

Postgraduate Online Learning Open Days 2025

Data, Inequality and Society
Dr Ian Russell



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Edinburgh Futures Institute

Join us to **Challenge. Create. Change.**

Data, Inequality and Society

Dr Ian Russell

School of Social and Political Science

Dr Marlee Tichenor

School of Social and Political Science

Dr Zeynep Oguz

School of Social and Political Science



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Study at Edinburgh Futures Institute

Interdisciplinary

Bringing arts, humanities and social sciences together with sciences, engineering and medicine to address complex global issues.

Participatory and porous

Inviting diverse groupings to bring their ways of working and thinking together. EFI extends this invitation to industry, the public and government.

Critical and research-led

Working on pressing social issues that require new ways of thinking. Mindful of the role of universities in confronting uncomfortable questions.

Future-facing

Embracing the non-traditional, the untried and the unexpected. EFI defines challenges and co-creates responses to build better futures.



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Sustainable Futures

- Data, Inequality and Society
- Planetary Health
- Sustainable Lands and Cities
- Future Infrastructure, Sustainability and Climate Change



Creative Futures

- Service Management and Design
- Creative Industries
- Narrative Futures: Art, Data, Society
- Cultural Heritage Futures



Just Futures

- Data and AI Ethics
- Education Futures
- Future Governance



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What's Different About Education at EFI?

- interdisciplinary programmes taught by leading academics from different Schools and disciplines
- equipping you with the critical, data and creative skills needed to navigate a rapidly-changing world
- you can study flexibly, please see degree finder for programme specific information and options
- we will help you apply leading-edge knowledge to live projects you care about
- we are proud of our ecosystem and the opportunities to connect you to our partners in the community, industry and government

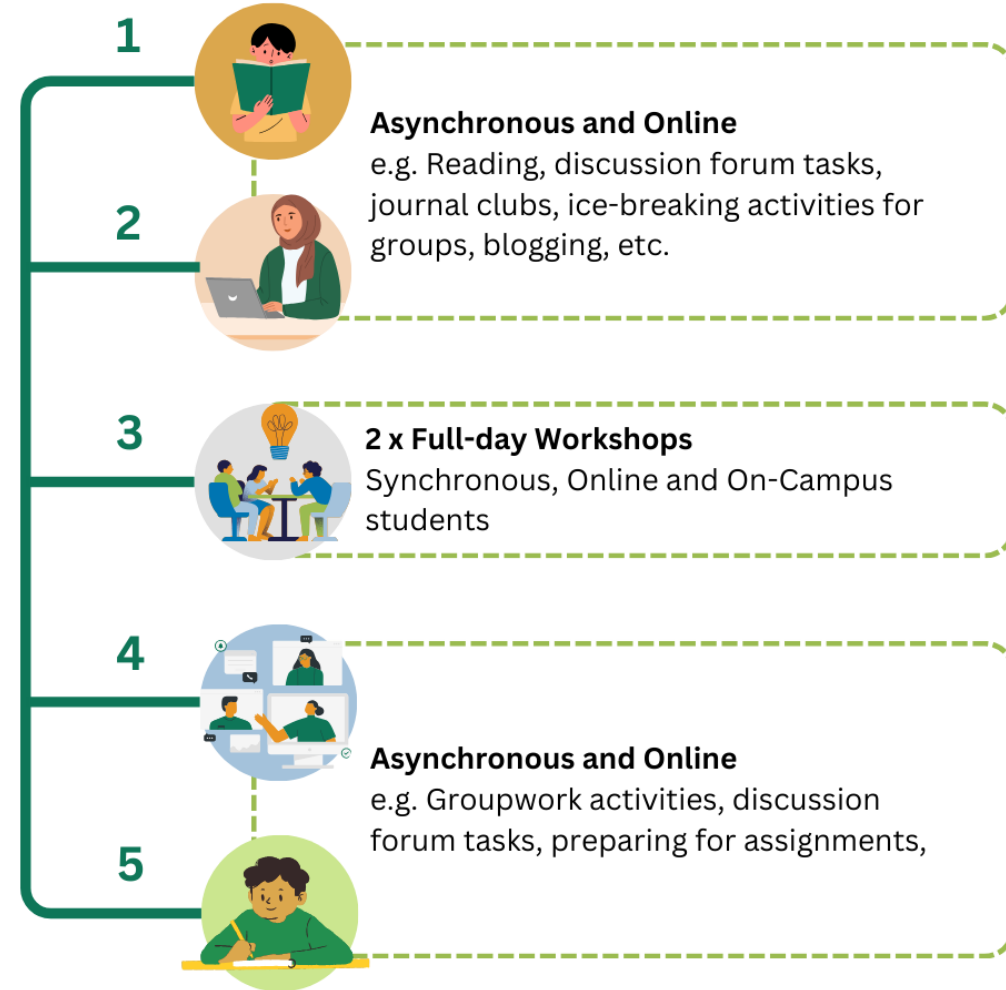


Fusion Teaching

- breaking down the online/on-campus distinction
- community-focused: bringing students from across the world together as a single cohort
- accessible: most courses are taught in five week blocks, with online activities and a two day long intensive sessions (09:00-17:00 Edinburgh local time)
- connected: employers work with us on the design and teaching of our programmes and help support projects

Intensive Course Timeline

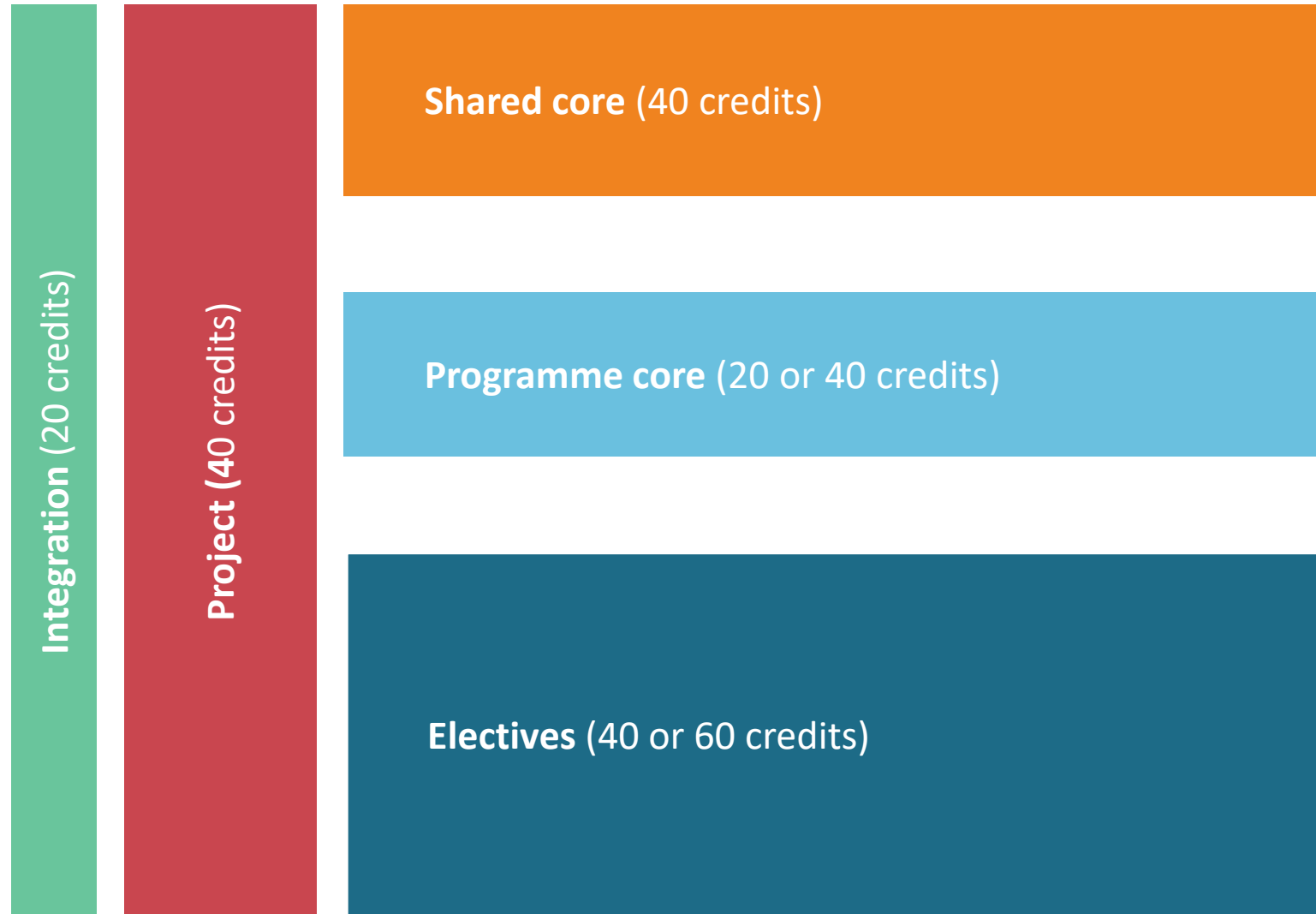
Weeks



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Our MSc Programme Structure



Our Core Courses

Futures Methods

Practical skills to apply cutting-edge futures and foresight methods and tools across diverse fields

Insights Through Data

Data science foundations, analytic and programming skills

or

Text Remix

Basic programming and creative skills

Representing Data

Programming and maker skills for data visualization and physicalisation

or

Building Near Futures

Futures methods and responses shared in a public-facing format

Ethical Data Futures

The ethical dimensions of contemporary data practices



Skill Focused

Working in cross-disciplinary teams with students from other Futures Institute programmes, you will learn critical data skills, ethical awareness, creative thinking, and methods to address complex issues:

- collect, manage and analyse computational datasets
- use emerging methodologies for mapping and designing possible futures
- learn the fundamentals of data ethics
- learn how to use creative skills in the analysis and representation of data-informed and qualitative inquiry



The Student Experience

- global and diverse cohort, on campus and online
- a very well supported experience with a dedicated student experience and support team
- events and networks to connect with each other



What Does This Programme Do?

- Explore **inequalities**, the very core of the world's most wicked and complex problems: e.g., poverty, basic rights, forced displacement
- Through **data** – of various types – that can help us to understand and act upon inequalities but can also hide realities and create and entrench inequalities
- Our core questions:
 - How are inequalities created, and what do inequalities produce?
 - What makes societies inclusive?
 - What is the role of data in describing and producing inclusion or exclusion?



The 'Toolbox' – Exclusion and Inequality

- *Where do social, political, cultural, and economic exclusions and inequalities come from? What are their effects?*
- Equip yourself with skills and knowledge necessary to understand and research exclusion and inequality
- Connect your learning to concrete issues related to health and healthcare, work and labour, resource flows, and the built environment



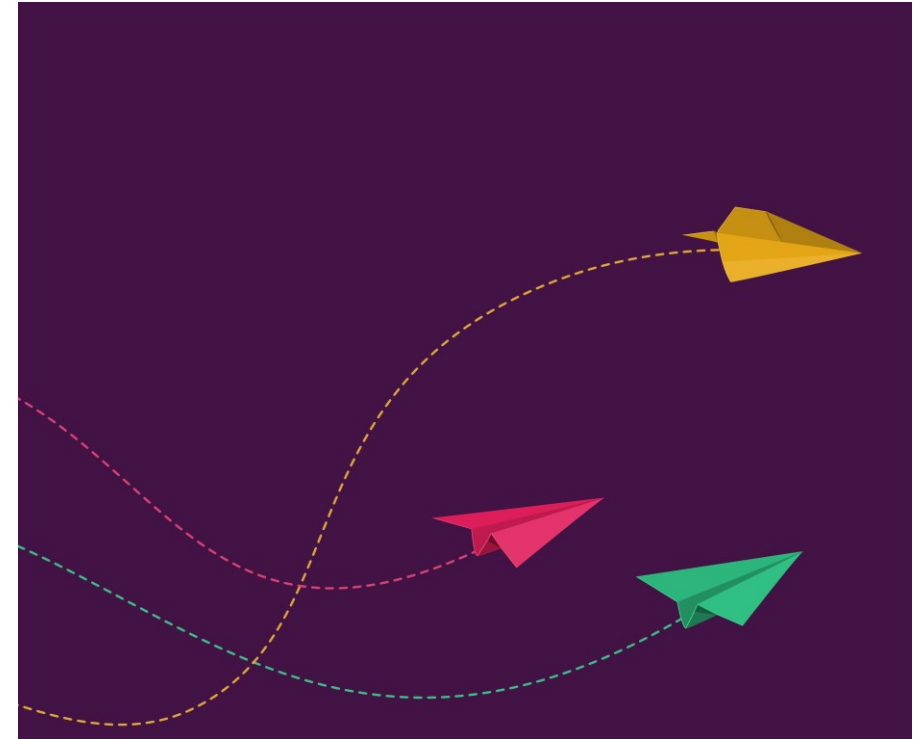
The 'Sandbox' – Inclusive Society

- *How are actors across the world addressing inequalities and exclusion?*
- Learn approaches to addressing exclusion and inequality from those leading projects of change
- Engage with initiatives that are concerned with citizen participation, data activism, working with vulnerable groups, and radical wealth and power redistribution initiatives



Electives for 2025-6

- Build your own academic journey using programme-specific electives:
 - Aftershock: Trauma and Recovery in an Unequal Society
 - Contemporary Inequality Issues in the Global South
 - Coloniality of Data
 - Data Science for Society
 - Migration and forced displacement in a digital age
- Many more available from other EFI programmes!



Final Project



- Bring together the knowledge and skills gained in the core courses and electives to explore a topic of your choice
- Use your data skills to interrogate inequality and exclusion – e.g., inequalities in access to healthcare, marginalisation of indigenous populations – or to better understand projects of inclusion
- Use your social science skills to interrogate the inequalities connected with data – e.g., algorithmic bias, information asymmetries



Who Is This Programme For?

- Current students have a wide range of interests and experiences
- Those with a background/interest in addressing inequality and exclusion who want to build their toolkit and data skills
- Those with a background/interest in data who want to learn more about inequalities and the role of data in addressing or exacerbating them
- Those who are passionate about understanding and addressing the major inequalities and exclusions that exist today



Questions?

- for further queries contact: **efi.education@ed.ac.uk**
- visit the EFI website: **<https://efi.ed.ac.uk/postgraduate-study>**
- search for 'Edinburgh Futures Institute' on our degree finder: **<https://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/postgraduate/degrees>**



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