

## Speaker Biographies

**John Butcher** is Professor of Inclusive Teaching in Higher Education and Director of Access, Open and Cross-curricular Innovation at the Open University (OU). He is responsible for the development, enhancement and implementation of the institution's pan-university teaching curriculum, including leadership of the UK-wide Access provision. As Deputy Director on the Open Programme, John supports the presentation and production of open box modules. He leads the Access Observatory and through that, evaluation and scholarship associated with WP initiatives internally. He is also Academic Lead for the Access Student Support Team as well as representing the OU on the Forum for Access and Continuing Education (FACE) and the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL) executive. John is the Managing Editor of the international journal *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*.

**Dr Catherine Bates** is Programme Manager within the Lifelong Learning Centre at the University of Leeds where she has run the BA Professional Studies degree – an interdisciplinary programme for mature students – since 2015. Catherine has a research background in Canadian literature, postcolonial feminism and waste studies. Her pedagogical interests include decolonising the curriculum, social justice, co-creation and andragogy.

**Paula Shaw** is Associate Professor of Online Teaching and Learning at the University of Derby. As Academic Manager for UDOL— the University of Derby Online Learning department— she has significantly influenced its expansion from 7 to 40 programmes and manages several of these across 6 disciplines. Through her research, Paula has developed the PROPHET Framework (Pedagogic Realignment with Organisational Priorities and Horizon Emergent Technologies) ensuring that horizon scanning, pedagogy and planning are integral to online students' experiences. She is currently leading an 18-month QAA supported collaborative project to deliver a MOOC flexible learning design toolkit. She describes herself as a champion for the marginalised, working to ensure that transitioning between study modes won't compromise students' experiences; acknowledging that university life may be experienced in different ways but all students should feel welcome, supported and valued irrespective of their study mode.

**Sandra Binns** is Senior Officer and **Kate Page** is Access, Inclusion & Skills Manager at the Office for Students (OfS). Sandra has worked on the access and participation agenda for the past five years, first at the Office for Fair Access and now in Access, Inclusion & Skills at the OfS. Her current policy portfolio includes work on mature students and the skills agenda at the OfS. Kate has worked at the OfS and previously the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) for over 10 years. She currently works on skills and employability policy. Before joining HEFCE, Kate worked in admissions and departmental management at the University of Bristol.

**Navjot Kaur Virk** is Head of Discipline: Midwifery & Children and Interim Discipline Lead: Post-Registration Nursing at the University of Derby. She is a senior academic with a strong professional history in the healthcare sector and higher education in England and India. Her passion lies in improving quality of education in health care practice and enabling access for learners. Navjot has played a pivotal role in developing Apprenticeship standards for Specialist Community Public Health Practice which are approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships. In addition, she is a national trainer for the Institute of Health Visiting for Domestic Violence, Infant Mental Health and Speech and Language Development. Navjot has a keen interest in developing leaders for the healthcare sector and has taught on various leadership programmes within academia and the NHS. She has presented at various regional, national and international conferences on a range of topics including Knife Crime, Forced Marriages, Impact of Pandemic on Family Health and Research Methodologies.

**Caroline McDonald** is Director of Access and Engagement at Birkbeck University, London. She has been working in the field of adult education for nearly 20 years. Across the community sector, local authorities, further and higher education, she has delivered on large scale projects and influenced policy and practices directly impacting the access, progression and success of mature learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/caroline-mcdonald-b0a24226/>