Institution: Staffordshire University
Unit of Assessment: 25 – Education

a. Overview

The Institute for Education Policy Research (IEPR) is one of the University's 10 Applied Research Centres (ARCs). Throughout the University, research and doctoral activity in Education takes place through the IEPR. Research within the IEPR has built on and strengthened the University's achievements in Education in the RAE 2008. Staff members not only work on research projects individually and in teams within the IEPR and other ARCs/Faculties, but also with other universities and other organisations within the UK. Further, they work with partners in other countries, such as in EU-funded projects. IEPR researchers are attached to the following research groups:

1. Social Inclusion and Social Justice
2. Children and Schooling
3. Higher Education and Lifelong Learning

Researchers work across research groups and no researcher is confined to a single group; some also work with research groups in other faculties. Typically, IEPR researchers conduct a research project, write the final report, present the findings at a seminar within the Faculty/University, present a paper at a national/international conference, publish papers in refereed journals, and disseminate the findings of the research amongst user groups to enhance its impact. A slight majority of IEPR researchers are located in the School of Education; the others representing a range of disciplines are spread across the University, yet involved in educational research. For example, two (Nick Adnett and Jean Mangan) are based in the Business School, one in the School of Sciences (Paul Orsmond), one in the School of Psychology, Sport and Exercise (Mani Dasgupta), and one in the School of Nursing and Midwifery (Julie Hadley). The IEPR is unique in this respect, having membership throughout the University.

b. Research strategy

a) Background

In the RAE 2008, we had submitted the outputs of 8.3FTE Category A researchers; in the REF now, we are submitting the outputs of 6.25FTE Category A researchers. This is the consequence of strategic decisions made by the University whereby it is entering a larger number of UoAs under which researchers are submitting their outputs. For example, two researchers whose outputs were submitted under the Education UoA in 2008 are now part of the Business and Management (Geoff Pugh) and the Psychology (Richard Jolley) submissions. These two UoAs were not returned in the RAE 2008.

The research conducted by members of the IEPR and subsequent publications link closely with the three research groups stated in the section above. As can be seen in our outputs and impact case studies, we continue to work in the fields of Social Inclusion and Social Justice (Tehmina Basit, Amanda Hughes, Jean Mangan, Paul Orsmond, Kim Slack); Children and Schooling (Nick Adnett, Tehmina Basit, Mani Das Gupta, Amanda Hughes, Jean Mangan); and Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Nick Adnett, Tehmina Basit, Julie Hadley, Amanda Hughes, Jean Mangan, Paul Orsmond, Kim Slack). However, the breadth and diversity evident in the research conducted under these three themes is based on strategic choices made due to a number of factors which include government priorities, staff expertise, and topical local, national and European/international issues in education. Strategic support is available to researchers from the Faculty and the University through administrative staff, a competent Information Technology team, and the Enterprise and Commercial Development department. Further, the University contributes in kind to externally funded projects such as by the European Union (EU), which only pays 75% of the costs; the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), which only pays 80% of the costs; and charities, which do not pay University overheads. Staff research projects undergo ethical scrutiny and need approval of the Faculty Ethics Committee before the commencement of the research.

The IEPR receives around £30,000 of core funding from the University. In addition, £17,000 is

available to the Faculty for Postgraduate Research (PGR) students' scholarships. Faculty funding is available for staff development and conference presentation.

b) Monitoring Performance

The IEPR monitors its targets and performance at monthly management meetings. Faculty monitoring is undertaken during quarterly Finance meetings and Research and Enterprise Committee meetings. The University has a process of examining its 10 ARCs annually through an ARC Activity Report submitted by each ARC on the previous year's performance in the first term of the new academic year. Doctoral students are monitored by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee, with all Faculty Committees feeding into the University Research Degrees Committee. There is a formal process of annual PGR student monitoring, which ensures that students work at the appropriate level and complete on time.

c) Strategic Aims and Future Directions

The IEPR submits proposals both for open grants and in response to calls for tenders. Depending on government concerns, we bid for HEFCE, HEA, and DfE funded projects, and those advertised by charitable organisations. For example, our research in schools and Further Education (FE) colleges is in response to recent changes in government policy devolving career advice to schools. The resources we are developing for this research will be available to schools and FE colleges free of charge on a new website called 'Staff Room' which is being set up at the University. Initially this will be available to approximately 340 schools, but it is intended to be rolled out much more widely across the UK. These resources are for teachers and students to support informed decision-making. Our future research strategy will follow this direction. This will mean that we will continue to raise our profile through engaging with Education practitioners and other stakeholders.

Our international work includes a collaborative EU-funded project on work-based learning completed last year with the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Sciences, which involved four other European partners: Denmark, Italy, Latvia and Poland. Our current work includes a project in collaboration with the Business School in the Faculty and the Department of Education and Communities, NSW, Australia. A recently funded EU project led by us is concerned with developing an access to learning course for people in drug recovery, in which four other European countries are involved: Cyprus, Romania, Italy and Ireland. We have submitted another bid to the EU which is being led by the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Sciences; and are preparing a further bid led by the IEPR. We anticipate submitting at least one bid to the EU annually in the next five years under its new Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ programmes.

There are a number of internal University funding streams that researchers can apply for. These include the Higher Education Innovation Fund, Innovation and Collaboration Vouchers, the Widening Participation Fund, and the Vice Chancellor's Teaching-led-Research Fund. Such funding facilitates pump priming projects, which could lead to proposals for external funding and publications. As part of our wider research strategy we play a significant role in enhancing the University's research culture and environment by working on research projects funded internally through the funding secured by the University from HEFCE and other government sources. The outcomes of the research that we carry out are included in the various University reports that are sent out to these funders, and have enabled the University to report high quality outcomes from funding streams related to areas such as Fair Access and Research-Informed-Teaching. Our strategy is to continue to develop this role and support the University in obtaining research funding from government funding streams.

We are also approached from time to time by our former doctoral students or other researchers who have recently completed their doctorates to come to the University for a few months to work with us as a visiting post-doctoral fellow. We strongly encourage this association and will continue to do so. These researchers either use this time to carry out a small-scale research project, or write a paper for publication, under the supervision of an established academic. This develops the career of a former PGR student, positions the senior academic as a mentor, and results in a joint

publication.

c. People, including:
i. Staffing strategy and staff development

We are fully committed to the implementation of the Concordat principles for the career development of early career researchers (ECRs) and PGR students as can be seen below. As part of career development, and to increase our capacity to supervise PGR students, staff members who are newly-recruited and have a doctorate, or existing staff members who complete a doctorate, are advised to enrol on the University's Supervisory Training module. They are also encouraged to join a supervisory team as a second supervisor where the principal supervisor in the team has the experience of doctoral completions. Currently, no research staff in the IEPR are on a fixed-term contract.

All academic and research staff members are allocated 22 days for research and scholarly activity. In addition, they can apply for a Timetabled Research Allowance of the same duration. Mentoring is an important part of our research strategy, whereby established academic researchers mentor ECRs by commenting on their draft proposals for research funding and papers for publication. The former also encourage and mentor doctoral students and ECRs by writing jointly-authored papers for publication with them. Supervisors also write and publish papers with students who have recently completed their doctorates. Development is evident in that some current staff members joined the Faculty as doctoral students and now have permanent posts within the School of Education as senior lecturers, senior research fellows, or research fellows. Strategic appointments of new staff members have brought in expertise in new dimensions of research, for example, we now have research experience in social inclusion in education in relation to ethnicity and gender as well as social class. Further, we have researchers with expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, which facilitates submission of proposals involving mixed methods research and subsequent research projects and publications.

Our strength lies in collaborative work between different schools and faculties, for example, researchers in Education have carried out collaborative research with colleagues in the Business School and the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Sciences. Since Education is a practice-based discipline, most staff members in the School of Education need to have experience grounded in work in schools or FE colleges as teachers and/or managers, and are not always research-active when they are recruited. Nevertheless, these colleagues are encouraged to register for a PhD or an EdD soon after starting, and are involved in research proposals by senior researchers whenever their professional experience relates to the focus of a project bid. Similarly, research assistants appointed to work on research projects are encouraged to undertake a doctorate, and can subsequently become permanent members of staff. New staff are also encouraged to attend conferences even if they are not presenting, in order to learn about conference presentation, and to undertake networking activities for potential research collaboration with national and international colleagues.

We have maintained and enhanced our research environment since 2008, through appointing senior staff, retaining senior staff on a part-time basis, and through appointing visiting professors. Four visiting professors are currently attached to Education. They have diverse research interests and bring a wealth of expertise to the University. They offer research seminars, collaborate with us in writing bids for external funding, and have been involved in doctoral supervision. They are:

1. Professor Peter Davies (University of Birmingham)
2. Professor Heather Eggins (University of Sussex)
3. Professor Audrey Osler (University of Leeds)
4. Professor Howard Stevenson (University of Nottingham)

In the last five years, the IEPR has organised two Research Symposia annually at which experienced and new researchers have presented from their research. All staff, doctoral and

master's students were invited to the symposia. These were typically attended by around 25 delegates. These seminars are led by IEPR members, visiting professors, our research partners, or doctoral students, and offer an effective way of developing the research and presentation skills of ECRs and doctoral students. Below are examples of recent IEPR seminars offered in these symposia on a diverse range of educational research topics during the academic years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

Seminar titles	*Presenter*
Education for Cosmopolitan Citizenship and Children's Human Rights: Political and Pedagogical Imperatives	Prof Audrey Osler
Diversity in higher education: Where are we going?	Prof Heather Eggins
Desperately seeking community learning: A visual ethnography of competing conceptions of informal learning in one geographic location	Dr Katy Vigurs
The importance of self-assessment in students' use of tutors' feedback: A qualitative study of high and non-high achieving Biology undergraduates	Paul Orsmond
Cultural capital, graduate premium expectations and higher education choices	Prof Peter Davies
From concept to completion: WBLQUAL, an ERASMUS Multilateral Project	Rosie Borup
Work-based learning in the European Union: The UK experience in higher education institutions	Dr Alan Eardley
Employer engagement in Work-based learning: Working within a tripartite relationship	Prof Tehmina Basit
Teacher professionalism in a privatised world: Time to reclaim teaching?	Prof Howard Stevenson
Trainee teachers' subject matter knowledge: Evidence from Economics and Business Studies	Guy Durden
Further Education in England: Implications of reforming the reforms?	Cheryl Bolton

Since the restructuring of the Faculty and the founding of a School of Education in September 2012, we now have a continuing programme of Faculty Research Seminars throughout the year at which external researchers, and internal researchers from the three schools of Business, Education and Law in the Faculty, lead seminars. Further, IEPR members actively participate in the Faculty Research Away Days and Faculty Research Colloquia, which are typically attended by over 50 researchers. We also have an annual Education conference, which was attended by 40 delegates last year from across the UK including our own staff and students. Our annual Early Childhood Studies conference was attended by 50 delegates last year. A recent development is the Early Career Researchers' (ECRs) Network. This forum, initiated by ECRs in the Faculty, invites new researchers to breakfast meetings to discuss research issues relevant to this group. This group currently comprises 40 ECRs from across the University. Each meeting is attended by at least 15 ECRs.

ii. Research students

There is evidence of a growth in doctoral students in the Education field. In RAE 2008, we had reported eight PhD completions, We have now had 11 PhD completions in Education since August 2008, In addition to home students, we currently have PhD students in Education, and/or those who have completed, from Eastern Europe, Canada, the Middle East, and South Asia. The majority of our completed doctoral students work in FE colleges or at universities. Almost all of them have progressed to higher positions in their own institution or have secured senior positions at other institutions as a result of their PhD. PhD students are represented by a Student Representative, chosen by them, on the Faculty Research Degrees Sub-committee. The students have a PhD Students' Room with desk space, computers, software, free printing and other necessary facilities.

In addition to a successful PhD programme, Staffordshire University offers a professional doctorate in Education (EdD), which currently has 27 students enrolled. Two students from its first cohort have completed in the 2012-2013 academic year. Students on both our doctoral programmes are supervised by research active supervisors, most of whom have their outputs submitted to the REF under the Education UoA. Supervisory teams typically comprise an experienced supervisor and a novice supervisor who has recently been awarded a doctorate and has completed the University's supervisory training module. A number of staff members from across the University are undertaking a PhD or an EdD. These include four from the School of Education; three from the Business School; three from the School of Computing; and one each from the School of Social Work, Allied and Public Health; School of Psychology, Sport and Exercise; and the Academic Development Unit.

Doctoral students are invited to all our research symposia and seminars. In addition, there is an annual Postgraduate Student conference and a number of smaller PGR seminars. Unless they have recently completed a Research Methods module at Master's level, PhD students are required to undertake the University's Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods, which is offered centrally, and is formally assessed at University level. Standards of research quality and integrity are maintained in all Education research conducted at the University by following the ethical guidelines of, for example, the British Educational Research Association and the Economic and Social Research Council. PGR student research projects have to undergo ethical scrutiny and have to be approved by the Faculty Ethics Committee before the research can commence.

PhD Completions in Education: August 2008 – July 2013 – Total = 11

2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
0	6	2	1	2

Name	*Title of Thesis*
AL BULUSHI, Issa (Oman)	The Role and Determinants of Participation in Industry-Science Links in an Oil-Based Economy: The Case of Oman
SLACK, Kim (UK)	Exploring Influences on Post-16 Choices and Destinations of Young People in a Disadvantaged Urban Area: A Life History Approach
HOWARD, Christopher (UK)	Assessing the Usefulness of a Multi-Functional Approach to Evaluation in the Context of Widening Participation into Higher Education
MIHALJEVIC, Maja (Croatia)	Student Attainment, Non-Completion and Time to Complete in Higher Education: The Case of Croatia.
TLUPOVA, Diana (Russia)	New Approaches to Higher Education Financing in England and their Impact on Widening Participation
NOBLE, John (UK)	Cultural Capital: A Stepping Stone or Stumbling Block to Successful Engagement with Higher Education?
VIGURS, Katy (UK)	Reconceptualising Conflict and Consensus within Partnership Working: The Roles of Overlapping Communities and Dynamic Social Ties.
LOWE, Michelle (UK)	Teaching Assistants: The Development of a Profession?
SPILLER, Marjorie (UK)	Learning to Manage or Managing to Learn: An Exploratory Study of how University Managers Learn within their Roles.
BOLTON, Cheryl (UK)	Investigating the professionalization of the FE teacher workforce: a Bourdieusian analysis
BASHIR, Humaira (Canada)	Rural Females' Perceptions on the Attitudes and Barriers to Education: An Ethnographic Case Study

Doctor of Education (EdD) Completions: August 2008 – July 2013

Name	Title of Thesis
HALL, Valerie (UK)	How can 'learner voice' be used to contribute directly to the improvement of teaching and learning? Does this have the potential to enable the development of the 'expert' learner?
ROWLEY, Susan Jane (UK)	Addiction Recovery & Adult Education: Formal & Informal Learning

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Research income 2008-2013

Project title	Duration	Funder	Income to IEPR £
Overseas Research Fellow	2008-09	Leverhulme	9,866.73
Private Schools Bursary	2009-10	Sutton Trust	10,441
MFL	2011-12	Comenius	673
Information Needs of Undergraduate Students	2009-10	HEFCE	38,200
Information Needs of Undergraduate Students	2010-11	HEFCE	10,000

Total income = £69,180.73

In addition to the external research income stated above, we have generated research income by contributing to research led by colleagues at other faculties in the University or other organisations. For example, we were approached by the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Sciences in the University to collaborate with them on an EU-funded project on work-based learning leading to qualifications. This generated an income of £34,367 for the IEPR. Further, we have received research funding by participating in projects led by other organisations such as Sheffield Hallam University and Oakleigh Consulting. We have also secured funding from University funding streams every year to carry out research as noted above.

Unsuccessful bids for research funding
Although, the income generated during the REF period is relatively low, there has been considerable bid-writing activity throughout this period and a number of outline or full proposals were submitted to a range of funders, which were unsuccessful. These bids for external funding were submitted exclusively by IEPR staff, or in collaboration with researchers in other faculties at the University, or with researchers at other universities or other public or private organisations. The proposals were submitted to a range of funders including the ESRC, EU, government departments, local authorities and charities. We will continue to submit proposals in response to tenders and open calls, but will be more strategic in the future by looking more closely at our strengths as researchers and seeking appropriate research partners in other organisations to build robust research teams.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

Education staff collaborate with members of other Schools and Faculties in the University to conduct research. Two recent examples are an EU project led by the Business School, and an EU project led by the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Sciences. We liaise with practitioners in schools and FE colleges, and offer advice and undertake consultancy work (Michelle Lowe) and give invited keynotes at schools (Duncan Hindmarch). Our international collaboration includes an edited book (Tehmina Basit and Sally Tomlinson, eds. 2012, *Social Inclusion and Higher Education*) which includes chapters by researchers in the UK, US, and Australia. One or two journal articles or book chapters have been published by individual researchers (Cheryl Bolton, Guy Durden) though these could not constitute the required four publications for the REF. We are initiating a writing Forum from January 2014 to support colleagues in writing for publication to prepare for the REF 2020, as we hope to have outputs submitted by a much larger cohort in the

next REF.

Education staff members regularly present papers at international and national conferences. These include the British Educational Research Association (BERA) conference; European Conference on Educational Research (ECER); American Educational Research Association (AERA) conference; Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) conference; Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) conference; European Association for Research in Learning (EARLI) conference; British Psychological Society (BPS) - Education Section conference; Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) conference; and International Pedagogical Research in Higher Education conference.

Further, individual staff members have contributed to the discipline in the following ways:

- Membership of editorial boards of academic journals: *British Educational Research Journal, Gender and Education, Research Papers in Education, Management in Education; Innovative Practice in Higher Education; Social Inclusion.*
- Membership of the ESRC Peer Review College.
- Membership of the British Educational Research Association; American Educational Research Association; British Education, Leadership and Management Association; Universities Council for the Education of Teachers; International Professional Development Association, West Midlands CPD Steering Group; West Midlands ITT Network.
- Published authored and edited books.
- Wrote chapters for edited books.
- Published articles in practitioner journals.
- Acted as doctoral external examiners (London School of Economics, UK; Middlesex University, UK; University of Worcester, UK; Witswaterland University, South Africa; University of Education, Pakistan, University of Management and Technology, Pakistan; Deakin University, Australia; Monash University, Australia).
- Given invited keynotes in the UK, Australia, Jordan, Pakistan and Singapore.
- Invited national advisor (e.g. Designing Assessment in the 21st Century' - a think tank organised by the International Advisory Group of ASKe and producers of the *Manifesto for Change;* (2008); and The Osney Grange Group, producers of the *Agenda for Change*, (2009) Both produced documents used to inform national and institutional assessment policy and feedback practices in the higher education sector.
- Actively contributed to the policy-making sphere, for example, by participating in the Nutbrown Review of early childhood practice.
- Interviewed on BBC Radio, for example, to speak about the Staffordshire Graduate.
- Co-Convene BERA SIG (Social Justice).
- Chaired sessions at the BERA conference.
- Reviewed papers for BERA conference SIGS.
- Reviewed bids for the Higher Education Academy.
- Reviewed papers for academic journals, such as: *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education; British Educational Research Journal; Education, Citizenship and Social Justice; Education, Management and Leadership; Educational Studies in Mathematics; Equity and Excellence in Education; Ethnography and Education; Gender and Education; Higher Education; Higher Education Quarterly; International Review of Economics Education; Irish Educational Studies; Management in Education; Oxford Review of Education; Race Ethnicity and Education; Research Papers in Education; School Leadership and Management; Studies in Higher Education;* and so forth.