

<b>Institution: University of Aberdeen</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 25. Education</b>
<b>Title of case study: The Inclusive Practice Project (IPP): Developing teachers' capacity to support the learning of all students</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>The University of Aberdeen's £1.4M Inclusive Practice Project has developed innovative approaches to teacher education to create classrooms where all children can learn through full participation in the school community, without the stigmatisation that comes from ability labelling. The Project has driven major changes in teacher education, in primary and secondary school classroom environments in Scotland and beyond. The Project is responsible for major changes to initial teacher education and ongoing professional teacher education programmes and is influencing education policy in Scotland and abroad.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The Inclusive Practice Programme (IPP) is an ongoing research and development teacher education reform project initially funded by the Scottish Government (£1.4million from 2007-2011) in response to concerns about persistent underachievement and increasing pupil diversity. The aim of the IPP is to ensure better awareness and understanding of issues that affect learning, and to develop strategies to respond. It was led by Professors Martyn Rouse (2006-retired 2011) and Lani Florian (2007-2012), in collaboration with Jennifer Spratt, Lecturer in Inclusive Practice (2003-present) and colleagues in the School of Education, University of Aberdeen. The work involves a reciprocal cycle of research / teacher education / classroom practice with each phase informing the others.</p> <p>The teacher education reforms were predicated on the concept of Inclusive Pedagogy arising from work by Florian and colleagues at the University of Cambridge. [3.1] The concept of Inclusive Pedagogy was further developed through research undertaken by IPP researchers from 2006-2013. Researchers conducted a series of studies of teacher 'craft knowledge' which identified three key challenges to inclusion in education: the deterministic effects of ability labelling, the belief that only 'specialists' can support children who experience difficulties in learning, and the structural barriers to inclusion created by existing forms of provision in schools (for example separate facilities for those deemed to have 'special needs'). Observations of classroom practice and focussed discussions with teachers across four schools in England and Scotland over the course of a year followed. These allowed researchers to identify classroom practices which help to increase the participation and achievement of all children without the need to identify difficulties in learning as limitations of learners. Findings provided the basis for a strategy aimed at improved educational provision and outcomes for vulnerable learners - a key area for development because children identified as having 'additional' or 'special' educational needs are often disadvantaged by poverty, cultural, linguistic or developmental diversity.</p> <p>Drawing on this research, IPP researchers in collaboration with colleagues redesigned the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) at Aberdeen around the concept of Inclusive Pedagogy. The course was underpinned by three key themes. Firstly, <i>Understanding Learning</i> critiques the widespread assumption that children have a fixed ability level, arguing instead that learning capacity is transformable when conditions are right. Secondly, <i>Social Justice</i> addresses the dilemma of responding to diversity between children without exacerbating difference by labelling. Instead of different provision for children experiencing difficulties in learning, Inclusive Pedagogy encourages teachers to extend the options available to everybody. Thirdly, <i>Active Professionalism</i> encourages classroom teachers to work with other specialists, to support the participation of all children in the learning community.</p> <p>The IPP then conducted follow-up studies of a sample of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who graduated from the PGDE course in 2009. During 2009/2010 seven NQTs were visited three times during their first year in post. Each visit consisted of observation, linked to in-depth interviews. Overall this research has developed the distinctive notion of Inclusive Pedagogy, and has shown</p>

how its principles can be embedded in teacher education courses and enacted in teaching practice.

### 3. References to the research

#### Publications:

[3.1] Black-Hawkins, K, **Florian**, L and **Rouse**, M (2007). *Achievement and inclusion in schools*. Abingdon: Routledge.

[3.2] Black-Hawkins, K. & **Florian**, L. (2012). Classroom Teachers' Craft Knowledge of their Inclusive Practice. *Teachers and Teaching*.18 (5) 567-584.

[3.3] **Florian**. L (2012). Preparing Teachers for Diverse Classrooms: Key Lessons from Scotland's Inclusive Practice Project, *Journal of Teacher Education*. 63 (4) 275-285.

[3.4] **Florian**, L & Linklater, H (2010). Preparing Teachers for Inclusive Education: Using Inclusive Pedagogy to Enhance Teaching and Learning for All. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 40(4), 369-386.

[3.5] **Florian**, L & Spratt, J (2013). Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28:2, 119-135.

[3.6] **Florian**, L, Young, K & Rouse, M (2010). Preparing Teachers for Inclusive and Diverse Educational Environments: Studying Curricular Reform in an Initial Teacher Education Course. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14(7), 709-722.

#### Grants:

*Inclusive Pedagogy: The role of pupil voice in self-assessment*. Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, New Approaches to Learning Strand, £47,538 Award to Lani Florian, University of Aberdeen, 2010.

*Inclusive Practice Project*. Scottish Executive, £1.4m Award to the University of Aberdeen School of Education, 2006.

*Teaching Strategies and Approaches for Pupils with Special Educational Needs: A Scoping Study*. Department for Education and Skills, £39,780, 2003.

*Inclusion and Pupil Achievement*. Wallenberg Project, Leadership for Learning, £18,645, 2003.

*Evaluation of Inclusive Education in the London Borough of Newham*. L.B. Newham, £31,500, 2002.

### 4. Details of the impact

Aberdeen's IPP has become a fundamental part of how the chronic challenges of under-achievement and lack of participation for certain groups are being addressed by policy makers, teacher educators (i.e. those who teach teachers) and teachers themselves.

The Scottish government's National Framework for Inclusion, launched in April 2009, draws heavily on IPP research. Reflecting the IPP approach, it promotes inclusion as being the responsibility of all teachers, in all schools and builds upon the work of the IPP to provide the basis for planning courses in teacher education and professional learning. Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Education, said at the launch, "The framework means systematic improvement with all teacher training providers embedding inclusive education principles within student learning... we are making advice and guidance available online so that all teachers, no matter how experienced, can learn how to make learning in their classroom more inclusive for pupils". [5.1]

Following the launch of the Framework, each of the seven university providers of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Scotland has restructured courses in line with the Framework. For example, at Stirling University, students take a module entitled 'Differences and Identities'. This module focuses on the wider pastoral responsibilities of being a teacher and asks students to consider how these might shape their thinking. More than 1,500 students successfully completed reformed PGDE over the six year period from 2007-2012. Teachers graduating from this course take up probationary teaching posts across Scotland. [5.2]

The IPP's follow up study of probationer teachers has shown that, through using the principles of Inclusive Pedagogy, probationers found ways of supporting the learning of all children without needing to mark some as different. One said in her IPP follow-up interview: "(Before the PGDE) I believed that people's ability is changeable, but I didn't really know how to articulate it and I certainly wouldn't have known how to ... bring it into the classroom. That's what the course has helped me with... the language to be able to justify what you're doing and trying to make (colleagues) think a wee bit." [5.3]

The research also impacts upon already qualified teachers. Every year, Aberdeen trains over 300 teachers in inclusive practice in partnership with schools in 6 local authorities [5.4] and, in January 2013, Aberdeen launched a new Masters level programme on Inclusive Pedagogy. This programme draws on the IPP probationer study. It has been designed with online elements so teachers can continue classroom practice while completing the degree. There are currently 13 practising teachers from Scotland, Egypt and Abu Dhabi enrolled and a waiting list for next year. Beginning in 2010, Glasgow University also incorporated Inclusive Pedagogy in its teacher continuing professional development programme.

Guidance based on the work of Florian and Rouse has been incorporated into the new Scottish national HMIE Inclusion Reference Manual for School Inspections (2008). [5.5] Rouse chaired working groups at HMIE in 2008 and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (the national accreditation and awarding body) in 2009.

The impact of the IPP research also has international reach. In November 2008, Florian presented IPP research on educating teachers to meet learners' diverse expectations at UNESCO's Conference on Education. [5.6]

Florian also co-authored a White Paper for the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education. Its key recommendations reflect IPP research in a call for investment in the development of new inclusive teacher education. The Paper was launched at a series of briefings on Capitol Hill, the White House and the US Department of Education in May 2011 as part of the re-authorization of the US Elementary and Secondary Education Act. [5.7]

Between 2009 and 2012, Florian represented Scotland as national expert on the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education study, '*Teacher Education for Inclusion*' (TE4I). Fellow participants included policy makers and practitioners from 29 EU countries and representatives of international organisations including the EU, UNESCO and the OECD. The TE4I's final report makes recommendations to support the development of teacher education for inclusion in Europe, citing Florian and Rouse's work. [5.8]

Public and professional awareness of the IPP research has manifested through articles in numerous publications including *Prospects*, UNESCO's journal on education, for an international audience of scholars, decision-makers and educators [5.9]; and the *Times Educational Supplement* (both September 2011).

Education Scotland (the Scottish government executive agency) have made information about inclusive practice and Aberdeen's research publicly available via their Journey to Excellence website. While aimed primarily at teachers, this resource is also used by parents and other stakeholders. It features four video interviews with Rouse speaking about the inclusive classroom and pupil achievement. [5.10]

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[5.1] <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2009/04/26163423>

[5.2] Contact at the General Teaching Council Scotland can corroborate the number of students who have successfully completed the reformed PGDE (primary and secondary) over the six year period from 2007-2012 and how many of these teachers have taken up teaching appointments across Scotland.

[5.3] Part of Quote on page 13 of Florian & Spratt (2013): Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28:2, 119-135. Full quote provided in Florian and Spratt presentation at the European Conference on Educational

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Research, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

[5.4] CPD Coordinator/Probation Manager, Aberdeen City Council can corroborate the teacher training and development of inclusive practice.

[5.5] HMIE Inclusion reference manual: <http://hmiectmlive.company-net.com/NR/rdonlyres/79D06B05-9F96-41C5-A2F5-4675FDE9C9FC/0/InclusionManualDecember2008forinternet.pdf>

[5.6] Florian was rapporteur at the UN World Conference on Education in Geneva UN Annex VIII d - page 63

[http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Policy\\_Dialogue/48th\\_ICE/ICE\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_eng.pdf](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Policy_Dialogue/48th_ICE/ICE_FINAL_REPORT_eng.pdf)

[5.7] White Paper, American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education and National Council for Learning Disabilities. <http://aacte.org/news-room/press-releases/aacte-and-nclld-release-white-paper-on-improving-learning-outcomes-for-students-with-disabilities-through-reformed-preparation-of-general-education-teachers.html>

[5.8] TE4I final report <http://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion> *Teacher Education for Inclusion Across Europe, Challenges and Opportunities*. European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. p.30.

[5.9] "*Challenges for teachers' professional learning for inclusive education in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States*" co-authored by Lani Florian and Majda Becirevic, in PROSPECTS, September 2011, Vol 41, Issue 3, pp 371-384 <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11125-011-9208-4>

[5.10] Martyn Rouse interviews on "The inclusive classroom" <http://www.journeytoexcellence.org.uk/videos/martynrousetheinclusiveclassroom.asp>