

UK BASW Student Conference
2024

Navigating Cultural Complexity in Social Work

BASW

● for students ●

16th
March
2024
14 - 17



Mainstage Session

14:00	Omar Mohamed , Co-Chair BASW Experts by Experience Group, BASW Council Expert by Experience Member <i>Welcome</i>
14:10	Keynote – Professor Janet Walker , Visiting Professor of International Social Work at the University of Lincoln, Chair of BASW International Committee <i>In search of Cultural Competency: A framework to support critical thinking about cultural complexity</i> Cultural Competence in social work practice is a vital skill. However, it can be hard to navigate with a number of different qualities, which have to be translated in a greater diversity of social interventions at multiple levels - individual, family, organisation, community and society. In this presentation we will examine the conceptualisation, construction and application in navigating cultural competency in social work practice. A framework to navigate critical thinking about cultural complexity will be offered. An example from another country will be used to identify how social work dialogue, responses and relationships in cultural complexity has been negotiated to support meaningful practice. Culturally sensitive and competent social work practice involves recognising the multifaceted nature of cultural competence.
14:30	Keynote – Imam Mohammed Rashid How to address cultural complexities by way of contextualising care & support from the lens of Culture & Religion i.e. etiquettes, customs etc thus enabling practitioners to work holistically, safely & inclusively.
14:50	Panel Discussion: Morgan Okwonko, BASW Student Ambassador, Volunteer @ Hummingbird Project, University of Sussex Edith Till, BASW Student Ambassador, University of Northampton Janet Walker, Chair of BASW International Committee Imam Mohammed Rashid
15:20 – 15:30	Break
15:30	Choice of workshops - see next page for details and join links
16:30	Return to mainstage for feedback from workshops, led by Omar Mohamed
16:40	Russell Hogarth , BASW Foundation Trustee, Expert by Experience, BASW Professional Development Committee Advisor Introduction to the BASW Charitable Foundation for Social Work & the Student Development Programme
16:45	Closing remarks with Omar Mohamed

Workshops 15:30 - 16:30 - select one to attend on the day

Cultural Competency

Morgan Okonkwo - Volunteer @ Hummingbird Project, BASW Student Ambassador, University of Sussex

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How an individual experiences culture is distinct. The cultural influence and lived experience of black and global majority individuals massively effects how they interact with professionals and navigate services. In social work, there is an obligation to uphold anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice with an emphasis on the acknowledgement of diversity and the promotion of equality reflected through meeting social work professional standards. Practicing cultural competence is a necessary advancement that requires addressing the effects of cultural attitudes and beliefs and challenging cultural biases held by professionals. This training aims to encourage cultural competence in social work practice in order to best serve diverse populations. It will discuss ways of understanding culture and how to increase one's self-awareness and cultural humility. It will also suggest ways to consider and integrate culture into practice in a way where difference is valued.

Cultural considerations across continents

Dr Sui Ting Kong, Associate Professor in Social Work & Janelle Rabe, Transnational Social Work Project Team, Durham University

B

Since 2021, there has been more than 200,000 Hong Kong people having migrated to the UK. Most of these migrants are families with children who were exposed to different degrees of political violence and felt compelled to leave Hong Kong. Among these migrants, there are also qualified social workers from Hong Kong seeking ways to settle in the professional workplace in the UK. Based on Sui-Ting and Hei's research with the Hongkonger communities in the UK, they will use Hongkonger migrants as an example to illustrate how the sociological idea of 'family practices' can inform social workers' understanding of families from diverse cultures, especially on what is 'family care' and 'rights and autonomy'. The presentation will also cover cultural clashes that Hongkonger social workers have experienced as they begin to join the social work workforce in the UK.

2023 Social Workers Union and Thunderbird Partnership Foundation international cultural knowledge exchange trip

Anna Collins & Rebecca Austin - Social Workers Union (SWU) Executive Member

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This cultural knowledge exchange trip was a unique opportunity for UK social workers to learn about the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation's strength based, holistic, trauma informed approach to social work practices that values culture, respect, community, and compassion. Thunderbird's "twoeyed seeing" approach of combining Indigenous knowledge and western knowledge has produced a wealth of frameworks, tools, and programs - many of which will be highlighted in this presentation.

*The well-being magic wand **

Kate Newman, Social Care Wales, Ioana Plesa, Social Work Mentor Coach & Laura Morris, NQSW

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**disclaimer - please note - spoiler alert..... there is no magic wand that can make everything ok all of the time - what we can help you with is how to approach difficult, busy times and where you can get further information and help in a safe connective space with your peers. Come and join us for a warm and friendly conversation which allows you some time to think about just you. Join Kate and Ioana to hear what can impact on your well being when studying and working. There will be the opportunity to consider what impacts on your own well-being and pose questions to your peers to help resolve any challenges you may have which are impacting on you managing home life, studying at placements. An informal safe space to connect with and be listened to by your peers. You will also receive information which may help you to find the right help when needed in the future to support your well-being.*



Omar Mohamed

is a new social worker in children's social care as well as holding roles and expertise in being a lecturer, researcher, author, activist, leader, and expert by experience. Omar is the Co-Chair of the BASW Experts By Experience Group, Non-Executive Director on BASW Council, member of the BASW International Committee, and Co-Vice-Chair of the BASW Diaspora Special Interest Group.

Janet Walker

is a Visiting Professor of International Social Work at the University of Lincoln, where she was, until 2021, the Deputy Head of School of Health and Social Care/Head of Social Work. She has experience of research and support for teaching and learning in England, with other European countries and worldwide, developing teaching and learning in social care and social work, including a European joint Erasmus Mundus Master programme in Advanced Development in Social Work. Prior to working in academia, Janet gained substantial experience in practice, as a social work practitioner and manager. Janet is currently engaged in a project to support the development of social work education in Malawi and the Democratic Republic of Congo; she is one of the Directors of the Council of the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) and Chair of the BASW International Committee.

Sui-Ting Kong

co-produces knowledge with social workers and marginalised communities, and often seeks new ways and methods to enhance participation and validation of lived experiences. She has been awarded the British Academy/Wolfson Fellowship to work with the Hongkonger diaspora in the UK, including Hong Kong qualified social workers, to understand their experiences of migration and settlement. She is an Associate Professor in Social Work at Durham University and co-director of the Centre for Social Justice and Community Action.



Mohammed Rashid

is an accomplished Islamic Scholar & Imam with over 2 decades experience serving in various communities in the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & East London localities. He has extensive experience supporting Muslim Patients with various psychiatric diagnosis within the framework and Lens of Faith, Culture & Spirituality.

He works across 3 different NHS Trusts serving as a Mental Health Chaplain and has delivered training & awareness on many subjects in particular, faith, culture and spirituality thus enabling him to bring a greater understanding of holistic care within the psych and social care practices.

He is also a certified coach and mentor and provides mediation for couples and mentoring for young people in a voluntary capacity.

Russell Hogarth

is an Honorary Fellow and Community Engagement Ambassador at the University of Central Lancashire. He is an entrepreneur in residence for the UCLan Lancashire School of Business and Enterprise. He chairs the EU award-winning international Creative Communities Group and the Lancashire Creative Commonwealth Association.

Russell is a University guest lecturer, High School and Academy enterprise advisor and an EU virtual VET ambassador.

Russell is an esteemed expert by experience within BASW, a trustee of the BASW Charitable Foundation for Social Work and a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists [Dementia & Elderly Quality Mark awards committee]. He is also the chief engagement officer [CEO] and a fellow at the National Forum for Health and Wellbeing. His area of special interest is equality, diversity, and inclusion



Morgan Chukwunyelum Okonkwo

is an international student, originally from California, who is pursuing her MA in Social Work at the University of Sussex. She has a passion for helping diverse populations flourish despite the adversities they face. Before attending University of Sussex, Morgan received her BA in Psychology from Hampton University in Virginia and worked as a mental health technician in a psychiatric hospital for children for a few years. While working there she had the opportunity to support survivors of human trafficking which inspired her to pursue a career in international social work. Upon moving to the UK, Morgan has been involved in many organizations who help black and global majority communities including volunteering with the Hummingbird Project, an organization that provides many services to young refugees and asylum seekers. She is currently on her final placement with Pathways to Independence, a housing and support service for young refugees and asylum seekers and care leavers. Her goal is to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children as a social worker and carry out relief work in their home countries.

Edith Till

is a mature Master of Social Work student at the University of Bedfordshire. Prior to enrolling in the program, she founded a local art-craft community group in Northamptonshire. The group aimed to enhance well-being by using creativity as a healing tool. Edith's has been chosen as a course representative within her cohort and serves as a dedicated student ambassador at BASW. With aspirations to become a Work Representative upon qualifying as a Social Worker, Edith is actively seeking knowledge about Trade Unions. She has successfully completed the GFTU First Stage Work Rep training and is currently gearing up for her Young Member Development Weekend in May. Edith's commitment to continuous learning and various roles underscores her passion for making a positive impact in the field of social work.



Ioana Plesa

is a very experienced social worker with a career spanning across 26 years in UK and Romania. Ioana worked in various social work areas such as fostering, children services, community and youth social work and University Social Work Lecturer. In the last eight years Ioana has supported over 200 newly qualified social workers in their first three years in practice. Ioana also supported numerous social work students as a practice educator over the last 15 years.

Kate Newman

has been in her role with Social Care Wales for two years. Her work is very much focussed on working with the social care workforce to support well-being at work. Kate brings a range and depth of knowledge and experience from working for over twenty years in public health, community development and health improvement roles. In her working life Kate has studied with the open university and Chester University whilst working full time. She now works full time and has a family, including three children (age 14, 6 and 4) and an incredibly energetic young Labrador. Kate brings with her a great understanding of the challenges of 'plate spinning' and has learned ways which have helped her be kinder to herself for her own well-being.

Laura Morris

is a newly qualified social worker working in a children services locality team in Wales.