

Alfred Jackson

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Education

University of Oxford, Saïd Business School, Green Templeton College	2021–Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctoral candidate • Dissertation title: “Organizational Learning in Extreme Contexts: How organizations learn when they cannot trial, and cannot err” • Supervisors: Harvey Maylor, Marc Ventresca • Expecting to submit December 2025 	
Cranfield School of Management	2015–2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSc. Management • Graduated top of my class 	
Open University	2011–2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA Modern Languages (Linguistics and Spanish) • 1st Class Honours 	

Dissertation summary

My research addresses the fundamental question of how organizations learn in the most challenging environments, when failure is not an option and experience is both rare and clouded by ambiguity. To answer this question, I conducted an extensive ethnographic study of the UK’s Royal Marines. As an elite military unit, they are at the forefront of capability but have not seen direct action since 2012. They are, therefore, forced to learn through exercises and other non-real experience. I lived with them for six months as they prepared for and deployed on a series of NATO exercises, representing unprecedented access to an organization typically shrouded in secrecy. Through this research, I explore the ways in which routines are generated and maintained despite rare performance and the specific ambiguities of learning when experience is simulated, artificial or otherwise ‘not real’ as in the case of these NATO exercises.

Research Interests

Organizational Learning, Routines, Ambiguity, Sensemaking, Identity, Extreme contexts

Working papers

- Jackson, Alfred.** “*You’d never do that in real life: patterning and performing routines in unrealistic training contexts*”. (3rd R&R received at the Academy of Management Journal, currently revising)
- Jackson, Alfred** and Claus Rerup. “*Fighting the Phoney War: The ambiguity of learning from simulated experience*.” (Accepted at AoM and target ASQ)
- Jackson, Alfred** and Bianca Crivellini Eger. “*Skin in the game: embodying identity in extreme contexts*”. (Analysis complete, working on manuscript)
- Jackson, Alfred.** “*The dark side of organizational learning*”. A systematic literature review of organizational learning literature focused on myopic and superstitious learning. (Analyzing data)
- Jackson, Alfred.** “*Fight tonight, fight tomorrow. Ambidexterity under uncertainty*”. (Early-stage draft)

Awards

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| • Tim Morris Award for best doctoral paper – Saïd Business School Research Excellence Awards | 2024 |
| • Competitive conference funding based on research quality | 2023 & 2024 |
| • Green Templeton College Scholarship – Competitively won scholarship covering full fees and cost of living allowance | 2021–2025 |
| • Course Director's Prize for Overall Achievement – Cranfield School of Management (MSc) | 2016 |
| • Ranked in the top 5% of teachers in 4 out of 5 years – eClass English | 2011-2015 |

Conference Papers and Presentations

You'd never do that in real life: patterning and performing routines in unrealistic training contexts.

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| • PROS – General Stream | 2024 |
| • EGOS – Routine Dynamics Stream | 2024 |
| • EGOS – Routine Dynamics Stream | 2023 |

The ambiguity of learning from simulated experience

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| • Ethnography Atelier 3-day workshop | 2024 |
| • Researching Extreme Contexts PDW EGOS | 2023 |

Fight tonight, fight tomorrow. Ambidexterity in the military

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| • Doctoral Consortium (Harvard Business School) – Conference in Honour of Michael Tushman | 2024 |
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Invited Presentations

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| • <i>Advanced qualitative research seminar series</i> – Kent University | 2025 |
| • <i>You'd never do that in real life: patterning and performing routines in unrealistic training contexts.</i> – Johannes Kepler University of Linz | 2025 |

Teaching Experience

Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford

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| • Two-week summer school on leadership, teaching undergraduates from other universities (feedback pending) | 2025 |
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Saïd Business School, University of Oxford

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| • Strategy Management Tutorials for BA Economics and Management. Teacher feedback average – 5 (out of 5) | 2024 |
| • Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods for MSc Major Programme Management (Teaching assistant) | 2023 |

Putney Summer School

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| • Taught introduction to business and management to 25 high school sophomores (no feedback given) | 2023 |
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eClass English

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| | 2010-2015 |
| • EFL classes to middle managers and students | |
| • Ran teacher training and evaluations for over 100 teachers | |
| • Led curriculum redevelopment during a shift towards hybrid teaching | |
| • Teacher feedback average – 6.8 (out of 7) | |

Prior Professional Experience

Connected Places Catapult – UK 2016–2021

Senior Technology Strategist

- Focused on UK Drone development and Autonomous Vehicles

eClass English – Chile 2010–2015

English Language teacher and teacher trainer

- Taught corporate classes and undergraduates at Universidad Adolfo Ibanez and Universidad del Desarrollo

Service

Saïd Business School March 2025

- Organizing and hosting the 2025 Routines Research Community workshop. Convening interdisciplinary researchers on the theme of routines in extreme environments

Green Templeton College Boat Club, University of Oxford

- Social Secretary 2021–2025
- Diversity, Inclusivity and Welfare Officer 2022–2023

Languages

- English – Native
- Spanish – Full professional proficiency. I spent five years in Chile and worked primarily in Spanish for two.

References

Sally Maitlis – Professor of organisational behaviour and leadership. Saïd Business School

Daniel Armanios – Professor of major programme management, Saïd Business School

Claus Rerup – Professor of Management, Frankfurt School of Finance and Management

Harvey Maylor – Associate Professor of Management Practice, Saïd Business School