

ARTS  
UNIVERSITY  
BOURNEMOUTH



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WINCHESTER

# Learning to 'Level-up'?

Supporting Working  
Class Boys' Progression  
to Higher Education

8 September 2022



# Widening Participation Research and Practice Conference

Hosted at Arts University Bournemouth, this one-day free conference will bring together practitioners and researchers conducting activity to support working class boys' educational progression. It'll provide a space to disseminate research and learn from evidence-based practice.

We're thrilled to be joined by a selection of esteemed speakers throughout the day.

**Book your free place**  
[aub.ac.uk/level-up](http://aub.ac.uk/level-up)  
[wp@aub.ac.uk](mailto:wp@aub.ac.uk)



# Speakers



Professor Nicola Ingram  
*Director of Education and  
Social Research Institute,*  
**Manchester  
Metropolitan University**

Author of *Working-class Boys and Educational Success: Teenage Identities, Masculinity and Urban Schooling*, Nicola is professor of sociology of education with an interest in analysing social class based educational inequalities across the whole education sector, and their connection to labour market outcomes. Her research is politically motivated by a personal history of growing up on a council estate with multiple markers of deprivation in Belfast, and a conflictual experience of social mobility through education.



Dr Alex Blower  
*Access and  
Participation Manager,*  
**Arts University  
Bournemouth**

Having completed his doctoral research in inequality and access to Higher Education for working-class boys in 2020 at the University of Wolverhampton, Alex joined Arts University Bournemouth as Access and Participation Manager in early 2021. Alongside the work Alex and the team deliver institutionally, he also advocates for evidence-based approaches to engagement with working-class boys across the sector, speaking regularly at national Higher Education research and practitioner conferences, and writing articles for organisations such as the Higher Education Policy Institute, Society for Research in Higher Education and WonkHE



Susan Morgan  
*Taking Boys Seriously,*  
**University of Ulster**

Susan Morgan is a principal researcher and manager of the *Taking Boys Seriously* research, as well as a lecturer in the School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences. Susan has taken a leading role in the development and delivery of Professional training in Community Youth work and an active role in the support and development of the vibrant Community Youth work sector in Northern Ireland through mentoring and facilitation, development of knowledge exchange opportunities, and engagement with the sector in support of widening access and participation for those underrepresented in higher education.



Ann Cayenne  
*Head of Programme  
(Boys' Development),*  
**Future Men**

Ann heads up the Boys' Development Programme at Future Men. Founded in 1988 as Working With Men, Future Men is a multi-award-winning specialist charity that supports boys and men along the path to becoming dynamic future men. The Boys' Development Programme facilitates positive peer mentoring and is an inclusive programme for all school aged boys including those who may be at risk of disengagement or exclusion. Through meaningful activities and discussions, boys are encouraged to thrive in education, develop their aspirations and to navigate the challenges of male adolescence.

# Programme

- 9.00** Arrival
- 9.30** Welcome
- 9.35** Putting young peoples' voices at the heart of the work
- 9.50** Professor Nicola Ingram
- 10.30** Future Men
- 11.10** Break
- 11.30** Research paper sessions
- 12.30** Lunch
- 13.15** Workshop sessions (choose two to attend)
- 14.40** Break
- 14.55** Taking Boys Seriously: core principles in practice with Susan Morgan
- 15.25** Driving forward the agenda: The Boys' Impact Coalition with Dr. Alex Blower
- 16.00** Close





# Research papers

Youth Work Methodology In HE: going from participation to engagement

*Nik Marsdin, Development Manager Morecambe Bay Curriculum (Eden North)*

Exploring how youth work methodology and practise can be utilised in HE outreach, this paper draws on practice-based research gathered during a project in 2020 which investigated the thoughts, feelings and experiences of young people regarding education and Lancaster university as a local education provider.

Being a Boy – Mobilising creative practice as a tool for critical reflection on masculinity and identity

*Dr Jon Rainford and Kate Venables*

This paper discusses a recent series of workshops in creative writing, photography and dance conducted at Arts University Bournemouth with young men aged 12-16. These workshops were developed to provide opportunities to extend the boys horizons for action (Hodkinson and Sparkes, 1997) whilst helping develop AUBs understandings of this groups needs and how to support them. Each workshop comprised of structured activities working towards participant led creative outcomes representing their experiences of masculinity. Through these workshops participants developed confidence, a sense of belonging and enabled them to consider horizons for action that had previously been in view.

Parental reflections on boys' development and achievements through an all-boy dance group

*Kick Off partners (NSCD, DAZL, Leeds City College, and Phoenix Dance Theatre) and Applied Inspiration's SEER service*

This presentation focuses on findings from consultation with the parents and carers of the young people in this all-boy dance group, exploring reflections of child transformation through dance collaboration. We analyse findings pertaining to dance in this instance as an inclusively masculine space, focussing on development through sociality and collaboration.

# Workshop sessions

## The Thrive Initiative

*Anne Clarkson and Liz Davis*

The Thrive Initiative encompasses how to manage your physical and mental health and promotes discussion around gender stereotypes, the objectification of women, anger vs aggression and creates a safe space for teenage boys aged 11-15 to explore their mental health and develop a useful toolbox of coping strategies and good practice. This workshop will provide you with a taster session of Thrive alongside sharing the outcomes of this project so far.

## Developing the critical consciousness of boys

*Deneen Kenchington*

This workshop will provide you with the opportunity to understand, analyse and evaluate the place of critical consciousness in our classrooms and in our conversations. Through a series of tasks and think pieces, delegates will look at boys' education through Freire's lens and through the viewpoint of his critics.

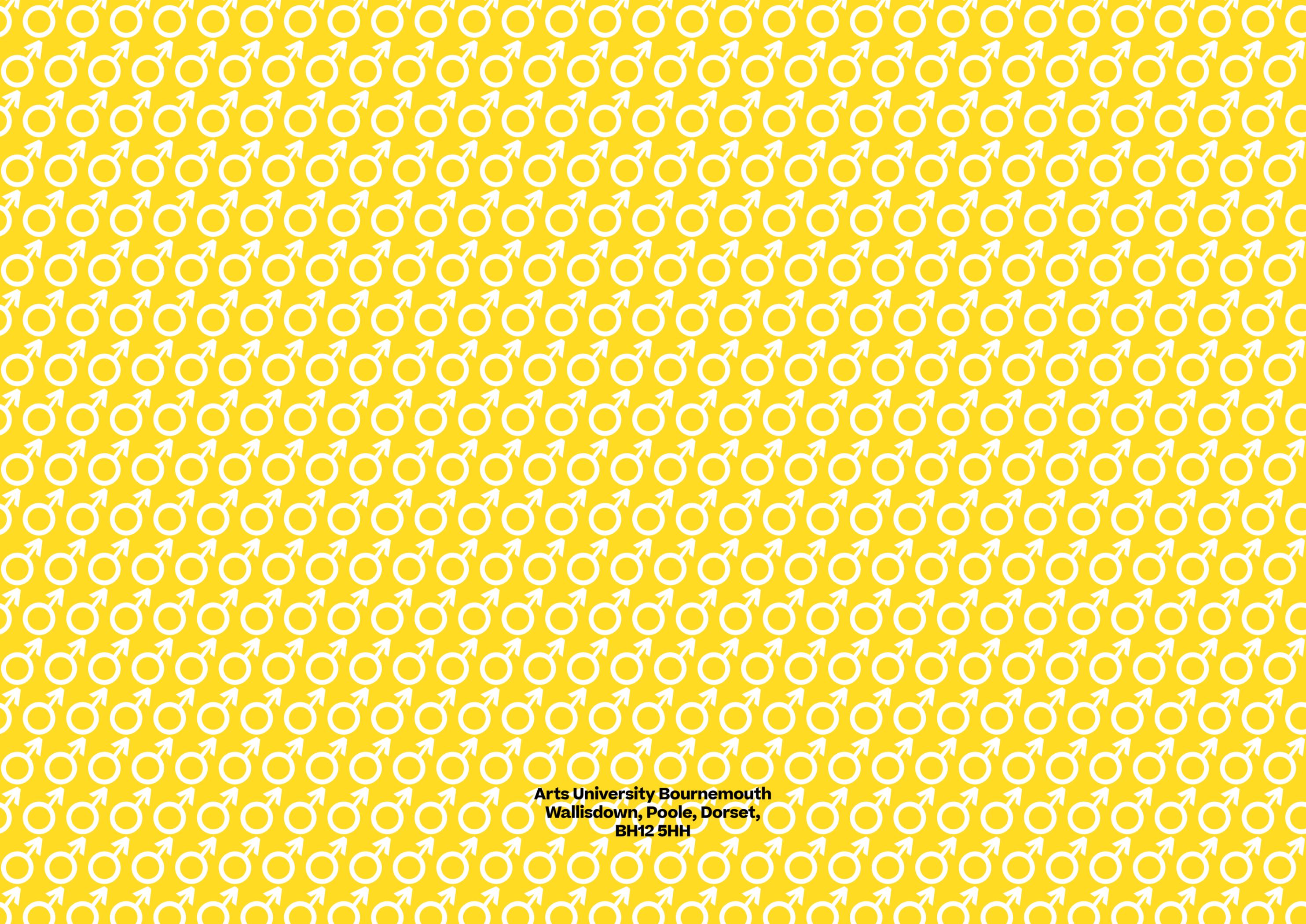
## Challenge, Confidence and Cultural Competence:

Making that which is strange seem familiar

*David Mather*

The session will be a practitioner-led discussion that has elements of colleague experience interwoven with concepts that are overtly sociological. In particular, Bourdieu's notion of 'cultural competence' – the know-how that one acquires via experience – will be used in order to frame the ideas that are generated.





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