

In this issue

NEET research

A recently awarded Research Project Grant from the Leverhulme Trust will enable Dr Lisa Russell and Dr Ron Thompson to undertake a major new study into early intervention programmes in England for young people aged 14-16 considered vulnerable to becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

**LEVERHULME
TRUST**

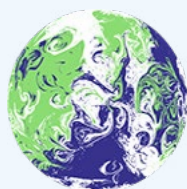
The 'Transitions Management Handbook' is a guide for practitioners working with NEET-experienced young people. Co-authored and based on research designed by Professor Robin Simmons, the handbook is an outcome from the 'Improving Transitions Enabling Results (ITER)' strategic partnership project funded by Erasmus+.



Erasmus+

Sustainable innovation

The award-winning Life-Saving Lullabies project involving Dr Jim Reid was represented at the influential COP26 climate change conference as part of the Resilience Hub.



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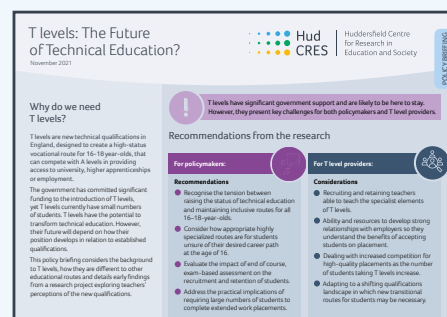
The cultural benefits of agricultural landscapes

Professor Helen Lomax contributed to a research project mapping pollinator populations and the relationships between pollinator-friendly landscapes and human wellbeing.

Using data to understand students' careers readiness

T levels: The future of technical education?

The latest HudCRES Policy Briefing.



HudCRES visiting scholar

Professor Yoshihei Okabe joins us from Otaru University of Commerce, Hokkaido, Japan.



Research events

On campus, live online, or watch again later.



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+44 (0)1484 478249



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Early intervention for young people at risk of becoming NEET



The first national-level analysis of early intervention programmes in England for young people aged 14-16 considered vulnerable to becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) is to be carried out by researchers at HudCRES with the support of a prestigious [Research Project Grant](#) recently awarded by the [Leverhulme Trust](#).

The aim of the research is to gain a better understanding of the nature and impact of early interventions, providing knowledge of educational processes, the subjective experiences of the young people and professionals working with them, and the short and longer-term outcomes for young people.



Led by [Dr Lisa Russell](#), with co-investigator [Dr Ron Thompson](#) (above), the four-year project will address the significant gap in knowledge about early interventions and provide a much-needed systematic analysis of existing practice, including estimates of the size and structure of the population of young people involved.

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“There is little robust evidence on how young people are progressing once an intervention has been put in place. The lack of knowledge, particularly from a comparative perspective across local authorities, is a serious obstacle to understanding the prevalence and impact of different approaches ... there are high economic and individual social costs attached to being NEET and that is why this research will be so important.”

Dr Lisa Russell, HudCRES



Working with NEET-experienced young people – a guide for practitioners



[Professor Robin Simmons](#) is a co-investigator in a three-year project that acknowledges NEET as a pan-European challenge and aims to help NEET-experienced young people make successful transitions from employability programmes into mainstream vocational education and training.

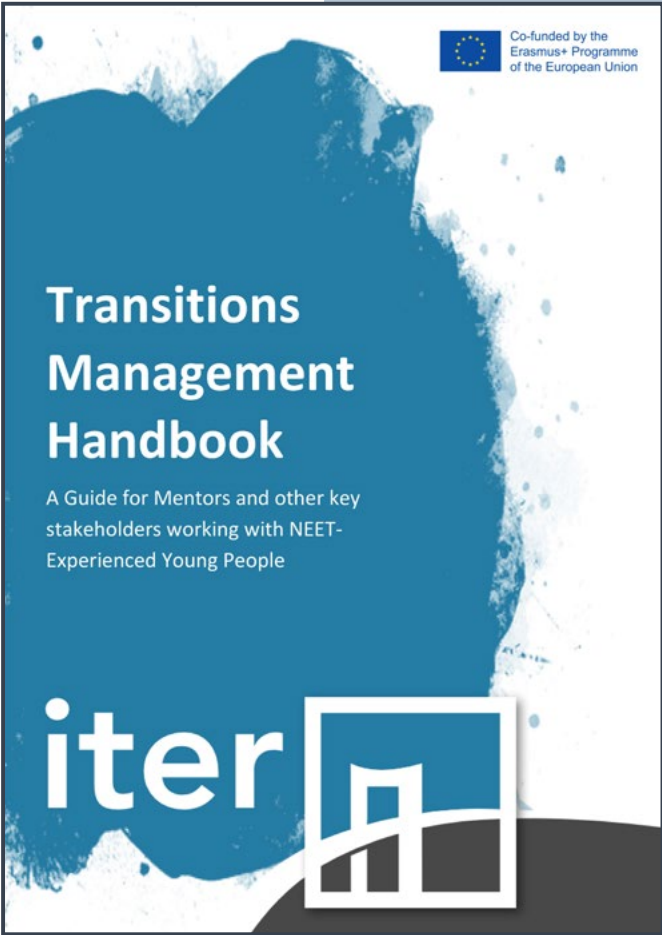
Funded by Erasmus+ and running until summer 2022, [‘Improving Transitions Enabling Results \(ITER\)’](#) is a strategic partnership project involving nine public, private and voluntary-sector organisations from five European countries – the UK, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Hungary. Its objectives are linked to the core priorities of the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2027) to fight the social exclusion and poverty affecting large numbers of young people across Europe.

Robin is co-author of one of the key outputs from the project – the *‘Transitions Management Handbook’*. Based on research with policymakers, practitioners and NEET-experienced young people across Europe, this guide for learning mentors comprises a wide range of information and resources to support constructive and creative work with young people on the margins of education and employment. It can be downloaded in [English](#), [Hungarian](#), [Italian](#), [Portuguese](#) and [Romanian](#).

Robin has also written an article, [‘Mentoring Matters’](#) recently published in the journal *Post-16 Educator*, which summarises key findings from the research. He is currently evaluating findings from the next stage of the project – feedback from practitioners using the handbook alongside online resources from the ITER project to help NEET-experienced young people move into vocational learning.

“The handbook provides a set of guidelines which will enable mentors to support young people to move into mainstream education and training – and remain there. It is an important resource which will help young people fulfil their potential, not only as learners but ultimately as workers, consumers, and citizens more broadly.”

Foreword, Professor Robin Simmons, HudCRES



In the UK, the acronym **NEET** is normally used to refer to young people (aged 16-24) not in education, employment, or training.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Championing sustainable innovation

Life-Saving Lullabies at COP26

The award-winning Life-Saving Lullabies project (see [HudCRES Newsletter issue 9, Nov 2020](#)), funded by the [UKRI Global Challenges Research Fund](#), recently featured as part of the Resilience Hub at the [26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties \(COP26\) in Glasgow](#).

Home of Race to Resilience at COP26, the [Resilience Hub](#) programme of Arts, Culture and Heritage events showcased opportunities for arts-based methods to facilitate and support net zero research.

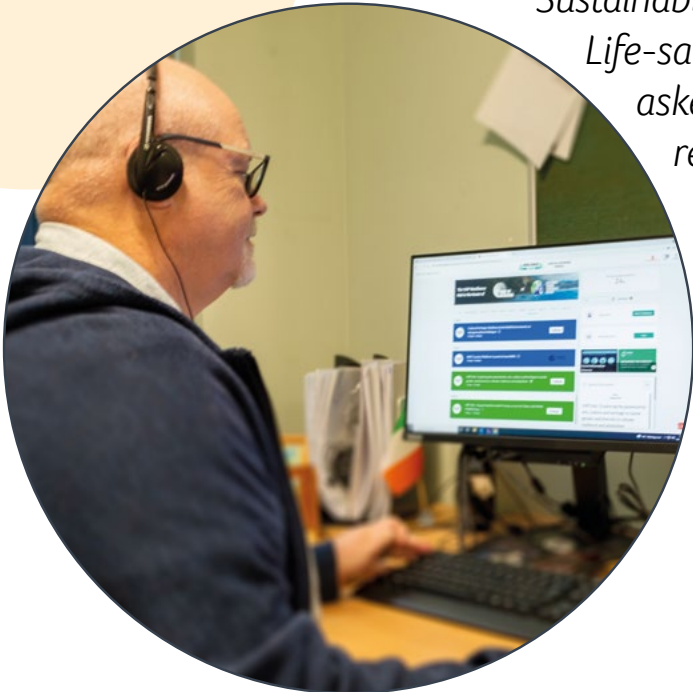
Principal Investigator Dr David Swann, Professor in Design at Sheffield Hallam University, introduced the Life-Saving Lullabies project's novel and sustainable approach to reducing maternal and child mortality in Zambia as part of a session exploring the potential for arts, culture, and heritage to tackle gender and diversity in climate resilience and adaptation. Co-investigator [Dr Jim Reid](#) (HudCRES) responded to questions online.

The international collaboration also includes co-investigator [Dr Barry Doyle](#) from the University of Huddersfield, Morrice Muteba, National Coordinator for St John Zambia, Tony Kawimbe and Chloe George from Ufulu Soul Studios.

More information about the project, named Best in Class for Social Impact at the [2020 Good Design Australia Awards](#), and a collection of short films made by Ufulu Soul Studios can be found at [hud.ac.uk/life-saving-lullabies](#)

“Sustainability is at the heart of the Life-saving Lullabies project and being asked to discuss it at COP26 is recognition for the hard work of our partners and the benefits of designing interventions that are built on local knowledge, skills and talent.”

Dr Jim Reid, HudCRES



Understanding the cultural benefits of agricultural landscapes



Funded by the UKRI Global Food Security programme, the ‘*Modelling Landscapes for Resilient Pollination Services*’ research project, led by Professor Simon Potts at the University of Reading, aimed to map the United Kingdom’s pollinator populations and their economic values.

Drawing on her expertise in creative and visual research methods, [Professor Helen Lomax](#) led a strand of the project exploring the cultural benefits associated with pollinator conservation efforts. In addition to focus groups and farm walks with farmers and the wider public, an innovative survey (Jan-Apr 2020) asked respondents to rate a series of images of agricultural landscapes in the UK then share their thoughts on the landscapes, the activities they might do within them and other aspects they associated with them.

“We have learned that maintaining a diverse farmed landscape with lots of hedges, flowers and grasses bordering fields would help support pollinators across the UK, maintain pollination services to crops and at the same time benefit wider society by maintaining affordable food and beautiful landscapes for people to enjoy.”

Project findings are summarised in a series of infographics created by artist Laura Sorvala [laurasorvala.com/projects/resilient-pollination](#) to be shared with policy makers, food producers and the wider public in order to help support pollinator populations and human health.



T levels: The future of technical education?



T levels are technical qualifications introduced in England since 2020 and designed to create a high-status vocational route for 16-19yr olds that can compete with A levels in providing access to university, higher apprenticeships, or employment.

The most recent HudCRES Policy Briefing (November 2021) summarises research into T levels funded by the Education and Training Foundation and undertaken by [Professor Kevin Orr](#) and [Dr Rachel Terry](#). It also provides specific recommendations for policymakers and T level providers.

All of the HudCRES Policy Briefings can be downloaded from hud.ac.uk/research/education/policy-briefing/#HudCRESbriefing



You may also be interested to watch a recording of the seminar ‘*International Perspectives on technical and vocational education and training*’ from 21 October 2021 to find out more.

T levels: The Future of Technical Education?

November 2021

HudCRES | Huddersfield Centre for Research in Education and Society

Why do we need T levels?

T levels are new technical qualifications in England, designed to create a high-status vocational route for 16-18 year-olds, that can compete with A levels in providing access to university, higher apprenticeships or employment.

The government has committed significant funding to the introduction of T levels, yet T levels currently have small numbers of students. T levels have the potential to transform technical education. However, their future will depend on how their position develops in relation to established qualifications.

This policy briefing considers the background to T levels, how they are different to other educational routes and details early findings from a research project exploring teachers' perceptions of the new qualifications.

T levels have significant government support and are likely to be here to stay. However, they present key challenges for both policymakers and T level providers.

Recommendations from the research

For policymakers:

- Recognise the tension between raising the status of technical education and maintaining inclusive routes for all 16-18 year-olds.
- Consider how appropriate highly specialised routes are for students unsure of their desired career path at the age of 16.
- Evaluate the impact of end of course, exam-based assessment on the recruitment and retention of students.
- Address the practical implications of requiring large numbers of students to complete extended work placements.

For T level providers:

- Recruiting and retaining teachers able to teach the specialist elements of T levels.
- Ability and resources to develop strong relationships with employers so they understand the benefits of accepting students on placement.
- Dealing with increased competition for high-quality placements as the number of students taking T levels increase.
- Adapting to a shifting qualifications landscape in which new transitional routes for students may be necessary.

What do T levels offer?

T levels are designed as post-GCSE qualifications that will normally take two years (full-time) to achieve. Each T level is equivalent to three A levels, and they have related UCAS points, allowing progression to university.

The government plans to introduce a gradual introduction of different subject areas and only three subject areas will be available in 2020.

- Design, surveying and planning for construction
- Digital production, design and development
- Education and childcare

By September 2023 there should be 15 industry-related pathways available. It was estimated the first year would recruit around 2500 students, but, partly because of the pandemic, this has not yet happened.

GCSEs

- A levels
- T levels
- Apprenticeships

T levels involve

- College- or school-based provision (around 1000 hours)
- Placements in industry (at least 315 hours, 750 hours in the education and childcare pathway)

80% College- or school-based provision (around 1000 hours)

20% Placements in industry (at least 315 hours, 750 hours in the education and childcare pathway)

Find out more about the research

About the researchers:

Kevin Orr is Professor of Work and Learning. His research focuses on technical and vocational education and training. He is an editor of the *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*.
<https://www.hud.ac.uk/en/persons/kevin-orr>

Dr Rachel Terry is Senior Lecturer in TESOL. Her research focuses on the professional learning of teachers in further education.
<https://www.hud.ac.uk/en/persons/rachel-terry>

Contact us

hud@hud.ac.uk
+44 (0)1484 475249

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How to cite this policy briefing: T levels: The Future of Technical Education? (Nov 2021), Rachel Terry and Kevin Orr, HudCRES Policy Briefing, Huddersfield Centre for Research in Education and Society, University of Huddersfield, UK.

Using data to understand students’ careers readiness

[Dr Bob Gilworth](#) returned to the University of Huddersfield as a Senior Lecturer in Careers Guidance in 2020, having been Head of the University’s Careers Service between 1996-2001. In the intervening period he has been Director of the Careers Centre at the University of Leeds and Director of the Careers Group, University of London. He also completed a term as President of AGCAS – the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services and was AGCAS Director of Research and Knowledge.

A key part of his work has been the development of Careers Registration – a method of collecting data directly from students about their careers readiness and employability. It featured in one of 13 collaborative pilot projects funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE, later OFS – the Office for Students) as part of the [Learning Gain research programme](#).

The approach has since been adopted in more than 90 UK Universities and others in Ireland, Portugal, Australia and

New Zealand, and Bob has supported many with its implementation. Most recently, he was invited to become senior research advisor to the Australian national Careers Registration research project being undertaken by Dr Julie Howell (Director, Student Experience, Curtin University) and Dr Noel Edge (Executive Director, Graduate Careers Australia).

Find out more about the development of Careers Registration on the ‘Ed Space blog: [Careers Registration: Starting Points and Journeys](#)

Professor Yoshihei Okabe HudCRES visiting scholar



We are very pleased to welcome Professor Yoshihei Okabe who will be undertaking research at HudCRES alongside [Professor Kevin Orr](#) until September 2022.

Yoshihei’s background is in curriculum studies and the sociology of education, and ordinarily he contributes to delivering the teacher education programme at Otaru University of Commerce, Hokkaido, Japan. His research focuses on post-16 education, and in particular the relationship and tension between academic and vocational education pathways. He is also interested in young people’s career decision making, their curriculum experience, learning and generic competency development.

Whilst in Huddersfield he plans to undertake a study of recent reforms of technical and vocational education in England following the Sainsbury Report (2016) to compare this with the situation in Japan. In addition to gathering detailed government documentation and statistical information, he is hoping to be able to visit sixth-form colleges, University Technical Colleges (UTC) and Further Education Colleges to collect data first-hand through observation and interviews with students and staff.

Yoshihei’s visit is supported by a grant from Otaru University of Commerce and the opportunity they have provided for him to undertake a period of research overseas.



“I knew that this University had many staff in vocational education and secondary education – and a very good reputation in the field of this research. So, fortunately, Professor Kevin Orr accepted my request and finally I have arrived.”

Professor Yoshihei Okabe, HudCRES visiting scholar

Research events



More than 18 months since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are pleased to be able to announce tentative plans for a return to holding research events on campus in Huddersfield (subject to change). However, based on the success of online events held during this time, particularly for national and international audiences, we are also planning to continue making them accessible to participants live online, and provide recordings afterwards for those unable to attend at the time. All are welcome!

Find more information about attending upcoming events on the HudCRES website hud.ac.uk/research/education.

Check back regularly as the programme is updated throughout the year, and details are occasionally subject to change.

If you would like to be notified of upcoming events by email, please join our mailing list bit.ly/HudCRES-list

1 February 2022

International students and UK Universities: what research has to say to practice



Online

- [Professor Rachel Brooks](#), Associate Dean for Research and Innovation (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences), University of Surrey
- [Dr Manny Madriaga](#), Sheffield Institute of Education, Sheffield Hallam University
- [Dr Sylvie Lomer](#), founding co-convener of the Higher Education Research Network HERE@Manchester, Institute for Education, University of Manchester
- [Bee Bond](#), Associate Professor of English for Academic Purposes, University of Leeds
- [Dr Liz Bennett](#), Director of Teaching and Learning (School of Education and Professional Development), University of Huddersfield.

This online event is aimed at a diverse audience including international students, their lecturers, those who support international students and researchers in the field of internationalising higher education. [Book now](#)

15 June 2022

Inaugural Professorial Lecture



Online



Campus

- [Professor Hazel Bryan](#), Dean of the School of Education and Professional Development

Recordings

If other commitments (or the time difference where you are in the world) mean you can't attend an event at the time, we are now making them available on the 'Ed Space blog blogs.hud.ac.uk/hudcres in the category 'Events – watch again'.

