

## Dr Sandra Cooke

Research Fellow

School of Education

### Contact details

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### About

Sandra is a Research Fellow in the [Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/) (<http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/>) where she is researching the role of values in professional practice in Medicine and Education. Previously she has worked in the Centre for Research in Medical and Dental Education, working on a range of projects including the role education may play in changing workplace culture and practices. With a background in education policy she has worked on numerous projects with local schools and higher education practitioners. She was Lead Researcher on the Four Cities project examining young people's attitudes to Post-Compulsory education in Hodge Hill, in Birmingham. Her research in education includes working as co-investigator on an ESRC TLRP project examining Learning and Teaching for Social Diversity and Difference; looking at the place of knowledge in vocational educational qualifications; students' experiences of studying science at university and the role of fair admissions practices in widening participation to higher education.

### Qualifications

- PhD Education (University of Birmingham)
- Pg Certificate in Research in Education
- MA Social Policy
- BA (Hons) Public Administration

### Biography

Sandra is a Research Fellow in the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues where she is researching the role of values in professional practice in Medicine and Education. Previously she has worked in the Centre for Research in Medical and Dental Education, working on a range of projects including the role of nurses in educating patients. With a background in education policy she has worked on numerous projects with local schools and higher education practitioners. She was Lead Researcher on the Four Cities project examining young people's attitudes to Post-Compulsory education in Hodge Hill, in Birmingham. Her research in education includes working as co-investigator on an ESRC TLRP project examining Learning and Teaching for Social Diversity and Difference; looking at the place of knowledge in vocational educational qualifications; students' experiences of studying science at university and the role of fair admissions practices in widening participation to higher education.

Her professional background is in widening participation policy and practice. She worked as an Education Adviser at Sheffield Hallam University, advising students and academic staff on issues of academic practice, before moving to Birmingham in 1999. After working in research for the WEA and UNISON developing a support framework for Lifelong Learning Advisors and then NASUWT as an Education Policy Officer, she joined the University of Birmingham, becoming Head of Widening Participation (Outreach) shortly afterwards. She then moved to the School of Education to become a Research Fellow as well as undertaking her PhD which examined students' experiences in higher education. She has also worked as an independent Research Consultant, working with both local schools and national policy bodies.

### Postgraduate supervision

Sandra is interested in supervising research students who have the following interests: Widening participation in Higher Education; Professional knowledge and education; Teaching as a moral practice; Teaching and Learning in Higher Education; Educational Policy; Educational Inequalities; Education and Social Justice

### Research

#### June 2012

*Improving literacy in the transition period: What do we need to know about what works?* : With Professor Stephen Gorard and Dr Beng Huat See. Literature Review of evidence of what works in improving literacy at end of Key Stage 2. Funded by the Educational Endowment Foundation.

#### September 2012 – Present

*Benchmarking for the accreditation of simulation in medical education:* With Professor Jim Parle. Organising expert panel, piloting accreditation framework and subsequent analysis and write up. For the Health Innovation and Education Cluster (HIEC) project.

*Investigating the ways that nurses in dialysis sessions promote the uptake of home haemodialysis:* With Professor Hywel Thomas. Designing the qualitative study, negotiating access to hospital sites, designing fieldwork instruments and preparing applications for national ethics approval. Fieldwork is due to commence once ethics approval has been obtained. For the Health Innovation and Education Cluster (HIEC) project.

#### October 2010 – June 2011

*Evaluating the role of Public Health placements in the training of GPs:* With Professor Hywel Thomas. Mixed methods study. Designing and conducting interviews with trainees in the workplace and by telephone, and with their Educational Supervisors. Analysis of data and second authorship of the report. First author of paper in preparation. For the West Midlands Deanery.

#### September 2010 – June 2011

*Who is teaching science? A preliminary study of teachers' qualifications from 1960-present day:* With Professor Emma Smith. Secondary data analysis of data sets from various sources to examine patterns of qualification amongst the teaching profession.

### Sept 2008 - May 2009

*Who is studying science? A study of undergraduate participation in science in higher education:* With Professor Emma Smith. Mixed methods study. Designing and administering questionnaire to 890 final year students across six universities, conducting focus groups and individual interviews, analysing data and writing up for conference presentation (BERA, Manchester, September 2009) and subsequent publication (International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education, Volume 9, Issue 2). For the ESRC.

### Jan 2008 - Aug 2008

*How long does a spontaneous language sample need to be?* Testing the reliability of four different sample lengths in grammatical analysis: With Dr Jodie Thomerthal. Mixed methods study. Publicising the project, recruiting young parents and children to take part in fieldwork, conducting fieldwork involving filming parents and children at play. For Nuffield.

### Jan 2006 - April 2008

*Learning and Teaching for Social Diversity and Difference:* Co-investigator with Professor Chris Hockings and Dr Marion Bowl. Mixed methods study. Lead researcher within Birmingham, designing and conducting fieldwork and writing up and dissemination. Designing and administering a questionnaire to 275 sixth form students in four local schools and colleges and a different questionnaire to 290 first year students in two universities, across four subjects. Also used semi-structured interviews, focus groups and classroom observations of university lectures.

## Research projects as an independent Research Consultant

### October 2010 – July 2011

*Vocational Educational Qualifications:* With Professors Kathryn Ecclestone and Ann-Marie Bathmaker. Mixed methods study. Designing fieldwork instruments, including a questionnaire to pupils, negotiating access to relevant participants, organising seminars and conducting telephone and personal interviews, analysis of data and making a significant contribution to the written report. Funded by Edexcel.

### January 2011 - July 2011

*Schools' experiences of the Access to Birmingham scheme:* Sole researcher. Small scale mixed methods project using an online survey to all A2B partners and semi-structured interviews with local schools' Access to Birmingham co-ordinators and students. Designed research, conducted fieldwork, analysed data, prepared interim and final reports.

### December 2009 – July 2011

*Evaluation of the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions Programme:* With Professor Geoff Layer, Vice Chancellor of Wolverhampton University. A mixed methods study. Designing a questionnaire for all British HEIs and sole responsibility for three case study sites. Third author to report submitted to HEFCE and the Steering Group.

### October 2008 - July 2009

*Pupil voice in raising achievement:* Sole researcher. An action research project working with a local school to raise the achievement of an identified group of students at risk of disengagement from school. Designing research, conducting fieldwork, analysing data, writing interim and final reports.

### March 2009 - June 2009

*Admissions tutors' perspectives on an admissions scheme designed to widen participation:* Sole researcher. A small scale qualitative project using semi-structured interviews with admissions tutors. Designing research, conducting fieldwork, analysing data, writing interim and final reports.

### March 2008 - July 2008

*Students' experiences of entry to university through an admissions scheme designed to widen participation:* Sole researcher. A small scale qualitative project using semi-structured interviews. Designing research, conducting fieldwork, analysing data, writing interim and final reports.

### Dec 2005 - July 2006

*Young participation in higher education, in Hodge Hill:* Lead researcher on a case study project examining the causes of low-participation in higher education by young people, subsequently named the 'Four Cities' work. Liaising with national research team, designing research, conducting fieldwork, analysing data, lead author for interim and final reports, presenting findings to a range of audiences including local MP Liam Byrne, head teachers, academics (including by invitation to three national seminars), practitioner events.

## Other activities

Sandra visited the [Stanford Center on Adolescence \(https://coa.stanford.edu/people/cooke-sandra\)](https://coa.stanford.edu/people/cooke-sandra) in 2014 to find out more about the centre and to share ideas and interests.

## Publications

### Articles in Academic Journals

Davison, I. and Cooke, S. (2015 forthcoming) "How nurses' attitudes and actions can influence shared care", *Journal of Renal Care*, Volume 1

Cooke, S. and Carr, D. (2014), 'Virtue, practical wisdom and character in teaching' *British Journal of Education Studies*, vol 62, no. 2, pp. 91-110., [DOI: 10.1080/00071005.2014.929632](https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2014.929632) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2014.929632>)

E Smith and S Cooke. (2011) 'I was told it was going to be hard work but I wasn't told it was going to be this much work': the experiences and aspirations of undergraduate science students, *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, Volume 9, Issue 2 [DOI: 10.1007/s10763-010-9228-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10763-010-9228-1) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10763-010-9228-1>)

Hockings, C., Cooke, S. and Bowl, M. (2010) Learning and Teaching in Two Universities within the context of increasing student diversity: complexity, contradictions and challenges in David, M. (Ed.) *Improving Learning by Widening Participation in Higher Education* (<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415495424/>) Abingdon: Routledge

Hockings, C., Cooke, S., Yamashita, H. McGinty, S. and Bowl, M. (2009) 'I'm neither entertaining nor charismatic. . .' Negotiating university teacher identity within diverse student groups. *Teaching in Higher Education*, Vol 14, Issue 5, pp483-494 [DOI: 10.1080/13562510903186642](https://doi.org/10.1080/13562510903186642) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13562510903186642>)

Bowl M, Cooke S, Hockings C (2008a), Researching across the boundaries and borders : the challenges for research, *Educational Action Research*, Vol 16, Issue 1, pp 85-95

Hockings, C., Cooke, S. and Bowl, M. (2008b) Learning and teaching for social diversity and difference in higher education: towards more inclusive learning environments. *Research Briefing* 41. London, TLRP.

Bowl, M., Cooke, S., Hockings, C. (2008c) Home or Away? Issues of 'choice', living arrangements and what it means to be a student. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, Vol 10, (3): 4-13

Hockings, C., Cooke, S., Yamashita, H., McGinty, S. and Bowl, M. (2008d) Switched off? A study of disengagement among computing students at two universities. *Research Papers in Education* 23 (2): 191-203.

## Research Report

