

# Staff Learning and Career Development

## NEWSLETTER | December 2024



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Dear colleague,

We are looking forward to the New Year. Here are the latest updates in our December newsletter.

An exciting pilot mentoring scheme is available for Professional Services staff. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Gareth Coulson, our new Learning and Development Coordinator - Apprentice, as well as our OCAED Student Partner cohort.

Oxford Brookes University's International Teaching and Learning Conference 2025 will take place between 18 and 19 June 2025 with the theme *Academic Advising: nurturing the will to learn*. Our call for submissions is now open, and we look forward to hearing about your practice.

The popular Talking Teaching Across the Globe seminar series returns in January and February. Until then, take a look at our archive of sessions.

Wishing you a peaceful New Year.

**Learning and Organisational Development and the Oxford Centre for Academic Enhancement and Development teams**

# Learning and Organisational Development

## Upcoming Workshops and Events



### December:

- [Risk assessment course](#), Tuesday 3 December, 2.00pm - 4.00pm
- [Mental Health one day for line managers](#), Wednesday 4 December, 9.00am - 5.00 pm
- [Occupational Health awareness for line managers](#), Thursday 5 December, 9.30am - 11.00am
- [Contract management training](#), Thursday 5 December, 10.00am - 12.00pm
- [New to management pilot workshop one](#), Tuesday 10 December, 9.30am - 11.00am
- [VCG new starter gathering](#), Wednesday 11 December, 12.00pm - 1.00pm

### January:

- [New starter welcome tour](#), Tuesday 14 January, 1.00pm - 2.00pm
- [Reframing negative thoughts](#), Wednesday 15 January, 9.30am - 10.30am
- [Debt awareness training](#), Wednesday 22 January, 2.00pm - 3.00pm
- [Mental health aware workshop](#), Wednesday 29 January, 1.00pm - 4.30pm

You can also find details via the [List](#) of upcoming workshops and events.

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## Online resources

Many of our learning and development resources are now online making them easier to access at a time and place that suits you. We have created dedicated areas on the Staff Learning platform to help you find the development that suits your needs:

- [Leadership and management](#)
- [Wellbeing and personal resources](#)
- [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion](#)
- [Essential skills](#)
- [Risk and compliance](#)
- [Professional and career development](#) (including [apprenticeships](#))
- [New starters](#)
- [Customer service](#)

You can find the links to all these areas and more on [Staff Learning](#).

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## Professional and Career Development

The recent staff survey results showed that only 29% of colleagues said they were satisfied with career development opportunities at Oxford Brookes. To help address this, and as part of wider work on a People and Organisational Development Strategy, we are working on several initiatives. The following items provide updates on some activities already in progress.

Over the coming months, we're adding more resources to our [Professional and Career Development dashboard](#) in Staff Learning to create a 'one-stop-shop'. This will include resources to help you:

- find career direction
  - prepare a career development plan
  - develop relevant skills
- 

## Professional Services Mentoring Scheme Pilot

We are delighted to announce a brand new initiative *the Professional Services Mentoring Scheme* to support career development conversations, specifically to help Professional Services Staff prepare for their next career steps.

### **What is mentoring?**

Mentoring in the workplace describes a relationship in which a more experienced colleague shares their greater knowledge to support the development of a less experienced individual.

### **Where can I find out more?**

For more information about the scheme including how to join as a Mentee, Mentor or both concurrently see [Professional Services Pilot Mentoring Scheme Information](#). Please note the deadline for expressions of interest is **noon, Friday 10 January 2025**.

Information about the scheme can also be found via the [Coaching and Mentoring dashboard](#) in Staff Learning.

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## Apprenticeships for existing staff

We have recently overhauled our apprenticeship process which provides access to a variety of **funded** qualifications specifically aimed at supporting professional development. These range from entry-level through to post-graduate and are relevant to more roles than you might imagine. The new [Apprenticeship area](#) in Staff Learning provides a list of possible apprenticeship courses to help guide you, alongside guidance on the process.

We will be looking to work with areas across the University over the coming year to identify relevant apprenticeships aligned with career pathways. If your department might be interested in working with us on this as part of a pilot please contact [Abigail Reilly](#), Director of Organisational Effectiveness and Development.

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## Coaching for career development

Coaching can be a powerful tool for career progression and development, offering a structured, reflective space for individuals to explore their career goals, identify strengths and weaknesses, and work toward achieving personal and professional growth. For more information see [Coaching - Career Progression and Development](#).

You can access an experienced, qualified coach for free via the University's [Coaching Pool](#).

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## Performance and Development Review (PDR)

The PDR process should provide an opportunity to focus on career development. However, in addition to only 29% of people feeling satisfied with career development opportunities, according to the Staff Survey, only 59% of people feel their manager supports their career development.

A review of the PDR process is planned for the new calendar year. This provides a good opportunity to understand how it could better support professional and career development as well as other aspects of the process. You are invited to complete this [short anonymous survey](#) to help give us a snapshot of perceptions and suggestions for improvement specifically about professional and career development. We will be engaging more widely around the PDR review in due course, but getting an initial steer on this particular aspect will help inform the process.

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## Mental Health First Aid

In March 2024, we published an article on [Mental Health First Aider training](#). In 2024, we will have trained a total of 75 Mental Health First Aiders.

Mental Health First Aiders are trained to identify, understand, and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue.

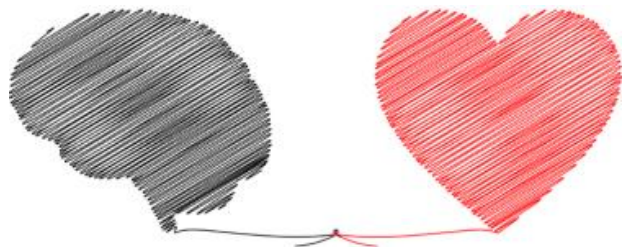
Mental Health First Aiders are not therapists. They will be able to listen, reassure, and respond, even in a crisis - and potentially stop a crisis from happening. They are trained to recognise the warning signs of mental ill health and have developed the skills and confidence to approach and support someone whilst keeping everyone safe.

If you would like to speak to a Mental Health First Aider, you can find a list with contact details in our [Mental Health First Aiders](#) section on Staff Learning. If you are interested in becoming a Mental Health First Aider you can find [details](#) of the upcoming courses on Staff Learning.

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## \*New\* Mental Health for Line Managers

We are pleased to announce that we are delivering a one-day [Mental Health course](#) specifically for managers. This course will explore what mental health first aid is, as well as touch on some of the mental health illnesses. The course will give you a model to help you start a discussion about Mental Health.



# Change and Project Management

In the last edition, we introduced the new [Change Toolkit](#) Google site developed to provide guidance and resources for those leading and managing change and anyone supporting individuals through change.

Two new courses have now been added to Staff Learning as part of the toolkit:

- [Introduction to supporting people through change](#)
- [Project management for non-project managers](#)

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## Welcome to Gareth Coulson

### Learning and Development Coordinator - Apprentice, People Directorate

Hello! I'm Gareth, I've been involved with Oxford Brookes for several years starting with a Bachelor's in Sound Technology and Digital Music, and then a Master's in Digital Media. Following that, I worked in IT Services as an IT/AV Support Officer running around on 'call outs' and ensuring lecturers could use our AV equipment. For those who remember it, I also drove the Brookes Union Safety Bus for many years. Additionally, I'm a Hall Warden at Cheney Student Village.

In my spare time, I'm a keen musician, playing Tenor Horn in one of the Wantage Silver Bands as well as conducting another one.



I also play with the Oxford University Brass Band and visit other local bands, which tends to keep me busy most evenings! When I'm not banding, I love going on road trips, listening to and recording music, and watching comedy and Sci-Fi such as Doctor Who on iPlayer and Netflix.



## Disability History Month 2024

[Disability History Month](#) runs from Thursday 14 November to Friday 20 December 2024 celebrating the theme of 'disability, livelihood and employment'. We are pleased to welcome author, historian, and disability activist Selina Mills for our keynote lecture '[Why Blindness Matters: How to Travel through Time and Life with No or Low Vision](#)' on Wednesday 4 December, 6.00pm - 7.00pm.

Between Monday 2 December and Friday 6 December, we will be taking part in [#PurpleLightUp](#) and lighting up Lloyd Building and Headington Sports Centre in purple. Everyone is also welcome to join an informal gathering organised by the Staff Disability Network at 12.00pm - 1.00pm on Tuesday 3 December, at The Forum, JHB which marks [International Day of People with Disabilities](#). You are encouraged to show your support by wearing something purple.

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## Teaching, Learning, and Assessment



Oxford Brookes International Teaching and Learning Conference 2025  
18 June and 19 June 2025

📣 **Call for submissions**  
Deadline: 31 January 2025



<https://bit.ly/bitlc25>

## Oxford Brookes University International Teaching and Learning Conference 2025: call for submissions

### Academic Advising: nurturing the will to learn

We are delighted to announce that the Oxford Brookes International Teaching and Learning Conference, which is open to Oxford Brookes staff and the wider international HE community, will take place online on **Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 June 2025** and the [call for submissions](#) is now open.

This conference welcomes stories of the positive impact of Academic Advising and meeting Advising's associated challenges. We are interested in hearing from practitioners who have nurtured a will to learn amongst their students and created connection with their students through a mutual interest in their discipline (Lawrence et al, 2020), and leaders who have reconciled dissonant discourses of Advising through whole-institution approaches to?

**Proposal submission deadline - Friday 31 January 2025.**

**Day one - Wednesday 18 June 2025**

We welcome Oxford Brookes colleagues to a morning of in-person networking and knowledge sharing.

**Day two - Thursday 19 June 2025 (online)**

Keynote, papers, panel, and plenary.

For more information about the conference theme and details on submitting a proposal, please visit the [conference website](#).

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## Introduction to our Student Partner Cohort

OCAED is pleased to announce our newly recruited cohort of Student Partners. This amazing team of students, recruited from all areas and levels of study, reflects the diversity of our student population and is committed to enhancing teaching and learning at Brookes. For a sense of who we are, meet Stephanie and Nikhil:



Stephanie is a final-year Psychology student joining OCAED in the role of 'Student Partner' for 2024. She is deeply passionate about diversity, equality, and inclusion, and draws on her experiences as a transgender and neurodiverse individual to help improve conditions for all Brookes students. Her previous experience includes working with the psychology department to improve inclusivity in the subject, conducting an LGBTQ+ psychology research dissertation, and hosting various LGBTQ+ events.



Nikhil is a Master's student in AI with a big interest in generative AI and its impact on learning. As a Student Partner with OCAED, he works to make teaching more inclusive, especially for neurodivergent students. Nikhil believes that learning should be enjoyable and engaging, so is focused on using AI to help close learning gaps and make education more accessible for everyone.

To learn more about student partnerships, visit our [toolkit](#). If you are interested in working with our Student Partners, please contact [Elise Tanner](#), Student-Staff Partnership Officer, OCAED.

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## HE and Lifelong Learning Research Strategy

[OCAED's](#) vision is to 'Inspire Transformational Academic Practice' and our mission is to offer 'inclusive, collaborative and compassionate academic enhancement and development'. Brookes' [Academic Development Framework](#) includes Teacher, Researcher, and Leadership development.

OCAED's first strategic ambition is to 'Increase engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) and academic development'. The [HE and Lifelong Learning Research Strategy](#) supports this ambition, underpins much of our work for TEF 2027, and aims to further Brookes's position at the forefront of evidence-based, transformational academic practice.

The strategy has three objectives:

1. Nurture HEALL SoTL/research capability collaboratively
2. Develop HEALL SoTL research capacity inclusively
3. Disseminate HEALL SoTL/research strategically

If you have an interest in or would like to share your Scholarship of Teaching and Learning or HE research at Brookes, or have pedagogic expertise (and evidence of positive impact) that might be useful to colleagues in other institutions please take a few moments to respond to our [HEALL Strategy questionnaire](#).

There are a number of disciplinary-specific pedagogic research groups across the university and we are interested to hear from you so we might learn from each other. The following activities and resources may be of interest to you and your community.

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## NEW Evaluating and Evidencing Impact: Academic Enhancement Toolkit

We are pleased to announce the new [Evaluating and Evidencing Impact: Academic Enhancement Toolkit](#) which offers practical guidance on evaluating Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (TL&A) enhancement initiatives and inquiries.

Please hold the date for a pilot workshop 'Evaluation of Teaching Inquiries and Initiatives' to launch this chapter of the toolkit: Wednesday 22 January 2025, 2.00pm - 4.00pm.  
[Book via Staff Learning](#).

Phase two of the Academic Enhancement toolkit 'Designing and Delivering HE Inquiries for Impact' will be published in January and a further chapter 'Dissemination and Publication of HE Inquiries for Impact' will follow in the summer of 2025. Many thanks to Dr Andrea Macrea, SFHEA for chairing the phases of work.

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## Talking Teaching Across the Globe

In 2024/25 we are showcasing the scholarship of teaching and learning -led and -based work of Oxford Brookes colleagues via the Talking Teaching across the Globe seminar series:

Catch up with our recordings from previous sessions via the [Talking Teaching archive](#).

We will return in the New Year:

**Thursday 23 January 2025, 12.00pm - 12.50pm** with Alice Gerlach FHEA, School of Law and Social Sciences, Oxford Brookes University on Ways to support student use of GenAI to enhance learning. [Register here](#).

**Thursday 27 February 2025, 13.00pm - 13.50pm** with David Nelson FHEA and Lucy Widdowson FHEA, Oxford Brookes Business School on Fostering student-staff trust in the age of GenAI. [Register here](#).

More information can be found on the [Talking Teaching Across the Globe](#) webpage.

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## EXPLORE 'Open Offer'

Excellence in Promoting Leadership of Research and Education (EXPLORE) through teacher, researcher and leadership development. The aim is to inspire transformational academic practice. The Open Offer of EXPLORE workshops are available to anyone teaching or supporting learning on an Oxford Brookes programme of study. The open offer allows you to self-select standalone staff development sessions to support your continuous academic professional development (CPD) needs.

- [Reflecting: evaluation for effective practice](#), Tuesday 3 December, 2.00pm - 4.00pm and Friday 6 December, 9.30am - 11.30am
- [Enhancing: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning](#), Wednesday 11 December, 2.00pm - 4.00pm and Thursday 12 December, 9.30am - 11.30am

- [IDEAS: Inclusive practice](#), Wednesday 18 December, 2.00pm - 4.00pm and Friday 20 December, 9.30am - 11.30am

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## Programme Leaders: Join us at the Educational Leaders Forum

The [Educational Leaders Forum \(ELF\)](#) aims to enable and sustain Programme Leaders in their crucial role. If you would like to join our community of practice, please email [ocaed@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:ocaed@brookes.ac.uk)

**\*Change to scheduled speaker\* Wednesday 4 December, 9.15am - 10.00am**, Dr Ian Scott, Dean of Education, Faculty of Health, Science and Technology will discuss, 'Reforming the exam board; Returning the focus to quality assurance'.

We will return to ELF in February.

**Wednesday 5 February, 9.15am - 10.00am**, Adrienne Hopkins, Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, will speak about the EDI Strategy.

You might also be interested in our [Leadership and Management workshops](#), available via the staff portal to support and enhance your CPD.

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## GenAI Thinkspace

The GenAI Thinkspace will meet online to discuss the implications of GenAI and pedagogic principles (e.g. [Oxford Brookes GenAI guidance](#) and the [IDEAS Curriculum Development Model](#)) for your assessments and the development of your student's assessment literacies/GenAI competencies. Led by Martha O'Curry, SFHEA (Deputy Head of the Centre for Academic Development) and Sam Folley, AFHEA (Digital Learning Developer, OCAED) the Thinkspace aims to create an informal, supportive forum for discussing concerns, sharing ideas and practice, and working through the challenges/opportunities GenAI presents for assessments on your modules/programmes.

The sessions will run on Zoom you can now add the event to your calendar by clicking the links below:

- [Monday 9 December, 12.00pm - 1.00pm](#)
- [Tuesday 14 January, 12.00pm - 1.00pm](#)
- [Tuesday 28 January, 12.00pm - 1.00pm](#)
- [Wednesday 12 February, 12.00pm - 1.00pm](#)

In January's Thinkspaces we are encouraging staff to bring an anonymised extract from students' work that they believe may have been generated by GenAI. We will think about the challenges of marking these pieces of work, the implications for our assessment practices, and how we can move forward.

Please ensure you are logged in to your Oxford Brookes [Zoom account](#) before joining the session.

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## What is 'IDEAS'?

Our **OCAED Curriculum Consultants** explain the IDEAS model here:

This [model](#) aims to improve the student experience by enhancing how education is delivered and thought about.

- **Inclusive learning** - how we as students are taught and assessed, and how our different learning styles are considered.
- **Digital inclusion** - if we are proficient in the digital skills needed to progress in a career and if equal access to technology has been thought about when the curriculum was designed.
- **Employability learning** - if we are gaining the necessary attributes to succeed in the job market.
- **Assessment for and of learning** - how we can feedback on assessment and if it identifies gaps in our understanding.
- **Sustainability Mindset** - how can our education be reconsidered to better the world, in the context of global events and threats?



## IDEAS Programme Design Sprites

[Programme Design Sprites](#) are a set of three in-person workshops to facilitate the use of the [IDEAS inclusive curriculum model](#). They use the Design Thinking methodology to identify rapid, impactful changes that can be made to improve a programme, module, or individual teaching practice.

During the workshops, you will work with student curriculum consultants to identify one challenge you would like to solve and collaboratively generate solutions you can put into practice. The Sprites are suitable for individuals or small teaching teams wishing to review their curriculum, assessment, and/or teaching practice.

The dates are:

- Wednesday 29 January, Tuesday 4 February, and Friday 7 February 2025 from 1.30pm - 3.00pm
- Thursday 1 May, Thursday 8 May and Thursday 15 May 2025 from 2.30pm - 4.00pm

To book your place on one of these three 90-minute workshops, visit the IDEAS: Programme Design Sprites course via [Staff Learning](#).

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## IDEAS: An introduction for Associate Lecturers

Are you an Associate Lecturer? The Oxford Centre for Academic Enhancement and Development (OCAED) would like to invite you to complete a new training course: 'IDEAS: An Introduction for Associate Lecturers', which will introduce you to the Oxford Brookes [IDEAS Inclusive Curriculum Model](#) and how it is relevant to you in your role as Associate Lecturer.

The course will take one hour. On completion of the assessment task, we will arrange for you to be paid for this time in the next payroll period.

Please access the course via this link: [IDEAS: An Introduction for Associate Lecturers](#).

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## Academic Advising

In Semester 2 of 2024/25, we have the following sessions:

[Effective Practice in Academic Advising](#), Wednesday 19 February 2025, and [Academic Advising Q & A Forum](#), Thursday 27 March 2025. Please visit the Staff Learning portal for further details and to book a place.

[Academic Advising: nurturing the will to learn](#) is our 2025 Oxford Brookes International Teaching and Learning Conference theme. The conference will be on Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 June 2025 ([see above for further details](#)).

### Stay current in your academic advising

- All staff with advising responsibilities must complete an online asynchronous [Academic Advising course](#) on Staff Learning. Year 1 EXPLORE participants who attended the "Introduction to Academic Advising" workshop in October 2024 are exempt.
- Advisors might use our [email templates](#) to welcome students, direct them to resources and services, and pre-empt enquiries. These templates should be sent at specific times during Semester 1 (the next one is due in week 12, the week commencing 9 December).

Further information about Academic Advising can be found on the [Academic Advising webpages](#).

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## Faculty Partners

In light of the faculty restructuring, OCAED has worked with the Deans of Education to rethink how OCAED [Faculty Partners](#) can better support academic practice across the institution. We have pleasure in presenting the revised [terms of reference](#). We have two Faculty Partners who will work closely to support academic practice :

- Faculty of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, Nik Beer SFHEA
- Faculty of Health and Life Sciences and Technology, Dr Mary Kitchener SFHEA

We also continue to offer support for individual staff members in Academic Enhancement Surgeries.

We are piloting academic enhancement and development surgeries in Semester one to offer personalised support for teaching and curriculum development. Facilitated by an OCAED educational developer, the surgeries allow you to discuss session planning, module design, and programme development.



You'll receive tailored advice, can explore innovative teaching strategies, and discuss challenges in a collaborative and confidential environment.

Click the date below to book a half-hour slot.

- [Monday 9 December](#), between 2.00pm - 4.00pm with Ben Walker SFHEA

If slots are full, contact [ocaed@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:ocaed@brookes.ac.uk) for alternate arrangements.

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## Brookes Briefings: guides to teaching, learning and assessment practice

As the semester settles in, we have a range of Brookes Briefings - scholarship-led and evidence-based essential guides to teaching, learning, and assessment to support you. Two new Briefings:

- [NEW Making Examinations Inclusive](#)
- [NEW Evaluation of Teaching Practice](#)



Find the full selection of our Brookes Briefings on the [OCAED Brookes Briefings webpage](#).

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## Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) works to benefit students and higher education and is one of the world's experts in HE quality assurance. They offer a portfolio of [online events](#), free to Oxford Brookes University staff, as we are institutional members.

Free events:

- [Student engagement network](#), online, Tuesday 3 December, 2.00pm - 3.30pm
- [Programme Leader network](#), Thursday 12 December, 1.00pm - 2.00pm

## Wonkhe Mondays

Wonkhe is the home of the UK higher education debate. Start the week with WonkHE's agenda-setting briefing, which includes everything you need to know about what's going on in UK higher education. As Oxford Brookes subscribes to WonkHE you can [sign up](#) today for free.

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## Advance HE

Advance HE is a member-led charity that works with partners across the globe to improve higher education for staff, students, and society. Log in to [My AdvanceHE](#) to access [Membership](#) benefits and [Development, Training, and Events](#). Advance HE has launched its brand-new portfolio of programmes, conferences, and events for 2024-25, which provides development opportunities to help address today's HE challenges. The portfolio, which includes new additions for this academic year, follows sector trends and developments. Take advantage of a time-limited early booking discount of 5%, in addition to your 25% member discount.

Free workshops:

- [Sexual Harassment workshop - overcoming barriers and resistance to inclusion initiatives](#), Thursday 5 December, 12.00pm - 2.00pm AEDT
- [Securing Student Outcomes - using data to secure student outcomes](#), Thursday 12 December, 12.30pm-1.30pm

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## Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA)

SEDA is the professional association for staff and educational developers in the UK, promoting innovation and good practice in higher education. As Institutional members, all Brookes staff have access to member [benefits](#) including exclusive discounts on SEDA conferences and workshops and a 20% discount on Routledge higher education texts.

SEDA is currently inviting applications for [Research and Evaluation Small Grants](#). There are five grants available, each up to £1,000. The deadline for applications is **noon on Monday 24 February 2025**.

**SEDAtalk series**, session recordings, and slides

- November: [Generative AI - the staff experience](#)
- October: [Generative AI for educational change](#)

The publication [Using Generative AI Effectively in Higher Education, Sustainable and Ethical Practices for Learning, Teaching, and Assessment](#) is available from Oxford Brookes Library and Routledge.

The latest free issue of [Educational Developments magazine](#) (25.3) is available. In addition please find [SEDA papers](#) on academic development, research supervision, supporting students, wellbeing, and student evaluation available to all staff.

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## Keeping in touch

**Oxford Centre for Academic Enhancement and Development**

Email: [ocaed@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:ocaed@brookes.ac.uk)

Website: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/ocaed/>

**Learning and Organisational Development**

Email: [staff-learning@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:staff-learning@brookes.ac.uk)

Twitter: [@Staff\\_Learning](https://twitter.com/Staff_Learning)

Website: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/staff/people/teams/organisational-effectiveness-and-development>