

<p>Institution: University of Wolverhampton</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 25 Education</p>
<p>a. Overview</p> <p>The return includes researchers based in the Centre for Developmental and Applied Research in Education (CeDARE: www.wlv.ac.uk/cedare) and the Centre for Research and Development in Lifelong Education (CRADLE: www.wlv.ac.uk/cradle). CeDARE was formed in 2008 to oversee all research activities in the School of Education. Building on its success, CRADLE was created in 2013 as an independent university research and development centre, funded by the university in partnership with the Institute for Learning, focusing on the lifelong learning sector. The centres work closely together and central to both is a focus on undertaking and disseminating educational research in the local and regional context which has national and international impact and significance.</p>
<p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>CeDARE was established towards the end of RAE 2008. Its strategic objective was to build research leadership and capacity to bring greater coherence to research activity in education. It also sought to increase the quality, quantity and impact of research undertaken by staff in the School of Education; increase the number and completion rates of postgraduate research students; and strengthen partnerships with researchers involved in pedagogical and curriculum research across the university. Key areas identified for research initially were curriculum innovation in schools; professional learning; and widening participation in higher education. Although priorities have evolved since, these themes and strategic objectives are still reflected in the centre's current research strands outlined below and remain central to this submission.</p> <p>The implementation of this strategy is overseen and evaluated by CeDARE's directors. Each semester, progress is reviewed and reported to a range of school and university committees. There are two key committees. The School of Education's Research Committee is responsible for the overall governance of research activities and for the development and maintenance of appropriate ethical guidelines and procedures. The Student Management Board monitors the progress of postgraduate research students in the School and reviews the quality of their support and supervision. These committees also report at university level. In addition, regular fortnightly meetings of CeDARE and CRADLE maintain the coherence of research activity across education research. They involve a range of colleagues engaged or interested in research and focus on research opportunities and monitoring progress towards targets such as for income generation.</p> <p>As already indicated, priority strands of research activity have evolved over the period since 2008. They are currently as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborative leadership and professional learning: focusing on the leadership of collaborative improvement and professional learning and development. This work is based in the schools sector, early years, and post-compulsory education and training in the region. 2. Curriculum and pedagogy: researchers in this strand have focused on areas such as inclusive teaching, comparative studies of the student experience, widening participation, and science education. These researchers work across different sectors of the education system from early years and primary schools to post-compulsory education and training and higher education and are engaged in policy-focused as well as practice-orientated research. 3. Children, families and communities: in this strand researchers are at the forefront of research in a number of key areas including early childhood education, social justice and inclusion, bullying, young people's sense of identity, and schools' approaches to health promotion. There is also an increasing focus on interdisciplinary research involving areas such as wellbeing and social welfare. 4. Digital media, video and change: This strand incorporates research in other strands that use, integrate and explore video and other digital media. This includes using video and digital media as both research tools and researching their use. Research has focused on areas including early years, teacher training and higher education. <p>Each of these strands highlights the growing coherence, maturity and depth of the research undertaken since 2008. Three PhD studentships, focusing primarily on strands 2-4, were made available in 2011 to extend expertise in these areas, funded by university and CeDARE and</p>

emphasis will be placed in the next 2-3 years on ensuring that the large numbers of students currently undertaking doctoral study, compared to before 2008, move through to completion.

Developmental areas and initiatives

It is anticipated that the research strands outlined above will remain key developmental areas for both research centres. Additionally, CeDARE has become increasingly engaged in interdisciplinary research over the past 12 months, relating to social justice and inclusion in the areas of education, wellbeing and social welfare. Two collaborative projects are currently being undertaken in partnership with the university's Centre for Health and Social Care Improvement and Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded research is being undertaken into using adult learning for mutual recovery. As it enters its second year in 2014, CRADLE will continue to build its research portfolio in areas such as professional development and curriculum innovation in further education. The School of Education became part of the new Faculty of Education Health and Wellbeing in August 2013. It is anticipated that synergies will be developed over the next few years to enable the research centres to support and extend collaborative, multi-disciplinary research activity across the Faculty and continue to meet CeDARE's original objectives to strengthen partnerships across the university in areas congruent with educational research.

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

Staffing policy since 2008 has focused on meeting the core objective of increasing research leadership and capacity, on which the other strategic objectives depended. Three professors (Hockings, Gleeson, Burton, the latter two appointed in 2013) and three readers (Dhillon, Duncan, Jopling) have been appointed during this REF period. This has compensated for the impact of retirements and career movement, with two professors and three readers moving to chairs and an associate professor post in five other universities. Four of these new appointments were internal candidates, reflecting the impact of the investment in staff development and research infrastructure. Until CRADLE was created in 2013, all professors, readers, post-doctoral researchers and research assistants in the School of Education were core members of CeDARE and other research-active staff (for example, Cramp, Thompson) were affiliated to the centre through fellowships and secondments funded by CeDARE (see below). CRADLE is an independent university research centre, led by a professor (Gleeson) funded by the university to establish the centre with researchers (O'Leary, Smith) who were formerly Research Fellows in CeDARE.

Alongside the establishment of CRADLE, the creation of two new part time research fellows in CeDARE in 2012-13 (Pascal, Whitmarsh) has also increased overall research capacity and enhanced coherence. These posts have offered research teams more consistent access to researchers and research support, in particular allowing them to develop dissemination and impact activities beyond the end of external funding. This research capacity is managed centrally to allow researchers to work across strands while developing their own careers. Overall, the number of category A staff being returned has reduced from 14 in 2008 to 12 in this submission, although it is considered that a greater proportion of outputs has been recognised internationally, reflecting the success of CeDARE's capacity-building strategy.

Since 2008 there has been a managed increase in the number of research-active staff. The strategy for this has focused on supporting staff and research students at every phase of their careers and studies to ensure they receive support, resources and time to develop their research interests and careers. This growing research community is based around six research clusters which coordinate a series of research seminars and workshops and the annual staff and student research conferences. The clusters, all of which are coordinated by an experienced researcher and have access to external expertise through seminars and guest speakers, are designed both to provide leadership and intensive support to staff new to higher education and research and to continue to develop colleagues with emerging research profiles. All members of the School of Education belong to one or more of the clusters, which have evolved during the period to reflect the developing research interests of their members. Details of their current configuration can be found at <http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=23847>. Each cluster functions as a professional learning community, creating opportunities to discuss current research projects and new theoretical

and methodological developments. The clusters also provide a range of support activities aimed at developing research proposals, improving research and writing skills and helping to maximise the impact of research outputs and outcomes through both traditional dissemination media such as academic journals and more practitioner-focused mechanisms such as dedicated websites (e.g. www.cedare-reports.co.uk) and social media. CeDARE monitors this through regular cross-cluster activity and meetings with cluster coordinators, which also ensures that clusters maintain research quality and integrity. The centre has also funded a number of further professional development opportunities, including seed funding for staff to undertake their own research projects - five £5,000 grants have been awarded since 2011 - and research writing retreats.

Career progression

The research clusters also provide a clear career progression route and high levels of support from colleagues for novice researchers and research students. In line with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, a number of structures and processes have been put in place to support researchers' career progression, professional development and employment stability. A reader oversees the appraisal and professional development of all research fellows and research assistants and manages their workloads and research staff are supported over gaps in research grant income. Staff are provided with funding to gain their doctorates at a range of institutions or by undertaking the Professional Doctorate in Advanced Educational Enquiry, which is currently recruiting its fifth cohort since it was established in 2008. This has led to the development of a supportive network of colleagues engaged in pedagogical research. This strategy has resulted in seven staff members gaining PhDs since 2008, while a further 22 are currently being supported to undertake PhDs or EdDs.

As already indicated, as staff develop their research profile and consolidate their areas of interest, they are able to apply to become Research Fellows, whereupon they receive enhanced mentoring from senior researchers in CeDARE, increased time for research and additional support for conference attendance. Research Fellowships have been awarded to 14 staff since 2008. There are currently six being supported through fellowships or secondments, four of whom are being returned in this submission for the first time, indicating the success of the investment. The next stage in their career progression is to be seconded into CeDARE for two-year periods. In this REF period, three staff have been seconded into CeDARE where they are supported to work through individual development programmes in preparation for their applications for a readership. In addition, two former CeDARE Research Fellows (O'Leary, Smith) are now key members of CRADLE and this submission. Equality of opportunity is also supported by offering ongoing sabbatical and early career researcher programmes to release staff from all other duties. A programme of CeDARE-funded sabbaticals was put in place from 2008 targeting staff at different points in their careers. During this period, nine staff were given extended sabbaticals and 14 staff, including seven included in this return, were awarded mini-sabbaticals to support research and dissemination.

Effectiveness of the staffing strategy

Taken together, enhanced staff development opportunities, changes in working patterns and the provision of a structured career path have had a profound impact on the research culture and the aspirations and achievements of individual staff. This has been evidenced by the scope and depth of research outputs being produced and the fact that the number of returnees has been maintained during a period of realignment and change. Five staff members included in this submission, who were employed by the university at the time, were not returned in RAE 2008 (Cramp, Jopling, O'Leary, Thompson, Smith). This increase reflects the impact of a targeted sabbatical programme and enhanced support offered to existing staff, as outlined in the staff development section. Two of the three returnees who were included in university's RAE 2008 Education submission (Dhillon, Duncan) have also been supported by CeDARE to take on research leadership roles, develop the use and recognition of their research nationally and internationally, and work with colleagues to enhance their research activity. The third (Hockings) gained a professorial post. Evidence of the success of the objective to increase collaboration can be seen in collaborative research and publications by staff submitted, exemplified by research such as the Longitudinal Study of Early Years Professional Status (Hadfield, Jopling *et al*, 2012), which involved both early years teaching

staff and researchers, and outputs by Smith & O'Leary (2013) and Jopling, Whitmarsh & Hadfield (2013).

Future directions

The majority of the structural improvements made to develop the local and national uptake of research by practitioners and policy makers have been discussed in the impact template. Recent changes to government research and development policy have required changes in the focus of research funding applications, methods of working, and approaches to the utilisation of research. Three main areas of development are currently underway.

Firstly, CeDARE has focused more of its efforts on direct engagement with practitioners. This has been achieved by developing a number of research-based practitioner networks, both locally and nationally (see section e for a description of the major networks currently being supported). Pre-eminent in this has been the establishment of CRADLE, which builds on its members' background and experience in the School of Education's research and development work in the lifelong learning sector. It is a key part of the strategy to formalise and develop further connections with schools, colleges and other forms of education in the region to support regeneration and raise the profile of national research and development internationally. CRADLE specialises in independent research in the lifelong learning sector, but also offers curriculum development, CPD and consultancy services. Through a partnership with the Institute for Learning, the centre can quickly disseminate research findings to a national network of practitioners and it has established a research seminar series in 2013-14 featuring academic experts in further education and lifelong learning (<http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=37330>). With an emphasis on empowering practitioners to take ownership of their professional learning and applying research to practice, a key part of CRADLE's work is about changing the nature of further education rather than simply responding to government policy.

Secondly, investment has been made in developing multimedia case studies and other digital tools and resources which allow lessons from research, including effective practice and methodological innovations, to be shared with practitioners, policymakers and academics. A growing number of examples of these case studies and resources can be found at <http://www.cedare-reports.co.uk/>. Finally, CeDARE continues to develop both its international research profile and partnerships in interdisciplinary research (see section e). Research and development projects are currently being undertaken in the areas of the transition of underrepresented groups to higher education (LiTe project, 2011-13: <http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=32515>) and the use of learning technologies in schools across Europe (<http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=33747>). All of this research is European Union-funded. As has already been outlined, the centre is also increasingly engaged in research bringing together education and early years with wellbeing and social welfare in areas such as parenting and the wellbeing of looked-after children. This will be developed through the strengthened links with key organisations such as the European Early Childhood Research Association and the Centre for Research in Early Childhood, of which Pascal is President and Director respectively.

The succession planning strategy is to continue where possible to appoint to key research leadership roles staff who have developed their careers in CeDARE and CRADLE and it is anticipated that the appointment at professorial level of a new Director of CeDARE will take place early in 2014. However, the fact that current members of CeDARE have been successful in maintaining research activity, focus areas and income generation, and supporting the establishment of CRADLE during a period of change also indicates the success of the centre's staff development strategy.

ii. Research students

A student management board was established in CeDARE in 2008 that is responsible for assuring the overall quality of the postgraduate student experience. It meets ten times a year to receive updates on student progression, monitor the quality of supervision and receive reports from student representatives. The board has overseen an increase in PhD completions over the REF period to five, alongside one EdD and several more due to complete in 2014, and has managed a

threefold expansion in the number of part-time research students. In addition, the board provides induction programmes for all students, designs and manages a research training programme for them and, in collaboration with the postgraduate student tutors, maintains a supportive research environment. The student body held its inaugural student research conference in 2011 and this annual event has since been integrated into the annual staff research conference.

During this REF period there has been a substantial increase in the number of research students, and research studentships on offer, and improvements to the completion rate. In the previous RAE period there were a total of 15 doctoral students. This has now increased to 37 at thesis stage. This increase is in part due to the launch of the professional doctorate in 2008, taught by research-active staff and informed by their research, which is now recruiting its fifth cohort of students. 26 EdD students are currently at the dissertation stage and a further 11 are progressing to that point. There were no studentships in Education at the time of RAE 2008. Currently, six studentships have been taken up. Three include a bursary of between £13,000 and £18,000 per annum, funded through university and CeDARE investment, and three are fees-only studentships. Two of the fees-only studentships were established in partnership with the independent Centre for Research in Early Childhood in 2013 and two further studentships will be offered with them by early 2014. In addition, CRADLE has funded two part time doctoral studentships focusing on post-compulsory education and training in 2013.

The current number of research students is limited by the number of staff qualified to supervise, although 21 have completed the supervisory training programme since 2008. As the numbers of completions increase among staff and students, the aim is to increase the overall number of PhD students and achieve a balance so that the student body will consist of 25 per cent part time and full time PhDs and 75 per cent on the professional doctorate route. Striking this balance will allow the number of full time students undertaking doctoral study to increase to reflect the growing national and international research profiles of the centres and their researchers. All of the staff included in this return are involved in PhD and EdD supervision and most contribute to teaching on the professional doctorate in Advanced Educational Enquiry.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Since 2008 CeDARE staff have been awarded over 60 research and development projects to a value of almost £1.4 million. Two projects were funded by ESRC during the REF period into the use of video in research (<http://www.uprg.co.uk/>) and Intergenerational Dynamics and Education amongst British Asian Families, one was funded by AHRC to look at the use of digital gaming in the English curriculum (<http://cedare-reports.co.uk/digitaltransformations/>) and a further AHRC-funded project exploring mutual recovery through adult learning commenced in 2013. The total also includes three European Commission-funded projects and 23 national projects, 16 for UK industry, commerce and public corporations and two for overseas bodies. Clients have included the DfE, QCDA, TDA, CWDC, National College, HEA, LSIS, JISC, and HEfCE. In addition, 14 research projects have been undertaken for local authorities. A full list of these projects can be found at <http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=23823>. The majority of the outputs included in this submission have derived from funded research and research income has been maintained during the period through judicious targeting of potential funding sources.

During this REF period CeDARE has used this income to increase its investment in research. This has allowed the centre to maintain the number of staff supported to undertake doctoral study, introduce the Research Fellow and secondment programmes, increase the number of research clusters to support emerging and early career researchers, and maintain budgets for conference attendance and study leave. It has also funded internal investment through the research studentships provided since 2011.

Specific budgets are provided for staff to engage in research project development activities. These include European development activities; participation in dissemination events; support for them to create both their web profiles and tools and materials to increase the uptake of research outputs by practitioners. The intention is to maintain the overall level of funding to staff over the next REF period, while increasing the proportion focused on the utilisation of research locally and nationally. This will be based on increased collaboration among CeDARE, the Educational Development

Environment template (REF5)

team, CRADLE and other research centres in the Faculty of Education Health and Wellbeing, across the university and elsewhere.

The centres have also benefitted from university investment to support the research environment, for example through the creation of a Research Hub and Doctoral College and the improvement of facilities for research students. Facilities now include a dedicated workspace area, hot desk facilities and a social space with kitchen facilities. The intention is to further improve the facilities for research students as part of the university's extensive rebuilding programme and to include the provision of new designated out of hours study and social space. These improvements reflect the university's investment in research and are also in line with the expanding interest in the professional doctorate. They recognise the need to improve the experience of these part-time students who are usually also full time educational professionals and therefore require specific forms of out-of-hours access and support.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

Interdisciplinary research

CeDARE is currently undertaking two research projects in partnership with the university's Centre for Health and Social Care Improvement for NHS Health Scotland and Glasgow City Council, focusing on parenting in vulnerable families and the health and wellbeing of looked-after children. Both projects bring together researchers and perspectives from education, health and social welfare and are co-directed by a reader from each research centre. AHRC-funded research into adult learning and mutual recovery is also being undertaken as part of a consortium of six universities. It is anticipated that further such collaborative research will be a core activity of the university's new Faculty of Education Health and Wellbeing.

Networks with industry, commence, third sector

West Midlands Learning and Skills Research Network (WMLSRN) a regional network of practitioners from the Learning and Skills sector engaged in research and networking (Smith)

London Early Years Foundation (LEYF), a national, third sector, non-profitable organisation which supports the development of a national network of third sector early childhood centres (Pascal)

COMINO Foundation, Liverpool, a centre overseeing collaborative community-based educational disadvantage projects (Burton, Director 2008-12)

National and international academic collaborations

European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) and British Early Childhood Education Research Association (BECERA) (Pascal, Founder/President)

Member of Department of Education's Early Years Funding Panel (from 2011) and Advisory Group for Early Education Research (from 2012) (Pascal)

Comenius Teacher Induction project value £800,000 (Burton, coordinator/adviser)

Educational research collaborations with four universities in New South Wales, Australia, resulting in joint seminar and joint teacher education project (Burton, project director)

Research on transition to HE (Lifelong Learning Fund) with universities in Bulgaria, Portugal and Poland, value £270,000 (Jopling, project director)

University of Hebron: Teacher Education Development Programme

Membership of International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) which is undertaking the new IEA Early Childhood Education Study (ECES) (Pascal)

MA delivery in Yunnan Agricultural University, China and at branch campus in Mauritius (Dhillon, Jopling)

Transatlantic School Innovation Alliance (TSIA), collaboration with the Institute of Education, University of Manchester which has resulted in action research projects among and between 40 schools in the US and UK (Jopling)

West Midlands Teaching and Learning Consortium (WMTLC) – led by researchers from CRADLE,

Environment template (REF5)

this is a regional Consortium between three HEIs, nine FE colleges, RAF Cosford, and a number of private providers in the West Midlands. (Smith, O'Leary)

Contribution to the national discussion forum on lesson observation in further education for the University and College Union (UCU) (O'Leary)

Expansive Education Network, one of the 11 universities in the network that has involved almost 200 schools and colleges in curriculum-focused research (Jopling)

Advice to Southend and Lewisham local authorities on preventing bullying and work with WomanKind's anti-sexual bullying initiative (Duncan)

Research presentations to the Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education in Australia (Hockings)

Seminar series and journal editorships

Member of Editorial Board of The Sociological Review (Chair 2007-12) and of Journal of Vocational Education and Training, Associate Editor of Gender, Work and Organisation (Gleeson)

Member of Editorial Management Committee and Editorial Board of Journal of Vocational Education and Training, Associate Editor of Educational Management Leadership and Administration (Dhillon)

Associate Editor of Journal of Educational Administration and History (Smith)

Founding editor and member of Editorial Board of the European Early Childhood Education Research Journal (Pascal)

Host of ESRC Research Seminar Series on Practitioner Research (Pascal)

Co-editor of Sage's 'Education Studies' book series (Burton)

Professional associations, learned societies, developmental initiatives

Joint founder (1990), President (2007- current) and Executive Trustee (1990- current) of European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) (Pascal)

Chair of Professorial and Readers conferment panel and professorial pay panel at Liverpool John Moore University (Burton)

Convenor of the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) Educational Effectiveness and Improvement special interest group (Jopling)

Regional Coordinator of West Midlands Learning and Skills Research Network (Smith)

Assessor for Higher Education Academy's National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) 207-13 (Dhillon)

External PhD examinations during the period

Burton (2); Dhillon (4); Gleeson (4); Hockings (1); Pascal (2)