

Institution: Sheffield Hallam University
Unit of Assessment: UOA 25 Education
<p>a. Overview</p> <p>The environment for educational research at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) aims to sustain academically rigorous research of high impact, built upon methodological excellence and innovation, underpinned by funding won through strategic partnerships with key users. This submission comprises two education departments, the Centre for Education and Inclusion Research (CEIR), the Centre for Science Education (CSE), and other parts of the University, which come together as the <i>Education Research Network (ERN)</i>.</p>
<p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>The research strategy over the assessment period aimed to strengthen the research environment by prioritising the development of funder-led research to sustain both academic knowledge production and problem-focused, policy-orientated research of high impact. On the basis of the applied research described in this submission an academic profile of national and international significance has been established. Success is evidenced by progress against strategic objectives identified in RAE2008. Key achievements are summarised below, with further details provided in later sections. <i>In RAE2008 seven strategic objectives were identified:</i></p> <p>To continue research in the fields of education policy, higher education and curriculum research. Research in each field features in this submission: education policy (Coldron and McCaig); school leadership (Simkins - REF3bi); higher education (Macaskill and McCaig); and curriculum research (Burnett and Merchant). Work in each field has been sustained by external research income, leading to outputs and doctoral recruitment.</p> <p>To make two externally advertised professorial appointments. Four new professorial appointments have been made in education (including Hobson, Leach and Merchant in this submission).</p> <p>To increase readerships in education from three to five. There are now 6 readers in education; Burnett, Hodge and Taylor were appointed during the assessment period.</p> <p>To continue to support the development of new researchers. As detailed in section C, investment has been made in doctoral training, small grants for staff, and support for ECRs.</p> <p>To continue to support the EdD and encourage institution-funded participants. As described in section C, 15 students successfully completed the EdD in the assessment period, including two researchers in this submission (Burnett and Hodge).</p> <p>To continue supporting guaranteed work-time available for personal research. In addition to a standard time allocation for all academic staff, research activity has been prioritised in the work-planning process, and QR income has been invested in additional research time for staff.</p> <p>To maintain a leading position in institution-wide higher education research. See the outputs of Macaskill and McCaig in this submission.</p> <p>In August 2013, the University launched the Sheffield Institute of Education (SloE) which provides the institutional framework within which research strategy will be developed in the 2014-2019 period. The SloE will enhance the research environment by bringing all academic activity in education into one cost centre and one physical location, enabling strategic investment to support research and impact activity. £30M is being invested in a new building, primarily to house the SloE (http://bit.ly/1a4DTtD). The SloE will set and monitor a sustainable staffing strategy to support research, secure the future procurement and effective delivery of research contracts, and promote an intellectually vibrant environment for research.</p> <p>Progress against the specific objectives below will be monitored by the Institute's Director of Research on an annual basis.</p> <p><i>The research strategy plans to:</i></p> <p>Increase research capacity by recruiting, developing and retaining research-active staff, providing them with experience of working on funded research projects, and developing their</p>

Environment template (REF5)

expertise through research mentoring. It is intended to increase the pool of SloE staff engaged in research contracts through the provision of targeted support and assistance (for example through staff development and allocation of additional time for research duties). Success will be measured by the number of staff members newly engaged in research projects, and the number of staff publishing outputs rated as being of high quality through internal processes.

Strengthen research leadership by establishing and supporting the role of Institute Director of Research, and thus building on existing strengths across all parts of the SloE. This will be complemented by at least two new professorial positions to be advertised during the 2013-4 academic year to add academic leadership in existing areas of strength.

Grow research funding to enable further investment in the research environment. This will be achieved by maintaining partnerships and relationships with policy-making organisations and developing new relationships with partners and commissioning bodies. Success will be measured by an increase of funder-led income by an average of around £150k p.a. by 2020.

Enhance the quality of research by supporting a larger number of staff to produce high quality research outputs through the provision of mentoring activity, doctoral training, and work on funded projects. The plan is to have at least 20 staff with a portfolio of outputs internally rated at a GPA of at least 2.5* by 2020.

Maximise research impact by establishing and sustaining partnerships with a wide variety of stakeholders to meet the aim of increasing influence on policy, organisations, practitioners, learners, and society. Working with SHU's Directorate of Corporate Affairs, stories, findings and guidance will be disseminated through a range of activities and outlets, increasing the use of social media. A public seminar programme will be initiated with at least 10 annual events involving internal and external speakers. Launch and dissemination events will also be invested in to maximise the impact of research and evaluation outputs (at least 2 p.a.).

Maintain and develop the doctoral programme by extending existing partnerships with UK and international partners, and building new partnerships, to include doctoral work. Working with partners, investment will be made in curriculum development on doctoral programmes. Likely partners include schools/academies in the UK and beyond. Investment will be made in a new studentship per year for external doctoral students, as well as supporting internal candidates without doctorates through EdD or PhD programmes. Success will be judged by an increase in doctoral completions from the current average of around 5 completions p.a. to an average of 9 by 2020.

New areas of research expertise have emerged, such as teacher education (Hobson), disability studies (Hodge and Reidy) and sexual health (Formby and Hirst; REF3bii). These are attracting income, and will feature in the future investment plans of the SloE.

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

Strategy over the assessment period focused on the recruitment, training, retention and career development of academic staff in an environment that respects diversity and enables staff to achieve their potential and contribute fully to University life. The promotion of diversity and equality in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of academic and research staff is supported by the SHU gender, race and disability equality scheme, which ensures full and inclusive participation in research through compliance with all relevant legislation. Despite this emphasis, women remain under-represented in senior research positions in education and across the university. Responses to this specific issue include the recent launch of a mentoring scheme for female academics with aspirations to achieve promotion to professor. Authorship policy on outputs is to name all researchers who contributed to project design, data collection and analysis, and writing.

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The University is committed to the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, and these underpin institutional policies and practice in relation to research staff. Key investment in 2012-13 included: a dedicated Researcher Development Advisor (1 FTE), a training suite addressing research integrity, and participation in an international collaborative project to develop Professional Skills for Research Leaders. This project resulted in an on-line training framework for early- to mid-career researchers (supported by an £80k investment). SHU has a clear pathway for career development for research staff, allowing for progression from Research Associate, Research Fellow, Senior Research Fellow and Principal Research Fellow to Professor.

As part of succession planning, funding for readerships and professorial posts has also been committed to areas of strategic need (see Section b). The QR income secured as a result of the education submission to RAE2008 has been used to support a small number of researchers with a view to increasing quality and impact for REF2014. Over the 2008-2013 period a total of approximately £300K has been invested in staff development and additional research time, enabling colleagues to produce high-quality outputs (for example Burnett was supported in 2009, McCaig in 2010, Hodge in 2011, Simkins in 2012, and Formby in 2013). All academic staff have time allocated for research and scholarly activity. This investment has also supported the production of outputs by a further 16 members of staff not included in this submission, some of whose outputs were internally rated as 2* or above.

Sustaining the research environment has been a key driver for staffing strategy for all levels of appointment. Professorial appointments have been made to ensure continuity of leadership in key areas of research interest in the ERN. This will be further strengthened in the future by ensuring that areas of growth have professorial leadership as outlined above in the SloE research strategy. Provision is made to ensure that, where possible, junior staff are appointed with doctorates, or are supported through doctoral programmes (e.g. Hart was appointed during the assessment period and is entered as an ECR). Career progression is reviewed through the annual appraisal process. Through this process McCaig (CEIR) was appointed Senior Research Fellow (September 2007), and Formby (CEIR) promoted to Senior Research Fellow (January 2012).

Activities organised by the ERN provide support for staff new to research. Interest groups based around areas of research strength (such as disability studies, teacher education and literacy) support ECRs to develop into mature researchers. ECRs are enculturated into these research communities through regular seminars to discuss research in progress, methodological issues and bid writing. For example Hart has received mentoring support from within the teacher education interest group and is part of this submission. These practices will be built upon by investing further in formal research mentoring in areas of strength in the SloE. In addition to this ***a vibrant research culture will be supported through:***

Doctoral provision. This is encouraged and supported through the appraisal process, and payment of tuition fees for academic staff. 24 members of staff are currently enrolled on doctoral programmes. In the assessment period 14 members of staff have completed doctorates, contributing to building national research capacity and creating a pool of new research staff as part of succession planning. Staff who successfully complete the doctoral programme are encouraged to undertake a course for research supervisors and to act as rapporteurs in early assessments of doctoral students' progress, before engaging in supervision themselves. All individuals included in this submission are involved in doctoral supervision and examination.

A forum on writing for publication. This has been offered as support for staff who are consistently producing high quality outputs (such as Hodge in this submission) as well as to staff (including ECRs) who are developing the quality of their research outputs (for example both Formby and Hart).

Conference attendance. A dedicated resource (£20k p.a.) is available for educational researchers to apply for to support presentation and attendance at national and international conferences. This gives opportunities for researchers at all career stages to participate in

academic communities. Conference papers regularly lead to publications (e.g. Burnett Output 4, Hirst Output 3, Hodge Outputs 2, 3 and 4). ECRs also use presentation and seminar feedback to develop outputs internally rated as at least 2*. For example Hart's Output 1 is based on a paper given at the International Conference on Human Development (2008), and Formby's Output 1 is based on a paper given at the European Sociological Conference (2011).

A seminar programme. The SloE runs a research seminar programme, attended by SHU researchers, doctoral students and external colleagues. Seminars are led by both SHU staff and visiting speakers of national and international standing (for example Furlong, Lawthom, Mackey, Pedder). See <http://bit.ly/16stt6B>.

Small grants for research. A fund of £25k is made available on an annual basis to support interest-led research providing five researchers p.a. with experience of project leadership. This has led to outputs (such as Burnett and Taylor in this submission) and provides staff development for less-experienced researchers who are supported by experienced researchers.

Career development for senior researchers: The development needs of established researchers are agreed through the appraisal process and resources for conference attendance, writing time and mentoring are allocated accordingly. For example investment has been allocated to enable Hobson to be mentored by a more experienced academic from another institution on research leadership.

Research standards are maintained through a number of internal quality control mechanisms. Ethical standards are maintained through policies and procedures laid down by the University's Research Ethics Committee (UREC), and these are regularly revised to comply with EU and national legislation and standards of good practice. SHU's approach to research integrity is recognised by the European Science Foundation (Fostering Research Integrity in Europe, ESF, December 2012) and the university also participates in the UK Universities Research Ethics Network to establish kite-marking for research ethics committees. All funding proposals developed in education are subject to review by the Faculty Ethics Committees, which operates under guidance from UREC. Processes are in accordance with agreed standards of good practice laid down in the GSRU (Government Social Research Unit) and the British Education Research Association (BERA). A risk assessment approach is followed to safeguard the well-being of participants and researchers. The SHU research data archive allows research data to be securely stored in line with data retention policies.

ii. Research students

The doctoral programme comprises traditional PhD provision for both full-time and part-time home and international students, and an EdD programme for part-time home students. During the assessment period there have been 26 completions (11 PhDs and 15 EdDs). The EdD is designed to provide research training to those who commission and use research, and teachers and others who wish to undertake action research as part of their professional practice. Money has been invested to support 4 full-time studentships during the assessment period.

Student support and progression. Doctoral students are supported by supervisory teams, at least one member of which has specialist expertise in the area of focus of the study. A compendium of research training opportunities is available annually. Depending on prior experience, PGR students are required to complete some or all of the MRes in Social Science Research Methods course, which offers core and optional modules on paradigms of social science methodology, encompassing qualitative and quantitative methods. PhD students are also encouraged to attend research training provided at weekends for the EdD Programme (for example modules on methodology in social science, or locating and reviewing literature). Students have an annual entitlement to apply for funding to attend conferences through the Graduate School. Since 2008 the Graduate School has also invested in the on-line skills training package Epigeum, which is available to all research students and staff via the SHU intranet.

Student progress is formally monitored in the first three months for full-time students and six

months for part-time students, when the proposed programme of study is independently assessed by two rapporteurs and an ethics review conducted. Progress is also monitored via the Confirmation of PhD registration stage at the 12 month mark for full-time students. This rigorous assessment of a student's ability to succeed at doctoral level requires the candidate to write a 6,000 word progress report, and then participate in an oral assessment as part of the seminar programme (providing experience of presenting research as part of career development).

Each year, all doctoral students are invited to apply to attend an Erasmus funded Intensive Programme (IP) and dedicated summer school. IPs are organised by the Postgraduate Research Tutor for Education. They offer students the opportunity to network with doctoral students in HEIs across 10 different European countries, and to discuss and present their work in a supportive conference setting. IPs also enable participants to write up their work for publication in an IP volume, following a process of revision and editing with the support of IP staff members. The IP experience thus provides students with the experience of presenting at a conference where they receive supportive critical feedback with regard both to the presentation and publication of their work. The experience of presenting their work in an international context, and networking internationally, supports students' career development. During the assessment period 22 doctoral students have participated in IP summer schools.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income generation. In response to increasing competition for a diminishing pool of external research funding from RCUK and educational charities, focus has been placed on increasing capacity to win funder-led research in areas that match internal expertise. CEIR provides the infrastructure to support funder-led research. Through partnerships with funding bodies, other institutions and educational policy-makers, policy, programme delivery and practice have been influenced (for example REF 3bi). As a result of the call for evidence-based practice in school teaching, a close partnership with the DfE has been developed as demonstrated by funded work on Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (2010). Investment has also been made in developing expertise in quantitative methods and the conduct of randomised controlled trials (RCTs; see below). Over the REF2014 assessment period, £6,074,775 of research income has been secured to support independent, applied and policy-related research. This work is undertaken primarily, but not exclusively, for central and local government and government agencies. Income streams map onto three overlapping areas of research interest and expertise, namely education policy, teacher career development and leadership, and children and young people.

i). Education Policy. Research is based on a longstanding relationship with the DfE. Since 2008 9 studies (value: £737k) for the DfE have been conducted, and a further study has been commissioned (2013, value: £190k). This relationship has been sustained by close links with the School Standards Research and Analysis Team, which commissioned 8 of the 9 studies. Research on school admissions procedures and parental engagement in school choice has critiqued practice and informed policy (3 projects totalling £113k, led by Coldron) and features in this submission. Research on PSHE (£133k, led by Hirst and Formby), the largest ever study of PSHE in England to date, mapped the state of current provision demonstrating how the widespread policy prioritisation of 'core' subjects in the curriculum is at odds with professional understanding that supporting young people's wellbeing directly links to their attainment. The programme of work conducted by McCaig (see outputs 1-4) addresses young people's decision-making in HE, and has been supported through five successfully completed research contracts. These are: AimHigher (£7.5k), Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA, £3.6k), BIS (£99k), the Nuffield Foundation (£13k) and HEA (19k).

ii). Teacher career development and leadership. Research is based on a strong relationship with the National College. 12 studies have been funded: 6 for what was known as the National College for School Leadership (NCSL, value: £358k), and 6 for what was the Teaching Agency (value: £797k). Work with the NCSL developed insights into assessing the effectiveness of leadership programmes (see REF3bi). This is complemented by research into beginning teachers' experience and subsequent career trajectories through the TDA-funded NQT Quality Improvement Study

(value: £510k) which tracked the progress of early career teachers. Hobson's work on Science Teachers' CPD and external mentoring (value: £91k) has developed into an emerging area of research interest in teacher development and school-led CPD (National College, 2013-14, value: £57k).

iii). *Children and young people*. Research includes a focus on curriculum issues as well as factors that influence pupil progress such as PSHE and sex and relationship education (see REF3bii). Quantitative research methods are an area of strength, and expertise in RCT methodologies has resulted in SHU being appointed to the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) evaluation panel (<http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>). This initiative has led to commissions including three in literacy research (value: £115k) involving Merchant and Burnett. This builds on the work of literacy researchers which informed the 2013 DfE L6 test study (value: £74k). This area of expertise has also contributed to small national studies for UKLA and the BBC (total: £9k) and commissions to evaluate a number of Booktrust programmes (total: £116k) and further DfE policy research in this field (value: £74k). In an innovative project for JISC (value: £197k), Merchant drew on his research on Web 2.0 technologies (Output 2) to lead in the design of an Open Education Resource on digital literacies for teachers and teachers educators. This income has been used to support research outputs of Burnett and Merchant, as well as developing other researchers in this curriculum area.

Infrastructure and facilities. CEIR provides an infrastructure for supporting contract research, and enabling the achievement of high-quality outcomes. Relationships between academics within and beyond SHU are brokered, the academic quality of research is monitored, and projects are evaluated. Skilled research managers on permanent contracts support PIs (including all entered in this submission) in all stages of research projects, from the construction of proposals, via submission and management, to writing reports. These research managers are supported by experienced research administrators. In addition, relationships with external funders, stakeholders, researchers and consultants are managed. CEIR supports academics in achieving impact for their research, for example through relationship management and liaison with SHU's press office.

SHU's Research and Innovation Office provides central expertise on innovation, applied research and knowledge transfer. Dedicated personnel (11.8 FTE) maximise intellectual outputs and impact from market-driven research, facilitate the raising of funding to support research, facilitate its exploitation, and create commercial technology transfer relationships with external organisations.

The library is very well resourced in education, integrating electronic and hard copy formats with excellent IT facilities in a range of different learning environments to meet the varied needs of researchers. A fast and effective Document Supply Service obtains items for researchers which are not held in the University's collections. Expert help in sourcing and using information resources and information literacy skills training is provided by Information Specialists and their Faculty support teams. Learning Centre Helpdesks bring together a wide range of services, including information enquiries and 24-hour IT support. Members of staff deposit their work in the SHU Research Archive, an open access repository containing scholarly outputs and publications authored by researchers at the University.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

As well as routine academic activities such as peer review for academic journals, and attendance and presentation at academic conferences, staff included in this submission have made the following **contributions to the discipline during the assessment period**:

Journal Editorships: 3 submitted members of staff have edited peer-reviewed journals of high standing (Burnett, Hobson & Merchant), and 2 have acted as associate or special issue editors (Merchant & Simkins).

Editorial board membership: Submitted researchers contributed as editorial board members to the following journals: Educational Leadership Management and Administration; International

Journal of Behavioral Science; Journal of Medical Law and Ethics; International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education; Literacy; Research in Science Education; Education et la Didactique; The Curriculum Journal.

Peer review: Submitted staff have reviewed for the following national and international research councils and associations: AERA, USA; ARC - Australia; BERA; Dutch Programme Council for Educational Research; the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences; the European Education Research Association; ESRC; the SSRC, Canada; MRC, Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research; Nuffield; the International Reading Association; National Institute of Health Research; the Leverhulme Trust; and the Wellcome Trust. Leach is a member of the ESRC peer review college and has served as a member of the ESRC First Grants Scheme Peer Review and Commissioning Panel (2009). Macaskill was an invited member of the expert working group on *Science and Society (Developing Public Trust in Science)* for Department of Business Innovation and Science (BIS) and member of the follow-up implementation group.

Learned societies: Hodge is a founder member of the *Disability Research Forum* and has been a member of the management group for the ESRC-funded project *Does Every Child Matter, Post-Blair? The interconnections of disabled childhoods* (2008-11), and served on the steering group of the award-winning Dipex/Healthtalkonline project (2007-8 and 2010-11). Leach was a member of the International Advisory Group for the meetings of the European Science Education Research Association in Lyon (2011) and Istanbul (2009), and was elected Academician of the Academy of Social Sciences in 2009 where he is a member of the nominations committee. He is Deputy Chair of the Education Sub-panel for REF2014. Merchant is a member of the Executive Committee of UKLA and chairs the association's Research Committee; and Simkins is chair of BELMAS.

Keynote addresses: Submitted staff have given keynote addresses at: UKLA/BERA International Research Symposium: Teaching and Researching Writing; the Centre for Study of New Literacies international Conference; the ESRC Teacher Education Research Network Conference (2009); the British Academy of Childhood Disability (2011); the World Association of Lesson Studies (WALS), Universiti Brunei Darussalam (2010); the UKLA International Conference (2009); the Mount Saint-Vincent Literacy Conference, Toronto (2009); the Hong Kong Discourse Analysis Symposium (2013); and the Australian Literacy Education Association international conference (2013).

Other contributions: Researchers are also involved in reviewing and contributing to international research handbooks (for example, Burnett, *The Handbook of Early Literacy* and *The International Handbook of Research in Children's Literacy, Learning and Culture*; Hobson, *The SAGE Handbook of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*; Leach, *The International Handbook of Research on Conceptual Change*; and Merchant *The International Handbook of Research in Children's Literacy, Learning & Culture*).

Education has adopted a strategic approach to research collaboration with other universities and research institutes. Examples include: a collaboration with Lancaster University and the University of Sheffield through which the ESRC-funded seminar series 'Children & Young People's Digital Literacies in Virtual Online Spaces' was supported (RES-451-26-0731, 2009-10: Merchant); an inter-university collaboration with the University of Sheffield, funded by HEFCE, which has led onto a number of joint initiatives including the JISC-funded Digital Futures in Teacher Education project (Merchant and Burnett); the Modes of Mentoring and Coaching project, funded by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, involving a collaboration with the University of Nottingham and the National Foundation for Educational Research 2011-12 (Hobson). In collaboration with Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and the University of Chester, the international 'Theorising Normalcy and the Mundane' conference was supported (2011, 2012 and 2013; Hodge). In 2011 SHU hosted the Critical Autism Seminar day, a joint venture between SHU, MMU and the University of Toronto (Hodge). As mentioned above, SHU has participated in an Erasmus-funded Intensive Programme (IP) to support doctoral training in education, in collaboration with HEIs across 10 European countries.