

Kirsty Alexander

Name:	Kirsty Alexander
E-mail address:	r01kea15@abdn.ac.uk
University and/or centre:	University of Aberdeen
Supervisor(s):	Prof Jennifer Cleland (Medical Education) Dr Sandra Nicolson (Medical Education) Dr Tania Fahey Palma (Linguistics) Professor Do Coyle (Education)
Country:	UK
Your professional background:	MA German and International Relations I then worked as Coordinator of university outreach and widening participation programmes.
Stage within your PhD/Post doc project:	First Year
<p>Abstract</p> <p>Medicine has been widely criticized for its lack of progress in widening access (WA) to “non-traditional” groups. However, the barriers to WA are related to broader social and educational inequalities.¹ Moreover, studies show that some school teachers have misconceptions about the requirements for medical applicants and may attempt to dissuade suitable students from applying.² It is essential to explore and address these misconceptions given the influence of teachers on pupil aspiration and attainment³ The over-arching aims of this inter-disciplinary doctorate are to examine and ultimately address the unstated assumptions that underpin and shape teachers’ practices when advising students on applying for medicine.</p> <p>➤ What is the query and/or dilemma you want to discuss?</p> <p>WA to Medicine is an under-theorized area of research and there have been calls for better quality studies using conceptual frameworks and innovative methodologies⁴. I am addressing this by applying linguistics approaches to analyzing a corpus of text, under the supervision of a Linguistics colleague. I will then work more closely with another supervisor, from Education, to access teachers and pupils. I would like to discuss how best to manage interdisciplinary working in terms of different expectations, unfamiliar approaches and environments, diverse ways of reporting, etc.</p> <p>➤ What do you want to achieve in your 30 minutes?</p> <p>I will present my study briefly, and reflect on my experiences of working across disciplines. I would like to discuss how best to negotiate working across several disciplines each with their own conceptual frameworks, styles and language.</p>	
Keywords (1 to 3)	

¹ Selecting for Excellence Final Report, 2014, Medical Schools Council, London
<http://www.medschools.ac.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Selecting-for-Excellence-Final-Report.pdf>

² McHarg, et al. Medical Education; 2007; 41; 815–821

³ Gorard, et al. Review of Widening Participation Research: addressing barriers to participation in higher education. Bristol, UK; 2006.

⁴ Nicolson & Cleland. Researching Medical Education; eds. Cleland, J. and Durning, S.; Wiley Blackwell; 2015