

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Strathclyde</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 25 Education</p>
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>UoA25 is the submitting unit for the School of Education and for staff in the School of Psychological Sciences and Health who are engaged in educational research in one or more of four themes: Teachers and Teacher Education; Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Policy; Equity, Diversity and Social Justice; and Children and Childhood. Both Schools are within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in the University of Strathclyde. In keeping with the historic identity of the University of Strathclyde as a place of useful learning, the approach to research impact adopted by the Unit is founded on a commitment to applied multidisciplinary research designed to improve education policy and educational provision, to enhance professional practice and hence to benefit the quality of people's lives through education in the widest sense.</p> <p>To this end, we engage with stakeholders in national and local government, with practitioners delivering educational outcomes across the life course, and with a range of organisations and voluntary groups representative of communities. Our research knowledge is sought by professional bodies, namely, the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) and the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). The key groups and users of research in UoA25 are those who are closely aligned as educational practitioners and policy makers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and other professionals working within the pre-5, primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors and those involved in the provision of lifelong learning</li> <li>▪ Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Health Workers, Social Workers, Community Police, Community Workers, and other practitioners working in partnership with schools</li> <li>▪ Charities working in the children's and young people's sector (e.g. Save the Children)</li> <li>▪ Children and their families, and communities</li> <li>▪ Professionals working within the Further and Higher Education sectors</li> <li>▪ Education Scotland; local government Education Services; trade unions representing education professionals; The Scottish Government; The UK Government; International links.</li> </ul> <p>Engagement with the specific groups is optimised through the work of our specialist Centres: the Centre for Lifelong Learning, Scotland's National Centre for Languages (SCILT), the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools, the Counselling Unit, and the Autism Network Scotland, all located within this UoA.</p> <p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>Engagement in Knowledge Exchange (KE) with policy and professional practice communities lies at the heart of the Unit's approach across each of the UoA's strategic research themes set out in REF5. The approach to impact adopted by the UoA during the period 2008-2013 was influenced by the successful user engagement strategy of the Applied Educational Research Scheme (AERS), funded by the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council from 2004 to 2009, in which Strathclyde was one of the three leading institutions. The specific goal of AERS was to enhance educational research capacity in HE institutions and to use that capability to conduct high-quality research, which would benefit education outcomes. This translated into engaging the users of education in research, exploring aspects of educational practice while building capacity for educational research. The approach resulted in formation of multidisciplinary project teams from all Faculties/Schools of Education in Scotland. Activities involved a high degree of collaboration with stakeholders in the policy and practice communities and a wide range of engagement mechanisms, including the establishment of networks, fostering communities of professional enquiry, and the organisation of conferences and research forum events.</p> <p>Where appropriate, we aim to involve stakeholders from the early stages of our research through participation in advisory groups and project teams, part of our strategy for impact through research capacity building. In particular, active engagement with relevant professional bodies (e.g. GTCS,</p>

**Impact template (REF3a)**

RCSLT and BACP) has been at the heart of our approach. The strategy for impact has been enhanced since 2010, with the formation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, which brought research and KE into a single focus in relation to funding and committee organisation, recognising that impact emerges from world class research and that well-run KE mechanisms are likely to increase impact. The approach of the UoA is supported by a specialised Research and Knowledge Exchange Team (RaKET) funded by the Faculty, which offers administrative support for funding bids, and for setting up conferences and other engagement opportunities. UoA staff use institutional facilities and programmes of support to secure funds for KE projects and to establish multi-disciplinary teams which can engage effectively with non-academic audiences. The University's Research and Knowledge Exchange Service (RKES) and the Communications Office further support academic staff in reaching out to the wider community.

The UoA is committed to actively promoting and harnessing the synergy between research, teaching and KE activities in Education. Being the largest provider of professional education courses for teachers and other practitioners working with children in Scotland, and among the largest in Europe, provides excellent opportunities for engagement and partnership that directly enhance the potential impact of research across the four UoA themes. Furthermore, our research-informed professional education programmes for teachers, early years and childhood practitioners, speech and language therapists, and professional school counsellors provide the means by which research in the UoA directly impacts on professional practice in Scotland, the rest of the UK and internationally. This work impacts on key Scottish education policies such as Curriculum for Excellence and Teaching Scotland's Future and on the development of professional standards across our portfolio of disciplines.

The approach adopted by the unit has fostered excellent relationships and active engagement with key stakeholders through collaborative working with schools, local authorities, professional bodies, Government agencies and the students we teach. This has been designed to enhance the impact of our research by means of KE between the academic and the non-academic communities. Such impact has taken the form of direct influence on policy and development of innovative practice, as illustrated in the three case studies on School-based Counselling (Cooper), Language Therapy in Primary Schools (McCartney) and Diverse Teachers (Smyth). The Scottish Universities Insight Institute (SUII), based at the University of Strathclyde, provides a platform for engagement activities involving a wide range of stakeholders. These lead to the synthesis and generation of new knowledge and the sharing and dissemination of research findings of relevance to education. The UoA has led a number of successful SUII programmes, including Refugee Integration, Digital Childhoods and The Well-Connected Child.

The UoA has been successful in obtaining funding for impactful research from European and national government bodies, funding councils and charitable trusts. Funded projects have included: EU FP7 funding for the Dialogue project explicitly focused on the links between research and KE in adult learning, and for Advanced Science Teacher Education; the Scottish Government for the Refugees Into Teaching in Scotland programme; Esmee Fairbairn Trust for approaches to inclusive education; and British Council funding on Philosophy for Children in Mexico. Such support has enabled the exchange of knowledge and research evidence, with UoA participation in externally organised conferences and events specifically for non-academic audiences.

Our approach to widening impact from the unit's has been extended by means of building connections in Australia, Europe, North America, Africa and Asia which have enabled our research to impact on educational policy making and practice globally, as exemplified in the case studies. Our commitment to international development and impact in the field of Education is further exemplified by our engagement with the World Bank and USAid, supported by the University and Scottish Development International, and our long-standing research and development work on teacher education and literacy in Malawi that is facilitated by SIPPI.

**c. Strategy and plans**

While forming partnerships to deliver high quality formal and informal educational experiences, our approach is one of collaborative engagement and the dissemination of our research findings within non-academic sites. We value the different disciplinary perspectives in addressing social issues in communities and thus work with partners in Social Sciences, Humanities and Psychology within the University and in other research institutions.

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To enhance the quality of life in society through Education, we design KE activities that contribute to public debate and enhance knowledge and learning within communities, while also contributing to the development of those working in formal and informal education and future policy formation. This collaborative process with a range of partners in local authorities, professional bodies and key voluntary sector agencies involves each of the UoA research groupings in the co-design, co-production and co-delivery of research.

Our strategy for achieving impact is as follows:

1. To prioritise potential for impact at the early planning stages of research projects by actively seeking opportunities for research which engages with key stakeholders and non-academic organisations at all stages.
2. To strengthen existing research capacity in areas that make genuine and meaningful impact, adopting where appropriate, a social practice model of research capacity building by engaging colleagues in policy and practice communities in project teams.
3. To internationalise further our research and KE activities through active engagement with external bodies such as the World Bank, British Council, USAid and through collaboration with colleagues in the Strathclyde International Public Policy Institute.
4. To harness the potential of multidisciplinary and inter-professional approaches while focusing on key strengths in ways that bring together teams comprising a range of skills and complementary academic, research and professional expertise.
5. To target events which will provide access to non-academic audiences for whom our work will be relevant and provide impact.
6. To harness the media, technology enhanced communications and social networking to enhance the reach and impact of our research and KE activities.

Plans for the forthcoming period include extending our collaborative approach to impact, working with key stakeholders through projects including the SUII funded project "Well-Connected Child" and the RCUK funded "Models of University and Schools Engagement". These initiatives are designed explicitly to build collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders and provide clear illustrations of the strategy and approach outlined above. Being located in West Central Scotland provides a crucible for research-based interventions designed to improve the life chances of socially disadvantaged communities. Current research in areas such as literacy, inclusion, diversity, inter-generational mentoring, and human rights education extends our collaborative partnerships to maximise impact on educational outcomes, in the widest sense, for such communities both locally and globally.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The three case studies demonstrate the strategic commitment of the UoA to effective engagement with relevant professional and other bodies. Smyth's RITeS (Refugees into Teaching in Scotland) project grew from research into diversity in the teaching profession and a concern that the demography of the profession did not match the demography of the pupil population in classrooms, a concern shared by the Scottish Government and the General Teaching Council for Scotland. The potential impact of Cooper's research on the counselling services in schools was enhanced from the outset by a close working relationship with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. McCartney's research of on the Strathclyde Language Intervention Programme was conducted with active support from the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists. Effective engagement with such professional bodies is facilitated by harnessing the potential synergy between research, KE and teaching in the UoA, in that these bodies validate the core professional education programmes for teachers, school counsellors and speech and language therapists.

The three case studies illustrate the joint importance of professional standards and the quality of evidence underpinning policy decisions and intervention programmes. Each of the case studies exemplifies a commitment to international impact: McCartney's intervention procedures and protocol have been adopted in an Australian trial of language intervention for pre-school children; Smyth's work on the RITeS project is well connected to the Australian, Canadian and European context; and Cooper's work on school counselling has been highly influential across all four jurisdictions in the UK.