

Evaluation of the Trauma and Adverse Experiences (TrACE)-informed university pilot

July 2023

Thank you

We would like to thank ACE Hub Wales for their support of this pilot, in particular, Vicky Jones, Natalie Blakeborough and Dr Joanne Hopkins.

We would also like to thank all the people we spoke to, who gave so generously of their time. Their experiences and their voices have helped us glean some learning, insights and impacts about the journey that Wrexham University and its wider community is on to becoming Trauma and Adverse Experiences (TrACE) -informed.

We hope that the insights will also be useful for other organisations on their journey to becoming TrACE-informed.

A special thanks to Lisa Scully, Wrexham University's TrACE Project Manager for providing structure to the implementation of the pilot.

Diolch yn fawr.

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Summary

Everyone has a role to play in Wales becoming an ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and trauma-informed (TrACE) nation.

ACE Hub Wales have developed a [TrACE toolkit](#). It contains a range of tools to help any person, organisation, sector, or system to reflect on their current practice, and develop strategies to strengthen ACE and trauma-informed approaches. ACE Hub Wales are working with a variety of organisations across different sectors to pilot the toolkit with a view to learn, shape, and adapt it for others.

At Wrexham University, we are the pilot organisation for the higher education sector across Wales and England.

It is important for us to understand and learn from the approaches that we have taken so far and capture any early impacts. Communicating and sharing these will support other organisations across the wider sector with their journey as well as help us to keep the momentum going and embed TrACE-informed approaches university and system-wide. This evaluation aims to disseminate lessons learnt and a series of recommendations to guide other universities and wider communities as they develop their TrACE-informed approach.

We have identified a number of key findings. These have been grouped around seven themes. They are:

1. Developing people's understanding
2. Practice impacts
3. Students as partners
4. Culture and leadership
5. The university as an enabler and connector
6. Filling the practice implementation gap
7. Personal impacts
8. Most significant change stories

In terms of the most significant change stories, they cluster around four main themes:

- Shared understanding
- Permission and autonomy
- Person-centred
- Culture change

We have deliberately focused on reporting people's voices. Letting them speak, providing a space for them to be heard.

Embarking on the journey to be a TrACE-informed university was never about arriving at a destination. It was always going to be about an on-going cycle of review and moving forward. This evaluation is useful for us to understand

where we are at this particular point in time.

We have identified a suite of recommendations that that we hope would be useful for any organisation embarking on a journey to become TrACE-informed.

1. Ensure that people have a shared understanding of what TrACE is (and isn't). Keep it simple.
2. Focus on appealing to people's hearts as well as minds.
3. Invest in a project manager to project manage the work.
4. Ensure that you have senior leadership buy-in.
5. Involve a broad spectrum of colleagues across a range of (academic and non-academic) departments.
6. Involve students as partners.
7. Create spaces for shared learning and practice with the wider public sector and civic society.
8. Continually review and move forward.

9. Develop ways to support people to apply their knowledge into practice.

10. Nurture relationships within the university and its community.

11. Take an active role in promoting and supporting systems thinking and systems leadership.

12. Develop tools to help colleagues in partner organisations embed a TrACE-informed approach.

We acknowledge that we're operating within and supporting a system. Whilst we can plan and provide a level of structure, our actions and their impact can also be organic in nature. We've started to see sparks of activity and impact across the system, and through this work we will continue to learn, share, and iterate together

Background

Everyone has a role to play in Wales becoming an ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and trauma-informed (TrACE) nation.

The University is working in partnership with the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Hub Wales, Public Health Wales to become the first trauma-informed university. Trauma-informed practice is recognition that trauma experiences are a possibility for anyone and approaches to policies and procedures should take this into consideration. A trauma-informed approach must include participation of staff and students themselves in shaping it. Building on the approach that we have been taking within the University, we are also exploring a TrACE-informed approach for communities.

A TrACE approach is one¹ that reduces ACEs, trauma and re-traumatisation and recognises that structural inequality, discrimination, and other factors may cause distress and be a barrier to equitable access to support. It promotes a kind, compassionate society that builds our connectedness and personal strengths, such as good relationships with supportive peers, family, and our communities around us.

ACE Hub Wales² have developed a [TrACE toolkit](#). It contains a range of tools to help any person, organisation, sector, or system to reflect on their current practice, and develop strategies to strengthen ACE and trauma-informed approaches. ACE

Hub Wales are working with a variety of organisations across different sectors to pilot the toolkit with a view to learn, shape, and adapt it for others.

At Wrexham University, we are the pilot organisation for the higher education sector across Wales and England, working to become a Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experience (TrACE)-informed institution – the first university of its kind in the UK. This project is being carried out in partnership with Welsh Government-funded and Public Health Wales-hosted ACE Hub Wales to raise awareness of the impact of Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (TrACE) and share reflections and learning around the role that all organisations can play in creating a kinder and more compassionate society.

Being TrACE-informed means developing the understanding of trauma and the impact of trauma for everyone that works and studies at the university to better enable people who may have encountered trauma or adverse childhood experiences to progress and thrive while at Wrexham University and feel that they are treated with kindness, compassion, and respect.

Becoming TrACE-informed is not about treating trauma and symptoms, it's about developing a fundamental approach that recognises that adversity and trauma are a possibility for everyone, so that we can promote opportunities for wellbeing, healing, and recovery. It's also about recognising that we can all play a part in supporting this.

¹ Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly harm a child (e.g., sexual or physical abuse) or affect the environment in which they live (e.g., growing up in a household with domestic violence). (Bellis et al 2016).

² ACE Hub Wales is Welsh Government-funded and hosted by Public Health Wales.

The National Context

In July 2022, a [Trauma Informed Wales Framework](https://traumainformedwales.com) was launched. Wrexham University were pleased to be able to support its development as part of the Expert Reference Group.

The aim of the framework is to help people, organisations, and systems to prevent adversity and trauma and their associated negative effects. It will facilitate the development of a whole systems approach to supporting the needs of people who have experienced adversity and trauma and seeks to bring consistency and coherence to support that effort and ensure that it meets the needs of people affected by trauma.

This extends from the need for empathic, compassionate responses across all Welsh society and more acute and specialist interventions that may be required to support those who have clinical needs following experiences of trauma. The Framework provides agreed definitions and a consistency of understanding of what is meant by the different levels of practice in preventing adversity and trauma and supporting people affected by it³.

“At its most simple level, a Wales trauma-informed approach recognises and understands the adverse and traumatic experiences of all ages can be exposed to and affected by”⁴. It is underpinned by a set of five practice principles (see Figure 1) that Wrexham University has adopted as part of our own TrACE work.

³ ACE Hub Wales (2022a) <https://traumainformedwales.com> – accessed July 2023

⁴ ACE Hub Wales (2022b) Trauma-Informed Wales: A Societal Approach to Understanding, Preventing and Supporting the Impacts of Trauma and Adversity

Figure 1: The 5 practice principles

Source: Ace Hub Wales (2022b)⁵



⁵ ACE Hub Wales (2022b) Trauma-Informed Wales: A Societal Approach to Understanding, Preventing and Supporting the Impacts of Trauma and Adversity

Civic Mission – the useful university

The TrACE-informed university project works alongside, and with, the university's on-going social inclusion work, our strong commitment to mental health and wellbeing, and our drive to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in everything we do. Being useful to our partners and communities, building on our strong connection to place and the people we serve is a key priority of our civic mission.

Our co-created civic mission has been informed through extensive engagement with partners, communities and exploration of evidence, data, and insight. From this, from this we know that one of the root causes of the region's challenges is grounded in social inequality. Our mission, therefore, is to work collectively to end social inequality across North Wales by 2030.

We are focused on enabling innovation, co-creation, and testing and delivering new approaches around three priorities:

1. Leadership, governance, and whole system working
2. Building community resilience.
3. Keeping well.

Working in partnership with ACE Hub Wales and continuing our journey to become the first TrACE-informed university in the UK, aligns with all three of our civic mission priorities.

Recognising that Wrexham University is very much situated in its place, being TrACE-informed should extend beyond the boundaries of our campus. Building on the approach that we have been taking within the University, we are therefore exploring a TrACE-informed

approach for communities in North Wales. The aim of this is to create systems change by having a collective vision, tackling avoidable health and housing inequalities through an approach which gives people the opportunity to grow while promoting well-being, healing and recovery.

As discussed in the report, Trauma-Informed Communities: A Comparative Study of Welsh Models of Practice⁶, our mission is underpinned by the understanding that no one organisation or group can undertake this alone, and partnership working enables a whole system approach.

The Toolkit

The toolkit includes a [self-assessment tool](#) and supporting [guidance document](#). It is structured around 6 implementation domains, each important areas to consider in terms of becoming TrACE-informed. The domains are:

- 1. Governance, Leadership and Organisation Culture.**
This domain relates to the overall support for and investment in implementing and sustaining a trauma-informed approach.
- 2. Policies and Procedures.**
This domain relates to how organisational policies and procedures demonstrate commitment to, and enable internal systems to, reflect the foundational values and principles of trauma-informed practice.
- 3. Workforce Training and Support.**
This domain relates to ensuring knowledge and skills within the workforce, enabling trauma-informed principals to be embedded in an ongoing supportive, learning cycle that recognises the importance of the wellbeing and safety of the workforce.

4. Physical Environment.

This domain relates to what the physical and social environments provide to promote safety and the provision of appropriate resources to achieve this.

5. Service Design and Delivery.

This domain relates to ensuring trauma-informed principles are incorporated in all aspects of service delivery.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation.

We have undertaken the self-assessment and we are in the process of using the toolkit to explore and develop our approaches in each of the domains through a TrACE-informed lens. We have an action plan and project sub-groups in place to support this. The groups involve all members of our community – academic staff, facilities staff, Human Resources, students, and stakeholders as part of an Academic Development Team Associates network. This breadth has been important to us so has the co-produced nature of the action plan. It reflects the Uni

⁷ Kotter, J.P. (2014) Accelerate: building strategic agility for a faster moving world. Harvard Business Review Press

The TrACE project structure and approach

The TrACE project structure and approach Early into the project, we decided that to engender cultural change, it was important to engage colleagues across the University in professional services and academic roles, as well as our student body and partners. At Wrexham University, we have distributed arrangements for academic development comprising a core Academic Development Team (ADT) of academic individuals each with substantive roles for learning and teaching, and a distributed network of Academic Development Team Associates.

Figure 2 diagrammatically shows how the Academic Development Team and Associates' Network fits together.

This structure and approach draws on the principles of Kotter's⁷ dual operating system which entails the establishment and use of an agile and innovative network made of volunteers organised into small project teams, led by core ADT members.

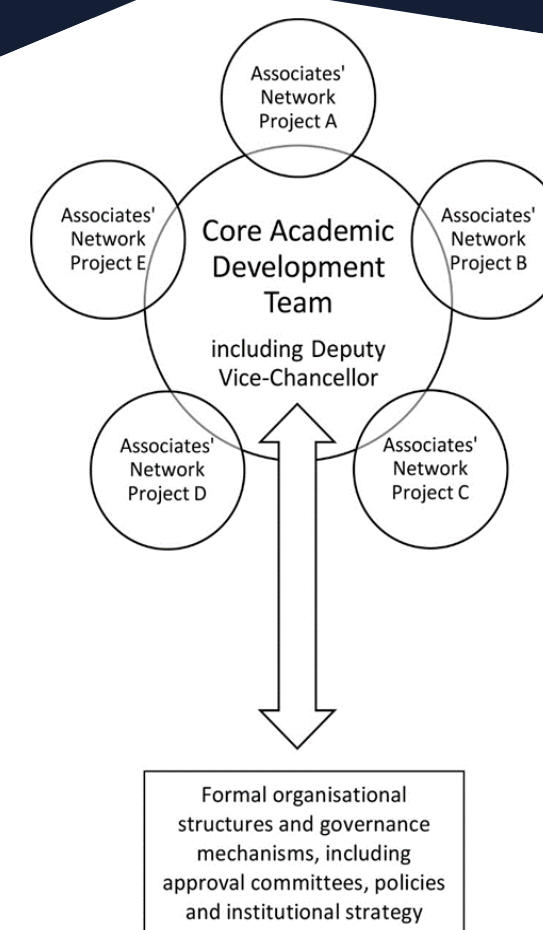


Figure 2

⁶ Addis, S. et al., 2023 Trauma-Informed Communities: A Comparative Study of Welsh Models of Practice. ACE Hub Wales

WU Project Set Up

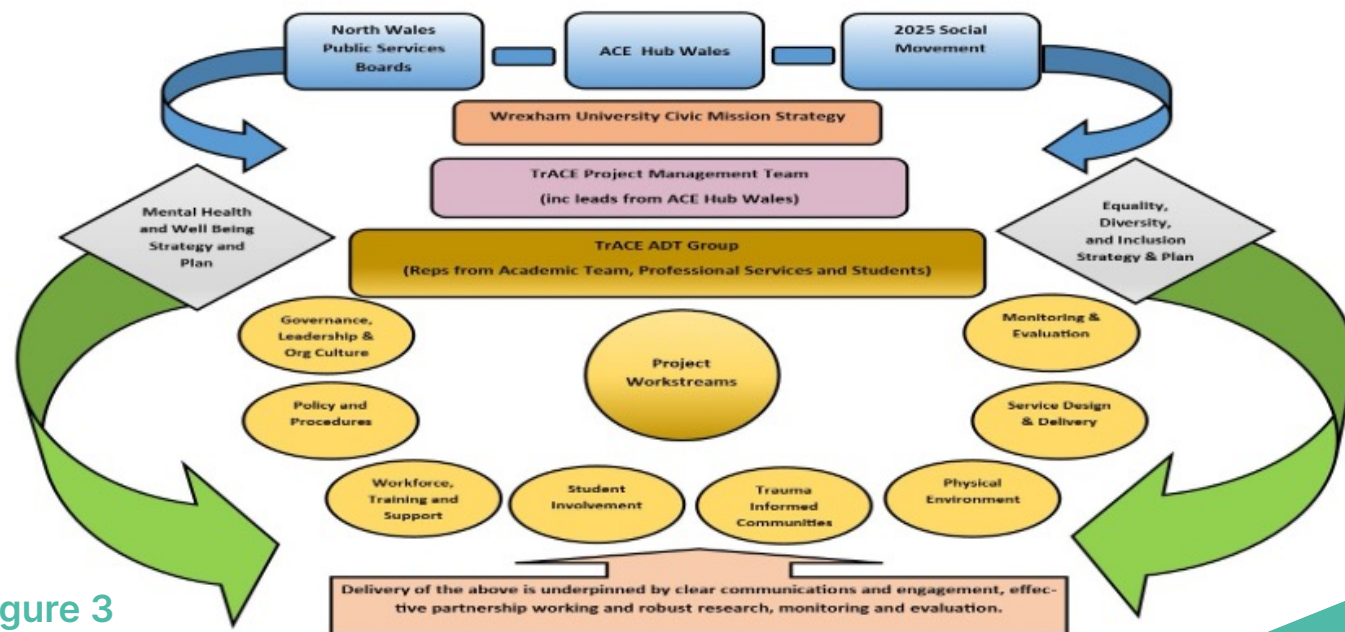


Figure 3

This structure and approach draws on the principles of Kotter's⁷ dual operating system which entails the establishment and use of an agile and innovative network made of volunteers organised into small project teams, led by core ADT members.

Colleagues work across systems on integrated development projects, working in a distributed way to take forward a variety of cultural change and organisational development projects.

A TrACE ADT Associates' Network was established with a call out across the

University for colleagues who were interested in being involved in this important work. This led to colleagues in a variety of roles applying to be a member of the ADT Associates Network, and this richness and breadth, which is reflected in the findings, as well as the co-produced nature of the action plan has been import

Figure 3 illustrates the structure of the TrACE ADT Associate's Network together with how it is situated within university strategies (Mental Health and Well-being, Equality Diversity Inclusion, and Civic Mission strategies and plans) and key regional and national activity (Public Services Boards, 2025 Movement, ACE Hub Wales).

This network of engaged staff, students, and partners have undertaken the self-assessment process contained with ACE Hub Wales' TrACE Toolkit to help us reflect on our current culture, practices, and processes. From this, we have established a series of workstreams that reflect the key areas of the self-assessment and developed a project action plan identifying activity to implement more trauma-informed and trauma-responsive approaches. This plan is reviewed on a regular basis and has evolved to meet emerging organisational needs and priorities, ensuring that it remains relevant to our TrACE-informed journey. The TrACE Project Management Team (which

includes colleagues from ACE Hub Wales) provides a key role in terms of the management and governance of the project. The aims of the team are:

- To provide clarity of understanding about our mission of being a trauma-informed university.
- To allow for effective planning that is linked into other strategic priorities and plans.
- To enable timely implementation of change.
- To support clear methods of communication and feedback.

Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

Meaningful research, monitoring, and evaluation underpins the project and is being considered at all levels of project activity. As can be seen in Figure 3, we have established a specific workstream for monitoring and evaluation. Through this, the following activity is being undertaken:

- Information on people's experiences is regularly gathered and used to inform planning.
- Evaluation of policies and practice is regularly conducted as part of the review and planning process and used to implement change where relevant.
- There are processes for continuous learning and improvement in place.
- Monitoring and evaluation considers mechanisms to promote cross-sector collaboration and how trauma-informed the system is.

The evaluation

It is important for us to understand and learn from the approaches that we have taken so far and capture any early impacts. Communicating and sharing these will support other organisations with their journey to becoming TrACE-informed as well as help us to keep the momentum going and embed TrACE-informed approaches university and system-wide.

Our methodological approach.

We wanted to keep the evaluation relatively simple. Yet within its simplicity, allow for a richness and diversity of stories and experiences to be told. With this in mind, we decided to use the [Most Significant Change Technique](#).

In essence, Most Significant Change is about capturing people's stories of change. Their stories, what change(s) they have seen and felt. It provides a richness and nuance to understanding about what has changed and why. It also provides some powerful stories that can be used to share with others.

Most Significant Change is therefore a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation that occurs throughout a programme of change (we would like to repeat this exercise to understand how and why things have developed) and provides information to help manage the change programme. It contributes to evaluation because it provides data on impact and outcomes that can be used to help assess the performance of the programme as a whole.

Participants for this study were University colleagues from academic and professional services, students involved in the project and external partners who have engaged with activity around the Trauma-informed University Pilot. They were chosen because they are well placed to evaluate their engagement with the Trauma-informed University work.

The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique

A Guide to Its Use

by

Rick Davies and Jess Dart



Figure 4

We have collectively identified a range of people within and external to the university who are either key enablers and/or stakeholders to the development and implementation of the project. Of these people, we were able to speak with twenty-four.

Everyone was asked a small number of questions. These are listed below (see Figure 5 for the questions and Appendix A for the Interview Schedule).

The first question is very much an exploratory question. It was important for us to capture the breadth of involvement and experience, different people's perspectives, and the journey so far. We hoped that people would be able to identify a range of impacts/changes to date (it didn't matter how big or small

these were, they are all valid). The key question is (question 3), which of these (from their perspective) has been the most significant. From experience, people find pinning it down to one quite challenging. It does, however, help to identify the key impact to date and the values and perspectives that prevail.

All conversations have taken place via Microsoft Teams. Using this software allowed us to record (and transcribe) the conversation. It was important that we captured both the detail of what people were saying and their own voices/words.

We have obtained ethical approval for the project from Wrexham University's Research Ethics Sub-Committee. This means the methods and questions that have used have been peer-reviewed to ensure that we were respecting people's autonomy, maximising benefit, minimising harm, being fair, and behaving with integrity. The evaluation team have worked within the University Code of Practice Ethical Standards for Research.

In reporting people's voices, we have used identifiers. These take the form of U for university (a colleague or student within the university) and C for community (a colleague working in the broader community) and the digit indicates the individual university or community colleague identifier.

Potential Risks

While there was no requirement to think or discuss any personal or work-related experiences of trauma, there was a small chance that the study may induce sensitive topic discussion relating to ACEs and trauma. To ensure that this risk was minimised, participation was voluntary, and participants could withdraw from the study at any time up to the point when data is anonymised.

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with Wrexham University's Management of Distress Policy.

This information was communicated to participants at the start of the study and clarified in the participation information sheet (Appendix C). The information sheet also informed participants that all data are anonymous and their identity, and that of their organisations, will remain confidential.

Figure 5

- **Could you please share with me the ways in which you have been involved in the TrACE-informed university/community project so far?**
When? How did you become involved? Why did you become involved?
- **What impacts have you seen or experienced so far?**
How have these come about? What have been the things that have led to these impacts?
- **Since the project commenced, what do you think has been the most significant change you've seen and/or experienced?**
- **How has being involved in the project helped you take a TrACE-informed approach?**
- **Is there anything else you would like to share?**

Arrangements for confidentiality and data security

The following steps have been taken to ensure that the research information complies with the Data Protection Act 1998:

- Only the researchers have access to the data.
- The identity of the participants will not be revealed within this research. All participants will be given pseudonyms to protect identity in all research outputs.
- Confidentiality was made clear to participants in the study information sheet. Participant confidentiality means that they will not be identified or presented in an identifiable form within the research study and any subse written reports or journal articles.

All the stories have been transcribed and analysed thematically by the evaluation team, both individually and collectively. We have used both in-person data analysis sessions and Jamboard⁸ to do this.

⁸ Jamboard is a digital interactive whiteboard that lets you collaborate in real time.

From all the most significant change stories, we have identified four significant change stories.

Findings

We have identified a number of key findings. These have been grouped around seven themes. They are:

1. Developing people’s understanding
 2. Practice impacts
 3. Students as partners
 4. Culture and leadership
 5. The university as an enabler and connector
 6. Filling the practice implementation gap
 7. Personal impacts
8. Most significant change stories.

We have deliberately focused on reporting people’s voices here. Letting them speak, providing a space for them to be heard.

Figure 6



Figure 7

Developing people’s understanding

From our conversations, one of the impacts from the pilot has been developing people’s understanding of what TrACE is (and what it isn’t), and what it looks and feels like to be TrACE-informed.

There’s been confusion between people that if we’re a trauma-informed university that means we are there to give traumatic, skilled interventions to people. There was a little bit of pushback at times – people saying that we’re an educational establishment, we’re not a therapeutic community. So it was really important that people understand what it is we’re talking about when we’re talking about being trauma-informed. (U2)

One of the things that we identified early on was around the language that we use... because actually if we are going to make being a trauma-informed university a thing, then we needed to help people understand it and actually feel that they could take some responsibility around it. We can all be kind. We can all be compassionate. (C2)

It’s relatively new for a lot of organisations, so I think a lot of staff aren’t too sure what that involves and how that’s going to be embedded itself within their working environment. (U5)

As part of that response, and in partnership with Ace Hub Wales, we developed the [Navigating the Storm](#) animation (**Figure 7** is an image from the animation). This was based on a concept developed by Dr Tegan Brierley-Sollis and developed into an animation by art and design students from the University. A Welsh-language version, [Lansio Llywio trwy’r Storm](#), was also developed and has been made available on [myf.cymru](#) – a mental health and wellbeing resource aimed at Welsh speaking higher education students.

The animation illustrates the way in which working through a trauma-informed lens can create meaningful connections and highlight one another’s strengths. Navigating the Storm explores how we can begin the voyage to becoming more trauma-informed and responsive. We are not predictable and will all experience life differently, but we can work together to nurture society and lead with gentle curiosity and understanding.

The animation was launched on 20th January 2022 as part of an [online event](#) to mark an exciting partnership between Wrexham University and ACE Hub Wales to raise awareness of the impact of TrACE and share reflections and learning around the role that all organisations can play in creating a kinder and more compassionate society. The event included a panel discussion chaired by the then Deputy Vice Chancellor of Wrexham University, Professor Claire Taylor, and involved Lynne Neagle MS, Deputy Minister for Health and Well-being, Sophie Howe, the then Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Benjamin Perks, Head of Campaigns and Advocacy at UNICEF, Dr Joanne Hopkins, National Director of ACE Hub Wales, Clare Budden, Chief Executive of Clywd Alyn Housing Association, and Dr Tegan Brierley-Sollis from Wrexham University.

I think Navigating the Storm is a really significant part of what's been achieved really in terms of putting something that often can be quite complex into a really understandable metaphor that can be universally applied and universally understood. (C2)

I think the film demystifies the whole concept and takes away the need to focus on language. It provokes some sort of response and reflection. (U1)
The animation can make you think that just because it looks like somebody's this beautiful ocean liner, you don't know what's going on, what else is going on around them. So I think just as a thought-provoking animation, if nothing else, if they don't understand anything about trauma, if it can get somebody to stop and think for a moment about their own lives or their friends, colleagues, or other pupils, then I think we've done our job. (U11)

The importance of engaging with colleagues and students to developing their understanding of the TrACE approach was prioritised, and the project team took the decision to focus on this, before, for example, implementing a

training programme, to facilitate sustainable engagement and culture change.

What we did concentrate on was winning hearts and minds. We did a lot of work presenting at staff conferences, learning lunches and developing a video about the project. Winning those hearts and minds has been fundamental. (U2)

Our activity included presentations to staff at three staff conferences, an Adult Learning Wales event, a UK cross-government Home Office trauma-informed practice meeting, the Trauma Summit 2022 in Belfast, a 2025 conference, the National TrACE Community of Practice, as well as being invited to attend a roundtable discussion at the Welsh Labour conference in 2023 with the Minister for Education and Welsh Language.

We have also met with a variety of organisations to share our experiences, including North Wales Police, Theatr Clwyd (they are embarking on their journey to become the first trauma-informed theatre in the UK), Aberystwyth University, Cardiff University's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Hub, Ysgol Clywedog, and service leads with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

Whilst tools like Navigating the Storm can help, there is recognition that people's understanding of what it is to be trauma-informed is evolving, as is the application of that understanding into everyday practice.

My understanding of being trauma-informed is also evolving, so there's probably much more I need to learn. (U5)

We're more equipped now, far more aware of what it is to be trauma-informed. So I think it certainly has a real sense of value for educators. (U15)

Indeed, in a very iterative sense, Navigating the Storm has prompted the development of a series of workbooks to support organisations with being trauma-informed. Workbooks based on the Navigating the Storm animation are being created and there will be a pilot project with Key Stage 2 pupils. If the workbook is found to be useful, this will be adapted to be applicable to different audiences outside of educational settings. The workbook follows the nautical concepts of the animation exploring themes of emotion regulation, behaviour as communication, relationships, and appreciation of individual strengths. It is also hoped that the workbook will support those delivering the sessions to appreciate that behaviour is often a manifestation of distress or a need.

The workbook includes a range of activities for each theme which are inclusive and can be adapted for 1:1 sessions and group work. The workbook does not have to be followed in any order; the idea is that activities can be taken from them at appropriate moments with many of the resources needed being provided as an appendix. Activities within the workbook include yoga, arts and crafts, reflective materials, kindness pursuits and mindfulness.

Practice impacts

Impacts through a shift in practice are starting to be realised, in part because of the approach and structure that has been put in place to support the pilot. This has enabled a wide range of people to become involved who have taken responsibility for leading on activities. Here, the project team reasoned that to embed change throughout the University, the distributed approach of the ADT Associates network was a more effective change vehicle than a working group or committee structure. Embedding a distributed approach has enabled the University to move developments forwards in a more engaging, agile, and impactful way with change projects owned by staff working

at grass roots level, across disciplinary and departmental boundaries, through all levels of the organisation⁹

The whole structure that the university has put into place with the Academic Development Teams and how that's been totally tied back to the university. People applying to be involved because they want to. We're working with the willing here. You've got a really kind of broad reach and I just think that's a really effective way of working. (C2)

We did a call out [asking people if they wanted to be involved in the Academic Development Team] and we had people responding who had interest and expertise that we would never have known about if we hadn't done that call out. So, for example, we've got people from recruitment who have been very much involved in the workbooks that we're pulling together, colleagues new to the University who had experience and researched trauma in their previous roles. (U2)

The call out for ADT TrACE Associates was responded to with enthusiasm, leading to a large Associates network, highlighting the interest and expertise in adverse childhood experiences and trauma informed approaches across the University. To this end, the project team decided to create subgroups, enabling Associates to select which aspects of the work they wished to focus on, and thus their ability to effect change. Wenger et al. (2011) highlight how the primary recipients of value in networks are the participants themselves, both individually and collectively, and without experiencing this value, the networks will break down, hence this approach has helped to sustain motivation for the TrACE project¹⁰

The Academic Development Team was a big group. What really made a difference is when we developed sub-groups, workstreams that related to different elements of the action plan... We started to see the

⁹ Taylor, C. (2020) The distributed educational development team: a case study, chapter in Devecchi, C. and Potter, J. (eds) Delivering Educational Change in Higher Education. London: Routledge.

¹⁰ Wenger, E., Trayner, B. and de Laat, M. (2011) Promoting and assessing value creation in communities and networks: a conceptual framework. Ruud de Moor Centrum

network taking responsibility and taking the lead on those different activities. That was a big turning point really. (U2)

Securing a post of Project Manager for the TrACE project has been instrumental in the smooth progress of the project as highlighted in participant accounts.

Thankfully we've got [project manager] who has been just fantastic. Having those project management skills has been fundamental really. The way she's galvanised those working groups to make progress, the way she records everything... So learning for others would be that that's a key role. (U2)

Being able to set up meetings and structuring those meetings in a way that allowed us to be creative, but at the same time got us through the order of the business we needed to. (U4)

Appointing a person who has project management skills has facilitated clear scheduling and decision-making, ensuring all involved in the project in the academic and wider community are informed of progress and learning is shared on an ongoing basis.

The TrACE ADT Associates network currently has the most members of the University's ADT Associates networks. Its design draws on Kotter's dual-operating system – two systems, one organisation concept – where flexible and adaptable networks become the accelerators which drive problem-solving, collaboration, and creativity¹¹ We have built a guiding coalition – a cross-disciplinary team formed from all levels of the organisation with all members of team having equal status and influence.

Here, participants talked about how the TrACE ADT network is impacting the way the university is structuring its other Academic Development Teams – its impact is wider-reaching than it anticipated.

The Academic Development Associates Team has had an impact shaping the other Academic Development Teams because it's shown to visibly work so well. It's absolutely been accepted that it's the model for us to take forward with other Academic Development Associates Teams. (U2)

Some early and simple practice impacts are being seen. Wrexham University developed a new Student Induction Module – Being Prepared for Your Studies in 2022 which includes content around TrACE, and signposting to student support services. This is offered to all new full and part-time undergraduate students, with the aim of developing an understanding of what it means to study within a trauma informed university at an early of study and supporting transition to higher education. Participants in the study also talked about practice they have implemented at programme level, for example, in the timing of assignment deadlines and feedback to optimise the opportunity to support students as much as possible, building self-care into learning activities, and putting trigger warnings on lecture content.

A student mentioned about receiving results [from assignments] on a Friday... she mentioned it was quite stressful dealing with it on her own over a weekend... So we changed the release dates to a Monday so there is a whole week for students to reach out to staff. (U7)

Deadlines and feedback times have changed to the middle of the day so that students don't have to wait too long for their feedback and equally with their feedback, if they're distressed by that they've got time to seek support. (U6)

We obviously now have trigger warnings on our content. (U6)

We're building a lot more self-care into learning activities. So sometimes within sessions I will do a brain-break activity or a creative activity. A place for students to process and think and sometimes work in a non-verbal way. (U6)

There was a tendency before to homogenise student groups. And now it's very much an individual bespoke type of delivery. (U5)

TrACE is also being built into 'the system', into the university's policies and procedures, the second domain of the TrACE-Informed Organisations Toolkit. This activity is being enabled by the [ACE Hub Guidance for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice](#) which was co produced with colleagues from ACE Hub Wales, Wrexham University, Coleg Cambria, and Coleg Gwent, and which aims to support the implementation of TrACE-informed practice.

At Wrexham University, following a presentation to colleagues in Human Resources, Organisational Development, and Academic Quality teams, we are piloting the utilisation of the Guidance in the review of both staff and student facing policies during 2023.

When people do those EDI, Welsh language assessments, they will also be doing TrACE. (U2)

This college and the university are kind of working in tandem. (C7)

As described above, the Physical Environment domain relates to what the physical and social environments provide to promote safety and the provision of appropriate resources to achieve this.

We are developing processes to enable a trauma-informed lens to be applied when considering changes to the physical environment, whether this is through the planned maintenance programmes or through more significant programmes of works including retrofit and new build, being delivered through the Campus 2025 programme. This will include the training of staff and student volunteers to review physical spaces using a toolkit based on trauma informed design principles. We will also be providing guidance and training for architects, engineers, and other relevant

contractors so that they can consider these principles when designing and developing the physical environment.

Staff have also started to think about the environment and how welcoming that environment is, how safe that environment feels, but also how it fits into the wider wellbeing and mental health strategy. (C2)

We're looking at different aspects of the physical environment... So we can actually look at that from a TrACE lens. (U8)

Our TrACE-informed approach is as much about affecting positive change within our broader community and the partners and organisations that we work with – our civic mission – as it is about the work that we do within the university. Although still relatively early on the journey to being TrACE-informed, organisations are already seeing some impacts in their change in practice:

We have a small cohort of persistent offenders and young people coming to our attention, so we needed to look at a different approach. We found a lot of positives from the TrACE-informed model and that way of working and looking at relationships, looking at the impact of trauma. We saw some really positive outcomes for children, young people in terms of fewer offences being committed, reductions in the use of enforcement and better transitions to other agencies and accessing additional support. (C1)

Some of the young people who were struggling in education, teachers have noted they're holding themselves differently, they're coming in with more confidence. (C3)

Students as partners

Wrexham University values students as partners and co-producers. This is exemplified in U2's comment below:

¹¹ Kotter, J.P. (2014) Accelerate: building strategic agility for a faster moving world. Harvard Business Review Press

We have a principle of students as partners, and student involvement was really important. We're the first Academic Development Team to have student members. (U2)



As has already been mentioned, the Navigating the Storm animation was student-led. In addition to this, and through our dedicated student involvement workstream, Wrexham University's Students' Union started a Kindness Campaign which ran across 2020 and 2021 and involved students evidencing kindness to become a Kindness Champion. This has evolved in TrACE Champions – focusing on connections and relationships – and key ingredient of trauma-informed practice.

In 2022, the University won a [Kindness in Education Award](#). Both Navigating the Storm and Kindness Champions were highlighted as examples of our commitment to becoming a TrACE-informed university.

Students have been proactive in helping to develop and embed a TrACE-informed

approach across the whole university, and particularly among the student population. Some of this activity has involved hosting a TrACE stand at Freshers' Fair from which 60 students expressed an interest in becoming a TrACE Champion. They have made connections with voluntary organisations, and delivered presentations at a psychology conference, a student conference, ACE Hub Wales event at Aberystwyth University, and a staff learning lunch.

Students have also instigated some practical, visible communication around the university, for example, adding signature strips to emails which also include a link to the Navigating the Storm animation, and key messages about TrACE are now displayed on screens around the campus.

In an article published on [Deeside.com](#), Deborah Robert, a student and member of the TrACE ADT Associates network, had this to say about her involvement in the ACE Hub Wales - [Trauma-informed Communities Report Launch Event](#) on 30th March, 2023:

"Having the opportunity to present at a Wales-wide event as a student was a great privilege – it was amazing that the university

allowed us the chance to have a voice on a national level. It was a fantastic experience, particularly in terms of being in the company of and listening to a host of inspirational individuals, as well as being able to share what we're doing at Wrexham University. This was an excellent example of student involvement in co-production and real-world application of theoretical knowledge and presentation skills."

What is clear from this is the multi-faceted benefits for involving students – as well, adding value to the TrACE project, there are tangible personal and professional developmental impacts that manifest as a result.

Culture and leadership

Governance, leadership, and organisational culture is one of the domains within the TrACE Toolkit. Wrexham University have recognised that to be trauma-informed within an organisation requires embedding a culture of understanding within all aspects of the organisation (amongst students and staff), and the TrACE toolkit has been utilised to develop our institutional approach. There is a recognition that these aspects are important for the overall support for and investment in implementing and sustaining a trauma-informed approach. From the conversations that we had; this was indeed identified.

As a university, we have been engaging in ongoing communications based on the new Trauma-Informed Wales Framework to inform the senior leadership team and cascade organisational change across the University.

It's about flagging up the leadership approach because that is really, really central. I think from the team, there has been extraordinary leadership. We wouldn't have been able to progress to these levels. I think what [name] has enabled is that kind of senior leadership buy-in because the team have presented

to Vice Chancellor's Board. (C2)

I think with any key piece of work, you have got to have the buy-in. [Name] is a big driver for this project, which is great, and we have representation on the leadership team. (U4)

Definitely spending time with the leadership team, getting their buy-in and they're understanding is important, and also asking them, how does this connect with your work? (U4)

We have seen students being a lot more proactive in accessing support and also sharing difficulties with the staff so that we can make adjustments or support them with their studies. (U7)

In addition, ensuring that TrACE is discussed across University business:

Now it's constantly on the agenda and I think that shared understanding is probably the biggest change. (U6)

As has been highlighted, the TrACE-informed model works alongside the university's ongoing social inclusion work which has seen the University rated the most socially-inclusive in Wales and England by the Times and Sunday Times [Good University Guide](#) for the fifth year running. The TrACE project builds on Wrexham University's commitment to widening access and participation:

Resisting the kind of pushback that this is one person's job because none of this can be done by itself. And Wrexham University really nailed that for me. I think that comes because the culture was something that was already, you know, on its way to be in this anyway. (C6)

I think the project is helping to enact a culture change in terms of creating an environment where it's ok to talk about difficult experiences, where everybody is starting to be on the same page in terms of recognising that we don't know what people have experienced or gone through. (U1)



Students as leaders in the TrACE ADT Associates network Academic Development Team has been critical to its success providing a different lens on the project and steering the activities— leading and further embedding a TrACE-informed approach to university life.

The university as an enabler and connector

An important aspect of this pilot is the recognition that the university is not bounded by the campus. The university is inherently place-based it is in and of its place. Coupled with the fact that the university is leading the way in terms of its work around civic mission, means that its reach is community wide.

Partnership working and the university stepping into the space of being useful to its community has been a feature of the university's civic mission work for many years. This culture and leadership have 'prepared the soil' for the university, through and with partners, to enable TrACE-informed approaches across North Wales. TrACE is now a key feature of, for example, Public Services Boards' well-being plans and approaches, Actif North Wales, 2025 Movement, the HEFCW-funded North Wales Children's University.

What was really, really interesting was the whole civic mission dynamic and actually looking at how the university reached out into the community and how, because it is an anchor institution, and because it does so much in terms of Public Services Boards agendas and the whole reducing inequalities and 2025 Movement, it just felt like this is a bigger piece for me. (C2)

The issues that [name] has identified in the Public Services Boards' Well-being Assessments are just streets ahead of where we've been at previously, where it's been very silo-based. Now [name] has identified inequalities and how it cuts across mental health, climate change, and trauma-informed. (C4)

The systems leadership approach [that the university is leading on] is giving people that space but also that language to be able to have those conversations around trauma. (C4)

I did the systems leadership module that they offer at the university. Through this I learned the skills of public narrative and the power to influence. (C3)

A lot of this is down to the work the university has been doing around systems leadership. (C4)

The North Wales Insights Partnership [convened by the university] is where there is real change happening particularly with the communities of practice. (C4)

In North Wales, we are connected to so many partnerships and that infrastructure. It's not one person that's it. It's a true team partnership effort. (U3)

This has tangibly resulted in TrACE approaches being developed and embedded in the new North Wales Children's University pilot programme a HEFCW-funded programme that encourages and rewards young people for taking part in additional learning and volunteering activities in their schools, their community and online in order to raise aspirations, provide young people with new experiences, skills, friends, and passions.

The TrACE approach is being embedded in the Children's University project – an innovative vehicle for change to support children. (U3)

It is forming a central part of North Wales Public Services Boards¹² well-being plans with corresponding financial investment for the university to support, in partnership with others, the development of the TrACE community of practice.

And instigating other areas of work:

From there, we've started to build on other projects. I'm starting to work with [name] creating projects for children who are more vulnerable, looked after children. (C3)

The connectedness across the system and the trust and relationships that have been built over time has meant that we're now starting to see movement in other organisations.

It's allowed for a much bigger conversation outside of the university. (C3)

You can see people talking about it more. I am involved in a lot of different communities, and it crops up all the time now and you see senior managers referring to it. (U14)

I ran a Member workshop last week, some of the members were talking about trauma. They would never have done that a few years ago. (C5)

Taking some of the learning from the university, what they've done and looking at how potentially as a health board we could support that and grow in other areas. (C3)

We wanted to embed it within our setting and obviously collaborate with other people, share practice and try and make the best difference to as many people as we can. (C7)

The team just like this approach and that freedom and flexibility, the backing the research gives them to do that. (C1)

TrACE fits in with what we're trying to promote in terms of inclusivity across the curriculum, across the country. It mirrors all the values that we're trying to work towards. (U8)

A key facet of the university's civic mission is being useful useful as a convenor, a connector, as well as a knowledge mobiliser.

There are other organisations who want to get involved, like Youth Justice, Reaching Wider. They're really keen to embed it. (U11)

Developing on from the animation [Navigating the Storm], how do we use this to apply to different settings?

We're working with Youth Justice Service, and we've developed workbooks for primary schools. (U2)

It's useful to have that sort of external challenge as well, to help us to think differently about how we might approach this. (C1)

We want to build on what we're doing and ensure that other people can feel as confident as we do. So having the support from the university to be able to do that is instrumental in creating something that can be grown in North Wales, and hopefully Wales. (C3)

Filling the practice implementation gap

As with any shift in approach, there will be a staggered adoption. There is a recognition that different cohorts of people are at different starting points and that support is needed to help them.

With the TrACE work and the community of practice, you've obviously got groups and cohorts of professionals who get it already and they are streets ahead, but how do we bring the rest of us along and ensure that this TrACE approach becomes the agenda of all organisations? (C4)

The biggest challenge is trying to get that whole university approach. Otherwise, it lands with just a few individuals and then you don't get as much impact. (U8)

How can I get colleagues who work in planning or the environment department to understand this and for it to be relevant to them, to be part of their discussions? My observation is we haven't really had those conversations, it still hasn't got out of the realms of feeling reasonably academic. (C4)

I'm really trying to understand how staff have taken that on board and how they're applying it to their working practices on a day-to-day basis. (C5)

And perhaps now with TrACE-informed practice being highlighted [in the well-being assessments], we're

¹² The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) puts a duty on specified public bodies to act jointly to improve the environmental, cultural, social, and economic well-being of their area via Public Services Boards. Each Public Services Board must assess the state of well-being in their area – a well-being assessment. The well-being assessment is then used as a basis to develop the area's well-being plan.

now at a stage where, you know, the touch paper is lit. Partners were all bringing issues to the table but we didn't really have the tools so this level of support will enable Public Services Boards to make a difference. (C4)

Some people have suggested some solutions of how to fill the practice implementation gap. This involves training and spaces to learn and reflect.

It could be that mandatory training would be probably really helpful. (U8)

I think there should be a module on becoming trauma-informed because it's just so valuable. (U5)

We're looking to use the framework to go who needs what and at what level, what's appropriate? So for some it will be awareness. (C5)

Having that protected space to reflect and to build on our practice is really important and something that we don't really have at the moment. (U6)

For some, the new established North Wales TrACE Community of Practice, in addition to the national TrACE Community of Practice, is helping to provide that space:

I don't think Wrexham University is isolated because we're so connected through the civic mission with our many different partners. But having a community of practice purely for TrACE, it was a really great two hours because there was so much. I literally had a side of A3 paper and put all my ideas on there, ideas of things that could work. (U4)

Having that broader network and an opportunity to share ideas of what works, what doesn't work and any sort of particular pinch point with a wider community. (C8)

The process of sharing learning stimulates other ideas and learning, as well as providing a network of colleagues supporting each other.

Personal impacts

Being TrACE-informed is inherently a relational approach – how we develop those relationships with our students, our colleagues, our partners. In so doing, it's important to recognise the individuals within these relationships. People make the difference, people make things happen, people shape practice. This is why the initial focus of the pilot was to concentrate on winning hearts and minds.

A powerful aspect of the evaluation, therefore, has been to capture people's personal narratives – how being involved in the TrACE project has impacted on them personally. Some of this is about people reflecting on their own professional practice:

It's made me reflect even more on how I am and how I approach things with people, what can be considered, and the importance of that non-judgement to put the importance of listening and the ability to sign-post as well. (U4)

It made me look at my own practice which can be a bit sobering because I've been in education a long time. It's useful to learn from your mistakes and acknowledge them. (U13)

The biggest impact for me has been looking at my own professional knowledge and development, and reflecting on that, and seeing where I can improve but also trying to make the best outcome for learners and people that I encounter on a daily basis really. (C7)

From a personal and professional point of view, hugely helpful. And unlocked the whole world around trauma-informed theories, genetics and neuroscience and psychology. For me, I could just see the benefit in terms of supporting different attitudes and behaviours. (U1)

For others, it has meant a different narrative, a different way of speaking about and to others:

It's brought an awareness to me of being much more compassionate and understanding. And I'm really reflecting on my own attitudes as well. (U5)
I always talk about compassion and kindness and the way that I can speak about that now is a lot different. And it's a lot more articulate. So yeah, for me personally, the learning has been amazing. (U4)

It's taught me to be kinder to myself. (U5)

On a personal level, it is just being much more aware of how to apply kindness and compassion I suppose and care. (U5)

And the project has enabled others to grow in confidence – to utilise and value the assets that they bring to the project. Whether this is about challenging things or drawing on qualities.

I think for me personally, I used to see myself as being the issue and when looking at environments and accessibility, it's the environment that's disabling. It's given me more confidence to say, you know, this isn't right. (U12)

The project has helped me implement my qualities... and I really have always been about motivating people and bringing inspiration so it's inspiring me to inspire others. (U9)

Most significant change

Most Significant Change is about capturing people's stories of change. Their stories, what change(s) they have seen and felt. As well as providing a richness to our understanding, it helps us to share with others on a similar journey what the significant changes have been to date. The most significant change stories cluster around four main themes.

Shared understanding

The change in hearts and minds, and the animation has been instrumental in that changing of hearts

and minds, I would say... Once they see the animation and go ok, we get it, we get what you're talking about, so we understand it now. (U2)
I think that shared understanding is probably the biggest change. (U6)

Permission and autonomy

It's given practitioners permission, the scope and the autonomy to deliver how they want to deliver. It has the potential to give more autonomy to the young person in terms of control over how they want to work with us as well. (C1)

Person-centred

I think it's about taking that person's perspective, from walking in through the door. What does that look and feel like? Who they're going to be greeted by? How are we meeting our students when they come to our area? What does it feel like? Are there going to be any triggers? We can't cover all eventualities, but I think it's about that mindset of what that might be like for that person. (U8)

Culture change

I think the project is helping to enact a culture change in terms of creating an environment where it's ok to talk about difficult experiences, where everybody is starting to be on the same page in terms of recognising that we don't know what people have experienced or gone through. Because that is changing individual staff members' and students' kind of world views if you like, isn't it? And societal views and expectations. (U1)

These most significant change stories are likely to change over time. This is why it's important to continue to capture the learning and insights along the journey – to track where we've come from and to use that insight to inform where we go. It will also provide guidance to others who embark on the journey to be TrACE-informed.

Recommendations

We have identified a suite of recommendations that that we hope would be useful for any organisation embarking on a journey to become TrACE-informed.

1. Ensure that people have a shared understanding of what TrACE is (and isn't). Keep it simple.
2. Focus on appealing to people's hearts as well as minds.
3. Invest in a project manager to project manage the work.
4. Ensure that you have senior leadership buy-in.
5. Involve a broad spectrum of colleagues across a range of (academic and non-academic) departments.
6. Involve students as partners.
7. Create spaces for shared learning and practice with the wider public sector and civic society.
8. Continually review and move forward.
9. Develop ways to support people to apply their knowledge into practice.
10. Nurture relationships within the University and its community.
11. Take an active role in promoting and supporting systems thinking and systems leadership.
12. Develop tools to help colleagues in partner organisations embed a TrACE-informed approach.

Concluding comments

Embarking on the journey to be a TrACE-informed university was never about arriving at a destination. It was always going to be about an on-going cycle of review and moving forward. This evaluation is useful for us to understand where we are at this point in time.

We are currently undertaking a mini-stocktake of the project activity of what has been undertaken to date, what activity is currently underway, and what activity is in the planning pipeline. The findings from this evaluation will feed into this process.

What we do know is that we will be using smart communication, engagement, and training to further embed this agenda and approach with staff, students, and our broader communities.

We acknowledge that we're operating within and supporting a system. Whilst we can plan and provide a level of structure, our actions and their impact can also be organic in nature. We've started to see sparks of activity and impact across the system, and through this work we will continue to learn, share, and iterate together.

Recognising that structures and circumstances within organisations vary, we hope that the learning from what we have done so far will be useful for others.

APPENDIX A

Participant Interview Schedule / Topic Guide

Introduction

I am interested in hearing about your thoughts and experiences and your engagement with the TrACE-informed university and/or TrACE-informed community pilot.

This interview will probably take between 30-60 minutes. If you want to stop or take a break at any time, please let me know.

If you agree, I will start recording.

Once recording has started, the researcher says: 'we are now recording, and can you confirm that you have given your consent for this interview to be recorded?'

Can you also please confirm that you have read the information sheet and given signed consent for this interview?

Please remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

Do you have any questions before we start?

- Could you please share with me the ways in which you have been involved in the TrACE-informed university/community project so far?
- When? How did you become involved? Why did you become involved?
- What impacts have you seen or experienced so far?
- How have these come about? What have been the things that have led to these impacts?
- Since the project commenced, what do you think has been the most significant change you've seen and/or experienced?
- How has being involved in the project helped you take a TrACE-informed approach?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX B

Participant Information Sheet

Research study title

Evaluation of the Trauma and ACE (TrACE)-informed university pilot.

Invitation and summary

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you agree to do so, it is important that you understand the purpose and nature of the research and what your participation will involve, if you agree. Please read the following information carefully and feel free to ask if you would like more information or if there is anything you do not understand. Contact details are given at the end of this information sheet.

Purpose of the study

Everyone has a role to play in Wales becoming an ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and trauma-informed (TrACE) nation. ACE Hub Wales¹³ have developed a [TrACE toolkit](#). It contains a range of tools to help any person, organisation, sector, or system to reflect on their current practice, and develop strategies to strengthen ACE and trauma-informed approaches. ACE Hub Wales are working with a variety of organisations across different sectors to pilot the toolkit with a view to learn, shape, and adapt it for others.

At Wrexham University, we are the pilot organisation for the higher education sector. Recognising that Wrexham is very much situated in its place, being TrACE-informed should extend beyond the boundaries of our campus. Building on the approach that we have been taking within the University, we are therefore also exploring a TrACE-informed approach for communities.

It is important for us to understand and learn from the approaches that we have taken so far and capture any early impacts. Communicating and sharing these will support other organisations with their journey as well as help us to keep the momentum going and embed TrACE-informed approaches university and system-wide.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

You have been chosen to take part in the study because you have engaged with activity related to the TrACE-informed university pilot.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether to take part. If you do agree to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you agree to take part, you may still withdraw at any time up until the data has been anonymised, without giving a reason.

What will taking part involve?

You will be asked to take part in a qualitative interview which will take between 30-60 minutes and will be recorded. We will ask you to share the ways in which you have involved in the TrACE project so far, what impacts you have seen or experienced so far, what you think has been the most significant change you've seen and/or experienced, and how being involved in the project has helped you take a TrACE-informed approach.

What are the potential risks and benefits to taking part?

There are no perceived risks involved in taking part because the subject under examination is a reflection on your experiences of engaging in activity relating to the TrACE-informed university pilot. Participation is voluntary (you can withdraw at any time), and you can be assured that your answers will be treated with respect and confidentiality.

A potential benefit of the proposed research is the opportunity to contribute to the developing trauma-informed approach at the University. Another benefit of taking part in this research is the opportunity to contribute to the body of knowledge around developing trauma informed universities and communities. Participants will provide valuable reflections on how they have experienced and contributed to activity related to the trauma informed pilot, and influence future developments. The research will inform the development of institutional practices within the University and to the wider Higher Education sector and communities from the experiences shared.

Will my participation be confidential?

Confidentiality and anonymity are paramount when conducting research, and therefore all information about you and your work organisation will be kept strictly confidential. All such information will be stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The only people who will know about you are the researchers. All data, whether electronic or paper or in any other form will be destroyed once our evaluation has been completed.

What will happen to the results of the study?

We plan to publish the results of the study in a report and peer reviewed journal(s). You and your organisation will not be identifiable from the results.

What will happen if I want to stop taking part?

You can withdraw your participation at any time. This means that if you do change your mind then you can contact the researchers to let them know. You do not need to explain your decision.

What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let us know by contacting

Dr Rachel Hughes: rachel@dotiau.org or

Dr Sarah Dubberley s.dubberley@glyndwr.ac.uk

and we will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with then you should contact the Research Ethics Sub-Committee at rescadmin@glyndwr.ac.uk. When contacting the Research Ethics Sub-Committee please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

Contact for further information

If anything is not clear, or if you want more information, please do contact us:

Principle Investigator

Dr Rachel Hughes

rachel@dotiau.org

Co-Investigator

Dr Sarah Dubberley

s.dubberley@glyndwr.ac.uk

APPENDIX C

Consent Form

Title of the research project: Evaluation of the Trauma and ACE (TrACE)-informed university pilot

Name of researchers and contact details:

Principle Investigator
Dr Rachel Hughes
rachel@dotiau.org

Co-Investigator
Dr Sarah Dubberley
s.dubberley@glyndwr.ac.uk

I confirm that I have read and understood the Information Sheet dated 30.8.22 for the above study, or it has been read to me. If I have asked for clarification or for more information, I have had satisfactory responses.

☐

I understand that taking part in the study involves taking part in a qualitative interview.

☐

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to stop taking part and can withdraw from the study at any time up until the data has been anonymised, without giving any reason and without my rights being affected. In addition, I understand that I am free to decline to answer any particular question or questions.

☐

I understand that I can ask for access to the information I provide, and I can request the destruction of that information up to point where it is anonymised. I understand that at the point where data has been anonymised that I will no longer be able to request access to or withdrawal of the information I provide.

☐

I understand that the information I provide can be quoted in research outputs such as publication in a peer reviewed journal. I understand that I will not be identified/ named through these quotes.

☐

I understand that the information I provide will be held securely and in line with data protection requirements reflected on the Wrexham University Privacy Notice. Once the evaluation is completed all data will be destroyed.

☐

I agree to being contacted at a later date and invited to take part in future studies. I understand that I am only agreeing to receive information and I am under no obligation to take part in any future studies. I understand that my contact details will be held securely.

☐

I agree to take part in the above study

☐

Participant name

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent

Date

Signature

Introduction	
Please note that this standard information should be considered alongside information provided by the researcher for each project, which is usually in the form of a Participant Information Sheet (PIS). The PIS will include further details about how personal information is processed in the particular project, including: what data is being processed; how it is being stored; how long it will be retained for, and any other recipients of the personal information. It is usually given to participants before they decide whether or not they want to participate in the research	
Data Controller and the Data Protection Officer	
Wrexham University is the data controller under data protection legislation. This means that the University is responsible for how your personal data is used and for responding to any requests from you in relation to your personal data. Any queries regarding your personal information should be made to the University's Data Protection Officer at dpo@glyndwr.ac.uk	
Legal Basis for processing your personal information	
If you are participating in a research project, we may collect your personal information. The type of information that we collect will vary depending on the project. Our basis for collecting this information is outlined below:	
Type of Information	Basis for Processing
Your personal information and associated research data collected for the purposes of conducting research	It is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest
Certain types of personal information such as information about your race, ethnic origin, politics, religion, trade union membership, genetics, biometric (where used for ID purposes) health sex life, or sexual orientation are defined as 'special Category' data under the legislation	It is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest, and It is necessary for scientific or historical research purposes in accordance with the relevant legislation (Data Protection Act 2018, Schedule 1, Part 1 Para 4)
Criminal conviction/offence data	It is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest, and Is processed in accordance with Article 10 of the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, Schedule 1 Part 1 Para 4
Retention of consent forms	
If you participate in a research project, you may be asked to sign a participant consent form. Consent forms will typically be retained by the University for at least as long as the identifiable research data are retained. In most cases they will be retained for longer, the exact time frame will be determined by the need for access to this information in the unfortunate case of an unanticipated problem or a complaint six (6) years after the research is completed for many projects, but beyond 20 years will be considered for any longitudinal or 'high risk' studies involving children, adults without capacity or a contentious research outcome.	
Your Rights	
You have the right to: be informed about the collection and use of your personal data; to request access to the personal data we hold about you; you are entitled to request to have personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete; you have the right to request to object to your data being processed and you can request to restrict the processing of your personal information. To exercise these rights please contact dpo@glyndwr.ac.uk	
Right to complain to supervisory authority	
If you have any concerns/issues with the way the University has processed your personal data, you can contact the data protection officer at dpo@glyndwr.ac.uk . You also have the right to lodge a complaint against the University regarding data protection issues with the Information Commissioners Office (https://ico.org.uk/concerns/)	

Prifysgol Wreccsam
Wrexham University

W