What is the emerging story of the process of curriculum reform in the open complex system of lower secondary education in Ireland and Scotland?
Both countries have chosen the Process Model of Curriculum to guide their reform which was originally proposed by Lawrence Stenhouse in 1975 and developed further by A.V Kelly in 2003.

The central tenets of the Process Model are a student-centered approach, a shift to learning outcomes, key skills, the professionalism of teachers, more curriculum autonomy for schools and the agency of students and teachers.

Both are working towards educational systems that advances equity, excellence, wellbeing, inclusion, democracy and human rights for all students within high-quality professionally run systems.
Complexity of Education

1. **Diversity**
   - Human beings with individual interests
   - Social, cultural, economic and religious interests
   - Political interests
   - Global influences
   - Purposes, interpretations, actions

2. **Processual**
   - System
   - Schools
   - Disciplines/subjects
   - Pedagogical & Methodological
   - Roles & identities
   - All agentic, emerging and contingent
COMPLEXITY THEORY

- Open
- Dynamic & Non-linear
- Nested
- Emerging
- Self-organizing
- Inter-connected

Curriculum
Open Nested Elements of Lower Secondary in Ireland
To map how the education systems in Ireland & Scotland are open, complex and nested systems.

To explore how the interrelationships and connections between stakeholders in the system allow self-organisation and emergence.

To focus on how the enactment of the new curriculum perturbed the system from equilibrium to the edge of chaos.

To discover how the emerging trajectories in the lower secondary system take account of the actual pattern of change of a system.

To answer the big question how can we interrogate the local to understand how things have come to be as they are and how they might be made different.
Balancing

Epistemology  Ontology

Axiology  Methodology
Methodology

Holistic Approach – from the macro to nano

Multiple perspectives of how it is not how it ought to be

Interrelationships and interdependencies in the system – ecosystem

Change understood at its level of emergence – local level

Researcher must be nested within the system

Multiple trajectories and causation is complex

Exploring bifurcation points

How the system moves to the edge of chaos
“Critique is not a matter of saying things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, [on] what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices we accept rest”. (Foucault 1988, p.154)

Post-Qualitative Approach
Case Study

1. Desk-top analysis of documentation from both countries to understand the history, trajectories and emergence of the system

2. Interviews of representatives of all stakeholders in the system from the macro to the micro

3. Focus group interviews with students
Tools of Analysis - Rhizoanalysis

- An imaginary not metaphor
- Start in the middle
- Molar lines
- Molecular lines
- Lines of flight
- Mapping – the unconscious
- Nomadic – travelling the plateau

Intermingled
It is about generating mileu/s of mo(ve)m ents from/with/in/of/ liminal spaces towards thresholds of understandings.  

(Marge Sellers 2015)
Thank you