

Lecturing within the panoptic scheme of Prevent in an English University

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The Counter Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) in 2015 placed responsibilities for national security on Higher Education (HE) in England with implications for lecturers' roles and responsibilities as they engage with students. The principal aim of this inquiry was to develop an understanding of lecturers' pedagogy in the context of students' academic study of *Prevent* in the fields of primary education and early childhood education (ECE). Panopticism was adopted as a theoretical lens to reveal the means by which the policy and structures of counter terrorism reach into the university classroom. Subsequently, practitioner inquiry was applied as a method to examine the assumptions that underlie pedagogical decisions made by lecturers in this context. Findings from this small-scale inquiry indicate that lecturers held complex assumptions relating to both the aims of the CTSA and students' agency as learners. Such assumptions informed the way lecturers modified pedagogy in their attempts to create spaces for students to construct critical knowledges of the implications of counter-terrorism policy. Within the literature on the implications of CTSA for pedagogy in HE this paper highlights the value of practitioner inquiry as a critical tool for research into teaching and learning in this context.

Keywords: counter-terrorism; Prevent, pedagogy, panopticism, practitioner enquiry.

Introduction

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) 2015 (HM Government 2015) co-opts a range of public institutions, including Higher Education (HE) in England, into the delivery of counter-terrorism measures. The inclusion of HE within the scope of counter-terrorism legislation is debated within the academic literature because of concerns relating to the potential for surveillance and restrictions on academic freedom, alongside the possibility of a chilling effect in teaching (Danvers 2021; Scott-Baumann 2017; Whiting et al. 2020). The relationship between HE and national security policy is problematic; where there is a prevailing agenda or concern for state security, this may lead to a 'dominant cultural outlook, which prioritises security as an assumed

existential need' (Durodie 2016, 23). Within this paper the securitization of HE is understood as one of the processes by which the state delivers its counter terrorism strategies (Talbot 2013, cited by Davies 2016); in this way, the boundaries between education, security and intelligence gathering have been blurred (Gearon 2015). While HE institutions are concerned with human security (e.g. welfare and well-being of students and staff), Davies (2016) argues that the notion of human security has been extended to consider whether an individual person poses a threat to the state. The specific interest in this paper is the implications for pedagogy arising from this process of securitisation of HE through the statutory duty imposed in England by Section 26 (S.26) of the CTSA 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism' (HM Government 2019). Mandatory guidance for HE in England and Wales, arising from S.26 (hereafter referred to as *Prevent*), is set out in both the government's overarching counter terrorism strategy *Contest* (HM Government 2018) and its work-stream *Prevent* (HM Government 2019). *Contest* requires HE institutions 'to have clear policies in place to safeguard students and build their resilience to radicalisation in ... higher education institutions' (HM Government 2018, 36). The Office for Students (OfS) monitors the compliance of the HE sector with *Prevent* in England, their focus is on the mandatory actions needed in HE, including, for example, risk assessment, welfare support and staff training (Office for Students 2021). However the OfS remains silent on the expectations in HE regarding pedagogy.

This paper reports a small-scale practitioner inquiry exploring the implications for pedagogy in HE arising from *Prevent*. The study is situated in a HE institution in England within a department whose portfolio of courses includes initial training of teachers for primary education and the continuing development of practitioners in early childhood education (ECE). The principal aim of this inquiry is to develop an understanding of pedagogy in the academic study of *Prevent* in the fields of primary education and ECE. A secondary aim is to make a methodological contribution on the use of practitioner inquiry and the value of this research approach in examining pedagogy in HE. Panopticism is applied as a tool to reveal the

way *Prevent* may affect lecturers' pedagogical relationships with students in HE. The study is guided by the following research questions:

- What are the implications arising from *Prevent* for lecturers working in the disciplines of primary education and ECE in HE?
- How is pedagogy affected by the intersection between counter terrorism strategy, ECE and HE?
- How might lecturers situate themselves as leaders of learning in this context?

The paper begins with a critical analysis of the *Prevent* strategy as a panoptic schema, followed by a review of the literature examining *Prevent* and pedagogy in HE. Subsequently, practitioner inquiry is justified as a relevant methodology for research into teaching and learning in HE. This is followed by a discussion of the assumptions that underpin lecturers' pedagogy in the academic study of *Prevent* in primary education and ECE; such assumptions emerge from critical reflection on episodes of teaching. The paper concludes by summarising the findings and proposing areas for future research.

Prevent as a panoptic schema

Panopticism offers a way of viewing structures and powers as they act on individuals within complex systems. Through its application of panopticism this paper adds to the body of knowledge presented in the subsequent literature review about the ways in which the structures of *Prevent* exercise power on pedagogy in HE. Analysis of *Prevent* as a panoptic schema can reveal the reach of counter terrorism measures, across the education system in England into the structures that govern policy and practice. A panoptic schema's purpose is to deal with 'a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or a particular form of behaviour must be imposed' (Foucault 1991, 205). We suggest that *Prevent* as a schema demands the compliance of education institutions, including HE, with state-directed ideology and counter-terrorism surveillance. *Prevent* is the vehicle to achieve state aims in relation to counter-terrorism and can be understood as a disciplinary political technology. As a disciplinary mechanism it uses a

‘faceless gaze that transform[s] the whole social body into a field of perception’ (Foucault 1991, 213) through its co-opting of educational staff to fulfil its purposes. We suggest that people working in educational institutions in England are subject to ‘a swarming of disciplinary methods’ (211) including regulation, statutory requirements for safeguarding, curriculum guidance and professional standards, which transforms educational institutions into a field of perception for government counter-terrorism. The structures through which *Prevent* works may be perceived as neutral or banal (Heath-Kelly and Strausz 2019) and we suggest that this potentially enables acceptance of *Prevent* within HE. Within this panoptic schema of *Prevent*, people are not only subject to disciplinary measures, but they also have the power to conduct surveillance and report on people to the authorities, as they exercise power made permissible by the scheme. University lecturers are co-opted by *Prevent* in this way to surveil staff and students.

The concept of lateral invisibility, whereby individuals within the system are not visible to each other, is central to any panoptic schema (Foucault 1991). We suggest that the distinctive requirements placed by *Prevent* on different phases or sectors of education leads to segmentation and lateral invisibility. *Prevent* clarifies the general duty for those working in education in England to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, it also sets out the different expectations for each sector of education. This can be illustrated by the differences in statutory requirement in *Prevent* related to the promotion of Fundamental British Values (FBV) as set of national values whose aim is to prevent individuals being radicalised. FBV are defined as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs (HM Government 2019). Whilst there is no statutory requirement to promote FBV within HE, ECE providers are required by the statutory guidance (HM Government 2019) to promote FBV in their work with young children. The Teachers’ Standards for England, however, specify that teachers in primary and secondary education ‘should not undermine Fundamental British Values’ (Department for Education 2013, 205) within or outside school, in addition to the school level responsibility to promote FBV (Department for Education 2015). In England this segmentation of implementation across the different sectors of education means

that the structures of power are only partially visible to individuals; each person experiences the impact of *Prevent* on their own sector or institution but does not see or experience the whole schema. In addition to this lateral invisibility within a sector, we suggest that there is a vertical invisibility, whereby individuals are aware of their own responsibilities, but not of those in positions of power over them. It is within HE courses for primary education and ECE that this complex mosaic of *Prevent* requirements for the education sector in England is brought to the foreground. *Prevent* positions lecturers and students in initial teaching training and ECE programmes in multiple ways; they are both subject to, and potentially active agents of, *Prevent* (Farrell 2016) in their roles as university lecturers, students, ECE practitioners or teachers. *Prevent* as a strategy holds the central power; it fulfils the function of the potentially all-seeing but unverifiable Panopticon. We suggest that those working in education may experience a 'state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power' (201). They may have a consciousness of and sense of permanent visibility to counter-terrorism measures through constant exposure. At the same time *Prevent* is unverifiable; individuals may be unaware of specific practices of surveillance even if they are certain that there is always the possibility of scrutiny. People are subject to the permanent force of the central power of the schema, the Panopticon, even at times when they are not required to act. Within this schema the Panopticon is occupied by the counter-terrorism functions within state government. For those studying on HE courses relevant to teaching in ECE and Primary, knowledge of the practicalities of *Prevent* as regards their future professional duties does not reveal to them the complexities of *Prevent* as a schema, segmented as this professional knowledge is. Critical study of *Prevent* (as separate from practical training for teaching) is therefore necessary for the formation of student understanding of *Prevent* as a schema. Danvers' (2021) research focussing on critical thinking and *Prevent* in HE argues for 'critical, educative encounters with [...] Prevent' (13) to counter-act 'critical closures' (13), the potential diminishing of academic focus or action, that may result from *Prevent* policy in HE. The academic study of *Prevent* as a pervasive yet segmented panoptic scheme has the potential to avert such 'critical closures'. Although the use of the panoptic schema in this study supports an

analysis of power and positionality, it remains silent on the agency afforded to individuals within the schema to problematise or resist the regime.

Learning from the literature

Prevent and Lecturers in HE

Although the CTSA places the duty on universities to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’ (HM Government 2015 paragraph 26), it does not specify the roles for lecturers as it relates to their pedagogy. Thornton (2011) argues that universities perform *Prevent* through existing functions such as research ethics and safeguarding without a necessary consideration of the implications for lecturers. McGlynn and McDaid (2018) also found in their empirical study in HE that *Prevent* created a concern and narrative about the potential for radicalisation that ‘permeated the consciousness of participants’ including lecturers in HE (121). Lecturers may therefore unconsciously operate within an institutional culture influenced by concerns for national security.

The literature on the implementation of *Prevent* in HE critically examines the ways in which lecturers are positioned by this strategy. Sandford (2019) claims that the duty is with the university and therefore not with the lecturers. However, this interpretation is not supported in the literature on *Prevent* in HE. Spiller et al (2018) argue that there is ambiguity surrounding individual lecturer’s responsibilities associated with *Prevent*; they suggest that the lack of clarity on expectations leads to a vacuum and uncertainty. Despite the lack of specificity within the *Prevent* statutory guidance in relation to the expectations and implications for lecturers' roles, Spiller et al (2018) argue that the CTSA leads to a process of deputisation. As a result, staff are repositioned by the inclusion of additional responsibilities ‘as part of a wider effort to deputise the duty throughout the institution’ (Whiting 2020, 10). The process of deputising lecturers into the delivery of the government’s agenda of counter terrorism includes an expectation of surveillance of students at potential risk of radicalisation by lecturers and in this way *Prevent* enters the pedagogical relationship (Danvers 2021). Within the panoptic

schema this deputisation gives lecturers power over students to observe and report to higher authority, whilst still being subject to the power of *Prevent's* panoptic schema themselves.

Lecturers' compliance with the *Prevent* duty is a theme within the literature; Spiller et al (2018) argue that a prevailing culture of compliance with university policy, may mean that lecturers silently condone counter-terrorism systems without challenge. However, lecturers' responses are complex; whilst one study (McGlynn and McDaid 2018) found that lecturers adopted a position of minimum compliance, another study found that lecturers engage in micro-acts of resistance, where their response is 'doing the bare minimum and not fully participating in what the CTSA demands' (Spiller et al. 2018, 140). McGlynn and McDaid's (2018) study found that lecturers held critical perspectives on *Prevent* understanding it as a strategy to address ideology within specific communities and not a set of neutral procedures. This view echoes perspectives within the broader literature on *Prevent* in HE where the strategy is critiqued because it constructs Muslim people as vulnerable to radicalisation and potential terrorists (Scott-Baumann 2017). In this way *Prevent* is found to be discriminatory and stigmatising of Muslim communities. Durodie (2016) suggests that universities will implement procedures and practices that align with *Prevent* as evidence of compliance, even if they believe them to be ineffective or superfluous. Spiller et al. (2016) situate lecturers' response to *Prevent* within a context of institutional compliance by universities to contentious issues. They frame this as 'bureaucratic conservatism' (135) arising from ambiguity in the responsibilities and roles assigned to HE by the CTSA. This in turn creates a risk-averse environment where lecturers engage in self-regulation for fear of being culpable. McGlynn and McDaid's (2018) study further exemplifies this conservative and risk averse approach, they found that institutions in the HE sector predominantly adopted 'the safeguarding route to counter radicalisation compliance' (112), that is, the unquestioning conflation of the CTSA with existing safeguarding procedures within institutions as a means of evidencing compliance. The positioning of *Prevent* within safeguarding policy and practice focused on student welfare in HE is problematic for those working in universities. Whiting's (2020) critical reading of this alignment found that whilst a safeguarding approach creates familiarity through an emphasis on

student welfare and early intervention it also ‘allows for the obfuscation of a political endeavour (Prevent) with something that is viewed as politically neutral and ultimately positive (safeguarding)’ (14). In this way lecturers' responsibilities for the welfare of students has been repositioned to include a concern for national security; the implication being that students in their classes may be considered at risk of radicalisation or even radicalised. As Danvers (2021) suggests this negatively reframes the pedagogical relationship where there is an expectation that lecturers engage in surveillance of students' ideas and make judgements about both the person and their knowledge. This conflation of security and safeguarding can be seen within the *Prevent* panoptic schema as part of the transformation of education into a field of perception for state counter-terrorism measures.

Pedagogy and Prevent in Higher Education

Within the literature on *Prevent* in HE three empirical studies (Danvers 2021; McDaid and McGlynn 2018; Spiller et al. 2016) report findings examining the effects of *Prevent* on pedagogy. Common themes emerging from these studies are the implications for pedagogy arising from *Prevent's* construction of students as both risky and vulnerable and the ways *Prevent* affects pedagogical relationships or limits academic freedom. Danvers (2021) examined ‘the multifarious impacts of *Prevent* on critical pedagogic encounters’ (6) in the discipline of politics. This study found that the curricula, students and lecturers are ‘framed by *Prevent* as risky knowledge/knowers and subject to processes of caution and self-censorship’ (6) and that this resulted in the closure of opportunities to extend knowledge and engagement in critical debate about *Prevent*. Lecturers reported how they had exercised caution through a process of ‘de-sensitising and de-politicising curricula’ (8) with the result of limited debate. The data revealed a re-positioning of students in the pedagogical relationship, lecturers understood the contradictions arising from viewing students as critical and educated whilst also viewing them as susceptible to radicalisation through the lens of the *Prevent* duty. Similarly, Spiller et al found that lecturers were concerned that way in which they were ‘deputised to

perform security' (134) changed relationships with students in the classroom with the implication that it hindered both lecturers' and students' freedom of expression.

However, McGlynn and McDaid (2018) found no evidence of a chilling effect of *Prevent* within the HE classroom, that is the decline of certain discussion topics due to awareness of possible consequences of the *Prevent* duty. Lecturers, in their study, conversely had 'a strong desire for such [academic] controversial intellectual enquiry to continue' (141) across a range of topics including *Prevent*. However, the findings indicate that lecturers operated sensitively and cautiously in their interactions with students about *Prevent*, for example, lecturers avoided the expression of a view that could potentially cause offence. This stands in contrast to a potential constraint that O'Donnell (2018) identifies, in a policy analysis of the implications of the *Prevent* duty in the education sector, that there is a risk of silence and silencing, in the form of both 'pre-emptive testimonial injustice' (994), whereby the lecturer's pedagogical choices may inhibit any exchange or debate on ideas of concern and 'testimonial injustice' (993) where students constituted as risky or vulnerable are silenced within the classroom.

The broader literature on teaching in HE provides an understanding of how lecturers' beliefs and values may shape their pedagogy and informs their engagement with *Prevent* in the classroom. Stacey et al. (2005) argue that lecturers' epistemic beliefs effect how students in HE learn. They suggest that where lecturers hold 'constructional beliefs' (8) students have opportunities to develop complex understandings in the field of study. The implication of this position, for pedagogy, is the hope of co-constructing an understanding of *Prevent* with students. Whilst teaching in HE can be conceptualised as student centred as well as teacher centred, the latter has a focus on transmission of knowledge. Kreber (2010) identifies that lecturers' conceptualisation of students as active agents leads to an authentic pedagogy that facilitates students developing 'self-authorship' (192) of knowledge. This authentic pedagogy is student focussed and requires the lecturer to take action that is in the students' interest. Lecturers' commitment to this authentic pedagogy will inform work with students, as they author personal narratives of *Prevent*. Rose and Rogers (2012) identify the potential for students

to experience ‘cognitive and emotional dissonance’ (45) between HE context and practice. Through academic study, students may become critically aware of the segmented nature of education governance, and the lateral invisibility imposed by *Prevent* as a panoptic schema and the implications of this for practice. This may lead students to question and reflect on their own experience within the communities in which they live and work. Lindblom-Ylänne et al. (2006) suggest that lecturers’ conceptualisation of their work is always within a specific context and their approaches to teaching are not static. Lecturers’ pedagogy, therefore, must facilitate the development of students’ skills to navigate any dissonance they may encounter between the HE context and their practice. This leads to the question of how lecturers’ pedagogy creates space for students to engage in critical reflection and analysis of *Prevent*.

Our review of the literature indicates that *Prevent* has the potential to reposition lecturers’ duties and affect their pedagogical choices in complex ways. Within the empirical literature findings suggest that, firstly there were ambiguities of the lecturer role due to the banal alignment of these counter-terrorism duties with safeguarding practices related to student welfare. Secondly, the lecturer-student pedagogical relationship may be altered by the requirement for lecturers to surveille students who are positioned as potentially risky or vulnerable. Thirdly, the statutory nature of *Prevent* within the education may influence lecturer choice of course content, either by elevating *Prevent* as a contentious topic worthy of academic study, or by closing down exploration of topics seen as potentially problematic. This study builds on recent empirical research (Danvers 2021; McDaid and McGlynn 2018; Spiller et al. 2016) that has introduced a critical understanding of the problematic implications of *Prevent* for pedagogy in HE. This inquiry aims to make a distinctive contribution through its focus on both understanding how lecturers’ assumptions inform pedagogy and the practical strategies they adopt within the classroom in this context.

Methodology

The participants in this study are two lecturers in HE who conducted a small-scale practitioner inquiry into their pedagogical practice as it relates to the academic study of *Prevent* in the field of ECE and primary education. Practitioner inquiry is an established methodology for educators to investigate complex issues emerging in their own teaching and learning. Such studies are often small scale, generating powerful narratives of how state governments' interventions shape or colonise educators work and their professional lives (Campbell and Groundwater Smith 2010). The method provides a disciplined research framework for formulating knowledge which is political in the sense that it questions 'the ways knowledge and practice are constructed, evaluated and used' (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 2009, 121). As the methodology applied in this study it respects the agency and autonomy of lecturers to initiate research into troubling aspects of practice as it relates to the presence of *Prevent* in the classroom with the aim of extending knowledge and understanding (Babione 2015).

Central to the design of this practitioner inquiry is the opportunity for structured reflection on practices by lecturers (Murray 1992) which enables analysis of the interaction between their beliefs, values and pedagogic practice in their encounters with *Prevent*. The selection of practitioner inquiry for this study is influenced by Hines et al. (2015); they argue that practitioner inquiry in the field of education enables participants to 'talk back' (348) to dominant discourses in national education policy through the production of knowledge in local contexts. Like Hines et al. (2015), this study positions practitioner inquiry as a methodology that provides practitioner researchers with a 'greater sense of agency, gleaning knowledge from research' (349). In this way practitioner inquiry generates 'actionable knowledge' (Groundwater-Smith and Campbell 2010, 205); such knowledge can confront challenging issues in pedagogy, open up debate and explore possible actions. Practitioner inquiry is distinctive as a methodology for its focus on the agency of the practitioner researcher to initiate research that critically explores problematic aspects of their lived experiences of *Prevent* as a panoptic schema. In this way this study has the potential to extend the range of methodologies open to lecturers seeking to interrogate contentious aspects of their pedagogical practice. Here

practitioner inquiry has the dual purpose of creating knowledges and a critical understanding of lecturers' pedagogy as it encounters state counter terrorism measures in the classroom.

In this study, the participants hold the dual role of lecturers and researchers immersed in the university. Where practitioners are inquiring into their own practice, there is a risk of both bias and lack of clarity on responsibilities, this can be addressed by a focus on ethics in the research (Campbell and McNamara 2010). Mockler (2014) provides a framework of ethics for practitioner inquiry inclusive of 5 ethical practices that were applied throughout this inquiry (see Table 1).

Table 1: Ethical research practice in this inquiry

Area of ethical practice	Research practice in this inquiry
Observation ethical protocols and processes	This inquiry met the requirements of the institutional protocols and policies for research ethics; this included receiving the consent of the gatekeeper within the faculty for research into teaching and learning.
Transparency	The researchers planned for transparency in the implementation of the research; for example, students on the modules were informed of the research aims and purpose; and the focus on lecturers' pedagogy in the academic study of <i>Prevent</i> .
Collaboration	The researchers collaborated at every stage of the practitioner inquiry. This provided opportunities for critical discussion and debate throughout the research process including the analysis of the vignettes.
Transformation	The aims of this practitioner inquiry focus on the transformation of pedagogy. The researchers make commitments to actionable outcomes in their pedagogy and to disseminate knowledge through scholarly activities with colleagues in the faculty.
Justification to the community	The practitioner inquiry required the researchers to commit time and resources to this project. The inquiry is justified within the faculty for its potential to extend knowledges of pedagogy within the context of <i>Prevent</i> .

(Informed by Groundwater-Smith and Mockler 2007; Mockler 2014)

The framework above enabled the researchers to address potential issues of bias and acted as a framework for accountability. This brought to the foreground the principle of authenticity in practitioner inquiry (Groundwater-Smith and Mockler 2007) as the purpose of the study and the research questions arose from dilemmas emerging in their leadership of the academic study of *Prevent*. Authenticity was also reflected in the collection and analysis of data on critical

incidents that occurred in the teaching of *Prevent*, where the researchers committed to deepening their understanding of the problematic aspects of their pedagogy and realising actionable outcomes.

Within practitioner inquiry the data collection methods must be relevant to the social reality of lecturer's roles and their work (Holliday 2016). As the aim of the research is to develop a deeper understanding of the values and beliefs that underpin pedagogy in HE with relation to *Prevent*; Brookfield's (1990) model for the analysis of critical incidents was selected as a method for data collection. The critical incidents 'highlight particular, concrete, and contextually specific aspects of [their] experiences' (180) that occurred on a routine basis. He argues that such incidents are 'primary data sources giving insights into [lecturers'] assumptive worlds' (180) and this enabled assumptions that underpinned lecturers' pedagogy to be revealed. The researchers in this study adopted a disciplined approach in the selection of incidents arising in their teaching for analysis. Brookfield's model involves the selection of significant pedagogical events by practitioners. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) propose a strategy in which the researcher determines sampling parameters and through this process is both selective and exercises restraint in the collection of data. Drawing on the four sampling parameters of setting, actors, events and processes (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014) incidents were deemed to be in scope if they occurred within the HE institution and if they involved the participants in the teaching of *Prevent* as an academic subject. The significant events related to the leadership of a module involving the academic study of *Prevent* and an episode of teaching where the focus was developing students' critical understanding of *Prevent*. For the two participants, these modules were at different levels of study and with different cohorts of students. One participant led an undergraduate module for students in their final year studying primary education in England. The 12-week module focussed on values in teaching, including FBV. Students engaged in 36 hours of lectures and seminars and developed an academic submission deconstructing Fundamental British Values and *Prevent* as these applied to English Primary schools for a summative credit-bearing module assessment. The second participant led a postgraduate module for students studying early

childhood leadership and practice in a range of country contexts including England. The 12-week module focused on developing a critical awareness and understanding of early childhood education policy development and its implementation in practice. Students engaged in 36 hours of lectures, seminars and workshops. For the summative assessment students developed a portfolio of work including an academic blog where they critiqued the ways in which ECE in England was affected by *Prevent* and argued for a change in policy. The university's teaching and learning policy requires taught sessions to be recorded and these audio and visual recordings were retained on the Virtual Learning Environment.

Consistent with Brookfield's model for critical incident analysis, the events occurring within the modules were contextualised by the researchers through a process of description arriving at vignettes. Vignettes are understood here to be representative, typical and emblematic of participants' encounters with *Prevent* (Miles, Hubermann, and Saldana 2014). As primary sources of data, the vignettes set out the actions participants took as leaders of learning and in their pedagogy in the HE classroom. In this way they represent an account of the participants' 'existential realities' (Brookfield 1992, 180). Subsequently, layers of reflection were applied to the critical incidents as they were reported in the vignettes. The focus was on deep learning about the assumptions that underpinned participants' actions. Assumptions 'can be viewed as the interpretive glue that binds the various meaning schemes comprising our structures of understanding' (Brookfield 1990, 177). Their examination through critical reflection has the potential to disrupt and transform understanding of events in teaching and pedagogy. In doing so Brookfield suggests that educators will move from 'habitual ways of thinking'(179). This was a disciplined process structured by Brookfield's three interrelated phases of critical reflection that, firstly, enabled the identification of the assumptions as they emerged in the writing of the vignettes. Secondly, it enabled the scrutiny of the assumptions by comparing the lecturers' experiences. Finally, it allowed the two researchers to integrate and reconstitute the assumptions so that they were inclusive of both their experiences. This can be understood as a process of data condensation (Miles, Hubermann and Saldana 2014) where repeated reading of the incidents is sharpened by

a focus on questioning the assumptions that underpin the actions. In this way the lecturers confronted their experiences of teaching *Prevent*. This was a collaborative process where ‘seeing how one’s practice is interpreted through a sympathetic colleague’s eyes provides a valuable window on how uncritically assimilated assumptions shape the fundamentals of practice’ (Brookfield 1992, 18). The collaborative dimension of this process enabled a questioning of the taken for granted assumptions of teaching contentious topics in primary education and ECE in HE. The writing and reading of the vignettes were seen as critical practices where the two processes ‘evoke new questions about the self and the subjective,’ (Richardson and Adams St Pierre 2005, 965).

Findings and Discussion

The process of reflection on the assumptions that underpin teaching in the context of *Prevent* in HE has led to a greater understanding of how the participants position themselves as lecturers within the panoptic scheme. In the three phases of data analysis, as set out in the previous discussion, participants moved from the concrete description of their experience of teaching to an understanding of the assumptions underpinning their pedagogical actions (see Table 2). The following section explores the participants’ assumptions as they have been integrated and reconstituted to be inclusive of both their experiences. Our findings suggest that there are complex implications for pedagogy in HE and these arise from the ways in which *Prevent* as a panoptic schema positions lecturers. This positioning is explored from the perspective of lecturers’ roles, their curriculum leadership and their pedagogy.

Table 2. Assumptions underpinning participants’ teaching of *Prevent*.

Phase 1: Assumptions emerging from critical reflection on the vignettes	Phase 2: Scrutiny of assumptions by comparison and integration	Phase 3: Reconstitution of assumptions (<i>Linked to the scrutiny of assumption in Phase 2</i>)
Researcher 1 assumes that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • justice and equity are important in the context of HE 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Prevent</i> exercises power in the institution where they work 2. <i>Prevent</i> can have a negative consequence 	<p><u>Prevent is hidden from the view</u> of students but has power over them</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prevent</i> is all pervasive • students are active agents and competent in their field • lecturers have a duty to safeguard students and assume that academics will filter information for students • an ethic of care over students is essential in HE • there could be negative results for students that could arise from a discussion around <i>Prevent</i> • the application of policy to the circumstances of children and families is important • the HE environment is a political space. <p>Researcher 2 assumes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teaching is values-based • <i>Prevent</i> exercises power in the university • their assumptions about their positionality in relation to <i>Prevent</i> determine teaching and learning • learning is a constructed process, therefore knowledge about <i>Prevent</i> is constructed • it is their responsibility to share critical perspectives on <i>Prevent</i>, and that assumes a position of integrity • academics are part of the <i>Prevent</i> system and are not separate from it. • students and lecturers exercise agency in this process of learning. • a tactic of self-censorship can be adopted in the face of <i>Prevent</i>. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. <i>Prevent</i> is dangerous 4. The <i>Prevent</i> policy securitises academic staff in HE – it assumes that participants will conduct surveillance of students in teaching. 5. <i>Prevent</i> exercises power over HE teaching and learning 6. Participants have power to choose what is included in the content of their modules. 7. Knowledge [of <i>Prevent</i>] is constructed through the process of learning. 8. Teaching is a values based activity and this collides with <i>Prevent</i>. 9. <i>Prevent</i> is pervasive but it is also hidden from students' view. 10. As lecturers, participants have a responsibility for student welfare and that they have an ethic of care. 11. Participants assume the role of gatekeeper in terms of learning experiences but also subject knowledge. The role of gatekeeper only troubles them in this context (<i>Prevent</i>). 12. Participants can exercise agency in the design and implementation of their teaching. They are part of the <i>Prevent</i> system in HE; they exercise agency in the way they navigate <i>Prevent</i>. 	<p>Phase 2 assumptions 9, 10</p> <p><u>Participants' pedagogy was values-based</u></p> <p>Phase 2 assumptions 8,10, 12</p> <p><u>Participants act as gatekeepers to knowledge</u></p> <p>Phase 2 assumptions 11, 6</p> <p><u>Participants' pedagogy respected students' agency</u></p> <p>Phase 2 assumptions 7, 8, 12</p> <p><u><i>Prevent</i> exercises power within Higher Education which participants can resist through their pedagogy</u></p> <p>Phase 2 assumptions 1, 2, 3,4,5,8</p>
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The implications of Prevent for lecturers in ECE and primary education in HE

The inquiry revealed the complex ways in which lecturers are positioned by *Prevent*. Whereas McGlynn and McDaid (2018) found in their study that lecturers in HE perceived that safeguarding and care for vulnerable students as required by *Prevent* lay outside of their role, this study offers an alternative lecturer reading of *Prevent*. Here, *Prevent* is repositioned by participants as a force in students' and lecturers' lives, particularly in populations that are seen as potentially more vulnerable to the reach of *Prevent* (Scott-Baumann 2017).

My principle concern about the inclusion of *Prevent* in the module was how it might position students living and working in communities affected by *Prevent* or terrorism. Would examination of this policy shine a light on such students? How would I provide opportunities for safe academic discussion that were free from practices of surveillance? (Vignette A)

The participants held assumptions about the power of *Prevent* over students (see Table 2) and this reveals that their pedagogical dilemmas arose from working in a specific context (Lindblom-Ylänne et al. 2006) where students are predominantly living or working in communities where *Prevent* has visibility. Participants were aware of the potential for 'cognitive and emotional dissonance' (Rose and Rogers 2021, 45) between students' lived experience at home or at work and academic study of *Prevent*. Participants assumed that each student might hold multiple perspectives on *Prevent* and its effects on their lives. Here the participants were aware of the reach of the *Prevent* panoptic schema and understood its power over students to be real and potentially troubling. The participants also understood that their assumption about the way *Prevent* exercised hidden power within HE (see table 2) might not be shared by students.

In the particular cohort I was working with, the majority of students would be classed by university metrics as 'BAME', a contested term. I was mindful that discussing *Prevent* and FBV as a white woman raised significantly fewer perceived risks than for other demographics. I was motivated to make explicit my privilege to students, to

indicate that I was open to being challenged about my assumption that interpretation of FBV and *Prevent* is often raced and Islamophobic. (Vignette F)

The exploration of this assumption revealed the multiple and complex privileged positions occupied in the roles of lecturers. This privilege was magnified in the teaching of *Prevent* as an academic topic: as lecturers they occupied a space of academic freedom in the classroom; in addition they were privileged with knowledge arising from their critical reading of research about *Prevent*. The participants held the privileges associated with their positions as white women lecturers which contrasted to the way specific communities were positioned by *Prevent*. They simultaneously experienced the power of *Prevent* in their institution but also the structural advantages arising from their identity. The participants can be seen as knowing they are within view of the *Prevent* Panopticon and subject to its power, whilst also understanding that different people may be subject to diverse expressions of this power within the panoptic schema.

Participants understood the repositioning of their lecturing role as being deputised to the *Prevent* duty (Whiting 2020). This altered role can be seen as part of the transforming of education's social body into a field of perception for the *Prevent* panoptic schema. Through their professional role, participants were co-opted into the schema. Participants' assumptions of their changed roles (see Table 2) informed their decision to include the study of *Prevent* within modules focused on the professional formation of primary school teachers and ECE practitioners. The participants held an assumption that *Prevent* is hidden from students' view (see Table 2). Their belief was that the academic study of *Prevent* in the module might reveal the diverse ways in which students are subject to *Prevent* and may be subject to *Prevent* in their future careers.

I was aware that a critical examination of the requirements for early childhood practitioners arising from *Prevent* would reveal its origin within measures to address counter-terrorism.(Vignette C)

The participants were conscious that students may not be aware of the intersection between counter-terrorism policy and the education practices they would be expected to adopt in their

future careers (Gearon 2015). They could not assume that students, even if they were currently working in practice, would have had access to *Prevent* training or had the opportunity to understand the structures put in place by the CTSA.

Participants were aware of the central position in the Panopticon occupied by *Prevent* as a counter-terrorism strategy. They understood the ways in which *Prevent* deputised lecturers into the functions of national security (Spiller et al. 2018; Whiting et al. 2020). However, the participants held assumptions (see Table 2) that they had agency over their teaching and their navigation of pedagogical decisions regarding *Prevent*. This resulted in participants positioning the academic study of *Prevent* as part of a common theme of social justice within each module.

My own conceptualisation of teaching is to see it as a potential vehicle for awareness raising, justice and equality. Teachers therefore have an opportunity to support social good, as well as a responsibility to act in the best interests of their students. (Vignette B)

Participants considered revealing knowledge of how *Prevent* operates through institutional structures as actions to reduce the potential for epistemic injustice (O'Donnell 2018) through silence on this topic. These actions do not threaten the structures of the *Prevent* panoptic schema, but indicate that individuals within the schema may still have agency to act in accordance with their own held values despite awareness of the power and reach of *Prevent*.

Leading learning in the context of Prevent

As lecturers within HE 'deputised' (Spiller et al. 2018) into a counter-terror role by *Prevent*, the participants in this study had knowledge of the varying ways in which *Prevent* structures different roles in education, in this case: their own responsibilities as lecturers; the current implications for their students within a university context; and also the possible ramifications for students in future work roles. Even though they were deputised by *Prevent* into a specific role, their knowledge of *Prevent* across the education sector in England influenced their decisions in relation to curricula and pedagogy. Although they recognized that *Prevent* exercises power in their relationships with students, they understood that it does not diminish their

responsibility as lecturers to engage students in critical academic debate about issues affecting children, families and their future professions. The participants held an assumption that despite the reach of the panoptic schema, they had agency in the design of their teaching (see Table 2).

In putting this issue [*Prevent*] on a syllabus, I was acting on the assumption that student engagement in policy which might affect them was important. In addition, I was choosing to make known complexities around *Prevent* that were not immediately visible to students, motivated by a belief in challenging potential injustice and inequality. I also assumed that an awareness of critique of government policy, and specifically *Prevent* was of benefit to students, either as current students or in future work with children and young people. (Vignette D)

Their belief that counter-terrorism policy is a problematic policy within the context of education made this role of gatekeeper to knowledge, where the participants both selected subject knowledge and structured learning opportunities, significant. Within the panoptic schema of *Prevent*, different educational sectors are segmented, usually ensuring mutual lateral invisibility. This segmentation is only visible to them due to the specific educational responsibilities and awareness they hold as HE lecturers in ECE and primary education. As lecturers they hold knowledge of the full panoptic schema, and therefore have opportunities to provide lateral visibility of the way in which *Prevent* exercises power across different sectors of education to students. Their reflections in this context revealed the ways in which the relationships of power exercised through lecturers' role as gatekeeper to the curriculum may have a consequence of restricting students' access to critical knowledge.

If I had decided to omit *Prevent* and Fundamental British Values from the module, I would have effectively colluded with practice that silenced alternative perspectives about *Prevent* and Fundamental British Values through absence of debate. it also led me to reflect on the relationships of power that exist between lecturers and students. In this instance the power of the lecturer to include/exclude knowledge from within the scope of the module is problematic. (Vignette C)

Participants in this study found that *Prevent* influenced the curriculum, prompting them to include academic critique of counter-terrorism policy within ECE and primary education, in a similar way to McGlynn and McDaid's (2018) found that *Prevent* had encouraged academic study of controversial issues in HE. The panoptic schema of *Prevent* was silent on their role as lecturers as leaders of learning, and therefore this decision to include the academic study of *Prevent* in primary education and ECE was not contrary to the power of the panoptic schema.

Prevent and pedagogy in HE

Participants' pedagogy within the panoptic schema of *Prevent* was influenced by their beliefs about how students learn. Reflection on their teaching made visible their constructional beliefs (Stacey et al. 2005), as they assumed a shared building of knowledge around *Prevent* through interaction within lectures. This view also accorded with participants' constructional beliefs that their knowledges of *Prevent* may be challenged through interactions with students. Participants exercised their agency within the boundaries of their roles as lecturers by recognizing that their power does not extend to changing the panoptic schema of *Prevent*, but that they could reveal its extent to students through providing opportunities for academic critique of policy. By positioning students as 'self-authors' (Kreber 2010, 173) of their knowledges of *Prevent*, lecturers adopted a pedagogy that provided opportunities for them to exercise agency. This pedagogy respected students' agency to decide how they would respond in class and share their perspectives about *Prevent*.

Introducing discussion with a Level 6 group of students around *Prevent*, I explicitly stated that I understood that this [*Prevent*] was a contentious topic to discuss, and that people were free to engage or not engage as they wished. Several students commented within the discussion that they had felt compelled to choose between a religious identity and a 'British' identity, or that they felt that there was an expectation that a nebulous national loyalty to Britain would be prioritised over their religious identity or cultural heritage. Individually at the end of the session, others too came to speak to me to indicate that they felt the same but had not wished to visibly agree. (Vignette F)

In this incident I was also aware that I was making clear the potential risks of entering into discussion, and therefore alerting students to a potential need to self-censor or consciously edit their contributions to the discussion. In doing so, my assumptions were that students would both understand the parameters of risk and be willing and able to act on this. I assumed that the students were active agents, able to choose how they responded to the viewpoints I put forward. (Vignette F)

Here the parameters of risk associated with *Prevent* were exposed by the participant to their students. This meant students could make an informed decision about how they would contribute in the class based on their individual circumstances. In exposing the risks associated with *Prevent* the participant ensured transparency in the teaching. Self-regulation and self-censorship were assumed by the participants to be aspects of student agency (see Table 2) and understood as strategies that students may adopt in order to mitigate the power of *Prevent*. In this way the pedagogy provided multiple opportunities for students to exercise agency including the option to talk openly about their lived experiences of *Prevent*, if they chose to do so, or the possibility of silence. Within this pedagogy participants accepted that students may present partial accounts and student silence was interpreted as active engagement in learning. This suggests that students here can also be seen as self-editors; in maintaining silence, they actively withheld accounts of their experiences of *Prevent*. This position was respected by the lecturer who maintained a distance from their individual perspectives. This pedagogical strategy assumed that students may self-regulate, self-censor or remain silent during academic debate about *Prevent* in education. Whilst these assumptions respected students' agency this pedagogy could also be seen as generating a chilling effect in the classroom as found in other studies (Danvers, 2021); this is illustrated by the ways in which some students shared their perspectives in private conversations with the lecturer after the class had ended. Whilst the pedagogy prioritized opportunities for students to exercise agency it also positioned students in complex ways; for example, constructing a critical knowledge of *Prevent* was potentially risky

for students, resonating with Danvers' (2021) findings that the academic study of *Prevent* is potentially 'risky knowledge' for students.

The analysis of the critical incidents revealed the extent of lecturers' modifications to pedagogy on the modules. These adaptations reflected the assumptions (See Table 2) held by lecturers that *Prevent* can have negative consequences for students but also that the lecturer has responsibility for the welfare of students in their academic study. Participants were also aware that the expectation of surveillance by lecturers of students was a potential route for *Prevent* to enter pedagogical relationships (Danvers 2021). As part of the module planned content students were engaged in the critique of FBV within ECE and primary education as a set of state-directed values to prevent terrorism. Given that it is government policy that opposition to FBV (HM Government 2019) could be considered as extremism both participants were concerned that students might question lecturers' rationale for providing opportunities for the academic study of FBV. This dilemma raised important questions for the participants:

Would pedagogical relationships become a practice of surveillance as I engaged and reflected on students' responses to FBV? By critiquing FBV, would students be at risk of allegations of extremism given that extremism is defined within the policy as opposition to FBV? How might students understand or interpret my motive for focusing on this aspect of policy? (Vignette A)

In this way the participants experienced how the agenda of national security could enter their classroom with the expectation of surveillance of students; this dilemma reflects Gearon's (2015) analysis that the boundaries between education, security and intelligence gathering have been blurred. This concern led participants to alter their practice of comprehensive recording of taught sessions; this can be interpreted as a micro-act of resistance (Spiller et al. 2018):

For the module I led which discussed Fundamental British Values in schools and Early Years settings, and by extension, *Prevent*, I made the decision not to live record the teaching sessions. I explained to the students the decision I had made, as this differed from my usual practice. I explained that I would offer a recap of the academic perspectives covered, due to the serious, sensitive and possibly personal nature of our

discussions. By making this choice I was still working within the university guidelines, but aligning myself with them in a different way, guided by my own values and beliefs regarding *Prevent*. (Vignette D)

In this module the usual practice would be for the lecturer to digitally record student academic discussion in the lecture in order that students could consolidate their learning by revisiting the lecture at a later point. However, this practice was abandoned with a rationale of protecting students and creating a safe space for discussion of sensitive issues. The very act of recording the lecture was now viewed by the participant as a potential tool for surveillance of students, providing as it did a record not only of taught content, but student discussion, which could be viewed by all staff at the university. The decision not to record students' academic debate about *Prevent* became an act of resistance by participants which can be understood as a refusal to conduct surveillance of students' discussions of *Prevent*. This was a strategy to counter-act any potential for 'critical closure': the diminishing of academic focus in the classroom as a result of *Prevent* (Danvers 2021, 13). The participants modified their teaching in order to limit the power of *Prevent* whilst acknowledging the power of *Prevent* exercised over their teaching.

A further example of a modification to pedagogy is the way one lecturer provided opportunities for students to construct knowledges of *Prevent* through the critical lens of post-structural theory.

My assumption that theory provided a critical lens and structure through which to view the operation of policy was confirmed by this session. Theory structured a safe discussion about the abstract operation of policy that was distant from their lived experience of policy. I found myself wanting to 'get up close to the practice and perspectives' of the students, however, I found that theory provided a disciplined structure for the discussion on FBV. I remained distant from the individual views and perspectives on the policy; students engaged in a critical analysis of the policy to promote FBV through the lens of theory. Through a silence on their individual

perspectives on FBV students created a safe space for discussion; here students exercised agency but not in the way that I had anticipated. (Vignette E)

This was a shift in approach as the usual practice was to provide students with opportunities to share experiences of the ways in which social policy affected their professional lives. The participant's assumption (see Table 2) of the power inherent in *Prevent* meant this was viewed as a risky activity. Focusing students on critiquing the policy of *Prevent*, through the lens of theory did not involve revealing personal experiences which may bring into question their exposure to, or engagement with, radicalization. While this pedagogical strategy aimed to reduce the risk of testimonial injustice where voices are silenced (O'Donnell 2018) it also aimed to respect learners as competent and capable; thus avoiding viewing students as risky and susceptible to the radicalisation. Similarly, Danvers' (2021) found that lecturers understood the contradictions arising from viewing students as critical academics but also susceptible to radicalisation.

Conclusion

The principle aim of this inquiry was to develop an understanding of pedagogy in the academic study of *Prevent* in the fields of ECE and primary education. The findings reported in this article evidence how lecturers working in this field are positioned by, and position themselves, within the panoptic schema of *Prevent*. Lecturers understood the way in which *Prevent* blurred the boundaries between education, national security and intelligence gathering (Gearon, 2015) through the expectation of surveillance of students in the HE classroom where they were deputised to perform functions of national security (Whiting 2020). Informed by the critical knowledge that the structures of *Prevent* blurred visibility of its reach into the education sector, lecturers exercised agency by including the study of *Prevent* in the curriculum. However, the deputisation of lecturers to the national security agenda had implications for pedagogy in this context. In this inquiry lecturers arrived at a complex understanding of their pedagogy through analysis of their assumptions. Central to the pedagogy was lecturers' assumption of students as competent 'self authors' (Kreber, 2010, 173) of critical knowledges of *Prevent*; such a position

respected students' agency to make decisions about how they engaged in teaching and learning. This assumption countered the ways in which *Prevent* constructed students as risky subjects and simultaneously vulnerable to radicalisation. This pedagogy provided opportunities for students to engage in debate about *Prevent* in order to minimise the risk of 'critical closures' (Danvers 2021). Lecturers' assumption that *Prevent* could potentially have negative consequences for students as it was risky knowledge, led to a deliberate strategy of modifying their pedagogy. Student silence was respected as a response, and they were encouraged to critically analyse *Prevent* through the lens of theory. Although this pedagogy aimed to lessen the risk to students sharing risky knowledge, lecturers' reflections revealed that such strategies may also generate a chilling effect.

Our study explored lecturers' leadership of learning within the context of HE and under *Prevent* requirements, and the complex relationship between lecturers' pedagogy and *Prevent* was revealed through critical analysis of their assumptions. The findings indicate that in this context, lecturers' assumptions about pedagogy and *Prevent* informed both their pedagogical leadership of modules, and their pedagogical practice. This suggests that lecturers' critical examination and awareness of the assumptions that underpin their own pedagogy may reveal complex interactions between these assumptions that were previously hidden to them. The study also found that lecturers altered their pedagogy based on the context of *Prevent* in HE as it interacted with their knowledge of and assumptions about their own cohorts of students. While lecturers' conceptualisation of their work has previously been identified as context-specific (Lindblom-Ylänne et al. 2006), this suggests that the critical examination of their own assumptions as they relate to contentious issues and their student cohort might support lecturers in navigating context-specific practical pedagogies.

An aim of this study was to make a methodological contribution on the use of practitioner inquiry into teaching and learning in HE. Here practitioner inquiry has enabled lecturers to critically reflect on and analyse the implications of *Prevent* for their pedagogy in the field of ECE and primary education. The distinctiveness of practitioner inquiry is it respects the agency of lecturers, as practitioner researchers, to initiate research into troubling aspects of

teaching and learning and as such is a political act. In this study it provided a structured framework for lecturers to ‘talk back’ within the context of their own teaching (Hines et al. 2015, 348) to government counter-terrorism strategy. Whilst practitioner inquiry is small scale and focused on a specific context it has in this study generated ‘actionable knowledge’ (Groundwater-Smith and Campbell 2010 205) in revealing to participants the assumptions that underpin their pedagogy. The findings are relevant to the specific context in which the small-scale study took place and as such are not transferable; however, this inquiry may generate debate about value of practitioner inquiry as a critical tool for research into teaching and learning in HE.

The study has highlighted the ways in which pedagogy in HE has the potential to support lecturers in navigating the complex environment arising from the intersection of policies of counter-terrorism and education. While previous studies have rightly focussed on the pastoral role of lecturers and how this is affected by the expectations of the securitisation within HE, this paper argues that greater attention is needed, through future research, on pedagogies that have the potential to critically engage students in evaluating the implications for themselves, their future careers and their communities arising from counter-terrorism policy. Furthermore, the adoption of pedagogies by lecturers that enable critical engagement with sensitive topics could be explored in future research. Such research has the potential to support lecturers in reflecting on their role as gatekeepers to the academic study of sensitive topics. In this way, further research on pedagogy may lead to spaces within universities for students’ critical exploration of the implications arising from the intersection of counter-terrorism and education policies.

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