

## Tom Harrison

Deputy Director (Development): Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues

School of Education

### Contact details

Telephone **+44 (0)121 414 4812** (tel:+44 121 414 4812)

Email [t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk](mailto:t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk) (mailto:t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk)

School of Education  
University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham  
B15 2TT, United Kingdom



### About

Tom Harrison is the Deputy Director of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues and leads on all the applied research projects. He has spent many years working on research and development programmes mainly relating to character and citizenship education. Most recently he has led the My Character and Knightly Virtues projects, on behalf of the School of Education. Previously he has led projects on behalf of engagED, Learning for Life, citizED, the ASC as well as the national volunteering and training charity CSV. Tom founded the international educational volunteering charity VESL in 2003 and is currently a trustee for the organisation. He is also a trustee of Character Scotland.

Tom's specialist interests are character and virtue ethics, citizenship, community development, student leadership and volunteering. He has written extensively on many of these areas as well as developing resources and training programmes for schools. Tom is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of Birmingham considering the influence of the Internet on the character virtues of young people in England.

Tom has appeared in the media several times in the last year, including in the national press, national radio and local radio. The BBC, in its **Education and Family section** (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-23929266>), recently reported on a survey undertaken by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Values which suggests that most people want schools to encourage values such as honesty and fairness in pupils. Tom was also a guest on the BBC Radio 4 **Bringing up Britain** programme about character. **Listen to the episode on Character** (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/i/b01rr55c/>). Tom has also been an advisor on several consultations recently including the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Social Mobility report on character and resilience and the IPPR Condition of Britain report. He is also a member of the data and quality advisory group for Step up to Serve and leads on their character and service research. He has also spoken on the theme of Character and Citizenship Education at conferences for head teachers and teachers both in Britain and Internationally.

### Qualifications

- **PhD (in progress) School of Education, University of Birmingham** ([/schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/profiles/tom-harrison.aspx](http://schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/profiles/tom-harrison.aspx))
- Associate Fellow, HEA
- BA, Sociology, University of York

### Biography

Tom Harrison has spent most of his careers working in the not for profit sector on educational programmes. Most recently Tom has managed projects that have both a national and international reach, on behalf of the School of Education and the University of Birmingham. One project, My Character, involves the development of a new social networking website and hard copy journal that is designed to develop the character, values and future mindedness of 11-14 year olds. The other is the development of a teaching pack for primary schools, entitled Knightly Virtues, that encourages young people to read great narratives and then draw lessons about their own character and values from them. Both the projects are subject to various research strategies to access impact, including randomised controlled trials.

Tom has been the Director of Teaching and Learning for Learning for Life since 2007. Learning for Life is an organisation that aims to research and develop the character and values of young people in the UK. Tom directed a series of projects in schools and community organisations across Britain. He also assisted on four major research projects and was an author on several of the resulting publications.

In 2008, Tom established an educational consultancy company called No Limits Learning. Through the company Tom developed a number of training programmes for teachers and students. Themes included active citizenship, student leadership, community involvement and global citizenship. Tom also provided consultancy to a number of organisations, including ACT, citizED, the UFA, the ASC as well as government departments including the Department of Education and Department of Home and Communities. He has also given papers on the themes of active citizenship and character at conferences in America, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia and Canada.

In the last few years Tom has developed a series of educational resources that are widely used in schools. These include the Play your Part pack that encourages young people to be active citizens in their local community. He was also a co-author of the Engaging Practice publication that provided guidance on setting up active citizenship projects for young people from socially disadvantaged communities. The publication was a result of a two year project run by staff from the University of Cambridge and Leicester and the charity CSV. Tom was also lead author of the ASPIRE community development toolkit for schools written by CSV on behalf of the DCSF (currently D of E).

In 2003, Tom set up the educational charity VESL (see [www.vel.org](http://www.vel.org)). VESL sends volunteers overseas and provides grants for educational projects in Asia. For the last ten years Tom has had overall responsibility for all departments of the charity, including finance, overseas programmes and all the other charitable activities. The charity currently send volunteers (mainly teachers) to work alongside the ministries of education in Sri Lanka, India and Thailand.

For three years between 2004 and 2007, Tom worked for CSV, the UK's largest volunteering and training organisation. At CSV he project managed various volunteering and citizenship education programmes across the country. This included running the national student leadership project with the National College for School Leadership (NCSL). In addition to the above experiences Tom worked for the international volunteering organisation Project Trust for three years, as well as volunteering overseas with the organisation for a year in Jordan. He has also volunteered on numerous other programmes in the UK and abroad since he left school.

### Teaching

2013- Module Leader, Children as Citizens (BA Education), University of Birmingham

2012 -2013 Tutor, Children as Citizens Module (BA Childhood, Culture and Education), University of Birmingham

2008 - Visiting lecturer, University of Northampton

2008-2010 Tutor, Citizenship Education Masters Programme, University of Leicester

## Doctoral research

**PhD title [The Influence of the Internet on the character virtues of 11-14 year olds in England. \(/schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/profiles/tom-harrison.aspx\)](#)**

## Research

2012 - Co-Principal investigator, Honourable Virtues, University of Birmingham

2011 - Co-Principal Investigator, My Character Project, University of Birmingham

2009- 2011 Programme Director, Engaged Project, University of Cambridge

2009 - Co-Principal Investigator, Global Citizens, VESL

## Other activities

Trustee, Character Scotland charity

Trustee, VESL volunteering charity

## Publications

Harrison, T and Carr, D. (2015 forthcoming) **Teaching Character Through Stories**. Exeter, Imprint Academic.

Arthur, J., Harrison, T. et al (2014) **My Character a Feasibility Study**, Birmingham, University of Birmingham.

Arthur, J. And Harrison, T. (2012) **Exploring Good Character and Citizenship in England**, *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*.

Harrison, T (2011) **Assessing Citizenship; Challenges and Opportunities** in Arthur, J. and Cremin, H. (eds) *Citizenship Education* , London: Routledge.

Mason, C., Cremin, H., Harrison, T. & Warwick, P. (2011) **Learning to (Dis)Engage?: The socialising experiences of young people living in areas of socio-economic disadvantage**, *British Journal of Educational Studies*.

Warwick, P., Mason, C., Harrison, T. & Cremin, H. (2011) **Citizens in a big society? The complex ecology of young people's civic engagement**. *Journal of Social Science Education*.

Cremin, H., Harrison, T., Warwick, P., Mason, C. (2011) **Engaging Practice; Engaging Young Citizens for Disadvantaged communities**, London: CSV.

Harrison, T. (2010) **A Curriculum full of Character; Developing Character Education in the classroom, culture and community of a school** in Arthur, J (eds) *Citizens of Character*, Exeter: Imprint Academic.

Harrison, T. (2010) **Volunteering and Character**, University of Birmingham.

Cremin, H., Harrison, T., Warwick, P. Mason, C (2009), **Building Voice, Civic Action and Learning; What can we learn from young people living in socio-economically disadvantaged communities?**, University of Leicester and University of Cambridge.

Harrison, T., and Hayes, A. (2009) **Global Citizens; Effects on attitudes and practice of teachers undertaking voluntary projects overseas**, VESL: Manchester.

Harrison, T. (2009) **Working Together; schools and the voluntary sector, Canterbury: citizED**.

Harrison, T. (2009) **Citizenship Education and the Learning Outside the classroom manifesto**, Canterbury: citizED.

Harrison, T. (2008) **Citizenship Education and Community Involvement**, Canterbury: citizED.

