

Tutor biographies

Dr Mehul Kotecha is a Senior Researcher and joined NatCen in March 2008. He has led on a number of qualitative studies including evaluations of back to work programmes (e.g. process evaluation of the Support for the Very Long-Term Unemployed Trailblazer programme), research into financial and material circumstances in old age (e.g. exploring the relationship between material deprivation and pensioner poverty and a study which explored older people's attitudes towards the principle of automatic awards of Pension Credit), and research into education and skills (e.g. a study exploring motivations and barriers to part-time post-16 education). Mehul has worked with a diverse range of participants and has experience of a range of qualitative methods - including in-depth interviews and focus groups. Prior to this, Mehul was a Research Fellow at the Institute of Primary Care and Public Health, based at London South Bank University - where he also received his doctorate in Sociology.

Sarah Frankenburg is a mixed methods Research Director in the Household Surveys and Children and Families teams. She has been involved in numerous qualitative studies and conducted many face-to-face and telephone interviews with a wide range of participants. Sarah's recent studies include an evaluation of the impact of the closure of the Independent Living Fund, mapping provision for new mothers in Islington and an evaluation of a mentoring intervention aimed at young people vulnerable of becoming 'NEET'. Prior to joining NatCen in 2015, Sarah specialised in conducting qualitative research into issues affecting adults with a learning disability and those in contact with the criminal justice system.

Valdeep Gill is a Research Director in the Children and Families team. She is a qualitative researcher with expertise in research with children and young people, families and youth sector professionals. She has worked as a researcher across applied settings: research agency, local authority, schools and charity sectors. Val is currently leading evaluations of whole school resilience programmes including one on outdoor learning for the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and another on reducing the risk of criminal exploitation of school children, for the Youth Endowment Foundation. Before joining NatCen, she led research and evaluation at HeadStart Newham, an early help initiative delivered in schools and the community for young people at risk of developing mental health difficulties.