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Professor Peter Davies

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About

Peter is Deputy Head of School and Director of Research. He also leads the Centre for Higher Education Equity and Access. He is programme lead for the Masters in School Improvement and Educational Leadership.

Qualifications

- Ph.D. University of Manchester
- M.A. (Econ) University of Manchester
- PGCE University of Manchester
- B.A. (Econ. first class, G.L.S. Shackle prize) University of Liverpool

Biography

Following experience as a head of department in a secondary school, Peter joined the School of Education at the University of Manchester where he worked in teacher education and the development of assessments for the National Curriculum. Joining the Department of Economics at Staffordshire University in 1994 he established and led the Institute for Education Policy Research. He moved to the University of Birmingham in 2010.

Postgraduate supervision

Research interests

Participation and access in higher education: the role of policy, information and schooling. Subject choice in secondary and higher education. The development of conceptual understanding in social sciences: applications of threshold concepts, alternative frameworks and Variation Theory.

Peter currently supervises a number of postgraduate research students. View some of their profiles below.

- **Jim Pugh** (/schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/profiles/jim-pugh.aspx)
- **Matthew Horton** (/schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/profiles/matthew-horton.aspx)
- **Roberta Keys** (/schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/profiles/roberta-keys.aspx)
- School leavers surveys all over Europe

For more information on research degrees, please visit the **Postgraduate Research** (/schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/index.aspx) pages.

Research

Theory and empirical evidence in relation to:

- Multidisciplinary analysis of participation, choice and engagement in secondary and higher education.
- Private and public finance of education.
- Conceptual change with particular reference to understanding in economics.
- Relationships between different theoretical perspectives on conceptual change, particularly Variation Theory and Threshold Concepts.
- Development of teachers' thinking and practice through 'Learning Study'.

Projects

2011-2013 Labour market expectations, relative performance and subject choice, The Nuffield Foundation, £142,200.

2004-2007 'Developing first year economics undergraduates' understanding of threshold concepts' (leading consortium including Universities of Durham, Coventry and West of England), HEFCE £249,780.

2006-2007 'Knowing where to study? Fess, bursaries and fair access, The Sutton Trust, £28,500.

2007-2008 Continuing Professional Development to Support Subject Networks of Teachers in Secondary Schools, Teacher Development Agency, £40,000.

2007-2009 Research Informed Teaching: The impact of enquiry modules in undergraduate programmes, Staffordshire University, £105,000

2008-2009 Evaluation of Flexible Degree Routes, Higher Education Funding Council for England, £60,000.

2009-2010 Private School Bursaries, The Sutton Trust, £15,700.

2009-2010 Information Needs of Undergraduate Students (with Oakleigh Consulting), Higher Education Funding Council for England, £130,070

Knowledge exchange and impact

- Research on student finance was featured in the lead article of the Guardian on 14th February 2008 and was subsequently widely cited, including the report on social mobility from Alan Milburn for the Cabinet Office.
- Research on Flexible Degrees indicated the cost effectiveness of Fast-Track degrees which were subsequently identified by the Secretary of State as a promising area for development in Higher Education (December 2009).
- Research in 2010 identified students' information preferences when choosing where to study in higher education. These priorities were reflected in the policy manifesto published by the new coalition government in May 2010.

Other activities

- Editor-n-chief, International Review of Economics Education
- Gambrinus Fellow, Technical University of Dortmund, Germany. (2010-11).
- Affiliated Professor: Stockholm University, Sweden.
- Visiting Professor: Staffordshire University, UK.

Publications

Selected Publications

Davies, P., Qiu, T. and Davies, N. (2014). Cultural and Human Capital, Information and Higher Education Choices, *Journal of Education Policy* ifirst. DOI: 10.1080/02680939.2014.891762

Davies, P. and Hughes, A. (2013). Defining and assessing enterprise capability. *Journal of Education and Work*. DOI:10.1080/13639080.2013.805188.

Davies, P. (2013). A response to Entwistle and Nisbet. *Psychology of Education Review,* 37, 1, pp. 15-17.

Ignell, C., Davies, P. and Lundholm, C. (2013). Swedish upper secondary school students' conceptions of negative environmental impact and pricing. *Sustainability*, 5(3), pp. 982-996; doi:**10.3390/su5030982 (http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/su5030982)** .

Davies, P. and Davies, N. (2013). Paying for Quality? Associations between private school fees, performance and use of resources. *British Educational Research Journal iFirst*. **DOI: 10.1002/berj.3107 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/berj.3107)**

Davies, P., Mangan, J., Hughes, A. and Slack, K. (2013) Labour market motivation and students' choice of degree subject. *British Educational Research Journal. 32, 2. pp.361-382* DOI: **10.1080/01411926.2011.646239 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01411926.2011.646239)**

Slack, K., Mangan, J., Hughes, A. and Davies, P. (2012). 'Hot', 'cold' and 'warm' information and higher education decision-making. British Journal of Sociology of Education, iFirst. **DOI: 10.1080/01425692.2012.741803. (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2012.741803)**

Davies, P. and Lundholm, C. (2012). Students' understanding of socio-economic phenomena: conceptions about the free provision of goods and services. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 33, 1, pp. 79-89. **DOI:10.1016/j.joep.2011.08.003 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.joep.2011.08.003)**

Davies, P., Slack. K. and Howard, C. (2012). Variation in the length of an undergraduate degree: participation and outcomes, *Studies in Higher Education*, 37, 4, pp. 431-447. **DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2010.520698 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2010.520698)**

Davies, K. and Davies, P. (2012). Tensions in Commissioning: services for children's speech, language and communication needs in one English Region, *Journal of Health Service Research and Policy*, 17, 2, pp. 37-44. **DOI:10.1258/jhsrp.2012.011121 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1258/jhsrp.2012.011121)**

Davies, P. (2012). Threshold Concepts in Economics. In. G. Hoyt and KM. McGoldrick, Eds. **The International Handbook on Teaching and Learning Economics (http://www.e-elgar.co.uk/bookentry_main.lasso?id=13836)** pp. 250-256.. Aldershot: Edward Elgar Press.

Davies, P. (2012). Can governments improve Higher Education through 'informing choice'?, *British Journal of Educational Studies* 60, 3, pp. 261-276. **DOI: 10.1080/00071005.2012.715626 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2012.715626)**

Howard, C. and Davies, P. (2012). Attracting Mature Students into Higher Education: The Impact of Approaches to Learning and Social Identity *Journal of Further and Higher Education*.ifirst. **DOI: 10.1080/0309877X.2012.684038 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2012.684038)**

Full publication list for Professor Peter Davies (PDF) (/Documents/college-social-sciences/education/publications/davies-peter.pdf)

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