

Institution: University of Sussex

Unit of Assessment: UoA 25 Education

1. OVERVIEW

The Department of Education, located within the School of Education and Social Work (ESW), provides an environment for research which

- is based around six priority areas
 - access, equity, gender and inclusion in schooling and higher education;
 - childhood, youth and family studies;
 - education and development in low-income countries;
 - educational planning, governance and financing;
 - learning, teaching and assessment to improve educational quality, equity and outcomes;
 - teacher and other professional education, development and learning; and
- aims to be interdisciplinary, methodologically diverse, innovative and interactive with policy and practice.

There are four research Centres:

- the Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER);
- the Centre for Innovation and Research in Cognition, Learning and Teaching (CIRCLETS);
- the Centre for International Education (CIE); and
- the ESW-based Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY).

The priority research areas listed above cross the research centres. The Department has 24.2 FTE and has attracted research grants valued at £5,570,000, with an expenditure of £4,486,000 since 1 January 2008.

2. RESEARCH STRATEGY

The aims in the REF period were to

- make internationally-recognised contributions to knowledge and understanding in each of the six fields;
- increase research income so that no less than half comes from research councils or other peer-reviewed sources;
- ensure that all externally-funded research leads to internationally excellent publications;
- promote research outputs with dissemination strategies designed to significantly inform policy, practice and/or theory; and
- increase the number of research students registered and the rate of completion and attract more externally-financed research student awards.

An enabling research infrastructure has been developed to support these strategic research aims, included building research leadership, described in Section 3 on staffing. Aim 2 was clearly met and is addressed in Section 4. The other aims have been approached and met through the following strategic objectives:

Enhancing and diversifying high-quality, successful, sustainable research activity and consultancy

Building on the momentum established with our existing strands of research, we identify

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opportunities and encourage the development of interdisciplinary bids. The strategy for the Department is directed by the Research Committee, which is chaired by the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange (DRKE) and the Professorial Group, chaired by the Head of School. We also have a dedicated senior Research Development Officer – based in the University central Research & Enterprise Services – to support new research and bid development.

The first aim has centred on developing the excellence of the work in the research centres. Evidence of significant achievement of this objective, in each research centre, includes:

- **The Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER)**

CHEER has undertaken the following major research projects, where the excellence of one project led to follow-on work, such as The Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Developing an Equity Scorecard (Morley, ESRC/DFID) and the follow-on project Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Impact, Influence and Innovation (Morley, ESRC/DFID). Additionally, the ESRC provided funding for a seminar series for 'Imagining the University of the Future' (Hey and Morley). CHEER also secured funding from the Equality Challenge Unit to examine the experience of BME higher education staff in England (Hey). While much smaller than the CIE (5FTE), CHEER has generated £728,000 in research income since 2008.

- **The Centre for Innovation and Research in Cognition, Learning and Teaching (CIRCLETS)**

CIRCLETS has built on established relationships with central government and NGOs in impact-related consultancy and advisory work (e.g. UNICEF; DfE expert working group; HEA). Research projects have included:

- a European Union Marie Curie study on mathematics and science teaching (Boaler);
- an Esmee Fairbairn study of expectations and achievements of mathematics students (Boaler);
- a UNICEF evaluation of the Rights Respecting Schools Award Programme (Sebba);
- a Qualifications and Curriculum Authority project to evaluate and trial mathematics qualifications (Drake);
- a project on Musical Bridges: Transforming Transition – Evaluation funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (Mackrill);
- a National Endowment Science, Technology and Arts-funded project to develop a typology of youth-led innovation (Griffiths);
- an ESRC study of user engagement in research findings (Eraut);
- an Esmee Fairbairn project on formative assessment (Crossouard); and
- an evaluation of the research element of the Teaching Schools Programme (Sebba, Kent and Trengenza).

These research projects focus on practice development and related very specifically to Aim 4. While composed largely of early career researchers, CIRCLETS has generated £758,000 in grant income since 2008.

- **The Centre for International Education (CIE)**

CIE has hosted the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity across 10 countries funded by DFID (Lewin – see Case Study). Further research arising from this project included that on Expansion of the Speed School Programme with Geneva Global. CIE also hosted the second-largest project out of the Hewlett Teacher Preparation Project in Africa (Akyeampong, Pryor, Westbrook) and work on Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Zones (Novelli, Sayed) for UNICEF. CIE's internationally recognised work on gendered school experiences and abuse of girls in schools includes work on Sexuality Education (Dunne, Oxfam; McLaughlin, CCE). Other recent projects include those from DFID (Dunne and Lewin) and Adamu State Government (Dunne), continuing the research on gender and school access in Nigeria. Work on the privatisation of schools is supported through a new research project in

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Malawi (Zeitlyn and Lewin, Open Society Foundation), and there is a growing international profile in the Department in research on fragile states and conflict (Novelli, UNICEF and DFID). CIE has generated £2,226,000 in research income since 2008.

- **The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY)**

CIRCY was established in 2012, as a school-wide centre. It has secured research projects for Education from funders including the ESRC and the EU. Grant capture includes an EU Framework 7 Intra-European Fellowship (Boddy) and two competitive grants from the Office of the Children's Commissioner (Gazeley, Boddy) in addition to research and consultancy income from funders including the Fostering Network, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and the European Research Council. Grants led in Education include an ESRC National Centre for Research Methods project on habitual practices in family lives (Boddy) and a Nuffield-funded project 'Working with Families of Children Placed Away from Home - Cross-European Perspectives' (Boddy).

Producing internationally excellent publications and making leading contributions to disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields

This has been supported through the protection of research time within staff contracts, mentoring and group critique within research centres as part of the staffing and research strategy. This has led to some outputs reaching the very highest levels of academic esteem, indicated by the receipt of prestigious awards. Some examples include:

- the Joyce Cain Award for the best article on Africa in a refereed journal in 2012, awarded by the Comparative and International Education Society of the USA for Lewin and Sabates' (2012) article in the *International Journal of Educational Development*, which was also the Editor's choice for this journal;
- Dunne and Gazeley's (2008) article in the *British Journal of the Sociology of Education (BJSE)*, which remains in the top 5 most-read articles in *BJSE* and Muijs and Dunne's (2010) paper in *Educational Research*, which remains in the top 10 most-read articles in *Educational Research*;
- major reports affecting UK and international practice, e.g. Boddy's report for the Care Inquiry; Gazeley's report on school exclusions for the Children's Commissioner; Sebba, Kent and Trenganza's work on joint practice development; Lewin's work on access to education in the Global South (see impact case study); Novelli's work on peacebuilding, conflict and education (see impact case study); and Sutherland's and Westbrook's work on assessment and reading (see impact case study); and
- interdisciplinary work, including Boddy's work across education and social care.

Extending the local, national and global significance and reach of our research, impacting on policy, practice and real lives

The Department's strategy for developing impact and networking has included the use of the following mechanisms:

- national and international conferences with a focus on policy;
- policy briefings, with key recommendations for effecting policy and/or practical change; and
- the communication of key recommendations for policy and practice through our relationship with key stakeholders, who include professional students and alumni, as well as representatives of agencies, partnerships and organisations such as The Care Inquiry, the French government, the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), DfE, DoH, DFID, UNESCO and UNICEF.

This is further supported through wider activities such as the Research Centres' Open Seminar series (recorded and available to view online and archived to ensure global accessibility and across time zones) as well as through targeted dissemination and impact work built into funding proposals, whatever their size and scope, or global or local focus. Networking engagements lead

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to invitations to high-profile debates such as those on privatisation between Lewin and M. Barber at the All Party Parliamentary Group on Global Education for All.

Some examples of excellence include:

- international work funded by global organisations, such as that on peacebuilding and education in post-conflict zones (Novelli, Sayed), and on exclusion and inclusion in education (Morley, Lewin);
- CHEER's keynote symposia at the 2013 BERA Conference, the 2012 SRHE Conference and the 2013 Gender and Education Conference; and
- Morley's keynote presentations, including those at the World Universities Forum, Vancouver, and the European Rectors' Conference, Istanbul.

Developing and promoting international and interdisciplinary networks and collaborations

Colleagues have actively built and nurtured existing relationships with key policy organisations, with former postgraduate students, with key funding bodies and with international organisations and universities by, *inter alia*, including former postgraduates in conference symposia (Roed at CHEER's SRHE Conference), membership of influential policy round-tables such as The Equality Challenge Unit (Morley), membership of the ESRC Peer Review College (Hey, Morley and others) and McLaughlin working with an Australian network on sexuality research methodology. Our research has been conducted and disseminated across five continents, and international research collaboration is a major feature of the wider research environment, evidenced in the range of funders we engage with. These include:

- links and relationships developed over the last 25 years with apex institutions in Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Malaysia, Senegal, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Uganda, generating research projects and flows of postgraduate research students;
- staff and postgraduate students contributing significantly to the current UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report on Education for All (Ayeampong and Lewin) and doing so every year since 2000;
- the Government of Ghana sponsoring 20 doctoral students to work on access and equity issues on a programme worth approximately £1 million since 2007, thus confirming the Department of Education at Sussex as the Ministry's network partner of choice and forming a significant collaboration with a government; and
- the CREATE programme investing over £500,000 in communications, staff and activity to establish a sustained international network and website. The project website attracts over 15,000 unique visitors every year and is continuously updated.

International activity spans the research centres. International staff exchanges and visiting professorships and fellowships since 2008 include the University of Orebro, Sweden (Morley), the National University of Malaysia (Morley) and Honorary Professorships in Beijing and Hangzhou (Lewin). We have encouraged visiting professors from the Asia-Pacific, including those from the University of Hong Kong, Prof. B Macfarlane; South Asia, Prof. Maithree Wickramasinghe, the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka; and Australia, Prof. B Johnson; and, from Europe, Dr Join-Lambert, Université Paris Ouest. We have also encouraged visiting fellows from sub-Saharan and West Africa, including Dr Manzoor Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Cape Coast University, and Dr Atto Essuman, the Chief Director of the Ghana Ministry of Education. Other countries represented included India – where the Vice Chancellor of the National University of Educational Planning in Delhi, Prof. R Govinda, visited – and China.

Investing in research confidence, competence and capacity across all faculty, with the bespoke nurturing of early-career faculty and doctoral researchers

A central commitment within our approach has been to provide clear mechanisms to mentor early career and new researchers. We pay close attention to individual research plans and to meeting

specific development needs. There is a formal system of research mentoring across the Department. Recent examples of the mentoring and staff development of early career researchers include joint research projects on privatisation with Zeitlyn, supported by Lewin, and on girls' participation with Durrani, supported by Dunne. Morrice was supervised by Hey for her doctorate and has been mentored by CHEER to produce publications in leading journals on her work on refugees in HE. Crossouard was supervised by Pryor and is now a leading scholar on research on doctoral studies.

The development of research activity in initial teacher education (ITE) was identified as a strategic priority at the 2008 RAE and this has been implemented by increased involvement of ITE staff through their being given dedicated time for obtaining their doctorates (4 members of ITE staff are currently registered for doctoral study (2 PhD and 2 EdD), 4 have completed EdDs and 2 have completed PhDs since the 2008 RAE), and their involvement in research bidding, project management, research and dissemination activities and the development of outputs through CIRCLETS. ITE-based projects and PIs include the Paul Hamlyn Musical Bridges evaluation (Mackrill), a National College for School Leadership project (Sebba, Kent), a Hewlett Foundation project (Westbrook), and an AstraZeneca Science Teaching Trust project (Chandler-Grevatt). There has been a policy of moving staff from short-term contracts and this is now complete. We are also now advertising for a professor and research leader for this group of staff. Work is also under way to increase the synergy between the centres.

Developing doctoral research for current and future academic and professional leaders

Our doctoral students include teachers, lecturers and managers from universities, colleges and schools, tutors and trainers in other fields such as health and industry, civil servants and those involved in planning and training, and research and consultancy work in international organisations. High-profile research students during the REF period have included the Chief Education Officer of Ghana, the former Director-General of the Malaysian education system, the National Director of Educational Planning in Sri Lanka and senior staff in international development agencies, including UNICEF, the World Bank and the African Development Bank. Many are practising educators undertaking research part-time on themes related to their personal and professional development. The International EdD largely recruits international professionals and expatriate workers in the field of development. Doctoral students are linked to research centres, some also taking on Graduate Teaching Assistant or Research Associate roles.

Future priorities are to continue to strengthen the research leadership by expanding our research leadership team and support for research activity, to increase the synergy between the research centres and to continue the drive for excellence.

3. PEOPLE Staffing strategy and staff development

Building research leadership through a strong team of professors (Dunne, Hey, Hudson, Lewin, McLaughlin, Morley, Novelli) who are located in the four research centres has been a key strategy to promote excellence. The professors report to the ESW Research Committee, host mentoring for early and mid-career researchers, promote research that consolidates our existing strengths and encourage growth into new interdisciplinary areas (e.g. in childhood and youth, education in fragile states, privatisation, aid to education, and diversity in leadership).

Since the 2008 RAE, strategic appointments have been made to address the Department's research objectives, particularly the development of a new interdisciplinary centre, and to build research capacity within ITE. A new Head of School (Hudson, 2012) joined the University, contributing directly to research capacity within CIRCLETS. Other senior strategic appointments include Professor McLaughlin (also linked to CIRCLETS) and a Reader (Boddy, co-directing CIRCY as part of a cross-School investment in childhood and youth). These appointments develop a capacity to pursue ambitious research grant capture, develop international research collaborations – and European bids in particular, support early and mid-career researchers in developing bidding capacity and research outputs, and extend research impact through

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established links with government and NGOs nationally and internationally. There has also been an aim to develop new areas of interdisciplinary activity, bringing together expertise in Sociology (e.g. Dunne, Sayed, Gazeley, Morrice, Morley, Hey, Crossouard, Pryor, Aynsley); the Economics of Education and Development Studies (e.g. Lewin, Sabates); Political Economy (e.g. Novelli); Psychology (e.g. Boddy, McLaughlin) and Anthropology (e.g. Zeitlyn). In addition, there has been a major move to decrease the use of short-term contracts and to support existing staff who are undertaking doctorates. We promote a challenging but supportive research environment for staff at all stages of their research careers. Approaches to staff development include intensive workshops, internal review, individual feedback and the targeted mentoring of early and mid-career staff in writing bids, project management and research outputs. Appraisal and performance management support staff in achieving potential and aspirations. Staff development is a key strategic objective and is discussed above.

Research students

We have 133 students currently registered for full- and part-time doctoral degrees in Education. Research students in Education study in a range of different modes, including MPhil +MSc SRM (5 students); PhD in Education – full- and part-time routes (48 students); Doctor of Education (EdD) – a part-time doctorate for home students (29 students); and International Doctor of Education (EdD) – a distance-learning doctorate (51 students).

Studentships and the ESRC Doctoral Training Centre

Reflecting our international research profile, we recruit students who attract prestigious scholarships. For example, the ESRC has provided seven scholarships since 2008, five high-esteem PhD scholarships were awarded to CREATE by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission and two studentships were attached to the ESRC/DFID-funded Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania project. CREATE has had 23 PhD studentships related to its work across several institutions.

The ESRC Sussex Doctoral Training Centre was established in 2011, one of a network of only 21 such centres in the UK. As an important part of our strategic approach to be affiliated with and to secure high-profile doctoral studentships, Education played a formative role in establishing and running the DTC. The Department is responsible for the pathway 'Knowledge and Society: Well-being, Health', and makes a major contribution to teaching the MSc in Social Research Methods and advanced training courses offered to Sussex social science PGR students and to the whole DTC network. In the first three years of the DTC, PhD students in the School of Education and Social Work have been successful in securing ten full-time ESRC studentships, two of them involving collaborative partnerships. Education faculty undertake cross-school supervision to strengthen interdisciplinarity and innovation.

Developing and sustaining postgraduate research culture

In addition to cross-disciplinary events and researcher training organised by the University of Sussex Doctoral School, specific research-focused activities within the School create an intellectually lively PGR culture. Activities include doctoral supervision training, a support forum and a Twitter group, reading and writing groups, monthly work-in-progress sessions, informal weekly lunchtime meetings involving a presentation by students, staff or visiting faculty, an Open Seminar series, the International EdD Summer School which includes a DTC advanced training course and participation from PhD and home EdD students, and an annual one-day student-run national inter-disciplinary conference. These activities provide peer and faculty support to postgraduate and early career researchers to help them to strengthen and develop their theoretical and methodological understanding and provide opportunities for intellectual exchange and support to address the challenges that are presented in the process of conducting research. This includes approaches such as collaborative writing and publication between students and faculty, and PGR students' inclusion in funded projects and conferences.

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Postgraduate research students are actively engaged in organising public research events, contributing to their training as future research leaders. Additionally, in 2010 and in 2012, Education PhD students organised well-attended national research-student conferences at Sussex in conjunction with the British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE), the first including a career-development workshop. On DTC Pathway Development, PhD students are supported to arrange conferences and training (e.g. May 2013 'My relation to my research'). Doctoral students are encouraged to present at external conferences (e.g. BERA, SRHE, UKFIET, BAICE), in some instances within faculty-led symposia, and many secure publications in academic journals, sometimes within the timeframe of their doctorate.

4. INCOME, INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

Despite its relatively small size of 24.2 FTE, Education has attracted a large number of research grants, valued at £5,570,000 with an expenditure of £4,486,000 since 1 January 2008. These grants are distributed across the six priority areas and have led to internationally excellent publications, high-profile dissemination and knowledge exchange events, and influence at international and national levels on educational development. Our average research income of about £40,000 per FTE active research staff member per year represents our success in obtaining funding and the esteem in which grant-givers hold our work. This success has been underpinned by a strong research infrastructure. The grants we have received have been from a variety of sources that include:

UK government departments, mainly DFID, DfES, DBIS	£2,998,224
Overseas charities (open competition) mainly the Hewlett Foundation	£750,473
UK research councils – mainly the ESRC	£643,745
UK charities (open competition)	£567,672
Overseas Other	£187,351
Overseas industry, commerce and public corporations	£180,758
EU government	£122,776
UK charities (closed competition)	£44,968
Other UK sources	£44,599
EU charities (open competition)	£30,156

The rate of bidding has increased over the last three years, with a big jump in 2011-12, and so has the success rate. In 2010-11, twenty-seven bids were submitted, eight were successful and the total income was £338,030. In 2011-12 thirty-one bids were submitted, fifteen were successful and the total income was £691,978. In 2012-13 thirty-one bids were submitted of which eight are undecided. The income from the confirmed bids so far is £332,682.

Excellent facilities to support research activity and a strong research community include a dedicated office and meeting space for research centres, providing opportunity for staff and PGR student exchange, mentoring, strategic development to support Department research strategy; and, for research students, equipped with computing and secure storage. The University Library offers wide-ranging bibliographic databases, access to an extensive collection of academic journals, newspapers, periodicals and social-media resources, and dedicated on-line subject guides and specialised training and support to postgraduate students and staff on request.

On-going research-support and staff-development programmes include bid-writing, EU funding, researcher development and personal career development. Staff-development workshops include the supervision of doctoral students, research ethics and preparing ethics applications, and writing research bids. Research seminars (often with international external speakers) are open to staff, practitioners and students, with live web-streaming and remote web access; research workshops and work-in-progress seminars and a cross-School reading group involve active contribution from both staff and students.

5. COLLABORATION OR CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCIPLINE OR RESEARCH BASE

The research in the Department has made a range of contributions to the wider disciplines and research base.

• Interdisciplinary and collaborative research

- CIRCY lead a Methodological Innovation Network on qualitative longitudinal methods, in partnership with the Universities of Southampton, Cardiff and Manchester, and Birkbeck College London;
- CIRCY leads a cross-national project 'Family Lives and the Environment within the NCRM NOVELLA Node, in partnership with the IOE London, Oxford University, UEL, and Sri Padmavathi Mahila Viswavidyalayam University;
- CIRCLETS led the 'Understanding Teachers' Learning Seminar Series' in collaboration with the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education, and CUREE, which aims to produce a research agenda and major research-funding proposal;
- CIE is undertaking two DFID-financed robust reviews on teacher education and on fragile states which involve interdisciplinary teams and cross-institutional collaborations (£125,000); and
- CHEER has extensive dissemination and knowledge exchange activities with other institutions such as the Universities of Middlesex in Dubai, Hong Kong, Melbourne, Auckland, Victoria, New Zealand and the National University of Malaysia.

• National and international academic collaborations and advisory posts

- Akyeampong is Senior Policy advisor to the Global Monitoring Report.
- McLaughlin is advisor to the Government of Kazakhstan on their educational reform and to the National Children's Bureau on selective research projects.
- Morley is a Board Member of GEXcel International Collegium for Advanced Transdisciplinary Gender Studies, Sweden.
- Lewin is senior advisor and facilitator to the Commonwealth Ministers for Education Post 2015.
- Novelli is advisor to UNICEF on the development of research on conflict and fragile states and education.
- Sabates is technical advisor to the Government of Rwanda.

• Contribution to professional associations or learned societies

- In 2012, Hey was made an Academician of the Academy of Social Sciences in recognition of her work on the affective dynamics of institutional logics, inter-professional relationships and black and minority-ethnic academics.
- Colleagues in ITE have contributed to work on aspects of the curriculum and professional practice (Mackrill on music education and Sebba, Kent and Tregenza on joint practice development).