



Praxis
Centre for Scholarship and Innovation
Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies

Past Praxis Projects 19–20

Here are details of all our past projects. You will see that we're engaged in activities across a wide range of themes relating to teaching and learning in Higher Education and we'd love the opportunity to tell you more – or even to explore collaborations where your interests overlap with ours. We've included contact details for all the project leads or <mailto:wels-praxis@open.ac.uk>

Project Lead	Project Title	Project Summary
Sam Murphy sam.murphy@open.ac.uk Sharon Mallon sharon.mallong@open.ac.uk	Babies and books: experiences of pregnancy and early motherhood while learning at a distance.	We undertook a survey, informed by semi-structured interviews, to ascertain the experiences of students who had a baby while studying with the Open University (OU). We explored the barriers they faced, and the support pregnant and post-partum students needed in order to understand how best the OU could support such students in the future.

<p>Azumah Dennis Azumah.Dennis@open.ac.uk</p>	<p>50 narratives @ 50 - Students lived experience following postgraduate study: personal, professional, and academic trajectories.</p>	<p>50 narratives @ 50 celebrated the Open University, 50th birthday of the Open University by talking to Taught Postgraduate students who had withdrawn from their programme. Using portrait methodology, the project concluded that despite an incomplete master's qualification, students often retain a strong sense of belonging to the OU and hoped to return to their study. They also enjoyed and could identify an immediate and tangible personal and professional benefit from their learning.</p>
<p>James Roy james.roy@open.ac.uk</p>	<p>An exploration of students 'experiences of tutorials on two large Level 1 modules.</p>	<p>This project explored students' lived experiences of tutorials within a blended learning environment, pre-Pandemic, where all teaching and learning is in distance learning mode. The project investigated students' perceptions of the learning environments for tutorial provision, alongside students' tutorial preferences in relation to their learning, in addition to what influenced students' choices, and what engaged students in tutorial provision. Our data identified a spectrum of difference – around students' choices, students' preferences, and students' engagement – which needs to be considered when tuition is being planned.</p>

<p>Jackie Tuck</p> <p>jackie.tuck@open.ac.uk</p>	<p>Writing for the Professional Doctorate (WPD): students' and supervisors' practices and perspectives.</p>	<p>This study explored feedback forms from two consecutive Year 1s of the Open University's (OU) Professional Doctorate programme using a combination of thematic and discourse analysis. This was complemented by the building of two case studies, each based on a student/supervisor pair, drawing on interviews, email exchanges, feedback forms, recorded supervisions and marked assignments. Analysis involved a close focus on the ways in which writing emerged (and, sometimes did not emerge) in written and spoken pedagogic conversations, with implications for assessment design, assessor training and supervisory practice.</p>
<p>Lore Gallastegi</p> <p>Lore.Gallastegi@open.ac.uk</p>	<p>Who are our Education Studies (Primary) (Q94) concurrent students?</p>	<p>The project explored the experiences of the increasing number of students studying at full-time equivalent intensity (studying two 60- credit modules concurrently) in the Education Studies (Primary) qualifications at the Open University (OU). Drawing from a large range of staff (Associate Lecturers, Staff Tutors, module chairs) and students, using a mixed methods and reflexive approach, and analysing quantitative and qualitative data through different theoretical perspectives, the result is a multi-layered and multi-vocal analysis that can inform how we understand students and their motivations, while also challenging preconceptions that act as barriers to a more</p>

		<p>nuanced appreciation of the student experience. The voice of concurrent students is at the centre of the report, with findings presented in the form of five student vignettes and numerous quotes from the interviews and surveys undertaken by the research team.</p>
Anna Comas-Quinn	Understanding Student Withdrawals L801	<p>L801 is the first module in the MA in Translation, a postgraduate qualification comprising three 60 credit modules with exit qualifications after L801 (PG Cert) and L802 (PG Dip).</p> <p>Completion and pass rates improved substantially from first to second presentations of L801 (73.2% to 77.4% and 70.1% to 74.2%, respectively) but that still meant that over 20% of those who registered in 18B did not complete the module, and of those who successfully completed the module another 20% did not progress to L802. (Data for 19B will not be available until December 2019).</p> <p>This project aims to increase our understanding of retention and progression in L801 with a view to considering interventions that may better support students and lead to increased retention in the first module of the qualification.</p>
Leigh-Anne Perryman	Universal design for learning: the	<p>The OU's postgraduate module H880 Technology-enhanced learning: Foundations and futures is the first OU module to be</p>

	importance of offline options for online learners	<p>delivered on FutureLearn. Early in the production process we learned that, unlike a Moodle VLE, the FutureLearn platform does not have the facility to automatically generate accessible versions of the module materials (e.g. Word, ePub). In addition, FutureLearn does not allow students advance access to the module. They can see its content on day 1 of the presentation and not before.</p> <p>Concerned about disadvantaging students, especially disabled students, who often rely on having advance access to a module as it allows them to make an early start on finding their way around a course site and/or to make an early start on their studies, we commissioned media assistants to produce accessible Word document versions of each of the four courses that make up H880.</p> <p>We feel these Word versions are an example of Universal Design for Learning, in that they benefit people with certain disabilities, but they also benefit a lot of people (both students and staff) who have a far wider range of access issues. For example, the FutureLearn platform does not have a search facility and the Word versions allow the course content to be searched. We would like to explore this supposition.</p>
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