THEORY OF CHANGE

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THEORY OF CHANGE

Debates and Applications to Access and Participation in Higher Education

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emerald **PUBLISHING**

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Dr Samuel Dent PFHEA, is Head of Academic Development at Staffordshire University. Prior to this Samuel was Academic Development Manager at Nottingham Trent University leading the Educational Research and Evaluation Team, which he established in 2018; the Trent Institute for Learning and Teaching; and the Educational Development Team. He holds a PhD from Sheffield Hallam University, and was named the 2016 emerging researcher by the Forum on Access and Continuing Education for his initial findings. Since then, he has received numerous awards and shaped practice in higher education (HE) in the United Kingdom and Ireland, including being cited in the Office for Students regulatory framework. In 2020, he was recognised as a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy for his contribution, to the HE sector and his reputation for weaving together research and practice on HE inequalities.

Anna Mountford-Zimdars is Professor of Social Mobility and Joint Director of the Centre for Social Mobility, at the University of Exeter. Anna leads the academic professional programme (APP, formerly PCAP), and she served for two years (2018-2019) as a TEF national panel Widening Participation (WP) Expert and serves on the Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO) academic advisory group. As well

as being an invited expert to the Milburn Commission on Social Mobility and the UUK social mobility academic reference group (both 2016) she has participated in an OfS working group for the WP TEF metrics.

Anna joined the University of Exeter after researching Higher Education inequality at King's College London, she undertook her post-doctoral research at the University of Manchester where she was part of the Institute for Social Change and was a visiting scholar at the Harvard Kennedy School. During her doctoral studies at New College, Oxford, she also spent time at the New York University Steinhardt School of Education as a visiting scholar. Anna is a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (PFHEA) and Principal Fellow of ASPIRE, a member of the SRHE and academic associate of Advance HE.

Dr Ciaran Burke is an Associate Professor of Higher Education at the University of the West of England. Prior to this he was an Associate Professor of Higher Education at the University of Derby. A native of Belfast, Ciaran studied Sociology at undergraduate and then postgraduate level at Queen's University Belfast. His PhD thesis focused on the role of social class on graduate employment pathways. During his time as a PhD student, he was the founding member of the British Sociological Association's Bourdieu Study Group and organised numerous conferences and seminars on social theory and inequalities/culture/consumption, continuing on his involvement in the academic community he has recently become a convenor of the SRHE Employability, Enterprise and Work-Based Learning Network. On graduating with his PhD in 2012, Ciaran took up a lectureship in Sociology at Ulster University. During his time as an ECR, he published and co-edited four books with Routledge and Bloomsbury focusing on social theory, higher education and graduate employment

including a monograph based on his PhD research 'Culture, Capitals and Graduate Futures: Degrees of Class' (2016). After five years as a lecturer, Ciaran joined the University of Derby as an Associate Professor of Higher Education – roles included acting as a mentor to junior colleagues and supporting academic writing and funding strategies. Ciaran has established himself as an authority on social theory and graduate employment/careers, often working within interdisciplinary research teams. In addition, his current research has focused on social inequality and Service Pupils and disability and method. Ciaran's research has been funded by numerous organisations beginning with internal University funding before extending to HECSU, SRHE, HEFCE/OfS and NCOP.

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ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Daniela Bandeva is an Abertay University BSc(Hons) Computing Graduate. Originally from Bulgaria, she came to Scotland in 2015 to start her HE journey. She has been involved with Abertay Students Association(SA) since 2017, when she was elected Vice President. In 2020 she was elected President of Abertay SA. As part of her time as elected officer, she has worked passionately to advocate for student experience and well-being and mental health, while promoting more inclusive campus culture. In addition, Daniela has worked with numerous voluntary organisations to promote inclusivity, solidarity, and support in the community.

Vanessa Baptista is the Widening Participation and Equality Coordinator at the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama. Her role entails supporting widening participation and youth outreach teams at each of the six CDD member schools to robustly evidence the purpose and impact of their interventions. Prior to this, she worked at AccessHE, the pan-London network driving the HE access, success and progression agenda for underrepresented learners across the capital, where she supported the AccessHE Creative Forum

Greg Brown is Student Retention and Surveys Manager at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Before taking up this role, Greg was Data and Evaluation Manager at HeppSY, the

Uni Connect Programme partnership for South Yorkshire. This was after spending 3 years at the Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Unit (WPREU) at the University of Sheffield as a researcher and evaluator. Greg's work focusses on developing theory-driven approaches to evaluation, to support the identification of promising and impactful programmes to support learners across the student lifecycle.

Vicky Cotterill is the Data and Research Officer for DANCOP (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Collaborative Outreach Programme) based at the University of Derby. Vicky has worked with DANCOP since Phase One of the programme, joining after completing her BA(Hons) and MA in Education. Vicky has 16 years of experience working with data for quality, compliance and regulatory purposes.

Julian Crockford is currently Chief Programmes Officer at Villiers Park Educational Trust. Prior to this Julian managed the Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Unit at the University of Sheffield. There he oversaw a range of short-term and longitudinal research and evaluation projects focusing on the whole student journey, student success and progression, inclusive learning and teaching and equality and diversity issues.

Anna Davey is the Data and Research Manager for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Collaborative Outreach Programme (DANCOP) and has worked in further and higher education for 21 years. Within further education she held a variety of roles including supporting young people in an academic and pastoral capacity, and embedding learner voice into practice. For the past 4 years Anna has lead on the monitoring and evaluation of DANCOP.

Kantha Dayaram is an International Accreditation Reviewer with the UAE Higher Education Commission, and the

Australian Quality Assurance Body. She was the Head of School and Director of Teaching and Learning at the School of Management, Curtin University, Australia. She was the recipient of the faculty-teaching award for innovative post-graduate teaching. She designed and developed undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs internationally.

Jill Hanson joined the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) at the University of Derby as a researcher in 2016. Her undergraduate degree was in psychology at the University of Aberdeen and her PhD, at the University of Hertfordshire, explored aspects of well-being in an organisational and health psychology context. Jill worked as senior lecturer in the school of business at the University of Derby for several years with a focus on employability and research methods before joining iCeGS. In her current role Jill has led on a longitudinal study of sixth form students examining their decision-making about higher education (HE) and the sources of information they use, as well as leading on the evaluation of the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Collaborative Outreach Programme. Jill was also involved in working with Career and Enterprise Company Primary Fund applicants in a consultancy role aimed at developing a Theory of Change for their programmes.

Neil Harrison is an Associate Professor in the Department of Education at the University of Oxford and Deputy Director of the Rees Centre, which specialises in research to support evidence-based policymaking around the education of children in care and care-experienced adults. He has written widely about access to higher education for disadvantaged and marginalised groups, with a focus on the epistemological basis of evaluating outreach programmes, including working on several projects for the Office for Students and its predecessors. Prior to his academic career, he worked as a

practitioner and manager in widening participation and student welfare roles. Neil's new co-edited book entitled *Marginalised Communities in Higher Education: Disadvantage, Mobility and Indigeneity* was published by Routledge in August 2021.

Catherine Kelly is a PhD candidate at the University of Bristol researching the influence of WP evaluation on practice and policy decision-making in English higher education providers. Prior to starting a PhD, Catherine worked as a Research Associate for a National Collaborative Outreach Programme Consortium, evaluating their widening participation work. Catherine's passion for evaluation and using theory of change started whilst studying for a master's degree at Vanderbilt University in the United States, she used her knowledge of evaluation in her role as project officer for the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT), and helped design an evaluation planning tool for HEAT database users in universities across England

Luke Millard is Dean of Teaching and Learning at Abertay University. His research is in the field of student retention and particularly around the first year student experience and the addressing of inequalities through course design and student opportunity. In addition, Luke has written extensively on student engagement and the impact of student employment on their success.

Joanne Moore is a Research Fellow of the Centre for Social Mobility at the University of Exeter. She has formerly held roles as an educational researcher at the University of Manchester and Open University. She has a detailed understanding of widening participation policy and practice, including co-authoring a guide to data sources for widening participation practitioners. She is currently working on a

collaborative project to support evaluation of the impact of outreach.

Subhadarsini Parida received a scholarship from Cooperative Research Centre Low Carbon Living for her PhD research on the impact of green buildings on employees' performance. Subhadarsini is an experienced multidisciplinary researcher in the areas of sustainable living, green HRM, social leadership, asset management, green buildings, autonomous vehicles and social license. She has experience in working with various research centres where she worked with local government, small business, and industry. In her current role at Centre of Innovative Practices, Edith Cowan University, she is leading a team of researchers and working with the Department of Transport (Perth) to evaluate the implementation of autonomous vehicles in Perth. Additionally, she worked with the Australasian Centre for Rail Innovation in the area of social license. Subhadarsini has presented her research on international platforms including ANZAM and BAM conference.

Dr Jon Rainford works on the margins between academic and professional services. He is an Associate Lecturer and Honorary Associate in Access, Open and Cross Curricular Innovation at the Open University as well as working as an independent consultant and evaluator. His work in higher education has been focused on widening access and success and is currently working to look at how technology can enhance both access and student success, especially in moving to online delivery. Having interests in the Sociology of Higher Education, his research focuses on exploring the gaps between policy and practice in relation to widening participation in higher education. He was previously Widening Participation and Access Coordinator at the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama where he developed and implemented their first institutional evaluation strategy.

Reena Tiwari is a Curtin University Academy Fellow, Australia. She received the Australian National Award for Teaching Excellence for leading and inspiring a model of teaching and research which has established a point of difference in the profession, with its commitment to community engagement and philanthropy (including Lakhnu rural development project in India, Slum Action project in India, Wedge coastal shack community project in Western Australia, To Walk or Not to Walk project in New Delhi, and Body performance in East Perth project for which support and funds were received from industry and professional bodies. She held the position of Head of Department Architecture and Interior Architecture and has been the Director of International Cooperation Research Cluster at Curtin University. She is an executive committee member for Urban Development Institute of Australia, Urban Design Institute of Australia and the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand.

Julie Blackwell Young is Quality Enhancement Manager at Abertay University. Her areas of interest are around partnership working (students as partners and academic/professional services partnerships), curriculum design and development, gamification and staff development.