JOINT STAFF-POSTGRADUATE
STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS 2020
Joint Staff-Postgraduate Student Research Projects 2020

The Massey University Institute of Education was established in 2013 with the goal of becoming a leading national, regional, and international centre of educational research excellence. This will be achieved by investigating significant educational challenges in meaningful ways in order to contribute to global scholarly exchanges, help inform public policy choices and contribute in practical ways to the improvement of learners’ and educators’ everyday lives.

Our postgraduate research students have an important role to play in meeting this goal. One of the best ways that we can help you to acquire the skills of being an educational researcher is to ‘nest’ you within a supportive, structured learning environment where research is already underway. In doing so, you will complete your thesis or professional inquiry by working alongside our staff and other postgraduate researchers to fill some of the important gaps in our educational knowledge and understanding.

The following pages contain titles and brief descriptions of the many cutting edge educational studies in which our researchers are currently engaged. You are warmly invited to explore these topics and to consider applying to join one of our established educational research programmes in order to complete your postgraduate degree. The contact person for each topic is provided at the end of the project summary.

Please feel free to contact us and find out more about the exciting research that we do - research that aims to make a real difference. We very much look forward to welcoming you as a member of our education research community.

Ngā mihi,
PROFESSOR HOWARD LEE
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ASSESSMENT

BACK TO THE FUTURE? NATIONAL STANDARDS AND THE (RE) CONSTRUCTION OF AN ‘EDUCATION CRISIS’

Target students: Master's thesis
Staff members: Howard Lee

This project seeks to explore the historical origins and subsequent development of National Standards in New Zealand schools post-2008. It will identify and analyse school principals’ and the primary school teacher unions’ (NZEI) responses to National Standards, survey the national and international research literature on National Standards, and explain why the then Prime Minister, John Key, decided to intervene and press for the publication of student achievement data from 2010, despite his public admission in July 2012 that the data being gathered and published in fact were “very ropey”. The project also will demonstrate the extent to which politicians and others who are intent on pursuing ‘quick fix solutions’ to very complex and long-standing educational problems help to perpetuate the very problems that historians of education argue are relics of a bygone era and therefore best consigned to our educational past.

Students will contribute by undertaking detailed analyses of the debates (in the print and online media, Parliamentary Debates, and NZEI and Principals' Federation position papers) and reviewing the international literature on standards-based approaches to educational assessment and enhancing students’ learning and achievement.

For further information, contact: Howard Lee h.f.lee@massey.ac.nz
BUILDING ASSESSMENT CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY IN AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Target students: Master’s and Doctoral thesis
Staff member: Jenny Poskitt

This project is part of an international study exploring how to collaborate across research and policy spaces to enable quality assessment for learning practices to flourish. Most countries aspire to broader development of ‘21st Century skills’ and innovative pedagogy, curriculum and assessment, yet all of them experience restrictions and narrowing of the curriculum from high stakes assessments. This project requires exploration of enablers as well as challenges and pressures, nationally and internationally. For example, how might collaborations across the education sector and system, create conditions for more effective implementation? What role might be played by students and parent communities? What assessment literacies are required by educators (ECE, primary, secondary, tertiary, initial teacher educators), researchers, policy officials, professional learning and development facilitators, businesses, and the wider community? How might assessment networks build understanding, and improve professional practice? How can we easily and dependably assess progress in the ‘things that really matter’ (e.g. non-academic subjects; interpersonal skills)?

Students will contribute by systematic literature reviews, and smaller exploratory, empirical research projects.

For further information, contact: Jenny Poskitt j.m.poskitt@massey.ac.nz
COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE

MULTICULTURAL GROUP WORK PRACTICES CONDUCIVE TO WELLNESS

Target Students: Master's inquiry, Master’s thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff Members: Bogusia Skudrzyk

Throughout cultures around the world, individuals, families, groups, and community members seem to grapple with unifying themes related to wellness. Some of the most pertinent themes include: sense of belonging/loving, making useful contributions to work, being able to maintain a sense of self, and being able to make meaningful contributions to helping others. These elements are often viewed as essential for wellness and well-being. Individuals, groups, and communities seem to find, create, and participate in practices conducive to cultivating and restoring wellness. This project will focus on exploring multicultural perspectives on wellness. Practices unique to the Māori culture as well as cultures around the world will be studied. Implications for counseling service delivery will be identified.

Specifically, this project explores the following:

1. Examining how group work models that incorporate multicultural creative expressions can be used for restoring and cultivating wellness with focus on:
   a. Tuning into the needs, desires, and concerns of individuals and groups that experience post-traumatic stress, crisis, illness, acculturation stressors, addiction, loss, and grief and
   b. Community building in schools, academia, work, and community settings

Students interested in joining this project will have an opportunity to:

1. Participate in a research team that focuses on:
   a. Inquiry of current approaches pertaining to wellness
   b. Investigation of group work models conducive to wellness
   c. Exploration of multicultural creative expressions conducive to wellness
      • Students will learn how to facilitate literature review relevant to restoration and cultivation of wellness
• Students will learn how to design and facilitate interviews with individuals relevant to restoration and cultivation of wellness and wellbeing
• Students will learn how to analyze data gathered from qualitative designs-interviews, observations, and literature review

For further information, contact: Bogusia Skudrzyk b.skudrzyk@massey.ac.nz
SUPPORTING CHILDREN’S SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING WITHIN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND AND CLASSROOM

Target students: Master’s thesis, Master’s inquiry, Master of Counselling Studies research project
Staff Member: Rachael Pond

The Government has recently released the New Zealand Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy – and it is recognised that schools will have an important role in supporting and enhancing children and young people’s wellbeing.

Social-emotional development is key to student wellbeing, and also to academic readiness and school success. Social-emotional development is both intrapersonal and interpersonal in nature, and the school environment (and broader sociocultural context) play an important role in shaping such competencies. The provision of a positive social and emotional school environment is hence an important task of schools. Social-emotional competencies can be enhanced through the informal curriculum (e.g., recess breaks in the playground), and with the support of teachers and school guidance counsellors.

Staff-student research projects will aim to increase understanding about how initiatives, practices, and/or naturally occurring phenomenon (like play in the playground) support children’s social-emotional learning (SEL), peer relationships, and wellbeing within the primary school context. Specific research projects can investigate a research question within the following areas:

1. Children’s social-emotional development in the context of the school playground. For example: a) how social-emotional development/learning and peer relationships occur naturally in the playground; or b) how social-emotional development/learning and peer relationships are affected by various practices and initiatives, including those that are deemed important for ‘resilient playgrounds’.

2. Teachers’ optimisation of children’s social-emotional development/learning in the classroom - through teacher-child relationships, provision of emotional support, or through other practices.

3. How school guidance counsellors can support children’s social-emotional competence in the playground or classroom.
A student can develop a research project that investigates a specific aspect of social-emotional development (e.g., self-regulation of emotions/behaviour) or wellbeing for all children, at-risk children, or children with challenging behaviours (e.g., high energy and impulsive children; peer neglected children; disruptive children). Research can explore perspectives or experiences of children, school personnel, and/or families/whānau. Research can use quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, or systematic review methodology; action-research and ethnographic qualitative modes of enquiry may be encouraged for some research projects.

A list of more specific research projects is available on request.

**For further information, contact:** Rachael Pond [r.l.pond@massey.ac.nz](mailto:r.l.pond@massey.ac.nz)
DIGITAL EDUCATION

DIGITAL BADGES, LEARNING AND MOTIVATION

Target students: Master's inquiry, Master's thesis
Staff members: Maggie Hartnett

The importance and influence of digital technologies as a mediator and facilitator of learning is fundamentally changing education: what it encompasses; what counts as learning; who has access; where and when it occurs; and the ways in which developed skills, knowledge and capabilities are recognised. One technological innovation that has emerged over the past few years is digital badges. Digital badges have the potential to open up new possibilities for engaging learners, innovative assessment practices, recognition of learning and sharing accomplishments. Internationally, digital badge use is growing, particularly in higher education. Postgraduate research projects can be situated within various learning contexts where digital badge use is occurring including the schooling sector, tertiary education and non-formal learning environments such as MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses).

Research questions include:

• How are digital badges being used to support learning?
• What are learners’ experiences of digital badges?
• What are teachers’ experiences of digital badges?
• In what ways can digital badges influence learner motivation?
• What are the benefits and challenges of digital badge use for learning?

Students will contribute by carrying out:

• Master’s inquiry project – one research question within a specific context OR
• Master’s thesis – several research questions across a wider context (e.g. several case studies, or mixed methods study)

For further information, contact: Maggie Hartnett m.hartnett@massey.ac.nz
DIGITAL EDUCATION, LEARNING SPACES AND DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Target students: Master’s thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Lucila Carvalho

The New Zealand government recently created new policies and standards to guide the design and development of schools’ learning spaces – stating that all newly built schools and refurbished buildings or classrooms are to be transformed into flexible learning spaces. These NZ policies and guidelines reflect global trends, and dominant narratives in education, which suggest that alterations in the designed environment – from traditional to flexible configurations – are likely to achieve changes in practices. However, many educators are still struggling to align their pedagogical models to these newly created learning spaces and are often wrestling to understand how to effectively use digital technologies for teaching and learning. This project focuses on finding ways of supporting alignment between current learning theories, pedagogical practices and the newly designed learning spaces – within schools and universities.

Areas for investigation within this research theme include:
   i. educators design and adaptation to new curricula and/or to new learning spaces, and
   ii. students’ and teachers’ skills and ability to co-construct productive epistemic environments in newly designed spaces

For further information, contact: Lucila Carvalho L.carvalho@massey.ac.nz
The terms ‘networked learning’ and ‘learning networks’ are closely connected. Both allude to situations that involve the use of technology for learning in ways that foster connections between people, and to learning resources; both value participation, co-creation and knowledge building (Goodyear et al 2004). ‘Networked learning’ signals a philosophical and pedagogical perspective on learning (drawing on the ideals of Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy). ‘Learning networks’ is a term used to denote a phenomenon for inquiry in educational research – which involves a multi-layered assemblage of elements (e.g. digital and material tools, artefacts, learning tasks, people, etc.).

In framing a particular phenomenon of inquiry as a learning network, educational researchers are highlighting connections between people and things, and pursuing an analytical understanding of how these connections enable activities that lead to learning. Educational researchers and educators may use these analytical insights to inform future design for learning – for example, to help improve the functioning of a specific learning network; or also for creating reusable design ideas; that is, after identifying what works well and how, this understanding can then be abstracted and repackaged to be applied in other learning networks.

Learning networks can refer to learning as part of people’s participation in formal (e.g. schools, universities) or informal networks (work settings, museums, libraries, others). Analysis of learning networks investigates aspects related to their functioning and may include exploration about what participants in a network are coming to know, for what purposes, what strategies they are using, with what tools and resources, and so on.

For further information, contact: Lucila Carvalho l.carvalho@massey.ac.nz
This line of research is focused on examining teaching practices that support children’s learning and social-emotional competence in early childhood (EC) settings. Recent reports have indicated that teachers in early childhood need more support and guidance about teaching practices and the pedagogical tools to promote children’s learning and social-emotional competence. The multiple aspects of this area of research are designed to examine teaching practices that are appropriate for the New Zealand EC context, explicate these practices within an organising framework, and identify teachers’ professional learning needs to use these practices competently and confidently. To date, we have developed two practice lists to support teachers in infant and toddler settings and in kindergarten settings. We are currently refining the list, building practice resources and supporting teachers with implementation of practices.

Project options include:

- Exploring teacher’s perspectives and use of specific sets of practices from the practice list(s) through interviews (Master’s thesis or Master’s inquiry)
- Exploring professional learning and development (including coaching) to support early childhood teachers to use effective teaching practices (Doctoral thesis only)

For further information, contact: Tara McLaughlin tw.mclaughlin@massey.ac.nz or Karyn Aspden k.m.aspden@massey.ac.nz
IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Target students: Master’s inquiry, Master’s thesis
Staff members: Monica Cameron, Tara McLaughlin, Karyn Aspden

Since the introduction of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996), the New Zealand early childhood curriculum 20 years ago, teachers have worked to implement this complex and aspirational curriculum in practice. Education Review Office reports have indicated variations in the quality of implementation across services and the need for more supports and resources to guide teachers practice. Based on feedback from a sector advisory report, *Te Whāriki* has been revised, which will generate new support resources over the next few years, designed to guide curriculum implementation. Given these changes, it is timely to engage in research examining how early childhood teachers are implementing the revised curriculum. Students who select this project will provide baseline information and data about curriculum implementation following the revisions to *Te Whāriki*. These data will then contribute to a longitudinal project that will examine curriculum implementation before, during and after the updated curriculum and resources have become embedded in the sector.

Students will contribute by:

- Conducting a case study (Master’s inquiry) or multiple case studies (Master’s thesis) of teachers’ current implementation of the curriculum in select early childhood settings. Data collection involves teacher interviews and document analysis with a standardised protocol. Case studies require qualitative data analysis.

For further information, contact: Monica Cameron m.j.Cameron@massey.ac.nz or Tara McLaughlin t.w.mclaughlin@massey.ac.nz
EXAMINING ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

**Target students:** Master's inquiry, Master's thesis, Doctoral thesis  
**Staff members:** Tara McLaughlin, Monica Cameron, Karyn Aspden

This body of research is made up of a series of research projects focused on assessment practices in early childhood. Assessment in early childhood should be designed to provide useful information to children, families, and educators to support learning and development. Current trends in early childhood in New Zealand support the wide-scale use of learning stories for assessment (see Kei Tua o te Pae, Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars; Ministry of Education, 2004). There is a need to explore the range of assessment practices and the quality of assessment practices in early childhood. To date, we have reviewed the literature on assessment and learning stories and worked with early childhood teachers (interviews and survey) to understand their perspectives about assessment of four-year old children and quality features of learning stories.

Project options include:

- Exploring teachers’ perspectives of what constitutes quality learning stories using an existing interview framework. (Master’s thesis or Master’s inquiry)
- Exploring the range of assessment methods used in specific early childhood settings through interviews and document analysis. (Master’s thesis or Doctoral thesis)
- Evaluating the breadth and depth of learning stories through interviews and document analysis (i.e., what content areas and dispositions are recorded). (Doctoral thesis only)

**For further information, contact:** Tara McLaughlin tw.mclaughlin@massey.ac.nz
This research project is guided by the premise that effective data can lead to knowledge and knowledge can lead to action for improved curriculum implementation (cf. Earl & Timperley, 2008; Gunmer & Mandinach, 2015). As part of an initial pilot project, we developed multiple data systems and tools to capture and analyse children’s experiences: what they do, where they spend their time, with whom they interact, and what types of play and learning activities they engage in. Data collection technologies include live observation recorded on a tablet and video recorded from cameras affixed to children’s clothing. Collected data are analysed with structured coding systems using observational software and entered into report templates that generated graphed data for teachers to review. Tools for teacher reflection of children’s abilities and video analysis protocols for teachers to gain deeper insights about specific children are available.

Doctoral students interested in working with early childhood teams to collect information about children’s experiences using these data tools, how data generated might be used to inform teachers’ practice, and children’s learning can develop a suitable project. Students will need to have access to or purchase a high-powered laptop, tablet with specific software requirements, and micro-video camera and chest strap. Software for observational analysis will be provided.

For further information, contact: Tara McLaughlin t.w.mclaughlin@massey.ac.nz
SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN INCLUSIVE EARLY LEARNING SETTINGS

Target students: Master's thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Tara McLaughlin, Karyn Aspden

The Ministry of Education (2010) stated: “Children with special education needs have difficulty actively participating in regular ECE settings without appropriate support … We need to increase participation rates for these groups while maintaining high quality ECE provision for all” (p.11). The Ministry statement indicates that children with special needs will likely need specialised support (i.e., early intervention) to participate fully in meaningful ways that optimise their learning. Learning is optimised when teachers, early intervention teachers, support workers, and families work together to support family-centred practice, routines-based intervention, and embedded instruction. This new line of research seeks to explore how teams can work together to best support children with special needs (birth through age eight). This line of research builds off past research projects conducted nationally and internationally.

Project options include:
- Explore teachers/teams/families/whānau perspectives about and practices for early intervention services and supports through interview or survey. (Master's thesis or Doctoral thesis)
- Explore family-centred supports to help families/whānau implement routines-based, embedded interventions. (Doctoral thesis only)
- Explore professional learning and development supports (including coaching) to help teachers/teams implement embedded instruction in early learning settings. (Doctoral thesis only)

For further information, contact: Tara McLaughlin t.w.mclaughlin@massey.ac.nz or Karyn Aspden k.m.aspden@massey.ac.nz

Note. This project can be cross-referenced with those interested in inclusive education.
Students in the Applied Research in Educational Psychology will be involved in a programme of research on Children’s Rights. Those in other research thesis or projects are welcome to join in this research. A STREAM site has been set up specifically for the Applied Research in Educational Psychology students, and for those completing their research within this programme of research. Each year, there is a single programme of research to which all students contribute their individual research report. The Stream site provides a range of readings relevant to the research programme as a whole, the opportunity to raise questions and offer ideas related to the research and your particular contribution to it, and the experience of being part of a community of supervision (academic staff and peers). The site also provides all the information required for your thesis with regards Ethics, writing your thesis, key documents, and timelines.

RESEARCH THEME FOR 2020
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a key piece of policy internationally to become familiar with. There are 54 Articles, some related to education, health, social services, the right to play, housing, care and protection. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) is an international agreement that recognises children’s rights. It was agreed to by the United Nations in 1989 and defines principles and standards for the status and treatment of children worldwide. New Zealand ratified (agreed to obey) the Convention in 1993. UNCROC is one of the most valued and respected human rights documents in the world. It is also the most agreed to human rights treaty. UNCROC is one of the United Nations core human rights instruments. It includes civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. It sets out in detail what every child needs to have a safe, happy and fulfilled childhood.

Why have a common theme?
Despite the fact that our government ratified the Convention in 1993, there is no New Zealand evidence base on how UNCROC is incorporated in policy or practice across social services,
health and education in New Zealand. In 2019, we will first explore what adults (teacher, specialists, providers, and parents) understand by the rights of the child, and how important they feel it is to listen to children’s views, and act on them. How do they do this in policy or in practice? Having a common theme means that the collective findings of your research have a much greater chance of being ‘heard’ and acted on by others.

In 2019 students identified their own area of interest (e.g. refugee children, children in care, students involved in IEPs, youth justice services etc.), and explored form an adult perspective how they understood children’s rights and how they enacted these in practice.

In 2020, you will identify your own area of interest, but the focus in on the children and young person’s views. You will choose your own Article(s) within UNCRC and explore whether children’s views are taken into account and acted on, whether in policy or practice. The culmination of work in 2019 and 2020; will mean your research will be published as a collection.

For further information, contact: Roseanna Bourke r.bourke@massey.ac.nz
NETWORK ANALYSES OF EDUCATION CHARITIES

Target students: Master's thesis
Staff members: John O'Neill

Since the Statute of Charitable Uses, 1601, one of the main objects of charity has been education. Today educational charities are very diverse, ranging from local community education trusts, to small progressive alternative schools, large elite private schools, global ‘not-for-profit' educational management and service organisations, neoliberal policy think tanks, and the ‘pet projects’ of both secular and Christian conservative philanthro-capitalists.

Contributing students will be trained to search the New Zealand Charities Register in order to identify a small sample of educational charities with similar characteristics. They will then conduct a critical analysis of these charities’ rules, personnel, activities, relationships, funding sources and distributions. Finally, they will evaluate the relative balance between private and public benefit provided by each educational charity.

For further information, contact: John O'Neill j.g.oneill@massey.ac.nz
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

AUTISM SPECTRUM

Target Students: Master’s Inquiry, Master’s Thesis, Doctoral Thesis
Staff Member: Vijaya Dharan

Autism spectrum is a vast field that offers many aspects to be studied and researched. Evidence from families and schools in New Zealand point to the need for increasing awareness, acceptance and participation of children and young people with Autism in formal learning settings as well as leisure and wider community activities.

I am interested in supporting students who want to research in the area of:
- Social emotional and behavioural needs of children and young people with Autism
- Children and Young people’s voices
- School and Out of School Transitions
- Collaborative practices – Home, Schools, & Community

For further information, contact: Vijaya Dharan v.m.dharan@massey.ac.nz
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international agreement that recognises children’s rights. It was agreed to by the United Nations in 1989 and defines principles and standards for the status and treatment of children worldwide. New Zealand ratified (agreed to obey) the Convention in 1993. There are 54 Articles, some related to education, health, social services, the right to play, housing, care and protection. UNCRC is one of the most valued and respected human rights documents in the world. It is also the most agreed to human rights treaty. UNCROC is one of the United Nations core human rights instruments. It includes civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. It sets out in detail what every child needs to have a safe, happy and fulfilled childhood.

Despite the fact that our government ratified the Convention in 1993, there is no New Zealand evidence base on how UNCRC is incorporated in policy or practice across social services, health and education in New Zealand.

This strand can include:

- How children conceptualise their rights within any of the Articles within UNCRC (e.g. right to have a voice and influence their own learning; right to play, right as a refugee child; right as a young person experiencing youth justice, right as a child in care etc.).
- Student voice – this extends beyond listening to the learner, to exploring their role in influencing educational policy, curriculum or other aspects of their lives.
- Student voice in policy how Ministry of Education and policymakers include the voice of children and young people.

All students in the MEdDevPsych are working on this programme of research, and any other Masterate or Doctoral student is welcome to join this programme of research within your own area of interest. This strand has its own STREAM site for collective support and readings.

For further information, contact: Roseanna Bourke r.bourke@massey.ac.nz
CO-DESIGNING CURRICULUM WITH AKONGA AND WHĀNAU

Target students: Master's inquiry, Master's thesis
Staff Member: Raewyn Eden

This research aims to create, enact and refine approaches to collaborative inquiry that assist kaiako to work in partnership with ākonga and whānau to co-design learning. We aim to shift current practice from knowledge-based curriculum delivery to an approach that empowers learners through a learner-centred curriculum. We aim to transform pedagogical practices in ways that had better support for students to develop competencies needed for living and learning. Working together, we aim to develop and engage in processes of explicit collaborative inquiry with ākonga and whānau to develop new and ambitious approaches to effective practice, aimed at expanding learning opportunities for students who are not yet achieving the learning successes they could be. The research is premised on a view that all citizens have the right to be included in the education system and to receive the individual support they require to succeed. Through developing powerful partnerships, we are interested in identifying what support each child needs to achieve to their own unique potential and then building that support around them on a personalised basis.

A primary mechanism for engaging in powerful partnerships, and collecting data, is through talanoa (or co-generative dialogues). Postgraduate students can contribute as active participants in research partnerships within one or more of the schools involved (in Palmerston North or Wellington) and/or in the analysis of qualitative data generated within project groups comprising kaiako, whānau and/or ākonga.

For further information, contact: Raewyn Eden r.eden@massey.ac.nz
DIGITAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Target students: Masters students
Staff members: Lucila Carvalho and Mandia Mentis

This research theme addresses the *Equity Through Education* centre focus on digital equity and inclusion across generations. Digital inclusion relates to participating in, contributing to, and benefitting from, a digital world. Digital equity involves the four elements of access, capability, motivation and trust when using digital technologies and the Internet. Inequities occur for those who do not have access or cannot afford an Internet connection and/or digital devices; those who do not have the capability and skills to use the Internet; those who are limited by impairment; and those who do not have the motivation or trust to use the Internet to enrich their lives and social connections.

Research projects within this theme will focus on intergenerational groups and explore experiences associated with access, capability, motivation and trust around the use of digital technologies and the Internet. Projects will involve small focus groups, interviews and observations throughout the Auckland area with school-students, teachers and the elderly.

Projects on this theme could involve professional inquiries or research projects focusing on issues of digital equity with Internet users across the Auckland area.

**For further information, contact:** Lucila Carvalho [l.carvalho@massey.ac.nz](mailto:l.carvalho@massey.ac.nz) or Mandia Mentis [m.mentis@massey.ac.nz](mailto:m.mentis@massey.ac.nz)
FACTORS THAT ACT TO EXCLUDE AND MARGINALISE STUDENTS FROM AND WITHIN SCHOOL

Target students: Master’s inquiry, Master’s thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff member: Alison Kearney

The importance of accessing and participating in quality education as well as achieving positive educational outcomes is well-reported. For example, positive educational outcomes are, throughout the course of one’s life, associated with better health, higher income, greater ability to adapt to a rapidly changing world, increased access to the rewards and affordances that come with living in the modern world, and generally, greater happiness. However, it is also well-reported that there are disparities between the educational access, participation and outcomes of some groups of students compared to others. Those students who are disadvantaged include those who are disabled, those who experience difficulties with learning and/or behaviour, those who belong to minority religions and ethnicities and those who live in situations of poverty. These students are more likely to experience exclusion and marginalisation from and within education. For these students, education is inequitable.

I am interested in working with students who wish to examine those factors that act to disadvantage students. This is not research that focuses on deficits or problems that students are perceived to have, but research that seeks to uncover and understand those factors within the educational system itself that act to exclude and marginalise students both from and within education.

For further information, contact: Alison Kearney a.c.earney@massey.ac.nz
LIFE-LONG, LIFE-WIDE, LIFE-DEEP LEARNING FOR EQUITABLE FUTURES

Target students: Master’s Thesis and Doctoral Thesis
Staff members: Mandia Mentis and Wendy Holley-Boen

This area of research covers ongoing professional learning, identity and wellbeing. It focuses on professional learning as a process of ‘becoming’ and ‘belonging’. Becoming relates to developing a professional identity and belonging relates to learning within professional learning communities. Learning as becoming through belonging to interprofessional communities results in professional (well)being. Professional learning is a life-long, life-wide and life-deep process that occurs flexibly over time and place, and blends formal, informal and non-formal contexts. This area of research is linked to the Equity through Education research centre, which promotes presence, participation, achievement and wellbeing in life-long learning, and social justice and diversity in, and through education.

Themes that link to this area of research include:
- professional identity,
- wellbeing,
- mentoring,
- networks of learning,
- professional practice communities

Research projects within this area can include literature reviews, professional inquiries, and research projects in various professional contexts with teachers and other professionals in schools, Kāhui ako, RTLB Clusters, SENCo networks, Communities of Practice or networks of expertise.

For further information, contact: Mandia Mentis m.mentis@massey.ac.nz or Wendy Holley-Boen w.holley-boen@massey.ac.nz
INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Target students: Master's Thesis and Doctoral Thesis
Staff members: Wendy Holley-Boen, Mandia Mentis, Jo Arnold

This strand of research focuses on teaching, learning and assessment for inclusion and diversity. This theme investigates assessment and teaching approaches that overcome educational inequities to find the optimistic alternatives in education. The focus is on educational practices designed for all learners to achieve.

Themes include:
- Assessment
  - assessment literacy
  - assessing beyond the average
  - narrative assessment
  - dynamic assessment
- Teaching
  - Universal Design for learning
  - Evidence-based practices
  - Unconscious bias

Research projects within this area can include literature reviews, professional inquiries, and research projects in various professional contexts with teachers and other professionals in schools, Kāhui ako, RTLB Clusters, SENCo networks.

For further information, contact: Wendy Holley-Boen w.holley-boen@massey.ac.nz, Mandia Mentis m.mentis@massey.ac.nz or Jo Arnold j.arnold@massey.ac.nz
STUDENT (DIS) ENGAGEMENT

Target Students: Master's Inquiry, Master's Thesis, and Doctoral Thesis
Staff Member: Vijaya Dharan and Nicole Mincher

This is a significant topic of research given the increasing number of students leaving schools without employable qualifications. Despite a series of interventions over nearly two decades, the stand-down and suspension numbers are extremely high. We have anecdotal evidence of pre-schoolers being expelled. In most instances, the reason for their exclusion is deemed to be ‘challenging behaviours’. There are a number of external and school-based factors that are attributed to student (dis)engagement. We are interested in supervising research in schools and early childhood settings to understand what works in keeping children and young people connected with their learning. To that effect, research topics can include and not restricted to:

- Children and Young People’s voices
- Systemic Interventions
- Supporting Teachers
- Supporting Families

For further information, contact: Vijaya Dharan v.m.dharan@massey.ac.nz and Nicole Mincher n.mincher@massey.ac.nz
SUPPORTING AND EMPOWERING ĀKONGA WHO ARE BLIND, DEAFBLIND OR HAVE LOW VISION IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SETTINGS

Target students: Masters Inquiry and Master’s Thesis
Staff members: Nicola McDowell

Children and young people who are blind, deafblind or have low vision face unique challenges in ensuring they have equal access and opportunities to participate within their chosen educational setting. These challenges often depend on the cause of their visual impairment, as this will determine what kind of support they need. However, researchers in the field are starting to recognise that children with visual disabilities may have completely different needs, even if they have the same condition. To ensure that equity, social justice and diversity is promoted in and through education, research needs to be undertaken specifically focusing on how to support the individual needs of each child within this population.

Note. This project can be cross-referenced with those interested in inclusive education for ākonga with other disabilities.

For further information, contact: Nicola McDowell n.mcdowell@massey.ac.nz
LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FAT PEOPLE IN EDUCATION

Target students: Master's and Doctoral thesis
Staff member: Cat Pausé

This project is part of an international study exploring the lived experiences of fat people and the impacts of anti-fat attitudes. Research outside of New Zealand demonstrates that most individuals, regardless of body size, occupation, race, or education level, have negative attitudes towards fatness and fat individuals. This results in fat people experiencing oppression through stigma and discrimination; the civil rights of fat people are not yet protected under law in New Zealand. This project allows students to explore the lived experiences of fat people, including within education spaces. What messages do fat students receive when they are placed in educational spaces not designed to accommodate their bodies? How do fat students navigate subjects, such as biology, public health, physical education, that reinforce negative stereotypes and attitudes of fatness? It also supports students to explore the attitudes around fatness, including within education spaces. Are teachers aware that fat bias may play a role in their teaching? What steps can those in education take to ensure that there are not barriers to fat students?

Students will contribute by systematic literature reviews, and smaller empirical projects. Students may also engage in an activism project.

For further information, contact: Cat Pausé c.pause@massey.ac.nz
MĀORI EDUCATION

Target students: Master’s thesis; Doctoral Thesis.
Staff members: Professor Huia Jahnke, Professor Meihana Durie, Te Rina Warren, Mari Ropata Te Hei

Our research focusses on all aspects of Māori education in the context of Māori development related to such broad areas as schooling, professional practice, education policies; economic, social and cultural impacts on Māori education; Māori learners in English medium and Māori language settings. We practice kaupapa Māori and Māori centred approaches to research that produce theses written in either English or Māori languages. The range of topics past and current post graduates and doctoral students have focussed include; te reo in homes and whanau ora; Māori initial teacher education; beginning teachers preparedness to teach Māori students; leadership in Māori education; Māori & citizenship education; Māori women educators; the politics of Māori education; kura kaupapa Māori graduates.

Project options range across kōhanga reo/early years to wānanga/tertiary education to whānau/hapū/iwi community initiatives in education.

For further information contact: Professor Huia Jahnke h.t.jahnke@massey.ac.nz or Professor Meihana Durie m.k.durie@massey.ac.nz
DEVELOPING EARLY ALGEBRAIC REASONING

Target students: Master's thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Jodie Hunter, Louise Fitzgerald

In recent years, there has been an increased emphasis on algebraic reasoning in primary school classrooms. This is due to the recognition of the key role that algebraic reasoning plays in mathematical understanding. We are interested in how early algebraic reasoning can be integrated into every-day mathematics lessons in primary classrooms. Within this study, there is the potential to explore the following questions:

- What conceptions do teachers have of students’ early algebraic thinking including understanding of the equals sign?
- How can tasks be adapted to develop early algebraic reasoning across primary years?
- What teacher actions and classroom culture supports students to engage in algebraic reasoning?

Data will include task-based interviews, questionnaires and classroom observations.

Students will contribute by using:
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of student responses to tasks.

Students will contribute by using:
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of teacher responses to tasks.
- Qualitative analysis of teacher questionnaire data.
- Qualitative analysis classroom observations.

For further information, contact: Jodie Hunter j.hunter1@massey.ac.nz
DEVELOPING MATHEMATICAL INQUIRY WITH MĀORI, PASIFIKA AND OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS

Target students: Master's inquiry, Master’s thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Bobbie Hunter, Jodie Hunter, Louise Fitzgerald

The May 2015 release of National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement results signals a pressing need for improvement in mathematics education at middle and upper primary school students in New Zealand. Only 11% of Pasifika and 26% of Māori students achieved curriculum standards at Year 8. Only 41% of all students were achieving at this level. One way forward has been our current large-scale professional learning and research project working with teachers in schools with predominantly Māori, Pasifika and other diverse students and developing mathematical inquiry communities. Within this study, there are opportunities for in-depth exploration of a range of questions including:

- What are the actions teachers take to construct mathematical inquiry learning communities where all students have a voice?
- How do teachers change their pedagogical and mathematical knowledge as they construct mathematical inquiry learning communities?
- How do the beliefs and values of the teachers and students change within mathematical inquiry learning communities?
- How does teacher mathematical knowledge change as they enact a learning/teaching cycle (predict, monitor, select, sequence, connect)?
- What beliefs about grouping practices do teachers and students hold and how do these change through involvement in Mathematical Inquiry Communities?
- How do teachers ensure equitable participation of all students in mathematical discussions and activity?

Students will contribute by carrying out:

- Qualitative analysis of already collected data of teacher interviews and observations of practice.
- Analysis of teacher/student interviews of beliefs and values.

For further information, contact: Bobbie Hunter r.hunter@massey.ac.nz
There is a current press on schools to develop Communities of Learning (COLs) with lead Principals/teachers within different roles. This places importance on specified individuals to provide leadership through mentoring or facilitating across a group of schools. However, what this role is, is not well understood, nor is there much knowledge around what their mentoring or facilitative role looks like. Working within a current large-scale professional learning project there are opportunities for in-depth exploration of the mentors/facilitators as they co-construct inquiry mathematics practices. Within this study, there are opportunities to explore:

- What are the most effective dynamic mentoring practices, which support teachers to transform their practices?
- How does the dynamic mentoring process change over time?

Data will include teacher interviews and video-recorded observations of practice as the mentors and teachers co-construct the pedagogical practices, which support inquiry learning.

Students will contribute by carrying out:
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of teacher interviews and already video recorded observations.

For further information, contact: Bobbie Hunter r.hunter@massey.ac.nz
The diversity of New Zealand mathematics classrooms can be challenging for many teachers. Often they are asked to draw on culturally responsive practices as they teach mathematics within increasingly diverse classrooms. Working within a current large-scale professional learning project there are opportunities for exploration of the following questions:

- How do teachers draw on the values and beliefs of different culture/ethnic groups to enact the social norms of inquiry mathematics classrooms?
- What ‘funds of knowledge’ of diverse cultural groups do teachers use to structure mathematical tasks and activity?
- How do Pasifika, Māori, and other diverse students view themselves as mathematicians?

Data will include interviews and surveys including Likert scales. Students will contribute by carrying out:

- Qualitative analysis of the interviews with teachers and students.
- Quantitative analysis of the surveys.

For further information, contact: Bobbie Hunter r.hunter@massey.ac.nz
ASSESSMENT FOR CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING IN MATHEMATICS

Target students: Master's inquiry, Master’s thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Jodie Hunter, Bobbie Hunter, Louise Fitzgerald

The Numeracy Development Programme brought new forms of assessment to New Zealand classrooms in the form of GLOSS and JAM. More recently, the PACT tool has been promoted to support teacher’s assessment. However, these tools do not match current assessment practices needed for students learning in culturally responsive mathematical inquiry environments. We need to develop a new form of assessment, which focuses on conceptual understandings in mathematics. Within this study, there are opportunities for exploration of the following questions:

- How do teachers draw connections between the curriculum and big mathematical ideas as they assess student understandings?
- What needs to be considered as teachers use comparative judgements?

Data will include design research tools, surveys, and interviews. Students will contribute by using:
  - Qualitative and quantitative analysis of teacher responses to tasks.
  - Qualitative analysis of interview and survey data.

For further information, contact: Jodie Hunter j.hunter1@massey.ac.nz
UNPACKING ANXIETY IN MATHEMATICS CLASSROOMS

Target students: Master's inquiry, Master's thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Margaret Walshaw

Contemporary research reports tend to paint a picture of active classroom communities in which all students and teachers are fully engaged with mathematics. Reports of environments like these can be deceiving because they cover over individual students’ anxieties about doing mathematics successfully. Mathematics anxiety is the focus of this series of projects. The interest is, specifically, on the way in which anxiety shapes, is shaped by, and prevents productive engagement with mathematical activity. The overriding goal of the series of projects is to develop a theoretical explanation, based on classroom evidence, for the work that anxiety does within the mathematics classroom. This study offers opportunities to explore a range of questions including:

- How prevalent is mathematics anxiety amongst school students?
- What are the factors that contribute to the development of mathematics anxiety in students?
- How might primary school teachers’ negative perceptions of mathematics be changed?
- What are the effects of an intervention designed to minimise or eliminate students’ mathematics anxiety?

Data will include student and teacher surveys and interviews, video records, and evaluation measures.

Students will contribute by carrying out:

- Quantitative analyses of student and teacher questionnaires; qualitative analyses of interviews and video records; design and evaluation of an intervention.

For further information, contact: Margaret Walshaw m.a.walshaw@massey.ac.nz
BIG IDEAS IN MATHEMATICS

Target students: Master’s inquiry, Master’s thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Jodie Hunter, Raewyn Eden

Attending to the Big Ideas in mathematics—such as place value, equivalence, and position on a number line—can help learners develop a rich connected understanding of mathematics. For mathematics teachers, understanding the big ideas in mathematics is essential to planning, designing tasks, and making connections between students’ solutions and the key mathematical ideas in the lesson. Research questions include:

- What big mathematical ideas are represented in texts or classroom activities?
- How can collaborative planning support teacher knowledge development around the big ideas?
- How do teachers orchestrate whole class discussions to sequence solutions and connect to big ideas?
- What is the impact on planning and task design around big ideas on teacher professional noticing and assessment?
- What is the impact of planning and task design around big ideas on teachers’ content and specialist mathematical knowledge development?

Data collection methods could include content analysis, video analysis, and interviews.

For further information, contact: Jodie Hunter j.hunter1@massey.ac.nz
DESIGNING RICH MATHEMATICAL TASKS INCLUDING FINANCIAL LITERACY TASKS

Target students: Master’s inquiry, Master’s thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Jodie Hunter, Raewyn, Eden, Peter Rawlins

Opportunities to learn in the mathematics classroom are mediated through the tasks that students engage. Consideration of big mathematical ideas, task challenge, opportunities for engaging in mathematical reasoning and sense making, and catering for diversity of student readiness are central guiding features of the tasks development and implementation. Possible research questions include:

- Teachers’ perceptions/current use of rich mathematical tasks. How can enabling and extending prompts support student access to task?
- How can cultural and authentic context support student access to tasks?
- How can we design and use tasks that integrate areas across the curriculum (e.g., financial literacy, STEM, art)?
- What factors contribute to maintaining cognitive challenge in task enactment?

Data collection may involve survey, case study and design research.

For further information, contact: Jodie Hunter j.hunter1@massey.ac.nz
THE IMPACT OF HIGH STAKES ASSESSMENT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING AND LEARNING IN THE MATHEMATICS CLASSROOM

Target students: Master's inquiry, Master's thesis  
Staff members: Peter Rawlins

Formal high stakes assessment systems such as NCEA and National Standards are becoming part of the educational landscape. In seeking to broaden our understanding of the affordances and constraints of high stakes assessment on pedagogical practices possible research questions are:

- To what extent are course design, content coverage, teaching resources, and pedagogies affected by the presence of high stakes assessment?
- What is the effect of high stakes assessment systems on assessment for learning practices?

Mixed methods research methodology could include surveys and case studies.

For further information, contact: Peter Rawlins p.rawlins@massey.ac.nz
TEACHERS' COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY: CO-TEACHING TO STRENGTHEN MATHEMATICS PEDAGOGY

Target students: Master's inquiry, Master’s thesis
Staff members: Raewyn Eden

New Zealand teachers are increasingly encouraged to work collaboratively, for example in new shared teaching spaces. Understanding how collaboration in teaching might afford or constrain teachers' professional learning is important. This study offers opportunities to investigate how co-teaching might support a range professional learning goals within the context of the day-to-day work of teaching mathematics. Explorations could include a self-study of a teacher's own-shared teaching, investigating the co-teaching experiences of other teachers, or exploring co-teaching in the context of the school-based leadership of mathematics.

For further information, contact: Raewyn Eden r.eden@massey.ac.nz
DRAWING ON HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE TO RAISE MATHEMATICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Target students: Master's inquiry, Master's thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Jodie Hunter, Louise Fitzgerald

New Zealand, like many other countries has an increasingly diverse and changing student population. Family-based studies highlight the benefits of developing parents’ understanding of the mathematics their children are learning and supporting families to act as mathematical resources for their children and for schools. These studies use a combination of workshops to engage parents in learning about the mathematics their children are learning in school and a series of classroom visits. Other studies acknowledge that children enter schooling with multiple funds of mathematical knowledge and document the importance of teachers becoming learners of their students’ community. Possible research questions include:

- How can parent workshops support the development of home/school relationships?
- What are the funds of knowledge in regards to mathematics of diverse learners within the New Zealand context?

Data collection could involve questionnaires, interviews, observations and video analysis.

For further information, contact: Jodie Hunter j.hunter1@massey.ac.nz
THE USE OF CONTEXTS IN MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

Target students: Master’s inquiry, Master’s thesis, Doctoral thesis
Staff members: Brian Tweed, Pania Te Maro

For many years now, mathematics teachers have accepted the importance of the use of meaningful/relevant contexts for the successful learning of mathematics. This study idea critically explores the relationships between contexts and mathematics; these relationships are problematised and understood to be influenced by politics and power. Within this study, here are some of the questions that may be explored:

- What happens to contexts when they are used for the learning of mathematics?
- What happens to mathematical concepts when certain contexts are used to learn them?
- How are teachers and students working with contexts in mathematics classrooms?
- What issues are involved when contexts from one cultural location are used in another?

Data will include interviews, questionnaires, critical document analysis, video analysis and classroom observations.

Students will contribute by:
- conducting interviews with individuals or focus groups.
- designing and implementing questionnaires.
- using qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyse the different forms of data collected.

For further information, contact: Brian Tweed b.tweed@massey.ac.nz or Pania Te Maro p.temaro@massey.ac.nz
Levels of secondary student achievement in mathematics and science have been subject to continuous public and political scrutiny. In this historical research, we are interested in what triggers such debates in New Zealand and in other national contexts. The project involves four case studies, focusing on (i) the mid-to-late 1930s; (ii) the second half of the 1950s; (iii) the 1980s, and (iv) the early 2000s. Using a multi-layered approach, we seek to show that concerns over falling educational standards are rarely entirely local. This study offers opportunities to explore a range of questions including:

- What triggers debates in New Zealand based around claims that secondary student achievement levels have fallen?
- How are such debates sustained, amplified and promoted to the status of a national crisis requiring urgent action?
- What are the mechanisms that facilitate the transfer of perceived crises and articulated solutions from one country to another?
- How and for what purpose do interest groups in particular national contexts utilise public and professional concern over mathematics and science underachievement for particular ends?
- What is the evidence that student performances in these key areas have declined, improved or stabilised over generations?

Data will include primary and secondary source material. It will involve publications; policy documents; curricula; professional literature; media releases and archival accessions including parliamentary debates.

Students will contribute by carrying out:
- Case study investigation; documentary analysis; content analysis.

For further information, contact: Margaret Walshaw m.a.walshaw@massey.ac.nz
INVESTIGATING MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN WHO STUTTER

**Target students:** Honours research project, Master’s thesis  
**Staff member:** Anna Hearne

There is a significant gap in research concerning the treatment of school age children. Yet we know that this is potentially the last chance to stop the development of the disorder and prevent potentially debilitating psychological consequences in adolescence and adulthood. There is an urgent need to better inform Speech Language Therapists in their decision making for this group of clients.

Student involvement: The research student(s) will be conducting exploratory case studies. These case studies will investigate different treatments for school age children and different service delivery models such as individual and group format. Quantitative and qualitative methodology will be employed to evaluate the outcomes of the case studies.

**For further information, contact:** Anna Hearne a.k.hearne@massey.ac.nz
LANGUAGE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN EARLY YEARS CLASSROOMS

Target students: Honours research project, Master’s thesis
Staff members: Elizabeth Doell, Sally Clendon

This project may appeal to speech-language therapists or teachers interested in classroom language.

The purpose of this project is to develop outcome measures for describing changes in children’s language and participation in classroom interactions. Evidence indicates that children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) experience difficulties participating in language learning interactions in their classrooms. We have been working with teachers to optimise opportunities in their classrooms. We now need to develop measures that identify the impact of these enhanced opportunities on children’s participation in classroom interactions and the language they use. We are interested in using qualitative methodologies to develop outcome tools and trial these with teachers involved in the inquiry projects. These tools will be used to monitor changes in children’s language associated with the teachers’ changes in their interactions. The findings will inform our understanding of how teachers can promote children’s engagement in instructional interactions and support children with SLCN.

Student involvement: Two possible projects.

• **Project 1:** The development of outcome measurement tools will involve an extensive literature review to find suitable tools that could be adapted for early years’ classrooms (Years 1 to 3). Students would work with teachers in their region to implement a preliminary trial of the tool or tools and use focus groups or individual interviews to gather feedback about the usefulness and relevance of the outcome measures.

• **Project 2:** This an explorative case study methodology where students work collaboratively with teachers implementing professional quality projects to enhance the language learning opportunities in their classrooms. The students will use case study methodology to gather information from the outcome measurement tool (from Project 1), teacher and student interviews, and direct observations to explore language and participation outcomes associated with teachers’ changes to the language learning opportunities in one instructional activity.

For further information, contact: Sally Clendon s.clendon@massey.ac.nz or Elizabeth Doell e.h.doell@massey.ac.nz
TEACHING AND LEARNING

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES AND SETTINGS

Target students: Aspects of this research programme can be adapted for Master’s inquiry, Master's thesis, Doctoral thesis

Staff members: Roseanna Bourke, John O'Neill

In everyday settings, individuals and groups of people learn to understand, appreciate and make sense of their worlds in many ways. This series of case studies sets out to explore the often invisible processes of teaching and learning in these everyday activities that enable individuals, groups and communities to contribute to social, cultural and economic development.

Classroom settings provide limited, partial understandings of the many diverse ‘ways of knowing’ (Harris 2007). Such ways of knowing may be said to explain how people live, develop, communicate and interact with the natural and social worlds around them through teaching and learning relations. Contributing students will investigate how teaching and learning take place in ordinary everyday activities and settings using a variety of theoretical tools such as Rogoff’s ‘intent community participation’, Engeström’s ‘cultural historical activity theory’, Bourdieu’s ‘theory of practice’, ‘Ākonga Māori’ (G. Smith, 1997), and ‘The Pacific Way’ (Anae, et. al., 2001).

For further information, contact: Roseanna Bourke r.bourke@massey.ac.nz