Research projects

Ongoing projects

Shrinking the state: analysing the reform of arm's length bodies (2012-2015) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/2013/shrinking-the-state.aspx)

This three year project will analyse the UK Coalition Government's major reform of 'arm's length bodies' (ALBs – often called 'quangos'). Quangos are a frequent focus for public, political and media criticism, regarded as unaccountable, wasteful, and self-serving. But they are also indispensible to modern government, preventing ministers from becoming overloaded, bringing expert advice and management to complex policy issues, and undertaking regulatory and quasi-judicial tasks that need to be politically independent.

Completed projects

Ways of Knowing: Exploring the different registers, values and subjectivities of collaborative research (Feb 2013 - Jan 2014) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/2013/ways-knowing.aspx)

This diverse inter-disciplinary project will draw together different perspectives produced through collaborative research generating a range of resources aimed at different audiences to inform the development of creative and reflexive collaborative practice.

Community governance in a context of decentralisation (Nov 2012 - Apr 2013) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/2013/community-governance-context-decentralisation.aspx)

This review will explore why these crucial concerns remain unresolved and consider creative responses to issues of demand, mobilisation, equity and risk.

Towards transformative co-production in local public services (Nov 2012 - Apr 2013) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/2013/towards-transformative-co-production-in-local-public-services.aspx)

This review explore the tensions in thinking about co-production as a substitutive response to austerity and consider when, where and how citizens and professionals can work together to deliver transformation in local public services.

Integrated Public Service Budgets (2010 - 2011) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/2010/integrated-public-service-budgets.aspx)

This research examines and establishes the costs and benefits of aligning or pooling budgets across activities, services, and organisations.

The Impact of Local Authorities Supplying Legal Services to NHS Trusts (2010) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/2010/impact-local-authorities-supplying-legal-services-nhs-trusts.aspx)

This research, undertaken by Dr Peter Watt, examines the business case for such provision and the legal issues that arise in working in such a way.

A Study into Local Authority Charging for Non-Residential Social Care Services in Wales (2008 - 09) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/archive/local-authority-charging-non-residential-social-care-services-wales.aspx)

A review of the existing pattern of charges levied by Welsh local authorities for non-residential social care services and assessment of options for introducing more consistency into charging for these services across Wales.

Small parties: influence and effect on democratic engagement and local politics (2006 - 09) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/archive/small-parties.aspx)

Small parties are a vital way for local citizens to signal discontent to the local political elite, pursue a single-issue cause, focus on local concerns and enhance political accountability and engagement.

The democratic anchorage of governance networks in Europe (2006 - 08) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/archive/democratic-anchorage-governance-networks-europe.aspx)

The project will assist policy makers, public service managers, and citizens to develop the democratic aspects of their approaches to collaborative decision-making and service delivery. It is also linked to advanced training for PhD students in Europe (see PhD web pages).

Accountability impacts of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda (2003 - 07) (/schools/government-society/research/projects/archive/accountability-impacts-modernisation-agenda.aspx)

This study analysed the accountability impact of the reforms of English local government since 1997. The project formed part of a long-term meta-evaluation of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda (LGMA).

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