

Skills
Development
Scotland

Skills Development Scotland Collaborative PhD Programme



2023/24



Economic
and Social
Research Council



Scottish
Graduate
School of
Social
Science

Sgoil Cheumnaichean Saidheans
Sòisealta na h-Alba

Foreword

Welcome to the 2023/24 edition of Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) Collaborative PhD Programme brochure.

This publication aims to showcase our talented students and the breadth of research they are undertaking, as well as provide essential information for our stakeholders.

This important and exciting venture was established in partnership with the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science (SGSSS) to:

- strengthen our links with the academic community in Scotland
- bring fresh thinking to skills policy and delivery in Scotland
- support new researchers to get a deeper understanding of the unique Scottish skills system.

I am pleased that the PhD Programme continues to attract outstanding doctoral students who can grow personally through their research, while producing academically rigorous and exciting research on important and enduring skills issues from a Scottish point of view.

I am delighted that the Programme has been acknowledged as a 'demonstrator' of innovation and best practice in collaborative PhD research. Several organisations in the UK have expressed an interest in replicating the SDS sponsored PhD model. The excellence of our students, the dedication of SDS's PhD sponsors and the expert input from SGSSS as our key strategic partner are at the heart of this success.

I am also proud that it serves as an essential vehicle to enable us to look at fresh perspectives in skills and learning. As we move out of the pandemic, it has never been more important to explore new ways of thinking about how we can continue to help improve the lives of people across Scotland.

The research plays a crucial role in identifying ongoing trends - translating key insights from our students' research into lessons for skills policy and practice is of fundamental importance to the programme. It allows SDS and key stakeholders to respond to the demands and best needs of businesses and individuals, continually fostering innovative approaches and improvements to products and services.

I hope you enjoy learning about our inspiring cohort of students and the key areas they will examine this year in skills policy, skills delivery, and career information, advice and guidance.



Damien Yeates
Chief Executive, Skills Development Scotland



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What is the PhD Programme?

The Skills Development Scotland (SDS) collaborative PhD Programme is a partnership between SDS and the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science (SGSSS). It was established in 2013 to engage the Scottish academic community to support policy-relevant skills research.

Our PhD researchers examine key questions in skills policy, skills delivery, and career information, advice and guidance. The programme produces innovative research aligned to the evolving skills agenda in Scotland. It also helps to develop a new group of expert researchers with an in-depth understanding of the unique Scottish skills landscape.

SDS current university partners

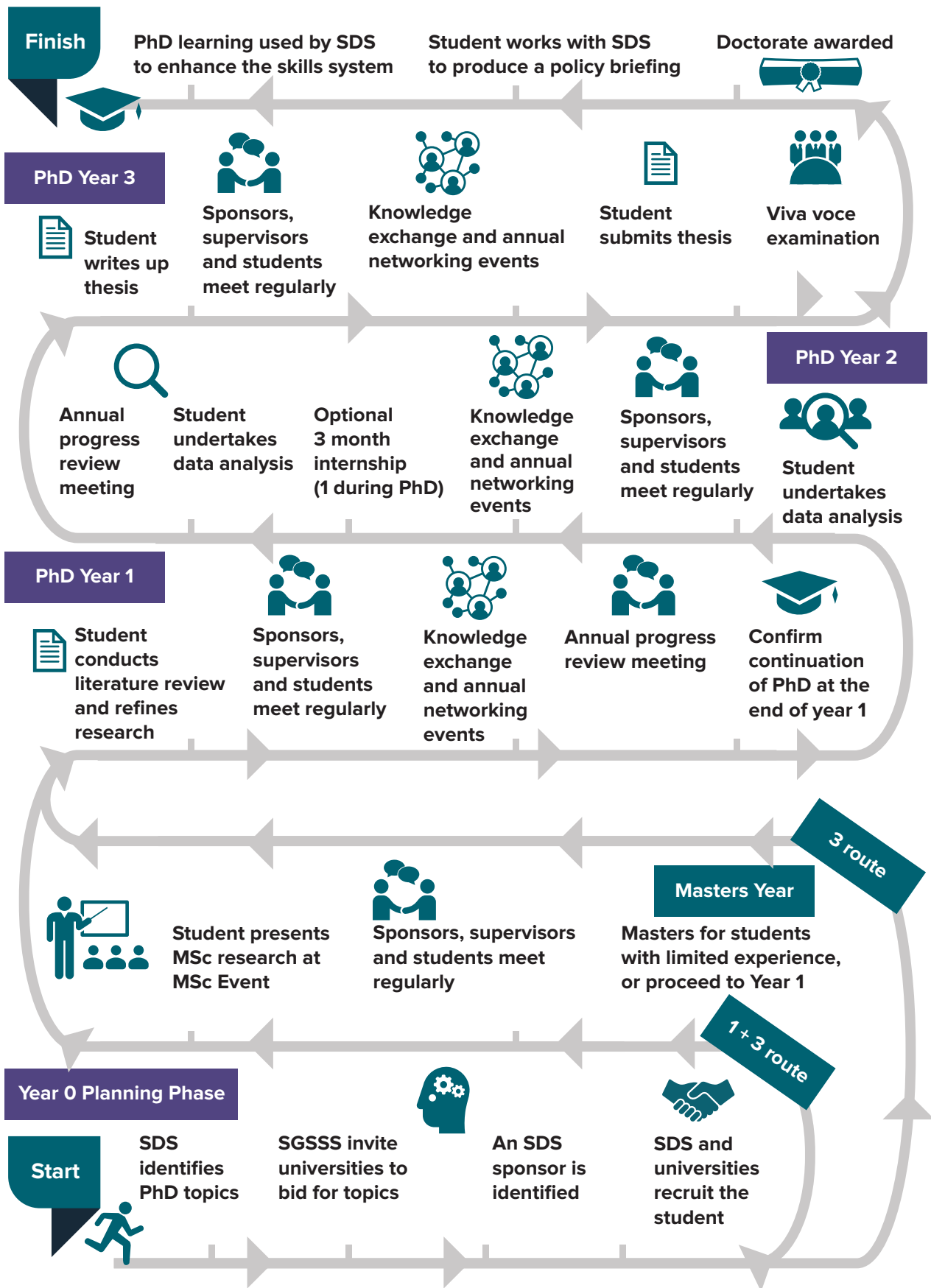


How does it work?

SDS identifies important skills-related topics and works with SGSSS to invite PhD proposals from academic supervisors. SGSSS and SDS then select the most suitable proposals. Up to four sponsored SDS PhD students are enrolled each year, co-funded by SDS and SGSSS.

SDS works closely with the host university, academic supervisors, and the PhD student to support successful completion. Each PhD student has an SDS PhD sponsor who links the student into SDS and the wider skills community. The SDS sponsor has an important role in promoting the PhD research to relevant SDS teams, ensuring that findings from the research are embedded in the policy and practice of SDS.

The following SDS PhD roadmap provides an outline of the SDS PhD student journey.



Benefits of the PhD Programme



Research on the Scottish skills landscape



High-quality research



Collaboration with the academic community

The SDS collaborative PhD Programme has a number of benefits for SDS and its stakeholders:



Investment in high quality skills research, providing a robust and rigorous approach to tackling key skills policy questions and underpinning our approach as an intelligence-led organisation



Increased awareness of the value of academic research within the skills policy community, bringing theory, policy and practice closer together



New opportunities for doctoral candidates to develop their knowledge and understanding within a policy and delivery context



Develops the supply of high-quality academic researchers with a deep knowledge of the Scottish skills system and landscape



New opportunities for PhD students to develop their skills and expertise within a workplace setting through PhD internships

A word from our partner – The Scottish Graduate School of Social Science (SGSSS)



The Scottish Graduate School of Social Science (SGSSS) is the UK's largest facilitator of training, funding and support for doctoral students in social sciences. Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and Scottish Funding Council, we work with 16 university partners across Scotland to facilitate world-class PhD research.

Our PhD researchers are funded to develop and contribute to disciplinary and methodological thinking within the social sciences. The knowledge and expertise gained in robust academic work has enormous potential to yield benefits for our society which is faced with significant social, economic and environmental challenges. A key route to realising this potential comes from our students' collaborative work with

those working in policy and practice. SGSSS' partnership with SDS is a prime example of how synergies between academic and policy/practice interests can lead to meaningful knowledge exchange and impact, enhancing career opportunities through collaborative studentships and PhD internships.

The first period of funding for SGSSS as an ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership is coming to an end and SDS have been a key contributor to the thinking about how the next phase of doctoral training can provide an even stronger foundation for impactful research careers. We look forward to developing this important partnership in the years ahead.

Professor Mhairi Mackenzie

Depute Director SGSSS & Professor of Public Policy,
University of Glasgow



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Meet our current PhD students

Economic and social outcomes of work-based learning across economic sectors: The case of Foundation Apprenticeships in Scotland

Academic supervisors: Professor Oscar Valiente and Dr Clara Fontdevila

SDS sponsors: Deborah Miller and Dr Malcolm Greig

Grace's PhD focuses on the social and economic outcomes of Foundation Apprenticeships, which offer work-based learning for senior-phase secondary school pupils. Her research seeks to understand the ways in which demographic characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, academic skills, and socioeconomic status may influence how young people approach and experience work-based learning. Grace aims to maintain a participant-centered approach to understand how young people from diverse backgrounds navigate their education and early employment options and how apprenticeships fit into their trajectories. This realist evaluation will consider the benefits of apprenticeships and work-based learning over other options and the diversity of apprenticeship experiences among participants. The work will investigate how participation in Foundation Apprenticeships relates to young people's aspirations and abilities, at individual and system levels. A mixed methods approach will consider outcomes statistics alongside stakeholder interviews and survey data to present a contextual understanding of apprentice experiences, across demographic groups and economic sectors.



Grace Barrett



How artificial intelligence can be used to enhance the provision of labour market intelligence

Academic supervisors: Dr David Brazier, Dr Dimitra Gkatzia and Dr Matthew Dutton

SDS Sponsor: Katie Killen

Aleksander is researching how the provision of labour market intelligence data could be enhanced in Scotland using machine learning.

He is exploring online job vacancy data to extract information about skills, knowledge, and job characteristics and requirements. The idea is to provide Scottish policymakers, training providers, and job seekers with timely, granular information about the Scottish job market and the underlying trends in skill demand. Later in his research Aleksander is planning to focus on the environmental aspects of the Scottish labour market providing insight about the classification of green jobs and skills.

His methodology will merge the traditional machine learning approach with the expertise of labour market experts from SDS to deliver the best recommendations for research audiences.



Aleksander Bielinski



Virtual models of working and the implications for Careers, Information and Guidance

Academic supervisors: Dr Scott Hurrell and Dr Emma Bolger

SDS sponsor: Lorna Stalker

Shayla has recently completed her Master's year as part of the 1+3 PhD Programme and moved onto her PhD.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven unprecedented in accelerating moves to remote working. Not all workers benefit from remote working however, and disadvantage will likely be experienced by those transitioning from education to work. Disadvantaged groups will need targeted Career Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG), to ensure they do not face career disadvantage because of remote working catalysed by COVID-19. A mixed-method, multi-stage design will be used to investigate the kinds of interventions needed. The approach will first analyse secondary datasets to establish the extent of remote working disadvantage and which groups are worst affected.

The final research focus will be determined after the initial secondary analysis stage but is likely to include in-depth interviews and/or focus groups with people experiencing disadvantage to understand the nature of their experiences and career impediments along with interviews with senior CIAG policy makers, to shape findings into recommendations for CIAG delivery and intervention in Scotland.

Gendered information landscapes and their impact on routes into and through apprenticeships

Academic supervisors: Dr Ella Taylor-Smith, Dr Sally Smith, Dr Colin Smith

SDS sponsors: Michelle Goldenpenny and April Robertson

Maria's research maps the information landscapes of young people and examines their impact on routes into and through apprenticeships and work-based learning. Maria is particularly interested in understanding how different sources of gender stereotyping impact on young people's career choices. The research uses a mixed methods approach to examine the current policy and literature on occupational segregation, and to investigate young people's situated experience of information related to apprenticeships and work-based learning. Maria hopes to be able to provide accessible outputs which can be used by policy makers and practitioners to help inform future policy and practice on gender equality in careers.



Shayla Bletsoe



University
of Glasgow



Maria Cecil

Edinburgh Napier
UNIVERSITY



Intrapreneurship: Its forms and enabling factors

Academic supervisors: Dr Scott Hurrell and Dr Jillian Gordon

SDS sponsor: James Burns

Róisín's PhD research explores the facilitation of intrapreneurship within different organisational sectors and settings, in a Scottish context. As intrapreneurship is becoming an important source of competitive advantage, carrying out this project to investigate the facilitating factors of intrapreneurship is both timely and critical.

Her innovative project links concepts of organisational culture, organisation structure, and Human Resource Management in order to explore the skills and factors which enable intrapreneurship. The practical impact of this research will be far-reaching across all sectors for organisations, informing them of the skills and enabling organisational factors which encourage and advance intrapreneurship.



Róisín Dooley-Nealis



The potential impact of graduate apprenticeships on intergenerational social mobility in Scotland

Academic supervisors: Professor Mike Danson and Professor Abigail Marks

SDS sponsor: Mairi Rule

Karen is in the final year of her PhD at Heriot Watt University. Her research explores the potential impact of Graduate Apprenticeships on intergenerational social mobility in Scotland. Graduate Apprentices have been surveyed and interviewed to find out about their educational and family backgrounds. They have also been asked about their motivation and aspirations. The results of this phase of the research have allowed the creation of a typology for Graduate Apprentices' motivations to study.

For social equity and to ensure Scottish organisations draw from the widest pool of talent available, Graduate Apprenticeships need to appeal to individuals from a range of backgrounds ensuring they represent diversity of gender, race, ability, and social class backgrounds. The research will recommend how information about Graduate Apprenticeships should be provided and disseminated to build awareness among existing and potential stakeholders. It will determine how learners from different social classes, not all of whom may have a family background of degree level study, may be supported to ensure successful completion of this qualification.



Karen Gilmore



Where to next? Post-school transitions and career decisions among young people in Scotland – insights from the Growing Up in Scotland study

Academic supervisors: Dr Valeria Skafida and Dr Elke Heins

SDS sponsor: Dr Patrick Watt

Hannah is really excited to start her PhD for many reasons. Hannah is looking forward to working with fellow students, supervisors, and other staff members at the University of Edinburgh and Skills Development Scotland. Hannah is eager to further develop her social research skills, and deepen her knowledge on the labour market and training in Scotland. Hannah hopes that her PhD will allow her to make a real difference on the lives of some school leavers in Scotland through contributing to Skills Development Scotland and national policymaking, as well as advance her own career in social research.



Hannah Glover



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of EDINBURGH

Transformative skills in the energy just transition: Mixed-methods pathways for upskilling, reskilling, and engaging new entrants in Scotland

Academic supervisors: Dr Kirsten Jenkins, Dr Craig Anderson and Professor Dan van der Horst

SDS sponsor: Dr Allison Carrington

Kaja's PhD aims to investigate the skill landscape of Scotland's energy sector. This project is designed to enhance our understanding of how Scotland's transition to Net Zero will affect the energy workforce and the skills required by Scotland's energy sector. Understanding where skills are transferrable from Scotland's fossil fuel industry to low-carbon energy solutions and identifying skill gaps and training opportunities is a crucial part of Scotland's journey towards Net Zero.



Kaja Horn



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Further, this project aims to understand what factors influence an individual's ability to engage in work-related learning and training opportunities to ensure equal access to skill development opportunities in the energy sector. While the energy industry skills gap has been identified as a significant challenge to Scotland's Net Zero goals, it is also a great opportunity to increase equality and diversity in Scotland's energy industry and address justice concerns as we move towards a greener future.

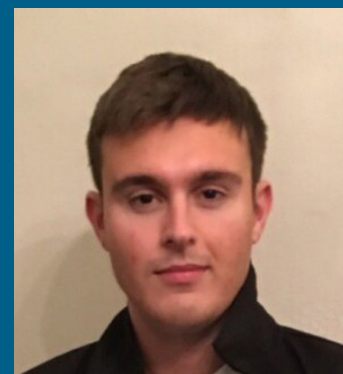
Work-based learning (WBL) in the digital age

Academic supervisors: Dr Pauline Anderson and Professor Dora Scholarios

SDS sponsor: Lewis Gale

Stephen's research focuses on how expert knowledge, skills and learning is changing as a result of technological progress.

His research considers what knowledge and skills are required to fully utilise new technologies and aims to understand how expert workers are learning to incorporate these into practice. It is also considering how tasks and activities of expert work are changing as a result of technological advancement and how policy can make WBL an attractive and realistic proposition for all, particularly expert workers.



Stephen Hughes



Creating sustainable communities through the development of skills

Academic supervisors: Dr Darren McGuire and Dr Kendra Briken

SDS sponsor: Dr Lynne Robson

Anya is researching meta-skills, youth transitions and socio-economic status. Anya is working to understand the ways in which socio-economic status influences how young people acquire and develop meta-skills. While meta-skills can be gained in many life situations, it is possible that there is a difference in how and why meta-skills are gained, developed, and used between young people of different socio-economic status. As meta-skills are becoming increasingly important in the quickly changing job market, if there are significant differences in how they are obtained and developed by people of differing socio-economic status, this could have consequences on an individual's ability to gain meaningful employment.



Anya Kaufman



Models of collaborative working in employability

Academic supervisors: Professor Colin Lindsay

SDS sponsor: Dr Patrick Watt

Daniela is in the process of writing up her PhD at the University of Strathclyde. Her research has explored the Scottish approach to collaborative working on employability and skills. Specifically, Daniela's research has identified the strengths and limitations of the Scottish Employability Framework and Strategic Skills Pipeline models in aligning the work of partners in support of collaboration in the delivery of employability services. Daniela has identified effective practice and critical success factors in the governance of employability collaborations, as well as how these can be measured.

Daniela Latina



Neurodiverse youth identities in career transition: Between the physical and the virtual world of work

Academic supervisors: Professor Kathleen Riach and Dr Evangelia Demou

SDS sponsors: Dr Emma Hollywood and Ian Bruce

Martina's PhD focuses on the process of neurodiverse youth identity formation within their transitioning into work. It is already recognised that disabled workers' identities are shaped since early childhood. However, little attention is devoted to the actual process of transition from youth into the workplace, and particularly to neurodiversity as an invisible disability. As studies show that neurodiverse youth career experiences differ from their aspirations, the research intends to understand the ways neurodiverse youth identities are shaped by and shape career transitions, particularly when engaging with the digitalised world of work. By using a mix of qualitative data drawing on neurodiverse youth lived experiences, and quantitative ones analysing career and employment trajectories, it will help identify the various patterns of transition into the workplace, providing insights into the reasons for the high unemployment level of this group of workers.



Martina Lippi



Exploring labour market inequalities experienced by unpaid carers and people with disabilities

Academic supervisors: Professor Paul Lambert and Dr Alasdair Rutherford

SDS sponsor: Ian Bruce

Louise's research explores the barriers and facilitators to labour market involvement for people with a disability and people who provide unpaid care. This includes looking at the impact of hours of unpaid care on employment likelihood. Another example is exploring how different health conditions impact the likelihood of employment. Throughout her final year, Louise will examine 'quality' of employment. This will include a quantitative analysis of the type of industries, hours worked, stability of contracts and household income that people with disabilities and unpaid carers are more likely to experience.

This research has been achieved through the analysis of three high-quality, large-scale social survey datasets, which include: The Scottish Health Survey, the Labour Force Survey and Understanding Society.

The quantitative results will allow Louise to explore how employment outcomes in Scotland are influenced by providing unpaid care or having direct experience of a disability/long-term health condition. The final stage of her analysis will then compare the results against current policy and initiatives to identify potential areas for improvement.



Work-based learning environments (WBLE) for fostering industry-relevant skills and optimal economic performance

Academic supervisors: Dr. David Haynes and Dr Colin Smith

SDS sponsor: David Coyne

John's research is looking at Work-based Learning Environments (WBLE), exploring the languages and frameworks practiced by industry. An important focus will be on current provision and how WBLEs can be transformed to maximise economic benefits for individuals, firms, and society. Then research will use a mixed methods approach, incorporating a wide-ranging industry survey and extended case studies. John hopes to build a set of tools that will inform decision makers on how to foster productive WBLEs. Specific areas of interest include the impact of Industry 4.0, business maturity and communities of practice.



Career information literacy and decision-making behaviours of young people

Academic supervisors: Professor Hazel Hall and Dr Peter Robertson

SDS Sponsor: Anthony Standing

Marina's doctoral work focuses on generating new knowledge of young people's career decision making and on the identification of means to enhance their career information literacy skills. It explores the role of information access, use, and evaluation in career development learning and career decision-making processes, to identify specific information literacy skills that can support young people's career development.

The research will implement inquiry into social sources of career information, which have been shown to be highly influential in career decision-making and will explore young people's responses to career information in different contexts. Research participants will be young people in S2-S6 (aged 12 to 18) who are preparing for their lives beyond school education. Findings and recommendations from the research will have implications for the delivery of career information, advice and guidance.



Marina Milosheva

Edinburgh Napier
UNIVERSITY



Labour market outcomes for ethnic minority people in Scotland: Do school subject choices and university choice matter?

Academic supervisors: Dr Marina Shapira and Dr Dave Griffiths

SDS Sponsors: Dr Emma Hollywood and Fergus McMillan

Cara's research investigates the transitions and labour market outcomes of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds in Scotland. Her research has a key focus on the influence of school subject and university choices on young people's pathways and outcomes. Her research uses a mixed methods approach with the use of quantitative analysis of secondary data, the Scottish Longitudinal Survey, to investigate the trends in transitions for young people. Data from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Services and the Higher Education Statistics Agency will also be sourced to explore how choices during the secondary school phase can create pathways to future employment for young people. This will be accompanied by qualitative interviews with a sample of young people and Careers Advisers to better understand the relationships behind the decision-making processes of school subject and university choices.



Cara Nethery

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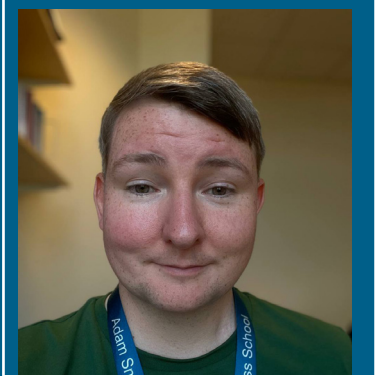
How do employers engage with apprenticeships in Scotland?

Academic supervisors: Professor Melanie Simms and Professor Chris Warhurst

SDS sponsors: Graeme Hendry and Alison McConnell

Paul is in the fourth year of his PhD at the University of Glasgow, where he now works full-time as a Lecturer in Human Resource Management and Organisational Behaviour. Paul's research seeks to enhance understanding of how employers engage with apprenticeships across Scotland.

The key focus of the research is to examine the decision-making process for employers when they are considering apprenticeship engagement, and to develop knowledge on what motivates employers to recruit apprentices. It will consider the impact of the Apprenticeship Levy as well as other incentive programmes developed to battle the economic downturn brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hoped that this insight will help policy discussions going forward as the UK and Scottish governments attempt to improve the quantity and quality of apprenticeship opportunities available.



Paul Quigley



University
of Glasgow

Toward a strategy for improving labour market outcomes for care experienced young people: an ecological multi-agency partnership with SDS, Dumfries & Galloway Local Authority & South of Scotland Enterprise

Academic supervisors: Dr David Lundie, Dr Shaia Shirazi and Dr Gillian Brydson

SDS sponsors: Greg Hiddleston, Roddy Bailey and Andrea Hall

Elle's PhD uses participatory action research to understand and enhance practice in supporting care-experienced young people into employment and/or further/higher education. Young people will be positioned as co-researchers and will drive the design of the research including identifying research questions and methods. The project seeks to understand the intersectional challenges and impacts on transitions to work and further study from the lived experience and perspectives of young people themselves.

A participatory action research community of practice will be formed to include care experienced young people and multi-agency partners to identify operating challenges, good practice, key nodes and information flows, making recommendations to improve multi-agency working at a local and national level.



Elle Scott



University
of Glasgow

Supporting the key influencers in young people's career development

Academic supervisors: Dr Dave Griffiths and Dr Marina Shapira

SDS sponsor: Ken Edwards

Gaile Suisyte

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Gaile's research explores the careers guidance and support networks utilised by young people to inform their options, opportunities, and career paths. This includes the role of family, friends, educational institutions, voluntary organisations, and other potential sources of information. It involves quantitative analysis of British Household Panel Survey and Understanding Society datasets.

Meta-skills maturity for future workplaces

Academic supervisors: Dr David Brazier and Emeritus Professor Hazel Hall

SDS sponsor: Lewis Gale

Katherine's research focuses on meta-skills – those higher-order skills which help people organise and accumulate other skills, such as self-regulation, curiosity, and cognitive resilience. Katherine is using multiple qualitative methods to investigate the measurement and development of these skills in experiential learning environments such as apprenticeships.

The primary purpose of the project is to develop tools and practices to ensure that the current and next generations of the Scottish workforce are prepared to adapt and manage their position within the future labour market, with its challenges of automation, socio-political change and multi-job careers.



Katherine Stephen

Edinburgh Napier
UNIVERSITY



Technology adoption and skills development in Scottish manufacturing SMEs

Academic supervisors: Professor Ronald McQuaid and Dr Belgin Okay-Somerville

SDS sponsor: Denis Donoghue

The overarching aim of Fanni's PhD research is to understand the impact of new technology adoption on skills requirements in Scottish manufacturing small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The research highlights the need for a more nuanced view on technologies when looking at the impact of technological transformation on organisations and skill requirements, and the need to examine the organisational context when studying this interplay between technology and skills. To have a better understanding on the homogenous effects of different technologies, the study compares the implementation of four types of technologies and their consequent effects on skill requirements in manufacturing SMEs. Overall, the study contributes to discussions on skills development initiatives in the face of Industry 4.0 in the manufacturing sector, with a unique focus on small and medium enterprises. From a policy perspective, the research will identify sectoral best practices and inform current sectoral skills development initiatives on the unique needs of SMEs.



Fanni Tamasi



Natural language interfaces to support career decision-making of young people

Academic supervisors: Dr Peter Cruickshank, Dr Dimitra Gkatzia and Professor Peter Robertson

SDS sponsor: Sandra Cheyne

Marianne's research explores how automated dialogue systems could be used to supplement career services for young people.

This is a multi-disciplinary collaborative project incorporating understanding the career related tasks that a conversational agent could effectively support; the information required to provide this support; and designing the interaction to meet the needs of young people. A key focus will be understanding how the ethical standards of such a system could be assured.



Marianne Wilson



A Closer Look at... Katherine's PhD on meta-skills



Katherine started her 1+3 PhD programme in 2019, and gained a Research Masters with Merit in Science, Technology and Innovation Studies at the University of Edinburgh before moving to Edinburgh Napier University's School of Computing to undertake her PhD. Her research looks at the social aspects of how people in the workplace process information in order to develop meta-skills. The Masters part of her programme focused on workers' metacognitive experiences of Artificial Intelligence.

Previous to her PhD, Katherine gained a PGDip with Distinction in Career Guidance and Development, and her career history includes an honours degree in pop music, a stint in the merchant navy, and working in hospitality technology. Her broad background gave her the inspiration to become a qualified careers advisor with training placements at Skills Development Scotland offices, where she found out about SDS collaborative PhDs.

Katherine's PhD research

Career landscapes are changing, and the future of individual workers is predicted to be reliant on adaptability and 'portfolio careers'. If this is the case, what is more important than technical skill in one area is the ability to form and implement cognitive strategies for learning those skills as the need arises. The processes required to create these strategic abilities are situated within 'metacognition' – thinking about thinking. A mature level of metacognition can thus lead to 'meta-skills' – the ability to apply metacognitive knowledge in appropriate contexts.

The term 'meta-skills' itself can refer to two different levels of skill. First, as a shorthand for metacognitive skill. These metacognitive skills fall into three categories: self-reflection (assessing how your knowledge affects your actions); calibration of comprehension (understanding to what level you have learned something); and cognitive adaptability (being able to change your goals depending on context). Second, as a broader term for the general competencies which those three categories of metacognitive skill can help you develop. Examples of this second definition of meta-skills might be focusing, communicating, or creativity. Katherine's research focuses on the first definition; the second definition is explained more fully in the Skills Development Scotland paper "Skills 4.0".

The idea that humans can develop these competencies purposefully, rather than as a by-product of specialist or technical education, is a contentious one. There is some research that experiential learning may be a good way to encourage this, and so communities of practice within workplaces are the ideal contexts for research.

Katherine's research questions:

- What is the definition of a meta-skill?
- How do meta-skills manifest when deployed in an experiential learning setting?
- How can mechanisms be positioned to develop meta-skills, taking into account different learners and contexts?

This third research question in particular is useful from a policy perspective, as the answers can align with SDS's existing work on developing meta-skills in particular learning contexts, and allow those mechanisms to be expanded into other types of learning environments.



Research methodology

Katherine was six months into her PhD, and had begun to design a data collection method based on ethnographic observation in the workplace, when the Covid-19 pandemic started. This meant that her plan of going into workplaces to observe workers' interactions could no longer take place, as workplaces suddenly did not exist in the same way. Therefore, a new research plan was designed which included more creative ways to find the necessary information.

This plan incorporated three different methods, which together formed a 360° view of meta-skills; how they are assessed, what they look like in reality, and how they can be explicitly developed.

The first method was an institutional ethnography, which is an approach designed to define institutions by the documentation they produce. Katherine analysed SDS's meta-skills self-assessment tools using researcher observations and interviews with assessors and the apprentices who use the tools.

The second method was a game-based approach called the Imitation Game. The method is named after the parlour game which inspired Alan Turing's Turing Test, in which a computer pretends to be a human. In this research method, a group of people pretend to be a different group, and an 'insider' judges their success; Katherine's research participants were a group of apprentices and a group of established employees within Skills Development Scotland.

The third method was an intervention study, using three communities of practice – PhD students, coastal rowers, and call centre employees – to investigate whether regular social interaction using conversation prompts could explicitly develop these meta-skills.

Katherine is in the final stages of writing up her PhD thesis and hopes to submit during 2023.

Outputs

Although the Covid-19 pandemic contributed to a loss of opportunity for in-person conferences and presentations for her cohort, Katherine has had work presented at three different conferences – CRASSH at Cambridge University in 2019, ISIC online in 2020, and the BSA's Work, Employment and Society conference online in 2021 – as well as presenting at the Career Development Institute's annual meeting and taking part in the European Doctoral Programme in Career Guidance and Counselling (ECADOC) summer school.

Katherine has also had the opportunity to work alongside colleagues in other short-term research projects relating to library networks and information proxies, and was awarded a grant for a 6-month project on audience receptivity to music recommendations. During summer 2022, Katherine undertook a part-time role with the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science to organise their PhD Summer School, and has now been successful in gaining a full-time position with SGSSS as Student Experience and Development Coordinator.

SDS Sponsor Spotlight

The centrepiece of the SDS PhD Programme is our network of our SDS colleagues who are PhD sponsors and have a vital role supporting students to connect with the policy world and sharing learning from the research throughout SDS.

SDS sponsor: James Burns

PhD Student: Roisin Dooley-Nealis

Intrapreneurship: Its forms and enabling factors

I have had the pleasure of sponsoring Roisin Dooley-Nealis from the outset of her fascinating research into intrapreneurship in business in Scotland. Roisin is looking into the culture and structure of large organisations and the extent that this influences intrapreneurship (acting like an entrepreneur in an employee context) among its employees and whether sector or organisation type effectively enables intrapreneurship.



I had a background as an academic, albeit short: my first job was as a Tutor at Strathclyde University where I started my own PhD (never finished) and so it was an exciting opportunity to work with and support a PhD student bringing in the practical aspects of business delivery to support the academic research.

I work in the Growth and Inward Investment (GII) Team and working as part of Team Scotland I have the opportunity and access to a wide range of knowledge and experience alongside partners and businesses who can provide insight and support into the work Roisin is doing. In turn, Roisin's work will have an influence back into the businesses we are supporting in SDS. It is a win-win for everyone and a prime example of the purpose of the PhD Programme in SDS.

Roisin has been a part of the GII Team too, regularly coming along to present her progress and seek input and feedback from the team, allowing stimulating discussion and challenging both her work and some assumptions in the GII Team. This has allowed the team to take back some of her findings and research to the business. I meet regularly with Roisin and her tutors, and I have been able to make some introductions to business leaders in Finland when Roisin went on an Overseas Institutional Visit to Aalto University in Helsinki, allowing her to develop a broader understanding of her subject.

From a personal perspective, I have enjoyed the challenge of supporting an academic, where we were both able to challenge academic thinking in a practical context and to bring that research and expertise into the work we do with our clients. This is the beauty of this Programme and its practical use in how we work with our clients.

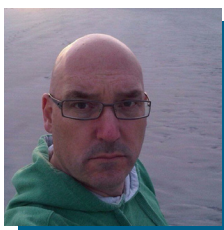
Meet our SDS sponsors



Dr Allison Carrington
Student: Kaja Horn



Andrea Hall
Student: Elle Scott



Anthony Standing
Student: Marina Milosheva



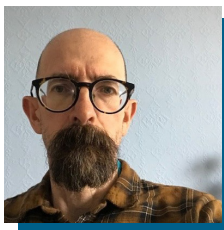
April Robertson
Student: Maria Cecil



David Coyne
Student: John Marshall



Deborah Miller
Student: Grace Barrett



Denis Donoghue
Student: Fanni Tamasi



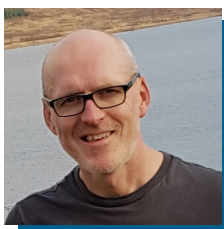
Dr Emma Hollywood
Student: Cara Nethery
and Martina Lippi



Fergus McMillan
Student: Cara Nethery



Graeme Hendry
Student: Paul Quigley



Greg Hiddleston
Student: Elle Scott



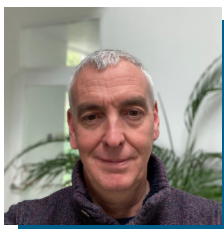
Ian Bruce
Student: Louise MacAulay
and Martina Lippi



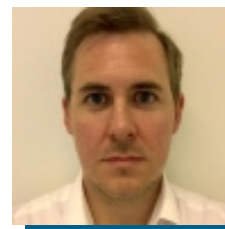
James Burns
Student: Roisin Dooley-
Nealis



Katie Killen
Student: Aleksander
Bielinski



Ken Edwards
Student: Gaile Siusyte



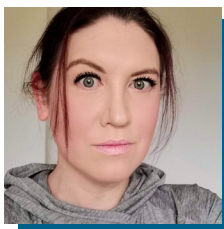
Lewis Gale
Student: Stephen Hughes
and Katherine Stephen



Lorna Stalker
Student: Shayla Bletsoe



Dr Lynne Robson
Student: Anya Kaufman



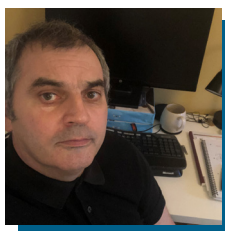
Mairi Rule
Student: Karen Gilmore



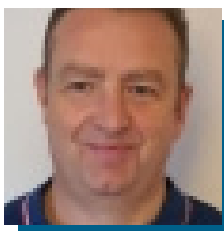
Dr Malcolm Greig
Student: Grace Barrett



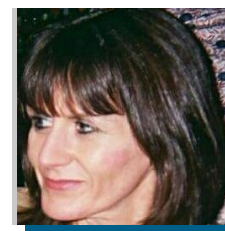
Michelle Goldenpenny
Student: Maria Cecil



Dr Patrick Watt
Student: Daniela Latina
and Hannah Glover



Roddy Bailey
Student: Elle Scott



Sandra Cheyne
Student: Marianne Wilson

SDS PhD Internships

SDS works in partnership with SGSSS to offer internship opportunities to students undertaking a PhD within a SGSSS member institution in Scotland. PhD internships provide work-based experience outside of the students' topic areas at a level appropriate to PhD research. They support the development of transferable skills, enhance employability, and provide the student with experience of working in research in a non-academic setting.

A closer look at... Paul's Internship

When I applied for my internship at SDS I just started the second year of my PhD. This means that I was in the phase where research projects usually really kick off. Too early to be gearing up for the infamous "time after the PhD"; a poorly timed distraction from the main PhD work? I was not sure. What I was sure of, however, was that at some point during my PhD I wanted to get to know non-university research and work in a team on joint projects. In the end, I could compare both worlds side-by-side on a part-time basis.



Paul Schuler

For the internship, I was looking for a project that combines my theoretical research with an applied project that also poses a challenge. In my doctoral project, I am investigating how the characteristics of young adults' social networks influence their availability of social support and how the place where they live plays a role in this. Since social relationships and social support are essential in the trajectories of young people, SDS seemed a very interesting organisation to me.

The internship that matched my goals was a project in the Evaluation and Research team, where I helped the team to move from using different software to a single, more flexible open-source one. In the process, I helped to build a so-called 'reproducible analytical pipeline'. In doing so, I was able to put my data science skills from my previous studies to good use and learnt a lot about how to work efficiently to the benefit of a team. The pipeline facilitates the process from the raw data to different outputs and makes it faster, reproducible and more robust. I could also experiment with different forms of data visualisation. Using the pipeline, we produced different standard outputs and conducted more in-depth analysis on the educational ambitions of young people in Scotland, I was invited to present to different audiences within the organisation.

From the first day at my internship, I felt like a real member of the team that both fully supported me and trusted me with different tasks. Every single colleague I interacted with was very kind and welcoming which I think is exceptional. Going in to work (or starting up the computer) to a group of friendly faces made the whole work very pleasant.

During the internship, I had the opportunity to learn many things. Working on several projects at the same time was fast-paced and very interesting. Although most of the data analysis was much more descriptive than I was used to from my PhD research, it quickly became clear how insightful the outcomes were and what kind of impact they could have. Above all, I learned the importance of disseminating results in a clear and concise way.

My time as an intern at SDS was a truly exciting and enjoyable one for which I am very grateful and would like to thank the team from the bottom of my heart. What I can say now is that it was anything but a poorly timed distraction. I would recommend anyone who is thinking about applying for an internship at SDS to do so when the opportunity arises.

SDS PhD Programme events

SDS provides a rich and varied programme of events for our PhD students to support dissemination, impact and networking. The Programme aims to support the development of innovative research on skills and learning and feed this back into an applied setting within SDS, helping to promote real-world impact.

Annual Networking Event 2023: Developing research insights for a changing world

The latest SDS PhD Programme Annual Networking Event took place on Friday 24th March 2023 at the University of Strathclyde. The event brought together academics, PhD students, SDS colleagues and key stakeholders to share research insights and celebrate the impact of the SDS PhD Programme.

Gordon McGuinness, Director of Industry and Enterprise Networks, outlined how the SDS PhD Programme has been identified by the Economic and Social Research Council as a demonstrator of innovation and best practice. He also emphasised that the PhD Programme is a key source of insight to inform the delivery of the SDS strategic plan 2022-2027.

Professor Colin Lindsay and Gordon McGuinness



“It’s great to hear about the cutting-edge research that SDS PhD researchers have been carrying out. These early career researchers really are at the forefront of breaking new ground and producing new evidence that will inform what will happen in workplaces and inform skills policy. It has been incredibly exciting to hear their stories.”

Professor Colin Lindsay, University of Strathclyde

Professor Jamie Pearce, Director of SGSSS, spoke of the benefits of collaboration, including access to experts and innovative research along with ideas to improve policy and practice. The keynote speaker, Professor Colin Lindsay from the University of Strathclyde, shared the key skills and workplace challenges for Scotland alongside how research can contribute solutions.

SDS PhD student Anya Kaufman reflected on the benefits of attending the event.

“I think the annual networking event has been absolutely fantastic. It has been a great opportunity to share my research with the relevant stakeholders in SDS and other policy makers across Scotland and really just tell them what I have been doing for the last three years, get their feedback and use that to further develop my research.”

Anya Kaufman, SDS PhD student



PhD students at the Annual Networking Event 2023

Three Minute Thesis® competition

During March of 2023, we held our annual Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition for SDS and non-SDS PhD students. Entrants provided a three minute video outlining their research question, approach, and its importance to policy.

The judging panel included: Dr Kirsten Jenkins, Programme Director for the MSc in Energy, Society and Sustainability, University of Edinburgh; Professor Jamie Pearce, Director, SGSSS; Ian Bruce, Equality Mainstreaming Manager, SDS; and Dr Patrick Watt, Head of Evaluation and Research at SDS.

“It was a pleasure to watch such fantastic presentations, to learn about the amazing breadth of work taking place in the skills development space, and to be exposed to both emerging Scottish experts and field-leading insights into the Scottish skills context.”

Dr Kirsten Jenkins, MSc Programme Director, University of Edinburgh



2023 3MT winners and judges

“The submissions to the 3MT thesis demonstrated the breadth of important research taking place through the SDS/SGSSS partnership and contributing to enhancing skills policy and delivery in Scotland. The participants in the 3MT also showed their talents for working alongside colleagues beyond the academic sector, and expertly communicating their research in a pithy, accessible and engaging way. It was a great pleasure to be involved in judging these excellent submissions.”

Professor Jamie Pearce, Director, SGSSS

“I was really impressed with the standard of the submissions this year, and the real relevance to the ongoing work of SDS. As a PhD Sponsor, being asked to be on the judging panel was a real privilege and a fantastic way to hear about all the exciting pieces of work the PhD students and others are involved in across SDS, rather than the siloed view of each specific area, we unintentionally fall into.”

Ian Bruce, Equality Mainstreaming Manager, SDS

There were four winners overall in the four categories of PhD Award, Masters Award, Non-SDS Student Award and People's Choice Award.



PhD Award
Roisin Dooley-Nealis
University of
Glasgow



Masters Award
Maria Cecil
Edinburgh Napier
University



**Non-SDS Student
Award**
Erin Bartley
University of
Glasgow



**People's Choice
Award**
Elysha Ramage
University of
Glasgow

All entries were of an extremely high standard and all videos can be [viewed online](#).

“It was interesting trying to decide what information to include and what to leave out and I felt a responsibility also to reflect the hard work I had done so far on my research with the great support of my supervisors as part of our partnership with SDS. It was also a great chance to practice being in front of a camera and hone my public speaking skills, it really helped me work on my presentation delivery.”
Roisin Dealey-Nealis, University of Glasgow and winner of SDS PhD Award

“I think the best thing about the 3MT was meeting lots of contacts through the process. It was great to chat to other researchers about their work and where we could potentially work together, already planning joint papers with other researchers. The whole process has definitely helped my confidence and my skills in being more concise.”
Erin Bartley, University of Glasgow and winner of non-SDS PhD Award

The winning 3MT videos were announced and shown at the Annual Networking Event in March 2023.

PhD Programme impact events

We run impact events for SDS colleagues, bringing together SDS PhD students on the themes of Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG); Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; and Work-based Learning with colleagues in these areas.

Students have the opportunity to feed into the design and delivery of services by presenting their research findings to relevant staff who can then feed research into practice, supporting our goal to be an evidence-led organisation.



SDS PhD student seminars

SDS runs a series of online student seminars for SDS PhD students. These provide a safe and productive space for students to share their research approaches and findings with other students and SDS colleagues at different points during their PhD. The seminars enable students to receive constructive and supportive feedback and ensure that policy and practice links are considered throughout the research process.

Buddy system

We know that effective support plays a key role in ensuring that students settle into the PhD Programme well and develop a strong sense of community. SDS operates a buddy system for our new PhD students where they are matched with an existing student for informal support along their journey.

Masters events

PhD students who undertake a Masters as part of their PhD are invited to attend a seminar with SDS staff to present their dissertation findings and outline their PhD plans.

“Presenting the findings from my Masters dissertation at the SDS Masters event was a fantastic opportunity to share my learning with an engaged, supportive audience, and to gain some good practice for future dissemination activities. As a PhD student, it can sometimes be difficult to make connections between theory and practice so it’s extremely useful to have these events to bring together academics, careers practitioners and policy makers. My sponsors April and Michelle allowed me to have a dry run with them before presenting which helped to alleviate any nerves, and the audience asked interesting questions, provided positive feedback, and signposted me to useful resources for further study, which has helped to guide me through the PhD.”

Maria Cecil, PhD student

Student welcome and induction events

All new students are invited to attend an SDS welcome and induction event. This event introduces the SDS PhD Programme and SDS as an organisation. Our induction provides an opportunity for new students to meet with their SDS sponsor, SGSSS colleagues, other new students, the SDS PhD team and their PhD student buddy.



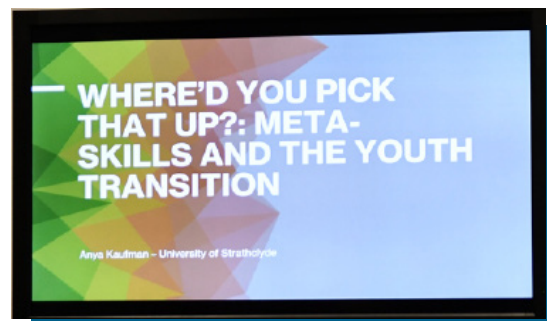
PhD insight events

These events are organised towards the end of the student's PhD and provide an opportunity for the student to meet with senior SDS staff to discuss the implications of their research for skills policy and practice. These events are also invaluable practice for students preparing for their viva.

Students produce an end of PhD report with support from their SDS sponsor outlining the main findings of the research and any policy recommendations. SDS then circulates the PhD findings and insights across SDS through a PhD research summary for each topic. Depending on the topic, toolkits or other practical outputs may be produced at the end of a student's PhD.

“I really enjoyed the different SDS events in the final year of my PhD. I had the opportunity to present my key research findings for a varied audience during the PhD conference in March, which was a very useful experience for me to learn how to translate 4 years’ work into an accessible, but informative, 10-minute format. I also appreciated the opportunity to present my final research outputs to a wider audience within SDS, which helped me to understand the wider implications of my research for policy and practice. It was also nice to see how SDS could utilise my research outputs, and the conversations that followed the presentation helped me to shape my final recommendations in my thesis as well.”

Fanni Tamasi, PhD student



Meet our alumni

The following students have successfully completed the collaborative PhD Programme and have either graduated or are waiting to graduate following a successful viva examination. Viva is short for “viva voce” which means “by or with the living voice” and is where PhD candidates must give a verbal defence of their research thesis. Having successfully defended their thesis at a viva voce examination they will earn the title Doctor.

Most recently, Dr Petri Simonen has joined the SDS alumni community.

Name	PhD title
Dr Mark Egan	Childhood psychological predictors of unemployment: evidence from four cohort studies
Dr John Evans	Shaping apprenticeships: strategic actors in skill ecosystems
Dr Magdalena Gilek	The impact of job quality on mental health among young workers in the UK
Dr Gabi Lipan	Mind the GAP: an investigation into the factors influencing student, academic and employer perceptions of graduate attributes
Dr Alana McGuire	The impact of big data on skills requirements
Dr Lyndsey Middleton	Exploring the development of innovative work behaviour of employees in multiple workplace contexts
Dr John Mowbray	The role of networking and social media tools during job search: an information behaviour perspective
Dr Kane Needham	The role of social networking sites in career management
Dr Petri Simonen	Young people’s key influences for transitions into the world of work and the role of careers guidance in Scotland
Dr Bozena Wielgoszewska	Understanding university graduates’ social mobility trajectories: how does the route affect the outcome?

Dr Mark Egan



Childhood psychological predictors of unemployment: evidence from four cohort studies

Mark's research examined how certain non-cognitive skills (e.g. self-control) and different levels of mental health in early life predict future unemployment. His research used British and American data from four cohort studies to examine how later unemployment was affected by childhood capacity for self-control. The research found that self-control, conscientiousness, and mental health all play a role in future unemployment and that children with poor self-control were more likely than more self-controlled children to experience unemployment during the UK's 1980 recession and the US's 2007 recession.

Mark Graduated in 2017 and currently works as a Senior Research Advisor for the Behavioural Insights Team in London.



Dr John Evans

Shaping apprenticeships: strategic actors in skill ecosystems

John's research considered the power relations between strategic actors and their repercussions for the shape and direction of apprenticeships. The research adopted a comparative case study design looking at engineering apprenticeships in Scotland and England, using an adapted 'skill ecosystem' lens to dig deep into actor power in skills systems. His research increased understanding of the division of labour between actors in the context of apprenticeships, analysing roles, interests, and relative power to shape skills.

John graduated in 2020 and now works at the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) as the Head of Devolved Nations.



Dr Magdalena Gilek



The impact of job quality on mental health among young workers in the UK

Magdalena's research examined job quality and mental health among young workers in four European countries. The study used large-scale European surveys to investigate how young workers evaluate the quality of their jobs in the context of the contemporary labour market. It considered the most significant factors that enable or challenge young adults in achieving or sustaining a high quality of working life, and the impact of job quality on their mental health. Magdalena's research makes an important contribution to understanding three key areas of job quality: its components, predicting factors, and outcomes. She produced new research findings on the impact of 'job fit' in terms of both skills and hours on young people's mental health (measured by exhaustion, stress and fatigue) and on the mediating impact of perceived employability. Magdalena graduated in 2020 and currently works as a lecturer in HRM and Organisational Behaviour at Edinburgh Napier University.



Dr Gabi Lipan



Mind the GAP: an investigation into the factors influencing student, academic and employer perceptions of graduate attributes

Gabi was the SDS PhD Programme's first 1+3 student. He completed his Master's at the University of Aberdeen and submitted his PhD in 2021. Gabi started his PhD by investigating the factors influencing student, academic and employer perceptions of graduate attributes. He then moved on to creating a universal model of graduate attributes and validating this model with stakeholder input. After the "7i Model" of graduate attributes was finished, Gabi's final PhD year was dedicated to the assessment of them. Applying methods used in high-risk industries such as aviation, Gabi created a behavioural markers system that can be used to assess and give feedback on observable 'easy to see' attributes. This will enable the assessment of graduate attributes that could not be assessed through traditional written assessments or exams (e.g. teamwork). As graduate attributes and meta-skills are inter-related, this approach can be adapted to the SDS meta-skills model. In addition to his academic work, Gabi has completed a PhD internship with SDS and is regularly in touch with SDS to present his findings and discuss their practical implications with key colleagues in the organisation. After finishing his PhD, Gabi worked as a Data Literacy Coach at Multiverse and is now working as Technical Lead for the Data Literacy Programme at Multiverse.



Dr John Mowbray

Edinburgh Napier
UNIVERSITY



The role of networking and social media tools during job search: an information behaviour perspective

John's research investigated job search networking amongst 16 to 24-year-olds living in Scotland. John explored the role of social media platforms in job search through interviews, focus groups and a survey. John's research found that frequent networking both offline and on social media is associated with positive job search outcomes – especially with family networking and use of Facebook for job searching. However, contextual factors including demographics can influence this. Furthermore, it was found that young people face multiple barriers to networking and so do not always utilise their networks effectively. Through John's engagement with SDS, he has used his findings to create a detailed list of recommendations for practitioners.

John graduated in 2018 and currently works as a Research Officer with the Scottish Government.



Dr Kane Needham

UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING



The role of social networking sites in career management

Kane's PhD explored the role of social networking sites (SNS) and the wider internet as a revolutionary platform for career management. He analysed large-scale survey data to map internet and SNS usage by demographic characteristics for a range of social groups and conducted in-depth case studies to look more closely at how productive use of the internet and SNS are for gaining employment. Kane's study also considered the extent to which the internet can be used productively as a tool to enhance skills and opportunity for everyone, whether it mitigates traditional labour market barriers or creates a 'second-level digital divide' and uneven distribution of digital skills. In addition, Kane looked at the role of social capital and at the continuing relevance of informal methods of finding work, such as through a personal contact.

Kane graduated in 2019 and currently works as a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Hull.



Dr Alana McGuire



The impact of big data on skill requirements

Alana's research looked at the ways in which rapid advances in information technology and the emergence of Big Data are changing the nature of employer demand for skills and the pace at which skills supply needs to change to enable employers to remain competitive. The research also explored the barriers facing employers in responding to the need to develop skills in working with Big Data and considered whether there was evidence of social, gender, and ethnic inequalities in the distribution of Big Data skills. Key findings included the need to see the value of data, improving skills and training and finding solutions to personal data storage, particularly around trust in cloud storage.

Alana passed her viva in 2021 and now works at Skills Development Scotland as a Skills Planning Executive.



Dr Lyndsey Middleton



Exploring the development of innovative work behaviour of employees in multiple workplace contexts

Lyndsey's research explored the informational, contextual and individual factors that enhance and inhibit the development of innovative work behaviour. A main output of her research was the development of a framework to explain how organisations can improve innovative work behaviour. The research draws upon aspects of information behaviour and use, organisational culture, and strategy as part of the framework development to provide a series of recommendations to practitioners.

Lyndsey graduated in 2020 and currently works as a Senior Assistant Statistician in the National Performance Framework Evidence and Reporting Team at the Scottish Government.



Dr Petri Simonen



Young people's key influences for transitions into the world of work and the role of careers guidance in Scotland

Petri's research examined how different influencers can affect young adults' educational choices and when those different influencers were important in the young adults' journeys. The study was conducted in Scottish policy context. As a result, the study also examined how Career Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) services paired with measures included in policies such as Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) to influence young adults' decision-making. This influence took place mostly through information and support provided by different institutional influencers both in and outside schools.

Petri passed his viva in May 2023.

Dr Bozena Wielgoszewska



Understanding university graduates' social mobility trajectories: how does the route affect the outcome?

Bozena's research examined the relationships between individuals' work histories and their social mobility trajectories, accounting for several additional characteristics. Her research used a sample of over 1,000 graduates from the 1970 British Cohort Study to reconstruct their economic histories before deploying sequence analysis to derive a typology of graduates' progression through social classes, and a typology of career pathways. It was found that a relationship exists between career type and social mobility trajectories, however additional factors (such as social, geographical and individual attributes, internal migration trajectories and higher education) also play a role. Bozena's research shows that career type is the missing link in contemporary social mobility research.

Bozena graduated in 2019 and currently works as a Research Associate at the Social Research Institute, University College London, dividing her time between the Centre for Longitudinal Studies and Quantitative Social Science.

Looking forward to...



Student seminar series

The seminar series enables SDS PhD students to share their research and ideas with other PhD students and SDS colleagues. We have at least four seminars each academic year. For 2023/24 we will have a mixture of online and in-person seminars and events.



Annual Networking Event

We are looking forward to hosting our next Annual Networking Event in 2024.



Continuing to disseminate and innovate: impact events

The PhD Programme is now firmly established, and our cohort of excellent PhD students have produced a significant body of high quality, valuable academic research on the Scottish skills system.

We run thematic impact events aimed at bringing together PhD students to present their work to SDS colleagues on a number of relevant themes.

For 23/24 we will run impact events on careers information advice and guidance (CIAG) and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Meet the PhD impact and insight team



Dr Emma Hollywood
Insight and Impact
Manager

Based in the SDS Evaluation and Research team, the Insight and Impact team support the delivery of the SDS collaborative PhD Programme and are also responsible for equality, diversity and inclusion research across SDS.

In delivery of the PhD Programme, we work closely with our students, academic supervisors, SDS sponsors and the SGSSS to ensure the success of our collaborative approach.

We organise events including the annual networking event, student seminar series and the 3MT[®] competition. We support our sponsor and student networks, buddy system, organise PhD internships in SDS, and assist in the development of new PhD topics and in the recruitment of new students.

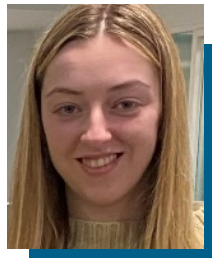
The team is also committed to supporting young talent by having a Graduate Intern and Graduate Apprentice working on the PhD Programme and supporting the Evaluation and Research Team.

Get in touch with us:

phd@sds.co.uk



Olivia Cochrane
Evaluation and Research
Graduate Intern



Rachel O'Hare
Evaluation and
Research
Graduate Apprentice



Dr Emma Parry
Evaluation and
Research Executive

For more information about our PhD Programme or if you would like information about any of the students' areas of research please get in touch.

PhD@sds.co.uk

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/research-and-insight/phd-programme/>



Economic and Social Research Council



Sgoil Cheumnaichean Saidheans Sòisealta na h-Alba