

The role of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) partnerships in promoting equity within diverse learning environments in Wales.

Supervisor: Katharine Burn

This project, rooted in Oxford's long-standing research into school-university partnerships, explores how ITE supports the drive for equitable educational outcomes. The past decade has brought profound changes, seeking to equip teachers for the ambitious responsibilities of Curriculum for Wales. The 2019 accreditation framework mandated ITE partnerships to strengthen new teachers' critical engagement with research. Revisions to the framework for 2024 sought to produce teachers capable of realising Wales national mission – 'tackling the impact of poverty on attainment'. The research would therefore focus on what beginning teachers actually learn from each partner (and from their interaction) that inspires and enables them to promote high standards and aspirations for all.

Place, identity, and education: understanding inequalities in Welsh tertiary participation

Supervisors: Dr James Robson and Dr David Mills

The challenge of youth NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in Wales is long running, but has continued to worsen. Fewer young men progress into Tertiary Education (either FE or HE) in Wales than in any other UK nation. A doctoral project built around an extended piece of ethnographic co-research in the Valleys, exploring questions of masculinity, identity, space and educational aspirations, would make a valuable contribution to understanding these persistent inequities.

Wales has recently created Medr, the Commission for Tertiary Education, and commissioned a series of [data reviews](#) and [analyses](#) from WCPP and ADR seeking to understand these inequities in tertiary participation. A collaborative doctoral project – potentially working with the Wales Centre for Public Policy - based on rich qualitative research would complement existing 'what works' approaches, and would have direct policy relevance and impact.

Young People and Climate Justice in Wales

Supervisor: Dr Steve Puttick

This project will explore how young people in Wales—particularly from communities affected by environmental and social inequalities—understand and engage with climate justice. Using participatory and place-based methodologies, potentially including collaborative mapping, ethnography, and visual approaches, the study will foreground young people's perspectives. It will explore how education might better respond to young people's lived experiences and aspirations, advancing social and environmental justice. The project will speak to Welsh policy priorities around youth voice, curriculum reform, and sustainability.

<i>Supporting</i>		<i>Welsh</i>		<i>Foundational</i>		<i>Learning</i>
<i>Supervisors:</i>	<i>Prof.</i>	<i>Cristina</i>	<i>McKean</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>Prof.</i>	<i>Sonali Nag</i>

The development of robust early language skills lays the foundation for children's long term social, educational and psychological wellbeing. The Welsh Government is committed to reducing social inequalities through the promotion of early language skills for all children through their 'Talk with me Speech Language and Communication delivery plan'. This plan, as for all Welsh Government policy, gives equal parity to Welsh and English. However, the linguistic landscape in Wales challenges the learning of native Welsh because of a sociolinguistic tension with dominant English both in the home and in school. There are more Welsh language schools opening across the nation but, in parallel, literacy levels in Welsh and English school remain low, with further slippage following the pandemic upheaval. This project aims to support Welsh early literacy development by enriching an important precursor: children's oral language skills. Using a series of three studies, the project will develop and evaluate approaches to facilitate Welsh

language development through shared book reading and shared story-telling in early education and care settings.