

**Keynote Speaker Biog: Professor Jackie Labbe**

Jackie Labbe has served as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at De Montfort University since 2017 and has oversight for all academic and educational activities at DMU, including academic development, the student educational experience, Library and Learning Services, and Postgraduate Taught provision. She leads on the development of staff academic support, student-focussed strategy and policy, and curricular innovations and is responsible for various strategies including the [University Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy](#). Previous roles have included Vice-President and Head of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Sheffield, and Chair (Director) of the University Graduate School at the University of Warwick. She is particularly interested in the whole student journey and ways to fully incorporate the student voice into strategic and policy development, taking into account the varied needs of different groups of students (e.g. commuting, mature, part-time). She remains an active researcher and has just published a monograph on the novels of Jane Austen and Charlotte Smith, and she co-teaches a weekly seminar on Romantic-period literature.

Keynote Address:**Of Road Maps and Pathways: Navigating the COVID Year(s)**

In common with Higher Education across the world, De Montfort University spent the summer of 2020 preparing for the known unknowns awaiting us in the COVID landscape. Our blended year throws up both challenges and opportunities: for some staff, the chance to move into new teaching territory is both welcome and overdue. For others, it's too much, too soon. And for students, whether new or continuing, it throws into the air much of what they have been conditioned to expect from University. In this talk, I'll focus on charting a clear path and the necessity of keeping in mind the people at the core of blended learning.