



# Imposed Identities and British Further Education: The Experiences of Learners Classified as "Low Ability"

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Education Studies

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## This course reading...

- Centres the unheard voices of so-called "low ability" learners in UK Further Education, enabling them to tell their own stories in their own words.
- Explores the impact of learner classification at or around GCSE level, and how post-education destinations are affected.
- Discusses the intersectionality of various social identities under the imposed label of "low ability" and highlights potentially problematic trends.
- Draws on first-hand person-centred research for a robust, authentic, and respectful approach to the individuals whose stories are being told.

## What is the impact when a social identity is not chosen and embraced, but imposed upon you?

UK policy can be criticised for pressurising the education sector to funnel learners who fail their GCSEs into vocational learning courses such as Media Studies. With narratives drawn from the original, person-centred research conducted by the author in the Further Education sector, this book centres the often-discounted voices of the so-called "low ability" learners themselves.

They tell of the lack of agency that comes from having choices made for them, and the impact on their lives and identities as well as their post-education destinations. Featuring stories from a range of individual research participants, the book also explores intersectional issues, such as how race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and language of origin can feed into the imposed identity and how it impacts their sense of self.

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