OU PRISON EDUCATION TUTORING
IS IT A HARBINGER OF EXCELLENCE?

THE "WHY"
Education reduces reoffending by 10% (MoJ, 2019). The OU is the primary provider of higher education in prison in the UK (Walder, 2022).

THE "CONTRIBUTION"
Investigating SiSE tutors’ lived experiences of teaching in prison will contribute to improved knowledge, practice and policy (Cushner et al, 2006) for self, organisational and international HE prison policy development.

THE "WHAT"
This study aims to understand the diversity of OU SiSE tutors’ approaches to tutoring in penal settings and how these could contribute to personal development and continuous policy improvement for the OU. I will be asking SiSE tutors:

a) To what extent do tutors’ previous professional experience(s) underpin and drive a diversity of positive approaches to tutoring in prison? (Feistritzer and Haar, 2008)

b) What are the lived experiences of OU SiSE tuition which help to describe and perceive the experience to be a “great tutorial”? (Walder, 2022)

c) How can these lived experiences relate to areas of personal professional development (Knowles, 1984) and policy development for HE prison teaching?

THE "HOW"
This study will adopt a qualitative methodology (Bryman et al, 2021) which complements Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA, Smith et al, 2022) to investigate the lived experiences of OU SiSE tutors, in order to identify what tutoring approaches provide the most personal significance and also where personal development and policy improvement could be achieved.

Understanding this phenomenon, will require a bracketing approach (Bryman, 2016) in order to produce distance between the researcher and the research because the researcher is also a SiSE tutor. This removed position will record lived experiences through semi-structured interviews, which will be categorised and analysed to establish deep insights (Pollard, 2019) to be able to answer the research questions in understanding more deeply SiSE tutors’ lived experiences.

THE "WHERE"
Data will be collected from a series of virtual and/or face to face SiSE tutor semi-structured interviews, to identify and understand personal experiences of significance for developmental and policy purposes.

Snowballing (Lecy & Beatty, 2012) will produce follow up opportunities to test factual accuracy and understanding with participants which will feed into studies of SiSE tutors andragocial praxis for local and international policy development.

DEFINITIONS
HE - Higher Education
MoJ - Ministry of Justice
OU - Open University
Prison Classroom - room in a secure environment which may (or may not) resemble a normal classroom or a virtual space ie telephone tutorial
SiSE - Students in Secure Environments (which include prisons, secure hospitals and those on some licence restrictions)

REFERENCES
Flyvbjerg, B., Five Misunderstandings About Case Study Research, Qualitative Inquiry, vol. 12, no. 2, April 2006, pp. 219-245.
Longan, D (2022), The Prison Classroom: Artwork. Open Campus, USA
Walder, T., (2022) Internal email confirmation, The Open University, UK

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN MY RESEARCH. FIND OUT MORE BY GETTING IN TOUCH

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THE PRISON CLASSROOM: IMAGE BY: DANIEL LONGAN FOR OPEN CAMPUS, USA (2022)

THE "WHAT"
"WHEN"

1. Data Collection Scoping
   April - Dec '23

2. Participant Recruitment
   Sept '23 - Dec '23

3. Data Collection (Virtual semi-structured interviews)
   Dec '23 - June '24

4. Data Analysis
   (parallel process with (4) )
   Jan '24 - Nov '24

5. "WHAT"
   "WHEN"

1. Ethics approval submission
   July - Sept '23

2. Data Collection
   (Virtual semi-structured interviews)

3. Participant Recruitment
   Sept '23 - Dec '23

4. Data Analysis
   (parallel process with (4) )

5. Participant Recruitment
   Jan '24 - Nov '24

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED