) *'The Collaboration Dividend: How Team-Based Education Drives Employability'*		
14:05 – 15.00	**Posters available to view**	**Oral presentations: Student experience** **Dr Polly Barr** *'Testing a cultural similarities icebreaker effect on home and international students' sense of belonging and attitudes to group work in research methods lab classes'* **Dr Jonathan Foulkes** *'Does the Peer-fect simulation teaching programme exist? An evaluation of a novel, blended, near-peer medical undergraduate simulation teacher training course'*	**Oral presentations:** **Building community/inclusivity** **Sarah Vivian** *'Factors which affect the emergence of professional identity in veterinary nursing students at two higher education institutes: a collaborative study'.* **Dr Sarah McLaughlin** *'Journey Mapping as an inclusive research tool to interview participants who are dyslexic.'* **Dr Polly Barr** *'Using Chatgpt to polish feedback is undetectable quantitatively but qualitatively students* *detect nuanced differences'*	

Plenary Lecture: The Collaboration Dividend: How Team-Based Education Drives Employability

Dr Ben Hobbs

Abstract

This session explores how purposeful collaboration can strengthen learning, confidence, and real-world readiness across a wide range of disciplines. Drawing on ten years of interdisciplinary teaching at the Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, we will consider the shared challenges that arise when students work in teams. These challenges include uneven contribution, uncertainty about roles, anxiety about group work, questions of fairness in assessment, and the significant impact team dynamics can have on wellbeing, motivation, and performance.

We will examine the choices that support effective teamwork. This includes creating psychological safety, setting clear expectations from the start, and using project management basics to help students speak openly and work with greater trust. We will discuss how the flipped classroom makes class time for collaboration, how simple team tools improve communication, and how students can act as co-educators by sharing their disciplinary strengths.

The session will also explore the role of authentic assessments and our 'Equity Share' model. Both of which help students understand how shared accountability works in practice. They also support transparency in contribution and reduce many of the fairness concerns that often appear in group work.

We will review what has worked well in our context, what has not, and the adjustments made over time as we refined our approach. These reflections will draw on student outcomes, employer feedback, and examples from units where teamwork forms a core part of the learning experience.

Throughout the session, we will endeavour to share concrete examples of teaching practices, team structures, and assessment methods that colleagues may wish to explore within their own subjects. The overall aim is to offer insight into how purposeful collaboration can work, enhancing learning and employability, while supporting an inclusive and engaging educational environment.

Biography

Dr Ben Hobbs is a ‘pracademic' with twenty years of practical industry and academic experience. Before joining the University of Bristol, he built and led insight focused departments in the financial services sector, delivering large strategic programmes and developing new products and partnerships. He now serves as Senior Lecturer and Director of PGT Programmes at the Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, where he leads eight master’s programmes and oversees curriculum, assessment and student experience. His recent work has strengthened programme coherence, built national and international partnerships, and contributed to outstanding PTES results and multiple awards for innovation and authentic assessment.

Oral Presentations: Student Experience

Testing a cultural similarities icebreaker effect on home and international students' sense of belonging and attitudes to group work in research methods lab classes

Dr Polly Barr

Abstract

Providing written feedback is a core pedagogical practice with well-documented benefits but also notable challenges. One key difficulty lies in the time required to craft constructive, accessible, and inclusive feedback for a diverse student population. Markers often report that producing feedback in bullet point form is relatively quick, but converting this into polished prose that is encouraging, rubric-linked, and explanatory is time-consuming. Meanwhile, students frequently note that feedback lacks clarity and sometimes requires further explanation. With recent advances in generative AI, there is potential to outsource the “polishing” stage, reducing workload while maintaining quality. This study investigated whether using ChatGPT to polish human-generated feedback reduced time costs for markers

and improved accessibility for students. Y2/Y3 higher research methods students (N=88)received feedback either polished by markers or ChatGPT. Students rated the feedback(between-subjects) on a range of variables (including clarity, constructivist value, or usefulness), and five markers provided within-subject ratings on the experience of providing the two types of feedback. Quantitative analyses showed no significant differences in student evaluations of feedback. Markers rated ChatGPT-polished feedback as initially faster to produce, though this did not translate into overall time savings; nevertheless, 60% expressed a preference for using ChatGPT in future. Qualitative analysis suggested students perceived subtle differences between feedback types. These findings highlight the value of mixed-methods approaches and suggest future research should involve students as co-creators of feedback practices.

Biography

Dr Polly Barr is interested in decolonising our curriculum, and student experience of how we decolonise our curriculum. I'm also interested in student experience more widely particularly in relation to research methods and group work, international student experience, how we can ensure our teaching practices are inclusive, how to we can create feedback that is useful for students and use of AI in bettering our teaching practices.

Dr Jiexin Zhang

Does the Peer-fect simulation teaching programme exist? An evaluation of a novel, blended, near-peer medical undergraduate simulation teacher training course

Dr Jonathan Foulkes

Abstract

Introduction: Near-peer teaching is known to enhance learning and teaching skills in a simulation setting1,2,3, with some evidence suggesting it may be more relevant for clinical practice than traditional senior-led teaching 4. However, the most effective method for training near-peer tutors in simulation-based teaching is not well-established. This study evaluated a novel, blended online and in-person teaching series designed to train 10 final-year medical students to create, deliver, and debrief simulation scenarios for first clinical-year medical students.

Methods: The training involved e-learning, assisting as embedded faculty in clinical teaching fellow(CTF)-led simulations, and an in-person "train the trainer" course. Subsequently, the students delivered their own scenarios to groups of three to six first-year students. Pre- and post-intervention questionnaires were used to evaluate the training. A 5-point Likert scale measured the final-year students' confidence and skill acquisition, while a 10-pointcomparator scale assessed first clinical year students' preference for either CTF or final-

year student-led simulations. The data were non-normal, so a Wilcoxon Rank Test was used to determine statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).

Results: All 10 final-year students agreed or strongly agreed that the sessions were useful and that they were likely to use the skills in the future. The training led to a statistically significant increase in confidence across most domains, including scenario writing and debriefing. First clinical year students reported no difference in teaching quality between the sessions led by final-year students and the CTFs. However, they expressed a statistically significant preference for the final-year student-led sessions in two specific areas: enjoyment and perceived learning.

Conclusion: This study suggests that a rapid, blended teaching approach seen with near-peer simulation can effectively train near-peer tutors to deliver high-quality simulation teaching that is comparable to, and in some aspects preferred over, more senior-led instruction.

Biography

Dr Jonathan Foulkes Clinical Fellow in Emergency Medicine - Southmead Hospital, Clinical Teaching Fellow - Bath Academy 2024/25

Dr Eleanor Renton Clinical Teaching Fellow - Bath Academy 2024-26

Dr Isobelle Langdon

Oral Presentations: Building Community/ Inclusivity

Factors which affect the emergence of professional identity in veterinary nursing students at two higher education institutes: a collaborative study

Sarah Vivian

Abstract

Collaboration among educators enhances teaching quality, promotes professional growth and builds a supportive community. Collaborative environments empower educators to continuously improve and was the main driver for this joint research initiative. Veterinary nurses report a lack of connection to the industry. A collaborative study was conceived across two Higher Education Institutions analysing professional identity, with the aim of supporting graduates to be more committed to the profession and address retention concerns. Establishing when professional identity emerges better informs educational providers on programme planning and helps students explore their Emerging Professional Identity(EPI).

An online questionnaire using Jisc was completed by FdSc (n100) and BSc (Hons) (n72) veterinary nursing students from two Higher Education Institutes. The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to determine any difference between variables and EPI and Social Capital whilst descriptive analysis was used to analyse factors which influenced respondents EPI.

Comparable results were noted from both institutions. Over 70% of respondents stated that they believed Prior Veterinary Related Work Experience helped them develop their professional identity. Age (Institute A = 15.95%; Institute B = 37.5%) was the second most recorded factor, with Access to Mentoring(Institute A = 8.5%; Institute B = 27.7%) being third. For institute A statistical differences (p= <0.05) favoured Further Education entry qualifications. For Institute B statistical differences (p=<0.05) were concluded to favour older ages and Informed Students.

Collaboration in this study has driven educational development across two institutions which will improve teaching and student experiences. It is wise to be mindful of the diversity of course structures across institutions and monitoring and reviewing of programme design is essential to ensure that EPI is supported throughout the programme. There is, however, further collaborative research to undertake with plans to conduct focus groups, targeting specific demographic groups as they progress through their programmes.

Biography

Sarah Vivian Admissions Tutor and Lecturer in Veterinary Nursing with an interest in research surrounding education, mental health and well-being within the veterinary nursing profession.

Katie Gazey Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Nursing in ARES, with over 20 years teaching experience in both FE and HE sectors, with a passion for exploring the learner journey, being a facilitator of learning, and encouraging students to take an active approach and to become lifelong learners - Nottingham Trent University.

Dr Sarah Broadberry Associate Professor in Teaching and Scholarship, Nottingham Trent University

Journey Mapping as an inclusive research tool to interview participants who are dyslexic

Dr Sarah McLaughlin

Abstract

Inclusivity in education research relates not only to what we research. It extends to how we research. Dyslexia – affecting 10 per cent of the UK population - is one example where traditional research practices may unintentionally marginalise participant voices. Qualitative interviews are commonly used in education research to explore participants' lives. As a

research tool, they may be considered a fairly simple process. But what if that process unintentionally excludes some of the very voices we most need to hear? For adults with dyslexia, traditional interviews may present significant hurdles. This presentation provides insights into the methods chosen for a research project exploring the learning journeys of health professions educators with dyslexia in Post- Graduate Teacher Training.

Amid the evolving landscape of health professions education, marked by growing diversity and heightened attention to inclusivity, the experiences of postgraduate educators with dyslexia remain underexplored. While the learning journeys of undergraduate students with dyslexia have gained some attention, there is a notable absence of research on health professions educators, particularly those undertaking postgraduate teacher training.

Our project employed mapping as a creative method, alongside interviews, inviting participants to visually represent their journeys and experiences. This innovative approach sought to give agency to participants to create their data and identify salient moments in their journeys into teaching. By shedding light on the experiences of neurodivergent educators, this project seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of inclusivity in health professions education. We share insights into the importance of ensuring research methodologies are inclusive, and draw upon salient aspect of our project's design.

Biography

Dr Sarah McLaughlin is a Health Professions Education Programme lecturer and MSc co-lead. She is the Principal Investigator of the research project - Constructing Inclusive Pathways: Mapping/Understanding the learning journeys of health professions educators with dyslexia in Post- Graduate Teacher Training.

Dr Steve Jennings University of Bristol - HPE

Dr Asim Ali Lecturer - Bristol Medical School

Using Chatgpt to polish feedback is undetectable quantitatively but qualitatively students detect nuanced differences

Dr Polly Barr

Abstract

Providing written feedback is a core pedagogical practice with well-documented benefits but also notable challenges. One key difficulty lies in the time required to craft constructive, accessible, and inclusive feedback for a diverse student population. Markers often report that producing feedback in bullet point form is relatively quick, but converting this into polished prose that is encouraging, rubric-linked, and explanatory is time-consuming. Meanwhile, students frequently note that feedback lacks clarity and sometimes requires further explanation. With recent advances in generative AI, there is potential to outsource

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Maria Garcia de Soria Bazan PhD student, University of Aberdeen

Afternoon sessions continued

Time	**Jessop room (ground floor)**	**Grace room (first floor)**	**Premier Lounge (second floor)**	Small meeting rooms (second floor)
15:15 – 16:05	**Workshop: Dr Ffion Jones, Josie Maskell** *'Planning for 2040, how to prepare our students for global change'.*	**Oral Presentations: Mixed themes** **Dr Emily Bell** *'Exploring the experience of academic staff following the introduction of reflective portfolios into biosciences higher education curriculums in UK universities'* **Gaurav Saxena** *'Exploring the Contexts and Mechanisms Influencing Students' Engagement with Curriculum Decolonisation Initiatives'*	**Workshop: Dr Rohin Athavale** *'Ethics & generative AI: bias, sustainability and responsible use'*	

Workshop: Embedding sustainability into the Dental curriculum

Dr Ffion Jones and Josie Maskell

Abstract

The importance of sustainability teaching is increasingly recognised in dental education. However, integrating it into an already packed professional curriculum presents challenges.

To avoid it becoming a bolt-on topic, we are working to ensure it complements existing teaching and engages students meaningfully. At the same time, we are mindful of staff workload pressures, aiming to minimise additional tick-box exercises.

The General Dental Council's new Safe Practitioner framework introduced two additional learning outcomes for integration into our spiral curriculum:

• P 3.11 – Describe the main principles relating to sustainable oral healthcare, both environmentally and in terms of patient compliance, and the factors that might affect implementing a sustainable approach.

• P 3.12 – Evaluate and apply the evidence base in relation to the environmental impacts of common treatment methods and approaches to the delivery of oral healthcare.

These outcomes prompted us to reconsider how sustainability could be embedded in a way that reflects its relevance and importance within dentistry. At Bristol Dental School, our non-modular BDS programme is structured around helical themes. As sustainability didn't align neatly with existing themes, we developed it as a standalone sub-theme in collaboration with the Education for Sustainable Development team. This allowed us to weave it throughout the curriculum while maintaining coherence.

In this workshop, I will outline our Year 1 introductory session, offering participants the chance to try out some activities and explore how sustainability is addressed across the BDS programme. This includes focused sessions in Years 3 and 5, regular "Sustainability Spotlights" in lectures, a Year 3 poster conference, and we are developing a Year 5 session, featuring clinicians from Green Impact Award-winning practices. After the Dentistry presentation Josie Maskell, the Education for Sustainability Coordinator, will facilitate an open discussion. In this, staff can share their existing examples of including Education for Sustainability in Life Sciences teaching and discuss ideas for their own disciplines. We welcome feedback and hope to encourage colleagues to identify discipline-relevant opportunities for integrating sustainability in a meaningful and engaging way.

Biography

Dr Ffion Jones is a Lecturer in Dental Sciences at the University of Bristol, where she also serves as the Theme Lead for Sustainability. With a background in biochemistry and a PhD in translational cardiovascular science, she brings a strong interdisciplinary perspective to her teaching. As theme lead she is working to embed environmental responsibility into clinical education. Her work spans curriculum design, pedagogic research, and inclusive teaching practices. Ffion teaches across the undergraduate dental curriculum and the International Foundation Programme as well as being a PGR supervisor.

Jodie Maskell (Education for Sustainability Coordinator) works alongside Prof. Chris Preist (Academic Lead for Sustainability). As well as being responsible for Embedding discipline-relevant aspects of sustainable development into every degree program, they facilitate the

sharing of best practice through the Education for Sustainable Development Staff Network (ESDN), and organise and promote extra-curricular ESD activities for staff and students.

Oral Presentation: Mixed Themes

Exploring the experience of academic staff following the introduction of reflective portfolios into biosciences higher education curriculums in UK universities

Dr Emily Bell

Abstract

In 2023, a group of like-minded biological science-focused lecturers met at the Horizons-in-STEM conference through a passion for supporting student transition via the use of reflective portfolios. We formed a cross-institutional collaboration with a unique opportunity to investigate staff experiences of integrating vital life-skills training to students. Reflective practices play a role in supporting an individual's self-awareness and personal growth, aiding knowledge acquisition, improving creativity and offering a method for coping with stressors. Using reflective journaling and portfolios in education as part of continuing professional development has been demonstrated to be novel assessment format allowing students to gain knowledge and insights on their learning journey. Despite potential benefits, integrating practices into curricula comes with challenges both in terms of colleagues' perception of teaching softer skills and reluctance or lack of understanding from students regarding their benefits. Currently, little research exists regarding the use and effectiveness of reflective portfolios within undergraduate bioscience education, or the experiences of staff who have initiated the use of portfolios. Using a combination of online surveys and semi-structured interviews, we have been able to explore the motivators, barriers, benefits and costs that staff across UK Higher Education Institutions have experienced whilst attempting to integrate reflective work into their degrees. Mixed methods data analysis revealed six emerging themes from staff's experiences including links with assessment, marking and feedback; purpose, motivation and engagement; employability and careers; support and scaffolding of portfolios, wellbeing and inclusivity and a scholarly approach to development. Within this talk, we discuss and reflect on our findings and share suggestions for best practices going forward.

Biography

Dr Emily Bell Senior Lecturer in the School of Biological Sciences

Exploring the Contexts and Mechanisms Influencing Students' Engagement with Curriculum Decolonisation Initiatives

Gaurav Saxena

Abstract

Universities globally, especially in the United Kingdom, are working hard to decolonise their curricula. These efforts aim not only to enhance learning content but also to promote inclusivity and representation for all students within their learning environments. Students play a vital role in any curriculum decolonisation process. However, research capturing their perspectives on the implementation of curriculum decolonisation initiatives remains scarce. To address this gap, we conducted interviews with 21 undergraduate psychology students at the University of Bristol. Using a critical realist framework, we explored the contextual conditions and underlying mechanisms that shape how students engage with decolonial efforts. Our goal was to understand when, why (or why not), and how students engage with curriculum decolonisation initiatives. We organised our analysis around the four contextual levels. At the individual level, factors such as students' prior experiences, personal beliefs, agency, academic goals, and the role of educators influenced engagement. At the interpersonal level, peer interactions, classroom atmosphere, diversity, and teaching approaches played a role in influencing engagement. At the institutional level, academic workload, staff diversity and preparation, and institutional commitment to decolonisation shaped engagement. At the broadest infrastructural level, students' historical awareness of colonisation and the perceived zeitgeist influenced their engagement with these initiatives. In the talk, we will discuss these factors in detail. We will also highlight key mechanisms such as psychological safety, motivation, and educator enthusiasm that appear to interact with the context and regulate student engagement. We will also present our 11 proposed Context-Mechanism-Outcome configurations. These configurations are developed from our findings and hypothesises how educational settings, student workload, identities, and institutional support may impact engagement with decolonial learning. Finally, we will outline future research directions.

Biography

Gaurav Saxena is a final-year PhD student in Psychology at the University of Bristol. Originally from India, his research focuses on the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum. He is particularly interested in understanding student perspectives and the impact of these initiatives. His work is informed by a critical realist framework. Gaurav has published several papers in high-impact journals and has presented at numerous international conferences. Before beginning his ESRC-funded PhD, he worked as a researcher at leading universities in both India and the UK. In addition to pedagogic research, his interests include happiness, well-being, mental health, religion, and spirituality.

Workshop: Ethics & generative AI: bias, sustainability and responsible use

Dr Rohin Athavale

Abstract

As generative AI tools rapidly enter clinical and educational settings, it is essential that staff and students are equipped to critically evaluate their ethical implications. This interactive workshop will explore some of the core ethical issues around large language models (LLMs), focusing on bias, environmental impact, and responsible implementation. Participants will compare sources of bias in humans (e.g., anchoring, confirmation bias) and AI systems (e.g., data imbalance, under-representation). These will cover how bias arises, manifests, and how it may be mitigated in AI models. A hands-on task will evaluate digital and real-world activities by environmental impact, supporting an understanding of AI's carbon footprint in context. Finally, participants will work in small groups to explore the risks, benefits, and ethical considerations of LLMs in specific use-cases, for example examining AI scribes in clinical settings. Overall, this session will allow you to make informed decisions on when and how you use AI and disseminate this learning to your students.

Biography

Dr Rohin Athavale is a doctor currently pursuing his passion for medical education as a lecturer at Bristol medical school. Rohin has strong experience in digital health, built on an MSc in digital health, backed by his clinical experience and understanding of medical education pedagogy. He has run several successful student choice projects on AI in medicine, delivered talks and workshops for clinicians and academics, and is currently leading research exploring how & why medical students use a RAG-based LLM tool in their studies.