

<b>Institution:</b> University of Wolverhampton
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 25 Education
<b>a. Context</b> <p>The main innovations in research infrastructure since RAE 2008 have been the establishment of the Centre for Developmental and Applied Research in Education (CeDARE) in 2008 and the creation of the Centre for Research and Development in Lifelong Education (CRADLE) in 2013. The centres have identified three main non-academic research user groups for their work: educational practitioners and organisations; initial teacher educators and professional development providers and commissioners; and central and local government policy makers.</p>
<b>1. Educational practitioners and organisations across different phases of the education system at local, national and international levels</b> <p>Impacts for these user groups include changes to how schools and early years settings work together and lead partnerships based on research into networking and collaboration in schools, further education and early years (Dhillon, Jopling – see impact case study); and impacts on learning and teaching practice in primary and secondary schools of research into pedagogical innovation and curriculum development undertaken for QCDA and the Innovation Unit (Jopling). In the post-compulsory sector, Smith’s research had an impact on networks of practitioners undertaking action research in professional learning communities; and improvements made to observation practice in further education colleges were influenced by O’Leary’s research into effective lesson observation. In higher education, impacts included the development of more inclusive approaches to teaching and learning based on research into effective practices and the achievement of black and ethnic minority students (Hockings) and into widening participation (Cramp; Hockings; Thompson); and work on curriculum change with universities in Yunnan, China, Mauritius, Palestine (Dhillon, Jopling) - see <a href="http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=26495">http://www.wlv.ac.uk/default.aspx?page=26495</a>.</p>
<b>2. Initial teacher educators and professional development providers and commissioners ranging from FE colleges and universities to local authorities and national agencies</b> <p>In post-compulsory education, impacts include the implementation of national and local strategies for the development of collaborative professional learning programmes and support for regeneration through partnership colleges in the region (Smith, O’Leary); partner colleges using findings from research into lesson observation (O’Leary) and vocational pedagogy (Gleeson, Smith) to shape and inform new policies and practices. Among higher education institutions, impacts related to changes to evaluation practices and policies in initial teacher education resulted from frameworks and materials created to support the design of impact evaluations in initial teacher education based on the ‘ICT in ITT’ research for the former Training and Development Agency for Schools and Becta (Jopling). The research was also highlighted in Bera’s <a href="#">Why Educational Research Matters</a> briefing. Among local authorities, impacts derived from the implementation in practice of findings from research into local authority commissioning and redesign in North Somerset and Walsall (Jopling); and research and development influencing teacher development in Wales (Hadfield while CeDARE’s Director of Research, 2008-13).</p>
<b>3. National and local government policy makers in the early years, primary and secondary education, and higher education sector</b> <p>Impacts at national and local government policy level included influencing government policy on the training and development of early years practitioners: findings from the Longitudinal Study of Early Years Professional Status were referred to in the Government’s workforce redevelopment policy and its response to the Nutbrown Review of early education and childcare qualifications (Jopling; Whitmarsh). Pascal has also influenced early years policy and practice in the UK and internationally, for example as a current member of the DfE’s advisory panel on early education research, through her involvement in the independent Centre for Research in Early Childhood (CREC). Current research into vulnerable parenting (Jopling, Whitmarsh) and looked-after children’s wellbeing (Jopling) is informing regional and national policy and practice in these areas in Scotland. Reforms to the school curriculum were informed by the QCDA’s submission to the Rose Review of the primary curriculum, which drew on research exploring the evidence base for effective curriculum innovation (Jopling). Research into bullying among girls (Duncan) formed the</p>

basis of changes to local authorities' policy and training around how to address bullying in both primary and secondary schools in Lewisham and Southend. Finally, in higher education policy, research on inclusive learning and teaching has been influential in the UK and Australia (Hockings, see impact case study) and research exploring the quality of teaching and learning in post-1992 universities (Dhillon) underpinned a report and campaign by the million+ university thinktank launched at an event attended by the Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills in February 2012 (<http://www.millionplus.ac.uk/events/latest-events/teaching-that-matters-launch/>).

**b. Approach to impact**

All staff in CeDARE and CRADLE are provided with the opportunity to work with key user groups as part of their work and encouraged to become part of existing professional networks. In order to support the wider uptake of research outputs and services, CeDARE has formed strategic research and knowledge transfer partnerships with a range of national organisations including the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE), the Black Country Challenge and SERCO. These have resulted in a number of innovative developmental projects, informed by research undertaken by the centre, including:

- A three-year programme developing a systematic evidence base for the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency changes to the primary and secondary curricula, in partnership with CUREE (2008-2011)
- The national programme to deliver an accredited leadership programme to children's centre leaders (NPQICL) to 3,000 Children Centre Managers (2008-11)
- Commission to deliver CPD for Strategic Workforce Leads, national pilot commissioned by Children's Workforce Development Council (2010)
- CeDARE was the lead research partner for the Black Country Challenge (2008-10). Senior members sat on the strategic management group which designed and coordinated this DfE-funded regional school improvement programme.

CeDARE and CRADLE have also initiated, with other universities and partners, several research-based national and international development initiatives and networks with users. These include:

- The West Midlands Teaching and Learning Consortium (WMTLC) - a regional consortium between three HEIs, nine FE colleges, RAF Cosford, and a number of private providers in the West Midlands led by researchers from CRADLE (Smith, O'Leary). This consortium delivers the majority of HEI-led initial teacher education provision for over 700 students in the lifelong learning sector in the region. Drawing on longstanding research into blended learning and pedagogy now overseen by CRADLE, the consortium reviews existing research and trains teacher educators to develop a community of coaches. It also identifies and shares existing best practice in blended learning across the region and contributes to the creation of new quality benchmarks and qualifications for the sector.
- West Midlands Learning and Skills Research Network (WMLSRN) - a regional network (led by Smith) of practitioners mostly working in further education, who are engaged in research and networking activities and have an interest in learning and skills policy and its impact on staff and students in the sector. Membership is drawn from institutions across the West Midlands and representation at the annual conference in the past has included staff from sixth form colleges and training providers as well as further education colleges and local HEIs.
- The Expansive Education Network - a membership organisation bringing together teachers, school leaders and university researchers from 11 universities committed to preparing young people to thrive in their future lives by developing their curriculum offer through action research. Beyond facilitating action research workshops for 20 practitioners in 2013, staff (led by Jopling) have provided a range of materials for the network based on their research into curriculum and pedagogy (<http://www.wlv.ac.uk/expansiveeducation>).
- Transatlantic School Innovation Alliance (TSIA) - a partnership programme supporting groups of practitioners undertaking action research projects in over 40 secondary schools and six universities in the United States and the UK to improve adolescent literacy, teaching and learning and educational leadership. Jopling supported practitioners' research in local schools and evaluated the network's development and schools continue to draw on support from Cramp and other staff in CeDARE (<http://www.wlv.ac.uk/Default.aspx?page=28150>).

CeDARE has supported staff to maximise research impact by bringing together into one structure teams of staff engaged in research, continuing professional development, partnership and international work with a dedicated educational development team. The educational development team's function is to exploit research outputs and maximise their impact by creating a range of knowledge and practice transfer opportunities, providing bespoke consultancy and evaluation services, and establishing strategic research relationships with local and national organisations. Researchers also have access to in-house web design, publishing and marketing teams in CeDARE. This has resulted in the production of dedicated web pages where a wide range of research outputs, tools and materials can be viewed and downloaded. The external CeDARE website (<http://www.cedare-reports.co.uk>) was created to house reports and summaries of research outcomes, including videos and multimedia case studies, designed to appeal to both practitioner and policymaker audiences. It generated more than 12,000 page views in 2012-13. Downloadable resources have also been well received. For example, the project reports from the DfE-funded evaluation of the I Can Early Talk programme were downloaded by 287 people and a resource for English teachers was downloaded 868 times in 2012-13. CeDARE also publishes a bi-monthly newsletter for local schools, researchers and practitioners; the last four issues brought almost 1500 visitors to the website and have led to small scale research being undertaken in partnership with local schools. Digital engagement through Twitter has helped CeDARE to promote work and news, with followers rising to over 2600 during 2013. Re-tweets and interactions with the centre's followers has put CeDARE's tweets and promotions in front of several thousand relevant Twitter users. YouTube has also been used to disseminate videos from multimedia case studies. For example, videos from the Longitudinal Study of Early Years Professionals research have been viewed by over 1200 people in 2013 and the Study's dedicated website ([www.cedare-reports.co.uk/eyps](http://www.cedare-reports.co.uk/eyps)), aimed at practitioners, has received over 3000 visitors during 2013.

#### **c. Strategy and plans**

The strategy for the future is to build on the four main research strands in CeDARE and CRADLE: collaborative leadership and learning; curriculum and pedagogy; children families and communities; and digital media, video and change. The following initiatives have been launched in the past 18 months to support this activity:

- The establishment of CRADLE, an independent university research centre leading research and development in post-compulsory and lifelong learning across the university.
- The integration of the School of Education into the Faculty of Education Health and Wellbeing to build on existing interdisciplinary research and maximise its impact regionally, nationally and internationally.
- The establishment of a dedicated educational development fund allowing researchers to bid for up to £20,000 to develop materials, programmes and interventions focused on user engagement with research.
- The creation of impact plans for all research projects at initiation that identify the resources and support required to maximise their impact on users inside and outside academia.
- Recruitment of highly experienced researchers at professional and post-doctoral level (Gleeson; Burton; Pascal) to support research and development in post-compulsory education and lifelong learning; education studies and inclusion; and early years.

#### **d. Relationship to case studies**

The two impact case studies reflect, and highlight in more detail, many of these impacts. In the first case study, the research into collaborative initiatives created impacts by applying findings from previous research to work with leaders in schools, colleges, local authorities and government. Thus impacts were created by building cumulatively on credible evidence at multiple levels, applying theory to practice in order to generate new theory which was then used in further research. The use of different media (summary reports, video, social media) to promote and disseminate the research to differentiated audiences, notably practitioners and policymakers, has become central to CeDARE's approach to generating impact.

The second case study on transforming teaching in higher education took a more linear approach, developing resources from research findings (including video) and disseminating them through a combination of online publication, presentation at workshops and seminars and contributions to expert discussions to maximise their impact.