

Issue E8

GRADUATE COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

The newsletter for our research student community



Making a difference



News



New coaching role for HLS student

Daniel Newcombe, PhD student in the Department of Sport, Health Sciences and Social Work, has taken up a new role as Head Coach of the Welsh Men's Hockey team.

Daniel has been with the Wales Men's coaching set-up for over nine years and has seen the team achieve incredible success, including attaining their highest ever World Hockey ranking following promotion to the EuroHockey Championships.

Daniel took up his new position in September 2020 and will lead the team in the run up to their crucial European competition in June 2021.

"I am incredibly honoured to have the opportunity to lead the senior men's programme. This is a special group of people, one that is a privilege to be part of. I am very aware that I have some big shoes to fill."

On hearing of the appointment, former Head Coach Zak Jones said that he was "absolutely delighted" for Daniel.

"I am certain that he will have the full support of both the playing group and staff and that he will also provide the squad with stability and continuity as he leads them into their European campaign in 2021."

Helping the transition to the digital world

One of the negative impacts of the first lockdown was the inability of many businesses to communicate with their clients.

Mohamed Sami Kerrouche, PhD student in the Oxford Brookes Business School, offered a remedy to this problem by founding London Media Lounge (LML) in April 2020.

LML helps SMEs, educational establishments and start-up businesses showcase their products and services and make the vital transition into the digital world.

In just a few months, LML has built an impressive portfolio of clients that includes start-ups, IT services providers and 'traditional' businesses such as private medical centres, factories, and financial services organisations.

LML is particularly interested in partnering with educational establishments to assist them in handling their communications during unprecedented events such as a pandemic. The company has even developed a specific program to aid in the transition to online teaching and to help students develop their online profiles to increase their research exposure and employability.

"We are young, talented and ambitious, and we hope to do business with everyone who might need us."

Find out more about LML on their website: londonmedialounge.co.uk

PhD student sells bracelets to raise money for trauma charities

GLC Resilience Coaching, a one-to-one coaching service founded by Brookes' Gemma Margerison, is working with ESC Bracelets to sell 5,000 Resilience Bands to raise money for charities working within the military community, as well as those who have experienced trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Gemma, who is studying for a Doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring, came up with the idea after a significant breakthrough in her own recovery in 2018.

"My counsellor asked me what it was going to take for me to be able to draw a line under my experiences. What I had found most difficult was feeling like I had a hole inside me that I couldn't fill; it ached constantly and sucked all the joy out of my life. I told my counsellor that I needed to find my missing piece."

A couple of days later, Gemma walked into a jewellery shop and bought a necklace with a jigsaw puzzle piece charm on it. Everything immediately changed.

"That symbol had an incredible effect. I had my missing piece, I was whole, and there was nothing holding me back."

Now Gemma wants to help others in the same way.

"I wanted to create a physical reminder for individuals that they are resilient; something subtle but powerful, something wearable and durable, and something that has heart. That's when I found ESC Bracelets."

Gemma hopes to hit the 5,000-band target by the end of 2021 and has already made significant progress in reaching that goal.



"Given everything we've been through this year, everyone deserves to be reminded of how resilient they are. Buy one for yourself or give one as a gift; the beautiful thing about these bands is that they not only help the wearer but also pay it forward to amazing charities and those who benefit from the services they offer."

The money will go to three charities:

- **Breathe Therapies** will deliver free PTSD and online Mental Health support groups
- **Advocacy Focus** will provide 150 hours of direct advocacy to people
- **HorseHeard** will offer 10 places to military veterans on their 'Find Your Place' programme

Additional funds are earmarked for delivering free Resilience Courses for Military Veterans as well as supporting the launch of *Connected*, Gemma's upcoming book that is due for release in mid-2021. *Connected* explores 'The Four Spheres of Connection' - Gemma's own model for wellbeing - with the help of industry experts from over 50 businesses, organisations and charities.

Find out more about GLC Resilience Coaching: gemmalouisecoaching.com

Resilience Bands can be purchased [here](#).



Harvard Institute of Coaching Conference

Karine Mangion-Thornley, PhD student in the Oxford Brookes Business School, was given the chance to travel to Boston to present her research at the 2020 Institute of Coaching Conference.

Karine, who is the recipient of a Harnisch Research Grant from the Harvard-affiliated Institute of Coaching, used the opportunity to discuss the role of coaching in talent management programmes.

Drawing on in-depth qualitative data from 30 interviews within a multinational firm in the banking industry, Karine's study contributes in developing, among other things, an in-depth understanding of coaching for training management purposes through the lens of social exchange and psychological contract theories.

Reflecting later on the conference, Karine said that it represented "a unique opportunity to learn from world leaders in leadership, neuroscience, health and well-being, coaching and positive psychology, and expand my professional network for future scholarly collaboration."

Postgraduate Research Symposium 2020

In early 2020, postgraduates from across the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences came together to share their work at the Faculty's annual Postgraduate Research Symposium.

The day was packed with over 30 talks and 22 posters, all produced and presented by PhD and MRes students.

Poster sessions gave early-stage researchers their first opportunity to share their work in an intimate setting and receive feedback from colleagues. The sessions saw researchers communicate their ideas and engage with a wide variety of sponsors who came along to support the symposium.

The involvement of sponsors provided researchers with a vital opportunity to network and to foster the collaborative and tight-knit community that Oxford Brookes prides itself on.

Third-year DTP student Shamma Rattan Booth felt that the symposium provided a "very positive environment" in which students could communicate their projects to a wider audience.

"Not only can you engage with fellow researchers, it gives you a platform to develop your project through collaborations and expert advice from researchers in other fields. Presenting my work allowed me to engage confidently and network, two valuable skills that I am always looking to enhance."

Click [here](#) to read a full report of the symposium.



International attention for PhD student's research paper

A research study co-authored by Brookes' Thaís Morcatty has featured in the *New York Times* as part of an article on the illegal trade in wild cats.

The study, originally published in the June 2020 edition of the prestigious *Conservation Biology*, shows that seizures of jaguar parts have increased tremendously in the Central and South America regions, and that private investment from China is significantly correlated with trafficking of the species.

"For the very first time, we have a big picture of what is happening in Central and South America regarding trade in jaguar body parts," said Thaís, who is the lead author of the study.

"What we can learn from this is that the patterns we saw in Asia and Africa are now starting to emerge in South America," said Vincent Nijman, a co-author of the study and Professor in Anthropology at Brookes. "If there is demand, it will be fulfilled, even if you go to another continent on the other side of the world."

The study has attracted significant attention across the scientific world. At the time of writing, it is judged to be in the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric, which tracks the quality and quantity of online attention for published research.

Click [here](#) to read the *New York Times* article.

Brookes' Alumna takes up new role at Harvard

Brookes' Alumna Salem Al Qudwa recently took up the position of Practitioner Fellow at Harvard University as part of the Religion, Conflict, and Peace Initiative.

Salem explores everyday architecture as a resource for positive social transformation, and his fellowship project, 'The Troubled Everyday in/of Gaza: Restoring Agency and Creative Possibility', strives to improve spatial design practice in Gaza and other conflict areas such as Syria, Iraq, and Libya.

The project will elucidate how young women who have been widowed in the ongoing conflict adapt to their new situation within their in-laws' family house, and how this predicament reshapes the contours of everyday architectural design when it comes to privacy and long-term security for women and children.

Salem's proposed research will rethink the implications of 'everyday spaces' for urban as well as rural social patterns in the post-conflict reconstruction process. It will also challenge conventional attitudes toward home reconstruction by emphasizing how architecture not only provides a sense of stability, peace, and protection from conflict, but also restores human agency, which in turn finds expression in a variety of creative forms.

Salem is looking forward to asking more hard questions and taking his leadership and capacities to higher levels.

TDE Research Methods Festival 2020



This year's research student conference in the Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment diverged from the usual format by focusing on research methods and methodologies.

At the request of students, the conference was open to non-student researchers as a way of linking students to ongoing research and applied methods. Presentations took the form of papers, performances and posters, and, as Dr Tim Jones explained, the aim of the day was to remind those present of the "joy of doing research."

The event was organised by three PhD students – Aline Barata (Built Environment), Shadi Eltanani (Engineering, Computing and Mathematics), and Juan Wang (also Engineering, Computing and Mathematics) – and supported by Beste Ozyurt (Visiting Research Student), Dr Juliet Carpenter, Ben Spencer, Professor Sue Brownill, and Allison Stevens.

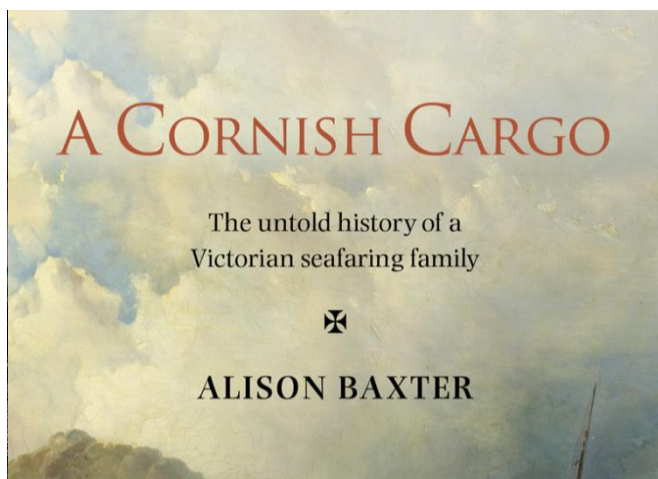
During the opening stages of the event, Professor Nigel Crook (Associate Dean: Research and Knowledge Exchange) commented that it had become "the most prominent event in the Faculty's Doctoral Training Programme" and had "produced an exciting new academic programme that opens up the dialogue around research methods

among both staff and students in the different schools of arts, computing, built environment, engineering and architecture."

"It is a time when we can all get together as researchers in various disciplines to share research approaches and network with colleagues and friends at different stages of their academic career."

The programme featured a wide range of research method presentations on big data, mobile methods, augmented reality, arts-based methods, qualitative research, and film-based methods, as well as an interdisciplinary workshop that sought to cross disciplinary boundaries through research methodologies. Participants also had the opportunity to see how PhD students and staff were using particular methodologies across a diverse range of research fields.

In addition, the event included an installation and poster exhibition, with participants being asked to evaluate the best poster. Isabel Zozaya from the School of Built Environment won first prize for her poster titled 'Defining and restoring Cultural Landscapes and Place-Identity of historic Cities: the Case of Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico'. Serkan Gunay (School of Architecture) came in second for his poster titled '3D Visualization with Mobile Digital Technologies'.



Book launch for Brookes' PhD Alumna

A new book by an Oxford Brookes' PhD alumna tells the story of the Dupens, a family of merchant venturers, mariners and engineers of Huguenot origin who had the "propensity to wander far over the earth."

Part social history and part detective story, *A Cornish Cargo: The untold history of a Victorian seafaring family*, written by Dr Alison Baxter, offers a true account of how the fortunes of one family changed as a result of the Industrial Revolution.

Part 1 of the book is set in Cornwall and tells the story of how an enterprising sailor named Sharrock Dupen moved to Hayle in 1835 to become the steward on the new paddle steamer service that connected Cornwall to Bristol and the rest of England. Part 2 is set several decades later when Sharrock and his sons set out to seek their fortunes across the world.

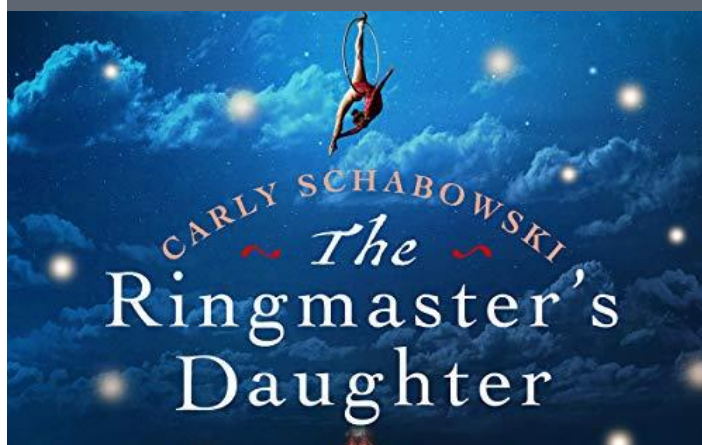
As the story begins with a link to the Huguenots – 'England's first refugees' – Alison is donating £1 from every copy sold to **Sanctuary Hosting**, an Oxford-based charity that provides temporary accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers.

Find out more about the book on Alison's website: victorianlives.wordpress.com/

Debut novel for PhD student

Brookes' PhD student Carly Schabowski has recently published her debut novel, *The Ringmaster's Daughter*. The novel is set in wartime Paris, where twenty-year-old Michel Bonnet lives on the edge of the law, finding work where he can by breaking into houses on the outskirts of the city. When the Nazis invade, Michel takes refuge as a stowaway on a rickety train bound for the rural south. It is a journey that will change Michael's life forever.

Carly's interest in the Second World War spans from a familial connection and inspired her to complete a PhD on the author's responsibility to historical fiction. Her second novel, *The Watchmaker of Dachau*, is due to be published in January 2021.



Making science lessons more practical

Brookes' alumna Dr Sarah Frodsham has co-written an article on **the impact and effectiveness of Thinking, Doing, Talking Science (TDTS)**, a programme that aims to make science lessons in primary schools more practical, creative and challenging.

Published in *Research in Science & Technological Education* and co-written by Brookes' Professor Debra McGregor and Helen Wilson, the article illustrates how a mixed-methods approach is required to substantiate the nature, as well as the extent of impact, of an educational intervention.

Research Student Profiles



Zixuan Ran

Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment

The title of my thesis is 'Development of Advanced Silicon Fibre Reinforced Aluminium Matrix Composites'

“My research project aims to utilise modelling techniques to optimise both material and component design.”

After completing my master's degree at the University of Dundee, I was looking for a doctorate which allowed me to explore and learn new things in detail. Oxford Brookes was offering some really interesting PhD project opportunities online.

What really attracted me to Oxford Brookes was the opportunity to be involved in a cutting-edge project. I was impressed with the research interests and the experience of my supervisors: Dr Neil Fellows and Professor John Durodola. What is more, the PhD was fully funded by the Oxford Brookes 150th anniversary scholarship.

I completed my undergraduate degree at Tianjin Medical University with the exchange year at the University of Dundee. I then continued my MSc in Biomedical Engineering at Dundee, for which I achieved a Distinction.

I love the research environment at Brookes; everyone is friendly and helpful. There is lots of training offered and I have gained really valuable skills in research and self-development. My supervisors have been very patient and supportive, and constantly provide me with encouragement, valuable advice and unconditional help.

My research project aims to utilise modelling

techniques to optimise both material and component design. Long fibre reinforced metal matrix composites have been under development since the early 1990s but had struggled to become commercial due to high manufacturing costs. This lack of commercial success had curtailed investment, hindering proper understanding of the material properties and component design optimisation.

However, there are niche applications where the strength to weight ratio makes them commercially attractive. For example, Al/C composites are now successfully used in a number of countries as overhead power transmission cables. New improved manufacturing techniques are leading to improved material properties at lower cost. This improves the potential for commercial viability and provides an impetus for further research into material characterisation and design optimisation.

In the future, I aim to apply my knowledge and put my skills into practice. Undertaking a PhD is a great experience and opportunity to challenge myself. It has improved my ability to solve complex problems and has helped me develop valuable transferrable skills. It is an excellent training process for creativity, professionalism and confidence.



Masrura Ram Idjal
Oxford Brookes Business School

The title of my PhD is **'The influence of decentralisation of policy to the nexus of power in tourism in rural communities; a case study of the new Village Law (2014) in Indonesia'**.

My research aims to examine the 2014 Indonesian Village Law and its influence on the nexus of power in rural tourism destinations. The focus of the research is on the planning and decision-making process at the village level. Decentralisation has been suggested by a number of scholars as critical to securing sustainable tourism development and as a democratic process. While many authors have focused extensively on the dynamics within communities, for the most part they have not explored the connection and interaction between the local community and local government within a decentralised system. The level of authority provided to the community, the legitimacy of policy decision making within the community, and the resources to deliver tourism policies have also not been studied in the decentralised tourism policy mechanisms.

The primary focus of this research is to define the 'mechanic' of gaining participation from local community members. There are widely differing views about what constitutes effective

community participation, and many researchers have not explored the connection and interaction between the local community and local government within the decentralised system.

My research will define the enhancing factors of citizen participation in the village, particularly in tourism development. The primary data has been gathered in two rural tourism destinations in Indonesia, which have been selected according to their tourism development trajectory stage. This research will analyse the advantage and disadvantage, the implications, and the process of policy formulation that can emerge from the implementation of the policy for tourism rural community's engagement in Indonesia, as well as contributing to theory by delimiting the essential pre-requisites to support rural tourism communities in maximizing the benefits from policy decentralisation.

I enjoy being a research student as it gives me an opportunity to explore, in detail, a research topic that I am passionate about.

After completing my PhD, I would like to work to help our communities develop their tourism potential, and expand my business in the tourism industry in Indonesia.

The primary focus of this research is to define the 'mechanic' of gaining participation from local community members.



Chris Griffiths
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

The title of my PhD is **'Authenticity in the work of W. G. Sebald and Bruce Chatwin'**.

My research is a work of literary criticism, but is also rooted in philosophy, and I think the two complement each other well. It follows on from the MA I undertook a few years ago on the work of the German author W. G. Sebald, which looked at various aspects of the uncanny in his prose narratives. Sebald's voice is certainly amongst the most interesting in contemporary literature, and as such he continues to be studied widely in academia. Alongside Sebald, my research also includes the work of the writer Bruce Chatwin, a far less common figure to be seen studied in universities but arguably one who left a body of work similarly important and difficult to categorise.

Chatwin was something of a self-mythologist who blurred the boundary between fact and fiction in his own life. He travelled widely because he was naturally peripatetic, but also because his concept of self was 'nomadic'. Sebald used themes of physical movement and displacement as a means to examine the construction of a stable sense of identity in the face of unreliable memory and the questionable legitimacy of truth. It is now open to debate whether such thing as a single, constant self

even exists in contemporary Western society; and, if it does, how do we discover it? The narrators of Sebald and Chatwin attempt various means to locate the authentic, from collecting Meissen porcelain to analysing photographs and films. But their journeys rarely provide a straightforward answer.

As part of my research, I hope to analyse not only the published work of Sebald and Chatwin but also the holdings of the Chatwin collection at the Bodleian Library. His extensive notes for a book-length project called 'The Nomadic Alternative' are housed here. My goal in undertaking a detailed analysis of identity and authenticity through the lens of the travel narrative in these authors is to add something new to the fascinating debate on authenticity in contemporary culture, and to uncover comparisons and textual interpretations previously unexamined in their work.

I am not really looking further than finishing the PhD in a few years' time. I am working part-time as well as studying, and as a mature student the research is something I am doing more for its own sake than as a career move. Having said that, there is always the possibility of academic opportunities arising further down the line.

My research is a work of literary criticism, but is also rooted in philosophy, and I think the two complement each other well.



Fiona Matley
Oxford Brookes Business School

The title of my PhD is **‘Using automatic processes to change drinking behaviour in midlife adults’**.

After studying for a master’s degree at Oxford Brookes, I worked as a Research Assistant in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, and found both experiences enjoyable. Through working here, I was already part of the Prevention Science Group, and knew both my supervisors: Dr Emma Davies and Professor David Foxcroft. These were important factors in my decision to apply to study for a PhD here.

I found the research culture at Brookes to be open, welcoming and enabling. People are willing to share what they have learned from their own research experiences, or suggest other sources of advice and support. Recently, the Psychology department moved into refurbished offices, giving researchers access to new facilities and equipment. I can see how these will support the different research activities in my PhD project.

The purpose of my project is to research, develop and test an intervention that aims to help midlife adults reduce the amount that they drink. Around two-thirds of alcohol-related deaths in the UK occur in people who are in their midlife years i.e. aged between 45 and 64

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years of age. Even though some people are drinking less than they did 10 years ago, patterns of alcohol consumption for people aged 45+ years are largely unchanged. Currently there is a limited amount of research focused on midlife drinking behaviour, and very few initiatives aiming to reduce alcohol consumption in this age range have been developed and tested. My project will be using the Behaviour Change Wheel (BCW), which provides a clear eight-step process, to guide the development of a new intervention to reduce the amount that people drink.

Life as a research student means taking on responsibilities, but you are also given autonomy and flexibility in the way you approach and manage your work. There are bound to be challenges along the way, and learning how to deal with these, and where to go for advice and support, is all part of the experience.

Like many other countries, the UK is facing some considerable challenges in responding to changing healthcare needs. We need good quality research and skilful researchers to help us understand and address those needs. I would like to be a part of that, and continue to build experience and expertise in developing health interventions.

Stay connected

Brookes has a strong and vibrant research student community. Here are just some of the ways you can stay in touch:

WRITING HUB: Upcoming Events in 2021

Write Space regular retreats

The **Writing Hub**'s virtual retreats aim to create a supportive, structured environment where you can meet a writing goal. A tutor will be available in a break-out room to chat through any issues that you might encounter, and the group will reflect together on the writing process before, during and after a good day's work.

The retreats are open to all Brookes staff and students and take place on a monthly basis throughout semester 2. You can sign up for the whole day (9am-4pm) or morning only:

- Wednesday 20 January
- Friday 19 February
- Wednesday 17 March
- Friday 23 April

BOOK YOUR RETREAT HERE



Follow us on Twitter @BrookesGC



Research Degrees Team Office Hours

9.00am–4.30pm
Monday to Friday

You can contact us with any queries by email: rd-enquiries@brookes.ac.uk or phone +44(0)1865 484244.

Training and social events

The Graduate College organise and support a variety of events for research students, including training and social get-togethers.

For further information visit: www.brookes.ac.uk/graduate-college/events

Research Student Noticeboard

The new Research Student Noticeboard is a Moodle site where research students can connect and ask each other questions via three forums.

Find out more by clicking 'Research Student Noticeboard' on your Moodle side menu.

RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Oxford Brookes is one of the leading modern universities in the UK with an excellent reputation for high-quality research and teaching.

FACULTY OF HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES

We offer a number of flexible part-time or full-time options via programmes including MSc by research, MPhil/PhD, a Professional Doctorate in Nursing, and PhD by published work. Find out more about departmental research degrees and how to apply:

Biological and Medical Sciences: brookes.ac.uk/bms/research/

Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health: brookes.ac.uk/nursing/research

Doctorate in Nursing: brookes.ac.uk/nursing/research/professional-doctorate-in-nursing

Psychology, Health and Professional Development:
brookes.ac.uk/phpd/research

Sport, Health Sciences and Social Work: brookes.ac.uk/shssw/research

OXFORD BROOKES BUSINESS SCHOOL

We are home to an expanding research community of doctoral students with focused but wide-ranging interests. We offer two research degrees: an MPhil/PhD and a Doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring (DCM). Find out more about our research degrees and how to apply:

International Centre for Coaching and Mentoring Studies:
brookes.ac.uk/iccams/

Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice: brookes.ac.uk/the-centre-for-diversity-policy-research-and-practice/

Centre for Business, Society and Global Challenges: brookes.ac.uk/bsgc/

RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMMES

FACULTY OF TECHNOLOGY, DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENT

The Faculty provides a vibrant and supportive environment for research students who are embedded within active research groups and centres. Find out more about our schools' research degrees and how to apply:

Architecture: brookes.ac.uk/architecture/research/research-degrees/

Arts: brookes.ac.uk/school-of-arts/research-degrees/

Built Environment: brookes.ac.uk/be/research/research-degrees/

Engineering and Mathematics: brookes.ac.uk/ecm/research/engineering

Computing: brookes.ac.uk/ecm/research/computing

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

We have a large, lively and growing postgraduate community that is leading the way in cutting-edge research. Find out more about departmental research degrees and how to apply:

English and Modern Languages: english-languages.brookes.ac.uk/english-languages/research

History, Philosophy and Culture: brookes.ac.uk/hpc/courses/research-degrees

Social Sciences: brookes.ac.uk/social-sciences/research

Law: brookes.ac.uk/school-of-law/courses/research-degrees

Education: brookes.ac.uk/school-of-education/research

Doctor of Education: brookes.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/doctor-of-education