



Dear Applicant

My name is Alison Oldfield and I am writing to you as the Pathway Lead for the MSc Education (Learning, Technology and Society). I am pleased to have offered you a place on the programme for the coming academic year and want to take this opportunity to introduce myself and share some information about the programme, as well as offer some of our current students' insights into the experiences of the programme and life in Bristol.



I look forward to welcoming you to the school. I have been working in the School of Education and on the Learning, Technology and Society pathway since 2016. My professional background is in education and youth work, and I have combined these with an interest in research and digital technologies for the past 10 years. Previous to joining the University of Bristol, I have lectured in other universities and worked on a number of UK and international research projects related to digital games, technology enhanced assessment, disability and outdoor learning, co-designing technology with children and developing innovative technologies for classrooms across Europe. You can follow my Twitter feed at [@alison_o](#).

Dr. Helen Manchester has also been a central member of the Learning, Technology and Society pathway since January 2014. She is an active researcher interested in a range of topics related to social and technological change. A significant part of Helen's research involves working with others in the city to explore the co-design of cutting edge creative digital technologies with groups who might generally feel themselves to be excluded from the digital environment. She develops methodologically innovative approaches to research – working across disciplines to collaborate on research projects with artists, technologists, young and older people, community organisations and policy-makers. You can follow Helen's work by looking at her twitter feed [@helenmanchester](#) or exploring the recently completed research project [Tangible Memories](#).

Key Features of Programme

As a student on the MSc Education (Learning, Technology and Society) you can expect to join a thriving educational research community where your interests and aspirations will be nurtured and developed by our team of tutors. At a time of great social and technological change now is a great time to be studying 'Learning, technology and society'. We believe this programme is unique in asking students to consider the wider contexts around the implementation of digital technologies for learning. We see learning as lifelong and lifewide and spend time exploring with students the many different contexts in which technologies can influence our social and learning lives. We help students to adopt a critical perspective on the implementation of technologies and to build on lessons from the past in order to make informed choices around technological and pedagogical developments.

Typically students undertaking this programme of study are interested in learning technologies in relation to schools, Higher Education institutions and more broadly in the learning potential of

technologies in our own lives. Many of our students are interested in going back to their own countries and contexts and sharing their learning with others- becoming future leaders in a wide range of educational institutions and policy settings.

Our students are teachers, museum educators, community workers and learning technologists working in all levels of educational institutions from many countries around the world. Many students go on to roles as teachers or senior leaders in educational institutions, some take up work as learning technologists in universities in the UK and elsewhere, others use their learning on the programme to pursue roles as designers of digital learning opportunities. We also have a number of students in each year who choose to go on to study for a PhD at the University of Bristol – and we offer all students who wish to follow this route an enormous amount of support for this.

2017/18 Cohort

The 2017/18 cohort have now completed their Autumn term units and are beginning to think about dissertations. Some highlights from the Autumn term for students included guest speakers, a 'technology showcase' where students shared different digital tools for learning, and taking advantage of opportunities within the vibrant local community – such as seminars, a session in a local museum and linking up with students from the university's computer science department. Feedback from the Autumn term included positive comments on the range of different teaching approaches and content including, *'Group work in class was really effective. Students can exchange ideas with peers, which is really helpful for brainstorming'* and *'I also enjoyed the "technology showcase" as I learnt about a range of technologies that I would not possibly encounter otherwise.'*

Student support was also rated very highly by the students. For instance, one student commented that *'The use of the tutorial was very effective, as I was able to share all my concerns with my tutor regarding what concepts I was struggling with. This helped clarify things and I felt prepared to undertake the assignment.'*

These Autumn term units are an important foundational block towards the dissertation and we are pleased to see some interesting and innovative emerging areas for dissertation topics including:

- Considering how technologies support children's participation in early years classrooms
- Exploring how learning to code with a micro:bit might support young refugees
- Examining how the use of iPads change teaching practices in a Kazakhstan classroom

Your decision to pursue the MSc Education (Learning, Technology and Society) at Bristol is a great choice, and we are confident that you will not only enjoy the academic challenges but also the personal ones. In order to support preparations for your arrival please bookmark our ['New Student Webpages'](#), which contain information and reminders on pre-arrival tasks to support your study.

If you have any questions about the programme or would like any support in helping you prepare for your programme, please do contact us.

Alison Oldfield

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Please do follow us on [Twitter!](#) This is a great way to start becoming part of the SoE community and we would love to hear from you on your aspirations and preparations for arrival by tagging us @SoEBristol. The Learning, Technology and Society pathway has also been using the hashtag #Itsbristol so check that out too to see what we've been up to this year.