

Research at Regent NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5 - JULY 2022

Welcome to the fifth issue of the Research at Regent Newsletter!

We are delighted to bring you this issue, which features a think piece from Kylie Hazeldine, Regent's Director of ARWA and Partnerships, who shares an inside look at Regent's relationship with partner institutions. Following that, we hear from another member of the partnerships team, Professor Paul McDermott, the Director of Partners, about an ongoing pilot project at Regent College aiming to improve student outcomes through the use of enhanced data collection and analysis.

In this issue we also recap recent Research Roundtable talks from Barbara Chinyani on mental health in higher education, Dr Vishu Sadanand on the spillover effects of foreign direct investments in emerging markets, and Dr Lisa Arai on the impact on children of domestic violence. In our new section Research Roundup, we signpost you to recent reports and academic articles, while the following section shares research and scholarship funding opportunities.

We are delighted to announce that Regent College academics have submitted papers and abstracts for consideration to an international conference at the Said Business School, University of Oxford. Regent was also invited to present at a careers and employability conference at our partner University of Bolton, where Regent was represented by Dr Chris Wood, Dr Saini Manninen and Kylie Hazeldine.

In this issue, we are pleased to feature not one, but two Spotlights on Student Research. Alum Amina Ali shares her research on the impact of e-marketing on UK businesses while Monika Potyka discusses her research on retailer

loyalty programmes and customer retention. Following that, Academic Skills Manager Vanessa Lima looks at research demonstrating how supporting academic skills development improves student experience and outcomes.

Dr Faizu Edu discusses ethics in research, its importance and what students need to consider when conducting their own research projects. In Top Tips for Students, Dr Adeniyi Adeboye and Dr Lisa Arai also highlight why research ethics matter in their discussion of highly unethical research projects from the 1930s and 1970s which helped to shape today's strong emphasis on conducting ethical research.

Finally, we are happy to note that the newsletter will be receiving a new name – Research at Regent Quarterly – from the next issue. Publishing four times a year, this refreshed approach will help us to bring you even better content at key points in the academic year.

We hope that this newsletter will continue to inspire you and kindle your curiosity!



**Dr Anna Wharton, Research
Development Manager/ Editor**

Guest Think Piece

University Partners: Beyond a Transactional Relationship

By Kylie Hazeldine, Director of Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access (ARWA) and Partnerships



Regent College London has been working with a number of awarding body partners since 2018, but over the last three years we have really transformed our vision and imagined how this can contribute to Regent College's growth and ambitions. In the sector, many relationships between universities as awarding bodies and private providers have historically been more transactional; that is, the teaching organisation requests and is granted the right to deliver the degree awarding institutions' qualifications. For many in the sector the relationship stops here, but Regent is determined to be different. This is particularly significant in light of our position as an Office for Students (OfS) approved fee cap provider currently striving for our own degree awarding powers against a landscape of new conditions in which a partner institution such as Regent College holds equal responsibility for upholding quality and standards.

There are many examples of how we are taking these partnerships to new levels and creating deep, two-way communities of practice, where we can

learn from one another, particularly in our relationship with the University of Bolton (UoB) and with our newest partner St Mary's University (SMU). In fact, this past May we successfully completed our initial approval event with SMU. At the SMU event, we received commendations on our approach to student experience and enhancements with clear statements from the panel members indicating that traditional universities and SMU itself can learn a lot from Regent College.

We are even working within our partnerships to disrupt and improve higher education delivery models and accessibility across the globe via our various modes of delivery: in-person, online and on demand. This means working with our partners to consider how they construct their programmes and module specifications to support a flexible approach whilst still upholding quality and standards. We are creating communities of practice across multiple partners within the sector to explore approaches to challenges around academic integrity and student performance in a new digital age. In

this way, our partners can learn not only from us but from each other.

For example, we are running a pilot study to utilise our Student Engagement and Enhancement Monitoring (SEEM) reports in a live and proactive way to create timely interventions. Finally, we are supporting our partners by opening up recruitment to learners they have not or could not reach before, not only in London but across the globe.

I personally am excited to lead a team which is enabling both ourselves and others at Regent College to engage in intelligent dialogue with our partners about our offerings, approaches, delivery and most importantly our students. We aim to truly change the UK higher education landscape. I feel so positive about this that I will be making this topic – the role of didactic partnerships between awarding bodies in the disruption of UK higher education, with Regent College as a case study at the centre – the focus of my own PhD studies very soon.

Pilot Study at Regent College: An Interventionist Approach to Improving Student Outcomes

By Professor Paul McDermott, Director of Partners



Introduction

This brief article discusses how the Regent College Partnership team are working with the School of Allied Health to respond to a changing higher education landscape and to support students to achieve their potential and reduce levels of withdrawal and failure.

Representing a seismic shift in the sector, UK higher education (HE) is moving away from a quality enhancement approach, based on the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#) (FHEQ) with a series of subject benchmark statements, to a quality management ethos overseen by the Office for Students (OfS) and the [Conditions of Registration](#). The focus on the student, the quality and the standard of a Provider's delivery, measured by the outcomes in achievement, demonstrates a shift from the supply driven HE of pre-2017 to HE which is moving ever closer to a more demand and market driven model.

The pilot study outlined below is set within wider sectoral changes, for example, the statutory review of the [Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework](#) (TEF) emphasising added value to student

learning; the focus on the quality of the assessment process, student progression, achievement and graduate outcomes as part of the revised Condition B2 and the new B3 Condition of Registration; and the ongoing principle of putting students at the heart of the system as set out in the various White and Green papers in 2011/12 resulting in the [Higher Education and Research Act 2017](#).

These changes mean that registered institutions with the OfS are now expected to demonstrate enhancement-led approaches and continuous improvement as a matter of course. Any Provider of learning, such as Regent College, who is working in any collaboration with a Partner, has a shared responsibility to manage, set and maintain standards and assure quality.

What is the approach we are taking?

Over the past ten years, researchers have considered how best to support learning as the mix of students in HE becomes ever more diverse. Emergent pedagogies such as research-informed, enquiry-based, and active learning are well documented. However, one key thing that has emerged as a critical element in practice within

the Widening Participation agenda and literature has been the concept of early intervention. This concept has two dimensions: 1) [early intervention at the student level supporting academic recovery](#) and 2) [early intervention at the programme level aiding academic engagement and improving retention](#). Our project focuses on the first dimension. [Research suggests](#) that the students Regent College traditionally recruits also need additional teaching support, especially in their first or foundation year to scaffold learning until they become more independent.

How are we achieving this?

Our pilot study commenced in April 2022 using a revised version of the Student Engagement and Enhancement Monitoring (SEEM) data sheet and focusing on data that is associated with student engagement and achievement. It is a 'live sheet' that is populated by both Registry and Tutors throughout a learner's journey with Regent College. It also takes into account formative assessments, benchmarking tests and historical attendance data to assess, evaluate and attempt to predict the progression and achievement outcomes for each individual student.

Tutors complete the areas of the SEEM data sheet that require input for any type of assessment (formative and summative), and each module within the school has been asked to ensure that some element of formative assessment is delivered by week five. In brief, tutors, Academic Support Officers (ASOs) and Customer Support Officers (CSOs) can assess a learner's attendance, engagement and performance in modules and apply various interventions (academic, pastoral, welfare, regulatory) as required. Achievement or engagement in formative assessment can be recorded in the appropriate section of the report using quantitative, qualitative data and/or comments.

A RAG (red, amber, green) judgement is applied to each data sheet based on requirements (for example, UKVI assessment thresholds for attendance or module specific regulations), formative success or otherwise, attendance/

engagement and summative progress. As the SEEM data sheet fills up, ASOs and CSOs can review each student and 'RAG' their status. They can then liaise with the tutors and the student to identify what type of intervention is necessary, thereby developing a student-focused, individualised support plan logged in a Learning Intervention Plan. This plan follows the student across their learning journey so that staff can assess the effectiveness of the various interventions made. These can be used not only to support the learning style of the student but also to analyse the interventions to identify effective practice across the school. Staff will then be able to share their practice of intervention through the creation of communities of practice.

Concluding thoughts and scope

Through this process it is expected that we will be able to identify those students who are falling behind, struggling with their

academic endeavours, or experiencing non-academic issues that require further support and help at an early stage in the semester. This small pilot project will be evaluated to consider whether it could be rolled out across Regent College in the academic year 2022-23. Should this be successful, the project could be widened to include effective practice for specific learning needs, communities of practice for staff or adaptations to the curriculum, amongst others.

As it is, these are early days, and it is anticipated that the outcomes from this project will be shared more widely throughout Regent and with our partners as a potential platform to build and develop the learning and teaching practice and interventionist methodology for the benefit of our students and the professional development of our staff.



Research Roundtable Recap

We are pleased to share the following recent talks from our Research Roundtable series at Regent College. You can find recordings and materials from the presentations on the Regent Digital intranet under 'Research at Regent.'

Every mind matters! Mental health in higher education

With Barbara Chinyani,
School of Allied Health
Lecturer



In April, Ms Chinyani discussed how mental health affects how we think, feel and act. She explored practical ways to handle stress, relate to others and make choices that have a positive impact. The talk emphasised opportunities to enhance both student and lecturer well-being by engaging in care for others and care

for ourselves. Part of this care included 'starting the conversation' by creating the right conditions, asking questions, listening, and signposting. Additionally, Ms Chinyani encouraged attendees to consider what they do for self-care to support their mental health; examples can be seen in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1

Spillover effects from foreign direct investments in emerging markets

With Dr Vishu Sadanand, School of Business and Enterprise Lecturer



In May, Dr Sadanand discussed how emerging markets (EM) have become a powerhouse of the global economy. EM countries today represent 59% of total global GDP, a notable expansion over the past decade. Global investors are diversifying their capital into these EMs through foreign direct investment (FDI). FDI is considered a key element in

the industrial development of these emerging economies as it brings capital inflow and contributes to the development of technology, managerial skills, and domestic firms. Dr Sadanand’s key research findings consider market size, industrial linkages, and conducive policy environments, as seen in Figure 2 below.

Spillover Effects from FDIs in EMs		
MARKET SIZE	INDUSTRIAL LINKAGES	CONDUCTIVE POLICY ENVIRONMENT
<p>FDI brings required capital and technology to provide an impetus for the much needed economic growth in a host country. It also acts as a motivating factor for foreign companies through its sheer economic size and potential market. Indeed, the scale and the growth of a region is dependent on its market size.</p>	<p>The industrial linkages between foreign and domestic firms aid in industry agglomerations and spillovers to the host economy. Linkages established between multinational companies (MNCs) and domestic firms support the growth of potential benefits in the same or related industrial sectors, thereby generating markets for domestic firms both in upstream and downstream industries.</p>	<p>Lower tax rates as an incentive to boost FDI inflows have gained attention due to increased globalisation and economic integration. Policy environment greatly influences decisions made by policy makers, and decisions related to government spending can affect the inflow of FDI. Government spending and incentives provided to MNCs are driving factors behind encouraging FDI inflow. It is customary for governments to provide incentives through tax rebates, and the setting up of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) to promote trade and investments is one aspect of that.</p>

Figure 2

The impact on children of domestic violence: Findings from a systematic qualitative review

**With Dr Lisa Arai,
School of Allied
Health Lecturer**



In June, Dr Arai presented selected findings from the 'ViOlenCe: Impact on Children Evidence Synthesis (VOICES)' project. This project identified qualitative research on the experiences of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) solely from the perspective of children and young people. The findings from the review were used to make recommendations for practitioners working with children affected by DVA. In this talk, Dr Arai discussed

the project background, main findings and recommendations, and areas of possible future research.

Finally, the VOICES project identified six primary themes: Lived experience of DVA; Actions, agency and coping with DVA; Seeking help, getting help; Managing relationships post-separation; Impact of DVA; and Reflecting and learning from DVA.



Research Roundup

In this section, we signpost you to recent reports and articles that make for interesting reading, support ongoing professional development and keep you up to date with academic research and scholarship.

Impacts of higher education assessment and feedback policy and practice on students: a review of the literature 2016-2021

From Advance HE, 2022

[Click here to read.](#)

HESA Spring 2022: Business and Community Interaction data

From Wonkhe, 2022

[Click here to read.](#)

Are students asking for the new normal, the old normal, or something else entirely?

From Wonkhe, 2022

[Click here to read.](#)

What works to tackle mental health inequalities in higher education?

From TASO, 2022

[Click here to read.](#)

Universities must make a savvy political case for online learning

Opinion piece from Times Higher Education, 2022

[Click here to read.](#)

Unravelling why students do or do not stay committed to a programme when making a higher education choice

By Vulperhorst et al., 2021

[Click here to read.](#)

Mapping the eight dimensions of the ideal student in higher education

By Wong et al., 2021

[Click here to read.](#)

Exploring the relationship between extracurricular activities and student self-efficacy within university

By Griffiths et al., 2021

[Click here to read.](#)

Getting ahead in the online university: Disclosure experiences of students with apparent and hidden disabilities

By Melián and Meneses, 2022

[Click here to read.](#)

'The whole world was lifted off me': the importance of relational supports and peer mentoring for under-represented students accessing university in Ireland

By McNally et al., 2022

[Click here to read.](#)

Whose target group is it anyway? The messy business of enacting widening participation policy

By Benson-Eggleton, 2022

[Click here to read.](#)

Research and Scholarship Funding Opportunities

UK Research and Innovation funding finder

EPSRC open fellowship

Open fellowship for individuals (usually Early Career Researchers) to develop high-quality research

Public Engagement Reaction Awards

Quick-response public engagement programmes which deliver high-profile public engagement activities and champion STFC science and technology and its impact on society

Women in Innovation and Ideas mean business: young inventors

Individual awards; Hold regular workshops to help develop skills for funding applications

Work with researchers in Luxembourg on arts and humanities projects

Must find your own Luxembourg partner; Need someone with a doctorate

Research cultural heritage, society and ethics with European partners

Teams of researchers from at least three but no more than five participating countries who are eligible for their local funding council

European Commission search for finding partners in education

Working on projects around Youth, Adult Learning, Vocational learning, and more

UPP Foundation

Small number of pilot projects around strategic themes: Access and Retention, Employability, The Civic University, Global Citizens

Charity Excellence

Provides searches of different funds and funders

Grants Online

Provides links to the key trusts categorised by giving

Directory of Social Change

Provides training to apply for grants and foundation funding

Prince's Trust

List of funding options for community projects

British and Foreign School Society

Grants to improve quality of education for vulnerable or deprived children and young people under the age of 25

For Good platform

Partnering highly motivated students and recent graduates with forward thinking organisations to collaborate on research, placements and practical projects to progress economic, social and environmental sustainability

Regent Academics Submit Papers to International Conference at University of Oxford

We are delighted to share that seven academics from Regent College have submitted papers and abstracts for consideration to the **CBER 11th International Conference on the Restructuring of the Global Economy 2022!** This is an excellent opportunity to share research projects and ideas and discuss with other academics interested in similar topics.

The conference covers a wide range of topics from business and management to health and social care, and teaching and learning, including technology-enabled education. Regent College is a sponsor of the conference, which will be held at the Said Business School, University of Oxford on 8-9 August.



Regent College Invited to Present at Partner University's Employability Conference



We are pleased to share that in June Regent College was invited to present at the University of Bolton's Employability Conference 2022.

Regent was represented at this event by Dr Chris Wood, Dr Saini Manninen and Kylie Hazeldine who spoke about how Thinking into Character (TiC) plays a central role in supporting students to develop employability skills.

Created by Dr Selva Pankaj, TiC is incorporated into staff training, integrated where possible into taught programmes, and promoted through Regent's non-assessed enrichment curriculum (SCOPE).

Focusing on how successful people

become successful and have a fulfilled life, the TiC materials help to develop individuals personally and professionally and cover vital employability skills, such as setting goals and achieving results, bridging the knowing versus doing gap, changing limiting beliefs, overcoming the terror barrier, developing a positive mindset and understanding how leaders create an 'impression of increase.'

Regent also runs weekly TiC 'Study Circles' for students and staff, that develop insights into human psychology and raise awareness of creative and intellectual faculties that can help participants flourish and achieve the results they want.



Spotlight on Student Research

In this section, we highlight a piece of original research conducted by one of our students, celebrating the excellent work being done at Regent College London.



The Impact of E-marketing on UK Businesses: An investigation of Nestlé

By Amina Ali, BSc (hons) Business Management (top up), January 2021 cohort

In recent years, there has been tremendous growth in technology, which has accompanied continual development in the business sector, largely considered the backbone of the UK's economy. In light of increasing capabilities brought about by technological developments, the UK government, alongside other stakeholders, strives to support innovative developments and provide businesses with a conducive working environment.

E-marketing is a modern development produced through the growth of information technology in business environments. It is an approach with many benefits and it widely impacts on an organisation's competitive advantages. E-marketing conveniently links goods and services with potential consumers. Unlike traditional marketing options, e-marketing allows digital norms to be applied in a business environment. For example, a company may use social media platforms to sell their goods and services rather than waiting for customers to arrive in a physical shop. Furthermore, e-marketing may support other benefits for the customer, such as delivery options.

Nestlé is one of the top firms in the UK where the food and beverage industry is lucrative but very competitive. As such, Nestlé has invested heavily in technology to push past competitors and continue reaching more customers around the country. The company has increasingly embraced a variety of marketing strategies to accomplish this aim.

My research investigated the impacts of e-marketing at Nestlé, demonstrating that by utilising e-marketing strategies, Nestlé has been able to reach a wider

range of customers, seen enhanced customer relationships, and improved tracking of customers' preferences.

Findings illustrate that through the application of multiple e-marketing options, Nestlé has been able to consider a wide variety of customer preferences and tastes. Due to this, the company has been able to broaden its customer base and utilise e-marketing strategies for a specialised market based on identified customer preferences.

The results of the research also indicate that e-marketing can enhance the relationship with customers. Through a wide range of e-marketing options, Nestlé has been able to share their products and services better and more easily. For example, interactive e-marketing options such as social media make it easier to communicate such information or collect feedback. These options include providing channels where disputes can be resolved, online spaces for customer relations, and much more. Thus, utilising e-marketing strategies allows Nestlé to continue to track customers' preferences and enhance the customer experience in improved and more efficient ways.



Spotlight on Student Research

In this section, we highlight a piece of original research conducted by one of our students, celebrating the excellent work being done at Regent College London.



Impact of Retailer Loyalty Programmes on Store Affinity and Customer Retention: The Case of Tesco

By Monika Potyka,
BSc (hons) Business
Management (top up), June
2021 cohort

Over the last few years, the popularity of loyalty programmes has increased in the retail sector. Due to their value enhancement role these programmes have become effective in creating an enduring relationship with customers. With the availability of technology, the ability to attract and retain customers through loyalty programmes has increased. Although there is existing research in this field, there is still work to be done when it comes to understanding loyalty gaps and improving store affinity using technology. My research is thus based on my interest in and the scope of

loyalty programmes in the retail industry.

My research focused on how effective loyalty programmes are in motivating customers and whether technology can play an important role in improving store affinity and customer retention. I selected Tesco as a case study as it is known to transform retailing and shopping through its loyalty programmes, and it can be of great benefit to understand better whether Tesco has been effective in aligning technology with its loyalty programmes.

The research was carried out using primary and secondary data sources to explore relevant topics and themes. A review of existing literature and theories, such as the non-linear sales funnel and customer loyalty matrix, contributed to a foundational understanding of the relationship between store affinity, customer purchase and retention. Responses from a survey of 30 Tesco customers provided further insight into customer preferences and behaviour.

Findings reveal that Tesco needs to focus on communication and taking regular and timely feedback from the customers, particularly regarding their loyalty programme, which is an important marketing strategy for companies today. Although Tesco's Club Card is a popular loyalty programme with regular

customers, it is important that they draw on new strategies and consider new decisions regarding their loyalty programme in order to attract and retain new customers. Loyalty programmes should include a focus on ease of access and ensuring that the programme is integrated into the complete shopping experience rather than only at the point of sale.

The research has also been valuable in understanding how technology can be used to address loyalty gaps and how artificial intelligence can be used to track customer preferences and address areas of concern. Additionally, by aligning technology with their loyalty programmes, retail organisations such as Tesco can analyse customer behaviour in order to improve customer retention.

At a personal level, this research has contributed to my understanding of loyalty programmes in the retail industry. At a broader level, this research has laid the groundwork for future research. Constant changes in technology and customer preferences require organisations such as Tesco to continually improve their usage of customer data to enhance their loyalty programmes.

Academic Skills Provision: Supporting and Enhancing Student Outcomes

By Vanessa Lima,
Academic Skills Manager



Academic skills (AS) support is crucial in higher education (HE) and the general view is that students benefit from such support, especially in the form of one-to-one tutorials or consultations. This is supported by several studies, with one such **recent study** indicating that students who attend AS consultations perform better than those who do not.

In this study, the efficacy of one-to-one student consultations was analysed over three years by looking at student success, GPA and attrition. Student success refers to the pass rate of students; GPA or 'Grade Point Average' refers to marks; and attrition is the percentage of students who did not complete their course. These three metrics were used to compare the performance of students who attended AS one-to-one

consultations with students who did not attend them.

The majority of one-to-one consultations were students from Health and Social Sciences courses, and more active users of the AS service were largely females, undergraduates, and commencing students. This is, interestingly, similar to the profile of Regent students who seek AS tutorials.

According to the study, students who attended AS consultations had proportionally higher average grades and fewer fail grades, showing that students were likely better able to understand their assignments or improve their learning strategies. Student success was consistently higher for those students who attended AS one-to-ones (about 12% on average each year) and the GPA of students attending AS consultations was also significantly higher. Additionally, there was an average increase in retention during the period of the study for those students attending AS with an average of 10.4% more students completing their courses each year.

It is important to highlight that there may be other factors influencing a student's

performance so it is possible that not all improvement can be attributed to the AS one-to-ones. However, students' positive feedback on the university's online student forum suggests that AS consultations do positively influence students' performances. This appreciation for AS can also be noted at Regent in the comments made by students during one-to-one sessions and in a feedback form following each session.

In conclusion, **this study** is consistent with the general understanding that AS support positively impacts on students' performances, as can be seen from metrics such as the success rate, GPA and retention rates. Such success is a positive reflection of not only students, but also the HE institution. Thus, resourcing and focus on AS in HE is not only valuable and beneficial for students, but also for the HE institution.

We are pleased to provide Regent students with an excellent academic skills service, ASK@Regent, a growing team dedicated to helping students achieve higher. Regent College students who wish to improve their academic performance can [click here](#) to book one-to-one tutorials.



Ethics in Qualitative Research: What is it and why is it important?

By Dr Faizu Edu, School of
Business and Enterprise Lecturer



Research is the systematic investigation into, and study of, materials and sources to establish facts and reach new conclusions. Research has two primary methodological data collection methods known as qualitative and quantitative inquiry. In qualitative research, the researcher largely collects data in rich and detailed textual form. In this way, the researcher seeks to understand the meaning of human action and experiences about phenomena as they occur in context.

Data collection in qualitative inquiry commonly considers approaches using grounded theory, ethnography, participatory action traditions, phenomenology, case studies or a narrative approach. In these approaches, it is possible for ethical issues to arise during data collection, analysis or dissemination of findings. This article aims to introduce research ethics to learners who are preparing to embark on their own research journey.

What is ethics?

Creswell and Tashakkori suggest that ethics is a moral correctness of specific conduct, that is, ethics is comprised of the moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity. For example, in the field of medicine, certain standards of correct, or ethical, behaviour must be observed. Institutions of higher learning also have ethical guidelines for learners to abide by before starting research. Such guidelines, for example, provide guidance on how to seek the consent of research participants and how



to discuss with participants the right to withdraw from a study should they wish to do so.

Why is it important to consider ethics in research?

Although research on human subjects has been conducted since the Middle Ages, codes of conduct regarding appropriate researcher behaviour did not emerge until the 20th Century. As qualitative modalities are now widely used, researchers must be aware of possible problems in study design and planning, the dangers of coercion and deception, threats to confidentiality and trust, implications of the emergent design of a study and new concepts of informed consent. The issue of informed consent is a critical ethical issue in research as it considers a participant's right to autonomy.

Ramos notes that the research relationship must consider all possible strategies for the protection of research participants while preserving the integrity of qualitative investigation. Thus, ethical principles are used to guide research in addressing both initial and ongoing potential issues in qualitative research with the aim to meet the goals of the research as well as to maintain the rights of research participants.

Tips for students seeking ethical approval for a research project

The 1964 Declaration of Helsinki is

one of the most influential documents regarding research ethics and provides a foundational understanding of the ethical criteria which should be considered when engaging in research. Based on this important document, some top tips for students seeking ethical approval for a research project are to ensure:

- No harm is done to participants;
- Participants are aware that participation is voluntary;
- Informed consent is obtained from each participant or an approved parent/guardian/carer;
- Open and honest communication with participants is maintained;
- Confidentiality is maintained and participants' identities are protected;
- Where appropriate, participants receive a copy of their own interview transcript in order to assess 'fit' or accuracy.

All necessary steps to obtain ethical approval from an appropriate body must be taken before a research project can go ahead; this is done to avoid harm to participants and will support the credibility of the project. In summary, ethical considerations are essential in qualitative research and must be taken seriously by any researcher aiming to conduct a study with human participants.

Top Tips for Students

We asked lecturers about their top tips for students.

Why is it important to consider ethics in research and what is your Top Tip for students seeking ethical approval for a research project?

Paradoxically, the importance of ethics in research is embedded in consequences of unethical research. For example, the philosophy underpinning the relevance of informed consent, as opposed to just consent, can be understood through the narrative of the hugely unethical 1932 **Tuskegee Experiment** and its heinous effects on research participants. [When seeking ethical approval for their own research project,] Students should go through not only reflection but also through reflexivity to ensure that they cover all ethical grounds.

-Dr Adeniyi Adeboye, School of Allied Health



We've learnt a lot from the mistakes of the past when researchers were not as aware of the importance of good ethical research conduct as we are now. There have been some terrible instances of unethical research (such as **Zimbardo's notorious 1971 Stanford Prison experiment** when participants were subjected to cruel and dehumanising treatment). Researchers have a responsibility to those they are collecting data from; they must not harm others, must not knowingly cause distress and have a duty to keep people's information safe and not identify research participants. If people were harmed in the process of conducting research or their identities revealed, nobody would ever want to engage with research and we'd all suffer.

If collecting your own (primary) data, ensure all documentation is completed thoroughly. A consent form is needed and a participant information sheet is necessary so that respondents can make an informed choice about whether they participate in research or not. Don't cut corners with this documentation - it pays to get it right. Put the potential research participant at the centre of your research and ask yourself: 'Am I being transparent, fair and honest with my research participants? Am I ensuring they are able to make an informed choice about engaging with the project? How can I keep their information and identity safe?'

-Dr Lisa Arai, School of Allied Health

Inclusion and Diversity Matter(s)

Inclusive Education: Supporting Inclusion in Higher Education

By Dr Anna Wharton, Research Development Manager, with Ida Kabamba, Inclusion Coordinator



Inclusive education is an approach in higher education (HE) which seeks to ensure that all students have the opportunity to access, participate in and succeed in education. This approach traditionally takes into account students who may have disabilities or may need special consideration in their learning environment.

Inclusive education is a basic human right and **The UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** highlights the obligations to ensure that people with disabilities are able to access higher education and lifelong learning. As increasing numbers of students with disabilities are able to access higher education, it is essential to develop an inclusive education system. To this end, the **European Disability Strategy 2010-2020** proposed the development of services and support plans which enhance access to and inclusion in education. Indeed, many universities now have departments which support students with disabilities or learning difficulties.

The recent publication **Good practices for equity and inclusion in Higher Education** features reports of good practices for inclusion in higher



education settings throughout Europe. One case from the University of Bristol discusses several initiatives to improve participation of underrepresented groups: Access to Bristol, Student Navigation Network: Peer mentoring scheme, and the Foundation Programme in Arts and Humanities. Another case from the University of Bristol considers how digital practices and online social networks can support inclusion and success by enhancing social capital.

A European University Association report highlights that there is still much to do to identify barriers, overcome challenges and link together the many isolated programmes and initiatives seeking to support inclusive education. However, it also recognises the value of the good work being done in this area of HE.

At Regent College, our own Inclusion Coordinator, Ida Kabamba, leads on supporting students with disabilities and other learning difficulties. We were pleased to hear from her about the excellent work she is doing and her vision to expand the service:

'My aim is to liaise with and support our students at Regent College with a variety of activities and by reaching

out to students on support plans... responsibilities involve assisting and guiding our students who would like to apply for **Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)** from Student Finance England, referring students to assessment centres and providing beneficial information and introducing services to students known to have a disability or other learning difficulty... I always ensure that I find a solution to each student's request. For example, a student on DSA might contact me in relation to their equipment not being supplied as requested. In this case, I contact the student service provider with the consent of the student to enquire further about the delayed equipment... I also enjoy in this role the connection I build with students... My vision is to expand further our inclusion service in the future to support our students to access multiple services and facilities. Regent's inclusion service is merged with the wellbeing team and our collaboration has been a great support to most students.'

For further information or support, students can contact Regent's Inclusion Coordinator at ida.kabamba@rcl.ac.uk.

Inclusion and Diversity Matter(s)

LGBT+ Students: Toward a more Inclusive and Supportive Higher Education Sector

By Dr Anna Wharton,
Research Development
Manager



As [Advance HE](#) note, 'Social attitudes to sexual orientation have changed significantly over the last few decades in the UK and internationally. However, many lesbian, gay and bisexual people may still face discrimination, harassment and isolation.' A [2009 report](#) from Advance HE discovered, in fact, that many LGBT+ students and staff felt that UK HE institutions needed to improve their approaches to LGBT+ equality. The report highlighted the need for institutions to address issues and inequalities affecting this particular community, not only for foundational wellbeing reasons but for reasons relating to retention, institutional reputation, legal compliance, and decreased time handling complaints.

In 2018 the government published the [LGBT Action Plan](#) which investigated the experiences of LGBT+ people living in the UK and included specific suggestions for the HE sector to improve students' experiences. Following this paper, the government asked the [Office for Students](#) (OfS) to 'investigate and tackle gaps in participation, experience, safeguarding and success for LGBT students in higher education.'



Part of this included OfS funding for projects supporting LGBT+ students such as [human library events](#), a series of [video interviews](#) and a [training programme](#) on transgender education and support.

A [paper](#) from the [Stonewall](#) charity considers what it looks like to deliver LGBT-inclusive HE and provides recommendations for HE institutions to embed inclusion in their practice and provision. The paper also notes that such provision ensures universities fulfil their legal obligations through the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#). The briefing suggests key actions for institutions to identify barriers for LGBT+ students and prioritise actions. These include monitoring, consulting, supporting relevant student societies and officers, protecting students from discrimination and training student services on specialist LGBT+ knowledge, amongst other things.

One [study](#) also suggests looking beyond the one-dimensional portrayal of LGBT+ students as 'vulnerable' and argues that HE spaces need to consider more than just individual care for LGBT+ students. The study explores LGBT+ students' experiences with curriculum

and course content; discrimination, prejudice and bullying; and facilities and service provision on campus. The research 'indicates that there is a broad continuum of experiences, with many examples somewhere in the middle, and/or shifting over time' and proposes that 'care' should be provided not only to individuals but by challenging systems of oppression in HE.

There is still much to do as UK HE strives to become a more inclusive and supportive space for LGBT+ individuals. However, a [recent report](#) from UCAS and Stonewall found that LGBT+ experiences in the UK education system are improving and the education system is increasingly seen as an environment where such individuals feel safe and free to be themselves.

For support for LGBT+ communities, visit [Stonewall Help and Advice](#) or [Student Minds' LGBTQ+ Resources](#). During Pride month many UK cities put on parades and events to celebrate the LGBT+ community and raise awareness about relevant issues. You can find more information [here](#) about the UK's biggest Pride parade, which takes place in London.



Join the Research Development Group

Staff members, we would love for you to join our voluntary, monthly meeting of academic and professional staff championing research engagement at Regent.

The Group has already contributed brilliantly to the establishment of Research Roundtable events and supporting the development of the new Regent Research Fund.

If you would like to come along, please contact Dr Anna Wharton, Research Development Manager.

Call for contributions

We maintain an ongoing call for contributions for brief research articles. We welcome ideas and research from both academic and professional staff at Regent, and are happy to support you to develop an idea into an article. Please ensure you have reviewed the Contributor Guidelines on Regent Digital under 'Research at Regent'.

We also invite members of staff to support future newsletters as part of the editorial team and to recommend student contributions to the newsletter that are well done, original, or innovative.

If you would like to contribute to or support future issues of this newsletter, please contact Dr Anna Wharton, Research Development Manager.