

# Dr Zixi Zuo

Pronunciation: /'zi:ʃi: dzwo:/ or 'zee-shee dzwo'

Email: [z.zuo@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:z.zuo@ucl.ac.uk)

Phone: +44 (0)7746 242 397 (UK) / +86 185 0275 4279 (China)

Website: [www.zoezuozi.com](http://www.zoezuozi.com)

ORCID ID: [0009-0004-7481-6843](https://orcid.org/0009-0004-7481-6843)

## Education Background

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**PhD in Sociology and Digital Culture**, Department of Education, Practice and Society, Institute of Education, University College London (UCL) **2018 – 2025**

- **Research Training:** Introduction to research support and integrity, Introduction to Qualitative Interviewing, Qualitative Data Analysis, Introduction to Case study, Introduction to ethnography Information and Literature Searching, Understanding Education Research Advanced Qualitative methods, NVivo Advance Use

**MA in Education (Distinction)**, Department of Culture, Communication and Media, Institute of Education, University College London **2017 – 2018**

- **Core Modules:** What Is Education? Understanding Research, Contemporary Issues in English Education, Gender, Sexuality and Education, MA Dissertation module

**BA in English Language and Literature**, Huazhong University of Science and Technology (HUST), Wuhan, Hubei, China **2013 – 2017**

- Extensive training in translation skills, linguistics, and cross-cultural communication
- **Core Modules:** Cross-Cultural Communication, Consecutive Interpretation, Lexicology, Advanced Practical Translation, General Linguistics, English Literature, Translation Classics
- **Overall GPA:** 3.84/4.0 (CAG: 86.7/100)
- **Outstanding Graduate Award**

## Research Experience

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**PhD Research**, Department of Education, Practice and Society, Institute of Education, University College London (UCL) **2018 – 2024**

**Thesis:** Love, relationship and sexuality on Campus: Chinese Young People's Experiences of Intimacies in the University Context

- Critical examination of young people's negotiations with gendered ideologies in their everyday lives using digital ethnographic research methods (online observation, digital diaries, and qualitative interviews)
- The research has been generated into one book chapter and two peer-reviewed journal articles (under review) and presented at national/international conferences/symposiums
- Academic fields of interest: Affect in media studies, new materialism, posthuman theory, transnational gender theory, intersectional epistemologies and methodologies, Chinese gender and sexuality politics, sexuality education.

**Joint supervisors:** Prof Jessica Ringrose and Dr Sara Bragg

**Viva Examiners:** Dr Amy Dobson (Associate Professor, Internet Studies, Curtin University, Australia), Dr Kata Kyröla (Associate Professor, Media Studies, University College London)

**MA Research**, Department of Education, Practice and Society, Institute of Education, University College London (UCL) **2018**

- **Dissertation Title:** Familial Influence and Career Aspiration of Chinese Only-child Women in the U.K. Higher Education.
- The research explores the experiences of young Chinese women studying abroad, focusing on their familial decisions around the transnational mobility and their career aspirations. The study reflects on the child-centred familial culture in China and the enduring impact of entrenched gender stereotypes on their career aspirations and mobility decisions

**Research Associate**, Undergraduate Innovation Research Project (Small Grant), Huazhong University of Science and Technology,

**2015-2016**

- **Supervisor:** Prof Taozhen Xia
- **Project:** Analyzing Emerging Internet Neologisms in China
- Conducted analysis of trending digital expressions across social media platforms
- Designed and led a qualitative research project with peer collaboration
- Presented findings at the annual undergraduate research forum

## **Publications**

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### **In Publication:**

Zuo, Z. (2024). Book Chapter: Teaching Love and Relationship in the Times of Uncertainty, in Bustillos, J.(eds.). *Routledge Handbook of Gender and School Politics*, Routledge. DOI:10.4324/9781003397502

Zuo, Z. (2025). "I'm Not a Feminist, But...": Exploring 'Intra-actioning' Construction of 'the Feminist' among Chinese Youth, *Postdigital Science and Education (Special Issue)*. DOI:10.1007/s42438-025-00608-2

### **In Process:**

Zuo, Z. (Under Review). "I Don't Want to Be Famous": A New Materialist Study of Digital Classrooms in Sexuality Education in Chinese Universities. *Gender and Education (Special Issue: Gender, Sexuality and Education in Chinese Contexts)* - Full manuscript invited after competitive abstract selection.

Zuo, Z. (Under Review). "To Share or Not to Share": Exploring Affective Aesthetics in Chinese Youth Practices of Intimacies in Everyday Lives. *Media, Culture & Society* (article submitted).

Zuo, Z. (manuscript in preparation). Becoming desiring subjects: Chinese youth's navigation of everyday intimacies.

## **Teaching & Mentoring Experience**

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### **Guest Lecturer**

**2019 – 2026**

Institute of Education, University College London

*Gender Sexuality and Education - MA module*

- Designed and delivered lectures on *digital Intimacy and New Media* for over 60 MA students
- Delivered lectures on *Gender and Sexuality Politics and LGBTQ Movement of Contemporary China*
- Developed asynchronous and synchronous teaching materials, and facilitated inclusive classroom discussions

### **Postgraduate Teaching Assistant**

**2021 – 2023**

Education, Practice and Society, Institute of Education, University College London

*Sociology of Media - BA Module*

- Designed and delivered lectures on Digital Intimacies
- Organised weekly seminars and interactive workshops for Undergraduate Sociology students
- Developed digital course content with online interactive methods (Padlet and Moodle forums)
- Supported a multimodal digital story-telling assignment, guiding students in producing short audio-visual projects from sociological media topics
- Provided feedback on formative and summative work, including assignments and digital creative projects

### **Postgraduate Teaching Assistant**

**2020 – 2021**

Social Research Institute, Institute of Education, University College London

*Advanced Qualitative Methods (MSc module)*

- Liaised with the module leader for programme development
- Designed hybrid and online learning modules using inclusive pedagogical approaches

*Dissertation module (MSc module/Bsc Module)*

- Organised one-to-one/small group tutorials for master's students' dissertations on academic writing and research ethics
- Developed workshops on research protocols for master students: A Practical Guide for Thematic Analysis, Conduct Qualitative Social Research Ethically, Academic Essay Writing Workshop
- Assisted in MSc Dissertation conference organised by SRI by coordinating logistics and compiling a professionally formatted abstract book showcasing student projects
- Gathered and analysed feedback from students, and supported the future development of the module

*Foundation of Psychology I (BSc module)*

- Liaised with the module leader for course content development
- Provided effective and timely feedback on students' papers and coursework marking

**Student Mentor** – Doctoral Mentor-Mentee Scheme

2019 – 2020

Institute of Education, University College London

- Organised monthly meetings with mentees and drafted minutes
- Provided academic advice to doctoral students in the earlier stages of the PhD program

**Academic Advisor (Part-time)**

2019

Yinghualian Education Consultancy

- Provided one-on-one mentorship for undergraduate and postgraduate applicants applying to UK graduate programs
- Supervised students' research proposal writing, assisting them in articulating research aims, methodology, and academic positioning
- Delivered feedback on personal statements, fostering skills in academic self-presentation
- Supported admissions to top institutions in the UK, including UCL, LSE, University of Edinburgh etc.

**Teaching Assistant TESOL**

2016

Wuhan Zhengxue Meitu Educational Services Co., Ltd

- Delivered tailored one-to-one English-speaking tutorials to students at varying proficiency levels, focusing on pronunciation, fluency, and conversational confidence.
- Maintained detailed daily student progress logs and provided timely feedback to students and parents.
- Coordinated closely with fellow instructors and parents to monitor student development and address specific learning needs.
- Supervised study sessions, offering guidance and responding to students' academic questions.

**Conference Presentations (Selective)**

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**Synthetic Imaginaries: the Cultural Politics of Generative AI, University of Siegen, Gernmen** Sept, 2025

- *Love, Sexuality, Machine – a Posthumanist Re-imagination of 'Flirting' in (Post)digital Intimacies in the Age of AI*

**Digital Intimacies, Young People and Everyday Life, University of Padova, Italy** Sept, 2025

- *Affective aesthetics: a Posthumanist Exploration on Youth Digital Intimacies*

**ATGENDER European Feminist Research Conference on 'Contemporary Feminist Liberation** July, 2025

**Struggles: Bodies, Borders, and Intersections', Barcelona, Spain**

- Presentation: Compressed (post-)feminism: Affective Intra-action of the Feminist Label Among Chinese Youth

**International Gender and Education Association (GEA) Conference, Manchester** May, 2025

- Presentation: Exploring 'Intra-actioning' Construction of 'the Feminist' among Chinese Youth'

**SOAS-Tsinghua Online Symposium: Virtual Spaces and New Horizons: Humanities in the Digital** April, 2025

**Age**

- Presentation: (Im)mobility and Affective Aesthetics: Exploring Chinese Youth Mediated Intimacies'

**Central China Normal University (CCNU): International Forum for Early-year Scholars [in Chinese],** Dec, 2024

**Wuhan, Hubei, China**

- Presentation: (Im)mobility and Affective Aesthetics: A Posthuman Exploration of Chinese Youth Mediated Intimacies'

**Global Digital Intimacies Conference, Amsterdam** June, 2024

- Presentation: 'In Bed with Calls': (Im)mobility and Mediated Intimacy among Chinese Youth during the Pandemic"

**The Gender and Feminisms Research Network and qUCL symposium, London** May, 2024

- Presentation: Rethinking Post-pandemic Mediated Intimacy

**British Education Research Association (BERA) Conference, Birmingham** Sept, 2023

- Presentation: Teaching Love and Relationship in Chinese Universities

**ATGENDER Spring Conference: Feminist Pedagogy of/beyond Borders, Istanbul** Sept, 2023

- Presentation: A Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis on Chinese University Students' Negotiation with Feminist Ideologies in Everyday Lives.

**Chinese Educational Research Association (CERA) Annual Conference, London** June, 2019

- Presentation: Negotiating with Heteronormativity in Chinese Higher Education Institutes

## Public Engagement and Knowledge Exchange

### LSE-UAL-RCA Public Academic Salon, Love and Power: Embodied Practices and Subjectivity in May, 2025

#### Intimate relationships (Mandarin/English), London

- Guest Speaker: What is Love: Rethinking Love and Intimacies through a More-than-human Lens
- Delivered a bilingual (Mandarin/English) talk titled "What is Love: Rethinking Love and Intimacies through a More-than-human Lens" for an interdisciplinary salon on "Love and Power".
- Engaged in a panel discussion with scholars from sociology, psychology, philosophy, art, and gender studies, exploring desire, boundaries, power structures, and identity within intimate relationships.

#### Panelist, Queer Asian + CinemaQ Film Festival, London

2019

- Invited as an official panelist for post-screening discussions, contributing critical perspectives on Asian queer narratives and identity formation.
- Engaged in community-led dialogues on representation and identity, centering lived experience and marginalised narratives in public discourse in the Pan-Asian Contexts.
- Provided academic insights from gender studies and cultural criticism on the media representation of queer communities, exchanging views with filmmakers and industry experts.

## Other Experience and Community Service

### Peer Review

2025-present

- Reviewed academic abstracts submitted to the Annual Conference 2026 *European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)* - Gender, Sexuality and Communication Section
- Ad hoc reviewer for *Australian Feminist Studies*, *Hypatia*, etc.

### Feminist Digital Activist & Community Volunteer

2020

Chinese Diasporic Feminist Networks, UK

- Contributed to performance-based storytelling projects, sharing personal narratives on gender, migration, and intimacies in the forms of stand-up comedy performances
- Volunteered in podcast production on motherhood, supporting discussions on reproductive justice, caregiving, and feminist perspectives on family structures within diasporic Chinese communities.

### Volunteer for Children with Special Needs

2013

Wuhan Childcare Centre for Children with Special needs

- Cooperated with other volunteers and organised weekly activities in a childcare charity centre for autistic children aged 6-14

## Professional Training and Qualifications

Qualification/training: **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England certificate**

2023

- Attended a series of weekly workshops to explore knowledge and skills for providing first-aid support for people experiencing poor mental health.

Qualification: **Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy**

2021

- Awarded for:
  - Case Study 1 - Alternative teaching approach in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)
  - Case study 2 - A combined model of feedback to promote students' engagement in the online learning environment.

Pedagogical Training: UCL Arena Training - **Teaching Associate Programme (TAP)**

2021

- Attended a series of 5 workshops [contact hours: 15] to prepare for course design and effective delivery
- Explored innovative teaching methods and pedagogy
- Developed insights on teaching practice and worked towards AFHEA.

Pedagogical Training: UCL arena Training - **Gateway Workshops**

2020

- Participated in a half-day workshop to understand teaching responsibilities and effective feedback

## Funding & Grant

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• CCNU Conference Bursaries	2024
• UCL Conference and Research Grants	2024
• UCL Conference and Research Grants	2023
• British Educational Research Association Conference Funding	2023
• ATGENDER Conference Bursaries	2023
• China Scholarship Council PhD Fellowship – shortlisted	2019
• HUST Innovative Research Project Grant for Undergraduate Students	2014

## Professional Affiliations

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- European Communication Research and Education Association – Full Member
- British Educational Research Association (BERA) – Full Member
- Chinese Educational Research Association (CERA) – Full Member
- European Association for Gender Research, Education and Documentation – Full Member
- PhEmaterialism (Posthuman Feminism Research Network)
- FEEL (Feminist Educational Engagement Lab)

## Skills

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### Research Skills and Analysis

- **Qualitative Research Design:** In-depth interviewing, thematic analysis, and ethnographic methods
- **Data Analysis:** Proficient with NVivo for complex qualitative data coding and analysis
- **Research Tools:** Skilled in Express Scribe, Zotero, Scrivener, and LaTeX (Overleaf) for academic research and writing

### Technical Proficiencies

- **Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs):** Proficient in Moodle, UCL Reflect, Padlet, and Menti for interactive content delivery
- **Multimedia & digital content management:** Proficient in Adobe Audition, Adobe Express, Canvas, iMovie, and Lightroom; Skilled in building and maintaining academic portfolios using platforms like Wix, vibe coding.

### Technical and Administrative Skills

- Proficient in MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and collaborative tools (Overleaf, Team, Zoom meeting, Google Workspace)

### Language Proficiencies

- **Mandarin Chinese:** Native speaker
- **English:** Fluent comprehension, reading, speaking and written
- **Korean:** Basic comprehension and conversation

## Other Awards and Recognitions

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• Laurels & Purples Award for Society Shields, University of London	2018
• Student Academic Representative on the Preparation for Academic Studies in Higher Education	2017
• Outstanding Graduate of Huazhong University of Science and Technology	2017
• The Excellent Tutor of TPIS (Tutor Programme for International Students)	2014

## References

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### Prof Jessica Ringrose

Professor of Sociology of Gender and Education  
 Institute of Education, Education, Practice and Society  
 University College London  
 Email: [j.ringrose@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:j.ringrose@ucl.ac.uk)

### Dr Brett Lashua

Lecturer in Sociology of Media and Education  
 Institute of Education, Education Practice and Society  
 University College London  
 Email: [b.lashua@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:b.lashua@ucl.ac.uk)

### Dr Sara Bragg

Associate Professor in Sociology of Education  
 Institute of Education, Education, Practice and Society  
 University College London  
 Email: [s.bragg@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:s.bragg@ucl.ac.uk)