

## **Dr Gillian Knight (PFHEA, FRSB)**

### **Profile:**

I am the Associate Dean in Education (AD-E) for the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) at Aston University, where my key role is ensuring the College delivers an excellent student experience to our ~4000 undergraduate, postgraduate and Degree Apprenticeship (DA) students. I lead the College's strategic and operational Learning & Teaching (L&T) developments across the whole the College, which is composed of three Schools and eleven Departments, over 50 UG and PG programmes and ~200 academics. I am member of the University Educational team, led by our PVC-E and composed of Senior Academic and Professional Services staff to devise and implement Institution wide L&T developments.

I have been working in Higher Education (HE) for over ten years, with over five years of experience in senior management and leadership within HE. I have extensive experience in Departmental, College and University Quality procedures of design, validation and implementation of undergraduate, postgraduate and Work-Based Learning (WBL) programmes. I am the College lead for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and manage the various L&T metrics that are used to measure student experience. I have internal (at Aston University) and external experience (at York St John) of leading the development of Subject Level TEF submissions. I also chair and vice-chair a variety of College and University L&T committees, steering groups and validation/accreditation events.

Before joining Aston, I was the Head of Bioscience at the University of Derby, where my role was to lead and manage ~25 academics and manage a degree portfolio related to the Biosciences and Public Health. I had overall responsibility of teaching delivery to ~500 UG and PG students and managed an annual budget of ~£600,000.

I have experience with working with other UK Higher Education Institutions, either as an external examiner for UG and PG programmes, external panel member for re-accreditation and/or validation events and as an external consultant on L&T. I am vice-chair, as part of the Future Talent Council, an international committee exploring global curricula innovation and work with the Royal Society of Biology, as an executive member of the Heads of Biosciences, on national and international delivery of Bioscience education.

I am an expert in the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), and have a national reputation on oral HPV and the role it plays in Head & Neck Cancer. I am a member of the East Midlands NHS Cancer Advisory group and work with a number of UK health organisations and charities around oral HPV. I am also a National Institute Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Studies reviewer and reviewer for a number of Virology and Immunology journals.

I also undertake research into developing more inclusive teaching practice and working with student as partners, to develop L&T curricula. I am a reviewer for Advance HE STEM conference, International Journal for Students as Partners and Advance HE National Teaching Fellowship Scheme.

### **Current Role (May 2018 – to date)**

Associate Dean in Education  
Associate Professor/Reader in Education  
College of Engineering & Physical Sciences  
Aston University  
Birmingham UK

### **Previous Employment:**

- 2014-April 2018: Head of Biosciences, Deputy Head of the Department of Natural Sciences, College of Life & Natural Sciences University of Derby, UK
- May 2012- Sept 2014: Senior Lecturer in Genetics, Biological & Forensic Sciences, Programme Director for BSc Human Biology and MRes in Biosciences, College of Life & Natural Sciences, University of Derby, UK
- Sept 2010- May 2012: Teaching Fellow in Biochemistry School of Life Sciences, Keele University, UK
- March 2000 – Sept 2010: Research Fellow in Molecular Biology Institute for Cancer Studies, University of Birmingham, UK.

### **Education:**

- 2010-2011: Postgraduate certificate (PCert) in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Keele University, UK
- 1996-2000: PhD: The Molecular characterisation of Na<sup>+</sup>/ bile acid co-transport protein. University of Bedfordshire/ St Thomas and Guys Hospital, UK
- 1992- 1996: BSc (Hons) 2:1 in Applied Biology. Awarded prize in Microbiology for highest grade of the year Brunel University, UK
- 1990 -1992: A levels in Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science
- 1988-1990: 7 GCSE's A-C grade (including Maths & English) Seaford Head School, East Sussex, UK

### **Professional Qualifications/Membership/External Engagement**

- Executive Member of Head of Biosciences, Royal Society of Biology. Lead in Teaching Excellence and student experience. September 2020-2023
- Vice Chair for a Curricular Innovation Board. This is an international group, being delivered by the Future Talent Council, to explore curricula development and delivery within international HE. July 2020 – July 2021.
- Aston Curricula lead for Institute of Technology (IoT). Department of Further Education. Aston University, Solihull College, South Birmingham College and BCU.

- 2019 to date
- Principal Fellow of Higher Education Academy (PF-HEA). 2019
  - Fellow of Royal Society of Biology (F-RSB).
  - Peer reviewer for the Advance HE National Teaching Fellowship Scheme.
  - Peer Reviewer for National Institute of Health Research
  - Member of East Midlands Cancer Alliance- NHS group of Head & Neck cancer. Sept 2017 to date:

### **Current Responsibilities:**

My key role at Aston is to ensure our College provides all our students with an excellent taught experience whilst studying at Aston. I lead the strategic development and operational delivery of the College curricula, which includes our suite of professional work-based learning and Degree Apprenticeship programmes. I lead the College in analysing the educational Key Performance Indicators (KPI), such as NSS, Student Graduate Outcomes and where applicable TEF data, to develop and implement College and Departmental L&T action plans.

I am a member of the Aston Delivery group, which is a group of Academic and Professional services, leading forward on the University's L&T developments. My role within this group is to work closely with both the University Provost and our PVC-Education (PVC-E) in the development of Aston's Blended delivery and to work with the PVC-E in the development of the University's L&T strategy and new L&T initiatives and policies.

I am leading the College in the development of our new format of Blended delivery, and work closely with our University Technology Enhanced Learning and Digital Services teams to ensure our College has the correct digital infrastructure to undertake more online delivery. I also support our academic and professional services staff in their L&T development and work closely with our University Educational team to implement staff development to support our academic teaching practice.

In addition, I facilitate the liaison with regional employers to ensure our degree programmes have greater support from business to ensure our graduates have the correct training for their future career choices. I am also the University curricula lead for a Department of Education Institute of Technology (IoT) project, whereby I work closely with number of West Midlands Further and Higher Education Institutions to develop a range of new online/blended programmes and CPD courses with a focus on Inclusive Curricula design to enhance widening participation recruitment into STEM. I also have worked with Aston's University International Department and their international partners Kaplan, NCUK and Belleby, to help Aston develop a global L&T presence and to design programmes that are more attractive to international students.

I am an active member of Aston's University HEA fellowship scheme. I am involved in the support and mentoring of University staff to help them achieve HEA fellowship, via Aston University's Advance HE CPD programmes. As Aston University is accredited to award up to Principal Fellowship I am familiar with the different routes university staff can undertake to

obtain fellowship recognition.

### **Research supervision**

- Co-investigator for PhD studentship (University of Derby funded), Investigating HPV prevalence within healthy adults. University of Derby & Aston University, September 2016 – to date.
- Co-investigator for Post-Doctoral Research Fellow (University of Derby funded). Investigating HPV prevalence within tonsil tissue. University of Derby & Aston University, October 2018 – July 2020
- Supervisor of Masters in Research student. University of Derby. Completed and awarded 2016.
- Supervisor of two PhD students. University of Birmingham. Completed and awarded 2009 and 2010 respectively.

### **External Grants and L&T consultancy**

- L&T consultant for the Centre for Innovation in Learning and Education (CILE). Office for Students (OfS) Catalyst Project. Aston University & Cranfield University. May 2019 - to date.
- External Consultant of Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). York St John University, May 2019 – October 2019
- Awarded, as Co-investigator, a funded PhD studentship from Oracle Cancer Trust, in collaboration with University of Derby. Awarded £102,234 to investigate the Pathogenesis of HPV within oropharyngeal cancer. Jan 2021-Dec 2023.

### **Recent Publications:**

- **Knight, G** (2020). Involving students, as critical partners, in enhancing graduate outcomes– how TEF can it be? Higher Education Pedagogies – *in press*
- Doss, TP, Allett NF, Woods GJ, Poursharif, G, Jenkins, L, **Knight, GL** (2020). Bespoke measures of learning support intervention at Aston University that have led to improved engagement and attainment of engineering work- based learners. Higher Education Pedagogies – *in press*
- **Knight, G** & Drysdale, T (2020). The future of higher education (HE) hangs on innovating our assessment – but are we ready, willing and able? Higher Education Pedagogies. DOI: [10.1080/23752696.2020.1771610](https://doi.org/10.1080/23752696.2020.1771610)
- **Knight G** & Roberts, B (2020). Is a gender bias in current HPV education causing a lack of awareness in young adolescents on the risks of oral and genital HPV infection? British Medical Journal (BMJ) Sexual & Reproductive Health. DOI: [10.1136/bmjshr-2019-200410](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjshr-2019-200410)
- **Knight GL**, Needwood, L, Roberts, S, Ward D (2016), Pilot study investigating the prevalence of oral Human Papilloma Viral (HPV) infection in young adults. Public Health, 132 p105-107.

### **Recent presentations:**

2020

- **Conference (oral) Presentation. Getting Ed-Tech correct for the student experience.**

Centre for Innovation in Learning and Education Conference. **Knight G**. September 2020.

- **Conference (oral) Presentation**. The use of diagnostic testing and student mentors to increase year one Computer Science engagement and continuation in a diverse student cohort. **Knight G**, Powell N & Woods G. Advance HE International L&T conference. July 2020.
- **Conference (oral) Presentation**. Tailored learning-support strategies in HE endorsing self-efficacy in Engineering Work-Based Learners. Doss, P & **Knight G**, Advance HE International L&T conference. July 2020.
- **Invited Guest Speaker** - Let's talk about sex baby- role of HPV in Head & Neck cancer. NHS oral cancer education conference. NHS Education Scotland, Edinburgh, May 2020.
- **Conference (oral) Presentation** – Poursharif G, Doss P, Broadbent R & **Knight G**. Developing Global Stem graduates through interdisciplinary project-based learning and thinking. Advanced HE STEM conference. Manchester, January 2020.

## 2019

- **Conference (oral) Presentation** – Jenkins L, **Knight G**, Luke S. Work based learning at Aston University. New Approaches to Engineering Education conference. Institute of Engineering & Technology. November 2019.
- **Conference (oral) Presentation** – Poursharif G & **Knight G**. Developing Global Stem graduates through interdisciplinary project-based learning and thinking. CLIPP Annual L&T conference, Aston University. Birmingham, October 2019
- **Conference (oral) Presentation** - Doss, TP, Allett NF, Woods GJ, Poursharif, G, Jenkins, L, **Knight, GL**. Bespoke measures of learning support intervention at Aston University that have led to improved engagement and attainment of engineering work- based learners. CLIPP Annual L&T conference, Aston University. Birmingham, October 2019
- **Invited Guest Speaker**: Let's talk about sex baby- role of HPV in Head & Neck cancer. British Dental Association (BDA) National Conference. Glasgow. September 2019.
- **Plenary Presentation**: Student experience and TEF. National Student Experience Conference. University of Salford, Manchester, May 2019.
- **Poster presentation**: Williams R, Sahota R, Whitton A, Marsh E & **Knight G**. Prevalence of HPV in tonsil tissue. Head & Neck Cancer International Conference. May 2019
- **Conference (oral) Presentation**: **Knight G** & Hainsworth S. Succession planning in Higher Education. Advanced HE STEM conference. Birmingham, January 2019.
- **Conference (oral) Presentation**: Ordidge H & **Knight G**. Championing Inclusion: Working with students as partners to effectively inform learning and teaching development. Birmingham, January 2019.
- **Conference (oral) Presentation**: Doss P, Jenkins L, **Knight G**. Supporting students on work-based learning programmes. Advanced HE STEM conference. Birmingham, January 2019.

## **References**

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