

PC03 - Migration Studies With Language Development

Lead Supervisor: Professor Trevor Thompson - trevor.thompson@bris.ac.uk

Outline:



Migration Studies Student Choice Project

Migration is a big contemporary issue for humanity. Millions are on the move due to war, poverty, climate change. This SCP is an opportunity for you to reflect on your own understandings and assumptions and ponder deeply on this topic.

You'll learn through directly from subject-expert academics from the University's migration studies institute [Migration Mobilities Bristol](#). You will also learn from health professionals involved in migrant healthcare and directly from the lived experience of migrants.

Language study is intrinsically valuable for offering us close insight into another culture. This SCP focuses on *French* language development but, as long as participants let us know early on, we can also help with development in other languages such as *Arabic*.

All students signing for the SCP will be offered the opportunity to spend a five full days volunteering with the social care charity [Care4Calais](#) based around Calais in northern France.

If you would like to do this SCP but don't wish to (or are unable) go to France (or study French) you are still welcome on the course. You need to make this clear as soon as you are accepted as it will change our arrangements with the partner in France.

In this case we will try to help you find placements in other organisations in and around Bristol. At the time of writing such placements are not arranged and so it is not possible to confirm the alternatives. Self-arranged placements would be encouraged.

More on Migration Studies ...

This is a large field and in this SCP we will focus on the following areas:

- Understanding how migration connects to economics, politics and environmental change – including the colonial history of the UK
- Understanding current UK migration policy and practice. How the asylum system works and fails to work. A critical look at the “hostile environment” policy.
- Health consequences of migration with a particular focus on mental health, services for migrants, and impacts on the wider system.

As well as this academic work, we want you to get alongside persons with lived experience of being a migrant through contact with persons who have migrated to the UK and/or wish to come to the UK (Calais). This to include asylum seekers and refugees.

Language Development ...

Doing some language work is a requirement of the SCP. The French language element is provided on campus. For those seeking to make progress in languages such as *Somali*, *Pashto* and *Arabic* we hope to link to [Refulingua](#) which gives work opportunities for those of migrant and refugee backgrounds to teach in their home language. You will be asked to confirm your language preferences soon after you are accepted.

The [CEFR](#) provides a scale of language proficiency from A1-A2 (basic), B1-B2 (independent) and C1-C2 (proficient). For this SCP the French learning is open to all students but is not ideally suited to complete beginners. Learners will likely be streamed into advanced beginner (A1, A2) and intermediate (B1 +) groups, depending on numbers. You will be asked soon after acceptance to state your niveau (level). [This](#) document might help. French development seminars will be in general French and medical French.

For clarity, if you don't choose French you are still encouraged to volunteer with Care4Calais. On the French trip you will get (and we can create) opportunities to use your French but the organisation works in English and the majority of migrants do not speak French.

Course Components:

The six weeks of the course are divided into three parts. The following is indicative:

Part 1. **Foundations of Migration Studies**. Three weeks. There will be x2 seminars each week in *migration studies* supported by focused reading materials and lead by migration

studies academics. There will be some additional less formal seminars e.g. in migrant health led by clinicians, or local services led by community organisation representatives .

There will be x2 French language seminars per week, lead by UK doctors who are native or fluent French speakers. These seminars will focus mainly on medical French. We have also established links with Université Paris-Est [Créteil](#) and they are keen for language exchange with their students. Details emerging.

In addition to these academic components our aim is that every enrolled student will get at least one experience of direct contact with migrant focused organisations in Bristol such as [the Haven](#) (which seeks to help asylum seekers). Details not yet confirmed.

There will be at least one social event where we will have a cooking lesson from a chef teaching their home cuisine. This will be organised via [MIGRATEFUL](#). There will also be at least one meeting in preparation for Part 2.

It is important that all students who apply for this SCP are free all day every day for the first three weeks. You will be in structured activity about half the time but we haven't timetabled yet so can't say when exactly. Don't plan on doing paid work in the day, going to family event etc.

Part 2. Practical Experience. Two weeks. Our assumption is that most students applying for this SCP will want to have the experience of volunteering in Calais. We have secured places for x10 students with the charity Care4Calais. Volunteers would arrive on/by Sunday 30th June and volunteer Monday- Friday and finish on Saturday 6th July.*

As explained above, you are still very welcome to apply for the SCP and gain your practical experience in Bristol or elsewhere in the UK. Your experience will likely not be as immersive and it can be harder to get placements in organisations not set up for short term volunteers (which is the Care4Calais model). But we will help as much as possible and it is very likely that strong practical experience will be gained.

With any sort of work with migrant populations there is the possibility of encountering persons traumatised by the likes of war, sexual exploitation and traumatic journeys. We also wish to emphasise that many migrants are not traumatised in this sense. Through prebriefing and postbriefing we will help you prepare for, handle, and process any such trauma stories so you can stay well. But exposure to harsh lives is something to consider on application.

Part 3. Assignment Writing. One week. The main activity in this part is writing up a project exploring some aspect of migration of your choosing. You should start that research in Part 1 and Professor Anderson and colleagues, along with the supervisors will offer support. There will be a check-in meeting on Monday 15/07 and a final meeting with presentations on AM of Friday 19/07.

*cost of travel to and from France, placement costs, accommodation and a food allowance will be provided for one week. Students are at liberty to remain in France for the second of these two weeks at their own expense .

Any other teaching and learning opportunities:

Attendance at all seminars is a course requirement. We are planning several additional components including at least one experience in an organisation helping migrants here in Bristol, a Migrateful cookery class, a French film night (open to all) and (hopefully) a chance to make an exchange partnership with a French medical student (this could work even if you are not studying French).

Is accommodation provided:

Yes. There are various options suggested by Care4Calais. We will assist the Calais group to find appropriate lodgings from Sunday 30th June to Saturday 6th July.

To arrange, please contact:

The placements cannot be finalised until the organising team know the number of students who have signed up. As soon as this is done, students will be helped and encouraged to find their accommodation in the area.

Is there a minimum level of fitness required?

No

Minimum students required for placement to run:

6

Maximum places available:

10

Are there costs which will be incurred and reimbursed?

Yes, with previous SCPs we have asked students to buy their own tickets and claim back. On this SCP you may also need to pay for food and accommodation and claim it back.

Any other information:

This is an intense SCP - you should expect to be engaged in the SCP full time for the first three weeks and the final week. There is scope for at least one less intense week around week 5.

Though we don't have a named person yet, our hope is that a person with direct lived experience of migration, possibly a doctor, will have a central role in the delivery of the course. We warmly welcome students to this SCP with family and personal stories of migration, as another resource to draw on as we explore this complex topic.

Students are encouraged to complete their assignments during the SCP period or shortly afterwards. Students will not be penalised for having a taught and experiential SCP.

Your safety is fundamental to the work of the Care4Calais charity. They don't have a history of physical harm to a volunteer. They offer daily safety briefings and have clear policies for contingencies. That said, this SCP is higher risk than a typical UK clinical placement as there can be volatility in the Calais migrant camps, for instance due to French police action (to which C4C are highly attuned). Keep this in mind making your course.

We learned of Care4Calais from current Y4 student Ilana Goldstein. Here are some of her reflections:

My secondary school partnered with Care4Calais to organise teams of volunteers to travel to France, of which I had the opportunity to be apart of. Our primary task involved sorting through donations and essential emergency aid, which we then distributed at various sites throughout the week. Another important task prioritised, when accompanying Care4Calais on distributions, were charging mobile phones, bringing hot drinks, food and firewood. This was consistently done in a thorough, efficient and routine way at specific locations such as Dunkirk.

Beyond distributions, we also had the privilege to spend time with the refugees and play football/cricket with them, which was what I found most insightful, learning just how distorted the media portrays the refugee crisis. Often showing stories of violent crime, none of which I experienced during my time. Care4Calais ensured our safety at all times by operating with specific systems and routines in place. Additionally the full time charity workers had built good relationships with many of the refugees. Overall, the charity's on-the-ground presence and ongoing commitment has built a strong community in their mission to support refugees, being able to contribute to that in some way was an invaluable experience I couldn't recommend more. Although I personally went during secondary school I could see how this would be an excellent experience for medical students. Refugees are not uncommon in the UK and will make up a large number of our patient group, having prior exposure, teaching and education on this topic I believe would be a great aid to our practice.

A note on *voluntourism*. This is the idea that people from rich economic areas pay to provide assistance to those from poorer economic areas. In this transaction, it is argued that the main benefactors are those delivering the help, which is not structurally beneficial to the recipients. A telling example [here](#). This is a concept we will explore during the SCP.

In terms of the assessed project, we will go out of our way to allow you to explore topics of your choosing in interesting and innovative ways whilst acknowledging the structure required by the medical school. Art work would be one example that could work.

If you have any questions about this SCP please don't hesitate to contact me directly via email. I can reply by email, or meet on Teams or face2face.

Professor Trevor Thompson

trevor.thompson@bris.ac.uk

07935 900990

