

SKOPE Research Centre Newsletter

New Apprentice - Farhan Ali

My name is Farhan Ali I was born and bred in Oxford but come from a Bangladeshi background. I am also a devoted Muslim, and my religion is important to me and my lifestyle. My father was born here however my mother was born in Bangladesh and moved here when she married my father. I grew up around hard-working people as my family is full of business owners and I believe this trait was run down to me. In school, I was always eager to learn and do the best I could to achieve the best grades possible. I am a dedicated person, friendly, and always wanting to better myself. I enjoy experiencing new cultures and places; the most breathtaking experience I'd say was China as it took me out of my comfort zone like this new job. I believe in health is very important, so I take time out of my day to ensure I exercise by going to the gym.

I have recently joined The University of Oxford as an apprentice in the Department of Education. Before applying I wanted this role as it would enable me to make a difference in the community in which I live which is rewarding to me. Working for one of the most prestigious Universities gives me satisfaction and is a reason why I will not take this opportunity for granted. I hope by completing this apprenticeship it will lead to something more within the University in the future and even a permanent place here not as an apprentice. I know this job will challenge me and I can expect something new every day. My first few days have been great my fellow colleagues have been very welcoming and helpful. I want to achieve great things individually during my time here as well as help achieve group accolades.



Kelsey Inouye

Kelsey is a Research Associate at the University of Oxford, Department of Education. Prior to her work at Oxford, Kelsey was a Senior Researcher at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland. Her research areas include doctoral education, scholarly writing, and PhD career trajectories.



THIS ISSUE:

Events and News
SkOP Podcast
Research Projects
Publications



[@SKOPEOxford](https://twitter.com/SKOPEOxford)

Events / News



What counts as green jobs in the Construction Industry?

Workshop 2: Planning for Green Skills in the Construction sector - Wednesday2022 10:00 - 12:00

Hosted by SKOPE and The Edge Foundation.

Register for this online workshop at ..



Policy Knowledge Exchange Workshops - January 2022 - for key policy, employer and academic stakeholders.

Aims: To exchange, identify and map the purpose, parameters and outcomes of UK Tertiary Education, and to define the policy levers which will ensure cross sector working and create successful pathways for learners.

For further information and how to register contact skope@education.ox.ac.uk

Review the Adobe MAX 2021 On Demand Creativity Conference, with Dr James Robson and Dr Ashmita Randhawa discussing their recent research into narrative skills and why these have become so important to business leaders when they're looking for future hires.

<https://www.adobe.com/max/2021/sessions/emea-education-mb162.html>

Listen to Dr Susan James Relly discuss "Enabling and Celebrating Vocational Excellence" at The Art and Science of Learning Podcast 58. <https://www.theartandscienceoflearning.com/season-3/58-enabling-amp-celebrating-vocational-excellence-dr-susan-james-elly>

Dr Susan James Relly was recently awarded the World Skills UK Certificate of Merit for commitment and services to the World Skills movement. [@worldskillsuk](https://bit.ly/3nd6a0s)

SkOP - The Skills Observatory Podcast

Listen and reflect with the SKOPE Team on the continuing education and training challenges across the UK, 2021.

Season 2

- Episode 1: The importance of Science Education & Skills
- Episode 2: The employability agenda in Higher Education
- Episode 3: Storycraft: the importance of narrative skills and narrative skills in business
- Episode 4: The Future of Work
- Episode 5: The Future of Technical Education
- Episode 6: A Reflection on Season 2

Honorary Fellows News

Dr Ashmita Randhawa, SKOPE Research Officer, joined Sunderland Software City as Innovation and Research Manager for Digital Catapult NETV.

Dr Gary Morris CBE, took up a new role in 2021 as Director of Enterprise, Southampton Education School, University of Southampton.

Professor Johnny Sung joins SKOPE as an Honorary Fellow. Professor Sung is an international expert in workforce development, with a specific focus on training effectiveness and the link between skills policy and business performance.

Further details see <https://www.skope.ox.ac.uk>

Publications:

Wheelahan, Leesa, & Moodie, Gavin. (2021). "Gig qualifications for the gig economy: Micro-credentials and the hungry mile". Higher Education, Early Open Access.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-021-00742-3>

Wheelahan, L. & Moodie, G., 2021. "Analysing micro-credentials in higher education: a Bernsteinian analysis." Journal of Curriculum Studies 53 (2):212-28. doi: 10.1080/00220272.2021.1887358.

News – Research Projects

Driving Technical Excellence / Policy and Practice Research:

Read the key findings from this research in a new World Skills report outlined in the Telegraph, 17th September 2021. The report informs how to successfully develop UK's skills-led education and training, drawing upon international insights to help build a skills-based economy in the UK. This vital piece of research wouldn't have been possible without our partners @worldskillsuk, @NCFE, @NCFEDavid, @ukEdge .

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/improving-uk-skills-and-apprenticeships/skope-report/>

New Project:

The purpose, parameters, and outcomes of UK Tertiary Education – a policy Knowledge Exchange

Policy in the post secondary education landscape has attempted to bring Further (FE) and Higher Education (HE) together into a single Tertiary Sector (DfE, 2019) that now encompasses education and training, once seen as two distinct areas. This is a core part of the government's strategy to 'level up' the country. However, this is a complex space, marked by policy tensions across the four nations of the UK each with different approaches to the notion of tertiary provision through offerings, funding mechanisms, governance, and the varied lifelong learning trajectories of the learners. It comprises many stakeholders, ranging from traditional universities and FE colleges to independent training providers (ITPs), for-profit private universities, University Technical Colleges (UTCs), sixth form colleges, and employers, all with different governance structures, relationships with their local contexts, and covering a huge range of qualifications: sub-degree awards and apprenticeships through to PhDs and various forms of continuing professional development (CPD). Indeed, the sheer range of provision has become so far-reaching that there are questions about how meaningful a category it is for framing policy.

Our previous research has shown how the post-16 landscape can be difficult to navigate for young people, is not well understood by employers, and only in a few instances do institutions from the various parts of the system work together in any symbiotic and meaningful way. The strands of provision often overlap, and at some levels result in similar outcomes – a broader view of the landscape is missing. There is, therefore, an urgent need to work with key stakeholders to co-construct a meaningful map of the sector. In compiling this map we will take into account these complexities and tensions to understand how policy is enacted at local, national, and cross-jurisdictional levels, and to define the policy levers that will ensure productive cross-sector working.

To do this we are convening Knowledge Exchange (KE) workshops that will address the lacuna in this broader understanding of tertiary education. Crucially, it will draw key policy, employer, and academic stakeholders together into a partnership network to collaboratively map out the space and key issues from different stakeholder perspectives.

Visit <https://www.skope.ox.ac.uk> for further details.

For more information on how to participate see [Events above](#).

Recent Publications

"Pandemic and Higher Education policy: the UK as a policy laboratory", in 'UK in a Changing Europe'. September 2021. Dr James Robson explores the impact of the pandemic on Higher Education across the UK.

<https://ukandeu.ac.uk/pandemic-and-higher-education/>

'Micro-credentials: The new frontier of adult education and training'

OECD series <https://www.oecd-forum.org/badges/1420-tackling-covid-19>. Sept. 2021.

Micro-credentials have the potential to deepen social inequalities claims Dr James Robson, Deputy Director of SKOPE. He identifies the need for a more systematic approach to regulation and quality bench marking of the global provision of micro-credentials.

Read in full at <https://www.oecd-forum.org/posts/micro-credentials-the-new-frontier-of-adult-education-and-training>

'What accounts for changes in the chances of being NEET in the UK?' by Craig Holmes, (University of Oxford, SKOPE Fellow), Emily Murphy (University of Luxembourg) and Ken Mayhew (University of Oxford, SKOPE Fellow).

This paper looks at data on young people between the age of 16 and 29 in the UK between 1975 and 2015, and highlights which characteristics are associated with a higher chance of being NEET and how the importance of these drivers has changed over time.

In the Journal of Education and Work, Volume 34, 2021 Issue 4. August 2021.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13639080.2021.1943330>

"Comparing skills policy in England and Scotland" a comment paper in WONKHE by Ewart Keep, Professor (Emeritus) of Education, Training and Skills, SKOPE, Department of Education, Oxford University, and a board member of the Scottish Funding Council, who writes here in a personal capacity.

While the policy problems may be similar, Ewart Keep finds that approaches to further and higher education are rapidly diverging between Scotland and England.

Read the comment paper at <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/comparing-skills-policy-in-england-and-scotland/> July 2021

"Employability skills in mainstream education: Innovations in schooling and institutional isomorphism" by SKOPE researchers Dr James Robson, Dr Ashmita Randhawa and Professor (Emeritus) Ewart Keep. First published: 14 July 2021, BERJ. online open access.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3756>

'Storycraft: the importance of narrative skills and narrative skills in business' by Dr James Robson (Deputy Director of SKOPE, University of Oxford) Dr Ben Holgate (Queen Mary University of London) Dr Ashmita Randhawa (SKOPE, University of Oxford). June 2021. Research funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, UKRI.

This ground breaking research reveals how prominent business leaders in the United Kingdom see 'narrative' as an integral part of doing business. Based on extensive interviews with business leaders, mostly CEOs and Chairs, from nearly a third of FTSE100 companies, the study fills a gap in our understanding of narrative in business, and highlights how skills associated with Arts and Humanities subjects are valued and sought out in business contexts.

<https://skope.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Storycraft-Full-Report.pdf>

James Robson's new project

Oxford and Cambridge win joint award to improve access to postgraduate research.

The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have been awarded OfS/Research England funding to improve Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students' access to postgraduate research. The Close the Gap project aims to transform doctoral student selection at Oxford and Cambridge to develop a socially and epistemically just and inclusive environment for world-leading research.

Black British, British Bangladeshi, and British Pakistani students are widely underrepresented in postgraduate research (PGR) in the UK overall, and in all major discipline groups at the doctoral level at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Both Universities have introduced new initiatives in recent years to try to improve doctoral application rates amongst historically marginalised students. However, variations persist in the likelihood of receiving an offer of a place to study, and on average, a Black British, British Bangladeshi, or British Pakistani candidate has been only around half as likely as a White candidate to receive an offer for doctoral study at either University. This is likely rooted in a wide range of formal and informal structures, practices, and organisational behaviours.

Therefore, working in partnership, and with wider stakeholders, the project team will analyse these formal and informal graduate admissions structures, practices, and organisational behaviours, and develop and test new disciplinary-specific, race-literate, fair selection processes that are designed to bring about meaningful change in doctoral candidate-selection systems. Led by James Robson, this collaborative project will last for 4 years and Kelsey Inouye joins SKOPE as a Postdoctoral Research Associate to work on it.

The £1.6m project is funded through an award of £800k by Research England and the Office for Students and matched funding by both Oxford and Cambridge Universities. It represents an innovative collaboration focused on mapping organisational behaviour and implementing lasting organisational change.

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2021-11-24-oxford-and-cambridge-win-joint-award-improve-access-postgraduate-research>



Visit <https://www.skope.ox.ac.uk>

Follow us @SKOPEOxford

**If you're interested in participating in our podcast,
or would like to share some news, do let us know:**

skope@education.ox.ac.uk