

**Institution:** Queen's University Belfast

**Unit of Assessment:** 25 (Education)

### a. Overview

Queen's School of Education (QSoE) is a thriving and dynamic research unit with a strong research culture and ambitious research strategy. The School has 29.8 FTE academic staff, with 88% of eligible staff being returned in this submission. The vitality and sustainability of research within QSoE is clearly evidenced by its success in meeting and transcending goals set in RAE2008 for this current reporting period. Since 2008 there has been: a 20% increase in volume of staff (FTE) submitted; a near three-fold increase in the number of doctoral degrees awarded per year; and a more than ten-fold increase in research income achieved per year.

Research within QSoE is overseen by a Director of Research ([Leitch](#)) who is a member of, and reports to, the School Management Board chaired by the Head of School ([Connolly](#)). The Director of Research chairs the QSoE Research Committee that oversees and plans activities and provides strategic direction for research within the School. The School's core areas of research strength identified in RAE2008 have been considerably enhanced over the current period through strategic investment in new staff appointments and the development of four research centres. Three of these research centres are taking forward existing areas of research excellence prioritized in 2008 (**Centre for Shared Education**; **Centre for Effective Education**; and **Centre for Children's Rights**) and are now providing the platform for QSoE to position itself as an international leader in relation to these distinctive areas. A fourth centre (**Centre for Behaviour Analysis**) represents a new and developing area for strategic investment identified by the School.

A strong commitment to research capacity building is evident in the development of a QSoE **Doctoral Research Centre** that coordinates postgraduate research training and provision across the School. Through the **Improving Children's Lives** initiative, QSoE also plays a lead role in fostering interdisciplinary research with children and young people across the university and with a wide range of external stakeholders regionally, nationally and internationally.

### b. Research strategy

**Achievements Since 2008:** In its submission to RAE2008, QSoE identified seven priority areas for the current reporting period. The goals set for each have all been met and transcended:

*i) To enhance our position as a leading international centre for research on diversity and inclusion in education.* QSoE committed itself to strengthen its internationally recognised research into segregated, integrated and faith-based education through an emerging research area on school collaboration led by [Gallagher](#). Since 2008, this has been achieved through a major initiative – the Sharing Education Programme (SEP) ([www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk](http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk)) – that has involved over 130 schools and over 9,000 pupils. SEP represents a highly innovative approach to providing opportunities for children and young people from different backgrounds to learn together through schools from different sectors collaborating in sustained and meaningful ways. Alongside achieving major impact nationally and internationally (see impact case study), the research has led to a range of high quality outputs ([Donnelly](#), [Gallagher](#), [Hughes](#)).

With the aim of consolidating and extending this work, QSoE has invested significantly in the establishment of the **Centre for Shared Education (CSE)** led by [Hughes](#) ([www.qub.ac.uk/cse](http://www.qub.ac.uk/cse)). The Centre defines 'shared education' broadly to include cross-school collaborations as well as promoting inclusion and collaborative relationships within school. CSE provides a focal point for a number of staff researching: the impact of school collaboration and inter-group contact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour ([Donnelly](#), [Gallagher](#), [Hughes](#)); the role of integrated education ([McGlynn](#)); curricular initiatives to reduce prejudice and promote respect for difference ([Connolly](#), [Emerson](#)); and the role of school leadership in divided societies ([Giannakaki](#)).

*ii) To become recognised as a leading international centre for educational research on children and childhood.* QSoE committed itself to build on previous University investment in the inter-disciplinary Research Forum for the Child, led by QSoE ([Lundy](#)). Since 2008 the Forum has been successful in facilitating a range of inter-disciplinary research networks and capacity-building activities. Most significantly it has given rise to the **Improving Children's Lives (ICL)** initiative, also led by QSoE ([Connolly](#)), that is now taking forward interdisciplinary collaborations developed in this area as outlined further below ([www.improvingchildrenslives.org](http://www.improvingchildrenslives.org)).

Existing research and expertise within QSoE in relation to children's rights has been central to the development of ICL and its vision of promoting an approach to children's services that is: outcomes-focused; evidence-informed; and children's rights-based. QSoE also committed itself to

taking forward this programme of work around children's rights and has thus invested significantly in the establishment of the **Centre for Children's Rights (CCR)** led by Lundy ([www.qub.ac.uk/ccr](http://www.qub.ac.uk/ccr)). CCR is an interdisciplinary centre with significant contributions from staff in Philosophy, Social Policy, Social Work and Law as well as those in QSoE (Elwood, Emerson, Jerome, Kerr, Leitch, Lloyd and Lundy). Research within CCR focuses on: substantive children's rights issues; children's participation in decision-making; and children's rights-based research methods. This work has also achieved significant impact (see impact case study).

*iii) To enhance our expertise in evaluation of the effectiveness of educational interventions; particularly in relation to improving outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people.* In 2008 QSoE committed itself to achieve this through the newly established NFER at Queen's Centre for Educational Research, led by Connolly. While maintaining collaborative links with the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), the centre became independent in 2010 and was re-launched as the **Centre for Effective Education (CEE)**, initially led by Connolly and then by Thurston from 2013 ([www.qub.ac.uk/cee](http://www.qub.ac.uk/cee)). CEE has developed considerable expertise in the use of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and has undertaken more RCTs than any other educational research centre in Europe. To date, the CEE has successfully completed 16 RCTs and has a further 14 currently running. These trials have involved over 807 educational settings and over 36,000 children and young people. CEE provides a focal point for staff in relation to RCTs, large-scale quantitative and longitudinal research and systematic reviews (Biggart, Connolly, Emerson, Kerr, Lloyd, McGuinness, Miller, Niens, Thurston). In working closely with educational providers and other stakeholders it has also achieved significant impact (see impact case study).

*iv) To continue to inform curriculum, assessment and pedagogy research arenas.* Since 2008, QSoE has continued to make significant contributions to a range of areas including: assessment and qualifications (Elwood); assessment for learning (Leitch); science education (Jarman; McClune); English education (Walsh); citizenship and human rights education (Emerson, Jerome, Niens); and language learning (O'Boyle). While continuing actively to support and invest in broad-ranging research across these areas, QSoE is also seeking to enhance this work further by drawing upon expertise from the QSoE research centres described above. Examples include: work with the CCR on children and young people's participation in assessment policy and practice (Elwood, Kerr, Leitch, Lundy) and children's rights-based approaches to researching citizenship and human rights education (Emerson, Jerome); and also work with the CEE in undertaking RCT evaluations of the effects of a wide range of curricular and pedagogical initiatives (Biggart, Connolly, Emerson, McGuinness, Miller, Niens, Thurston). In addition, QSoE has made a strategic investment in the establishment of the **Centre for Behaviour Analysis (CBA)** led by Dillenburger. CBA will build upon the internationally recognised work of Dillenburger on children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and the significant networks created through this regionally and internationally. With the strategic appointment of a new lecturer (Dounavi), the CBA will seek to consolidate this programme of work whilst also broadening it to apply the science of behaviour analysis to other areas of education, pedagogy, curriculum and learning across the lifespan.

*v) To maintain our pre-eminent role in harnessing global excellence for local purpose and advantage to inform the development of educational policy and practice in Northern Ireland.* QSoE made a commitment to continue this work through ongoing advisory roles to the Department of Education, Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment and other key organisations. This work has been significantly extended since 2008. In addition, one of the key goals associated with the establishment of the four research centres and also the cross-university **Improving Children's Lives (ICL)** initiative has been to enhance significantly this influence and impact. This is all clearly evidenced in later sections below and in our impact (see REF3a).

*vi) To develop our existing research capacity building role in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.* QSoE has continued to make a leading contribution to capacity building across the island of Ireland. QSoE hosted the ESRC Regional Training Centre for Northern Ireland (2009-11) and acted as a hub for extending capacity in social sciences research methods by building on the expertise developed through the ESRC-TLRP projects. Moreover, efforts regarding research capacity building have been consolidated and extended through the recently established **Doctoral Research Centre (DRC)** led by Elwood that includes the organization, with University College Dublin, of an annual all-Ireland doctoral conference (described later). In addition, the research centres will make a significant contribution to postgraduate research training in their respective areas of specialism. Alongside doctoral research supervision, plans are underway to offer new

## Environment template (REF5)

masters programmes, linked to the research centres, that have strong specialist methods training: Quantitative Methods in Education (CEE); Children's Rights (CCR); and Applied Behaviour Analysis (CBA). In addition, QSoE has made a major contribution to capacity building through its leadership of the interdisciplinary and cross-university **Improving Children's Lives (ICL)** initiative (described below).

*vii) To continue to provide a dynamic research environment which attracts international researchers and students.* This final commitment is being achieved through all of the more specific initiatives and plans outlined above. QSoE currently has 20 international doctoral students and a number of our home students are engaged in international collaborative research.

**Future Plans and Priority Areas:** QSoE remains committed to ensuring that it contributes fully to the development of education policy and practice locally and globally through undertaking world-leading research. Within this, and reflecting its distinctive areas of specialist expertise, QSoE seeks to contribute to the development of educational policies and programmes that: a) promote social cohesion, good relations and respect for diversity; b) reduce educational inequalities and promote social inclusion; c) realise the rights of children and young people, particularly those from disadvantaged and marginalised groups; and d) are effective in improving social and educational outcomes for all learners.

The key driver for achieving this vision will be through continued strategic investments in the four research centres and the Doctoral Research Centre that have been set the following seven core priorities for the next five years:

1. continue to undertake high quality research and produce world-leading outputs;
2. seek to sustain our levels of external research income generation from a range of funders and to increase the proportion of funding from RCUK and other high quality peer-reviewed sources;
3. develop further international collaborations with key international research centres;
4. increase the number of staff within QSoE collaborating with the four research centres and also increase collaborative working between the centres;
5. enhance further the experience of postgraduate research students, their facilities and inclusion with the work of the four centres and also the numbers of international students;
6. continue to play a major role in impacting on education policy and practice locally and to increase further the impact of this work on national and international policy and practice; and
7. contribute further to research capacity building through masters and doctoral courses, bespoke training and engagement in national and international events.

**Methods for Monitoring and Attainment of Targets:** Each centre is in the process of completing a strategic plan for the next five years that will set out objectives and targets aligned with the above seven QSoE goals. These will all be considered and agreed by QSoE Research Committee to ensure that activities across the four centres are aligned and coordinated. Similarly, a five year plan for the Doctoral Research Centre is also being finalised that will be considered as part of this process to ensure that its range of research capacity building activities and supports for postgraduate research students align with and are informed by the work of the research centres.

A comprehensive system of appraisal for all academic and research staff within QSoE supports the achievement of these targets. All staff complete appraisal at the beginning of the academic year to identify objectives and targets and development needs. A mid-year review meeting is also required to assess progress and what additional supports may be required; achievements are then formally reviewed at the end of the year.

### c. People, including:

**Staffing strategy and staff development:** The success of QSoE's research strategy is evident in the increase in volume of staff submitted this time – 22.8 FTEs – compared to 19.0 FTEs in RAE2008, a 20% increase. The strong research culture within the School is also evident in the fact that 88% of academic staff eligible for submission (out of a total 25.8 FTEs) are being returned. All but one of these staff are on permanent contracts. By grade, there are 14 lecturers, 4 senior lecturers and 9 professors. Women are either equally or over-represented at each grade. At professorial level there are 3 men and 6 women. In addition to REF-eligible staff, there are 6 full time staff on teaching-only contracts. These staff are expected to undertake scholarly activity and are encouraged to engage fully in the research activities and events of the QSoE.

The consistency and sustainability of research within QSoE is evident in the fact that nearly 70% of staff submitted in RAE2008 (13 out of 19) are also included in this return. Of the other six, two remain in QSoE (one transferring to a teaching-only position) and four have left the University,

**Environment template (REF5)**

either through retirement (Alexander) or moving to another institution (Gardner, Mark, Murphy). None of these changes have impacted on the core research priorities of QSoE that are now being taken forward by the four research centres.

Since 2008, QSoE has also invested in seven new full-time appointments (6 permanent and 1 for three years in the first instance). Six of these appointments have been made strategically to support investments in the four research centres; particularly in relation to new specialist masters degrees being developed by each centre. The professorial position vacated by Gardner was linked to the Directorship of CEE and filled by Thurston (2013) who assumed this role from Connolly following his internal appointment as Head of School. Miller (2010) and Lloyd (2012), both with strong quantitative expertise, were also appointed to further enhance the work of CEE. Similarly, the appointments of Jerome (2012) and Kerr (2012), with expertise in children's rights and children's participation respectively, have significantly enhanced the capacity of the CCR. Giannakaki (2013) was appointed with specific expertise in educational leadership in divided societies to contribute to the work of the CSE. Dounavi (2012), with expertise in behaviour analysis, was appointed to support the strategic development of the CBA.

There has been a significant increase in contract research staff (CRS) employed within QSoE, largely associated with the increased research income associated with the four research centres over the current period. Over the period 2008-13 there was an average of 10.2 FTEs contract researchers employed each year. Both full and part-time research staff are fully integrated into the research culture of QSoE by virtue of being attached to significant research grants associated with the centres. All are required to participate in appraisal processes outlined above and have access to mentoring and training programmes. Contract researchers also attend School Board meetings.

With regards to staff development the University has an HR Excellence in Research certification (awarded January 2012) which links to the Concordat for the Career Development of Researchers and the QAA Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes, that acknowledges alignment with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for their Recruitment. In January 2012 Queen's agreed a Concordat Implementation Plan, which outlines a range of tasks and targets, some of which are based with academic schools. This implementation plan builds on the Queen's Researcher Career Booklet which was published in 2010 and which provides an overview of the Concordat and contains advice for researchers on their career development.

All newly appointed academic staff within QSoE are allocated a mentor and complete a three-year probation period before being confirmed in post. Meetings with mentors, which occur bi-monthly during the probation period, are used to set goals for teaching and research, to identify development needs and how these are to be addressed. A personal £4,000 start-up grant is provided to all newly-appointed staff to support research activities. Beyond the probationary period, support is provided to academic staff through the appraisal system described earlier. In addition the workload allocation model ensures that each research-active member of staff has the equivalent of two days per week to dedicate to research. Furthermore, QSoE has a sabbatical leave policy and in the 2008-2014 period, 8 members of staff availed of this.

All new contract research staff (CRS) appointments are expected to complete a 6 month period of probation and then undertake appraisal alongside all other academic staff. Moreover, given the fixed term nature of CRS appointments, particular emphasis is placed on developing their expertise and career skills. All CRS are included in publications plans for the projects they work on and this includes providing them with opportunities to act as lead author on at least one output from their projects. Most CRS are also actively included as co-applicants on new research grant proposals and Senior Research Fellows are encouraged to act as principal investigators where appropriate. In addition, opportunities are provided for all CRS to make small contributions to teaching within QSoE to build their career profiles. As a result of this emphasis three CRS have been successful in securing full-time academic appointments as Lecturers in Education within QSoE since 2008 (Kerr, Lloyd, Miller) and a fourth has achieved the same through an appointment as a Lecturer in Social Policy in another School (Byrne). All four are being returned in REF2014.

With regards to equal opportunities, Queen's is the top employer for women in Northern Ireland and one of only two UK universities in the Top 50 (2011). The University has a well-developed Equality and Diversity Policy. The present submission includes 7 men and 16 women. Nine staff are from outside of Northern Ireland and the remaining 15 reflect the ethno-religious balance in Northern Ireland (8 Protestant and 7 Catholic). There are appropriate grievance

**Environment template (REF5)**

procedures to deal with discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Staff can request variation of contract for reasons of work-life balance (including caring responsibilities) and two academic staff in the current submission have taken advantage of this. In addition, QSoE operates a policy of providing female academic staff with a teaching-free term on return from maternity leave.

All QSoE academic and research staff can avail of the central courses, induction and career development programmes offered by the Staff Training and Development Unit (STDU). Approximately £150,000 is invested annually by the University in STDU salary and programme delivery costs (see [www.qub.ac.uk/stdu](http://www.qub.ac.uk/stdu)). Researchers also have access to online information and materials via the research staff website [www.qub.ac.uk/crs](http://www.qub.ac.uk/crs).

**Research students:** Further evidence of the vitality and sustainability of QSoE’s research environment is the near three-fold increase in the number of doctoral degrees awarded in the current reporting period compared to that for RAE2008 (16.6 per year compared to 5.7 per year previously). Of the 83 degrees awarded in the current period, 31 (37%) were PhDs and 52 (63%) were EdDs. The significant growth in EdD awards over the current period demonstrates the key role QSoE plays in building research capacity among educational professionals.

<i>Number of doctoral degrees awarded by year and type of degree</i>						
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Total
PhD	7	5	6	9	4	31
EdD	5	5	11	13	18	52

QSoE currently has 146 students studying within doctoral research programmes (36 MPhil/PhD; 110 EdD) of which 20 (3 PhD and 17 EdD) are international students. All students are strongly encouraged to align to, and participate in, at least one of the four research centres that relate closest to their research interests.

As part of the strategic goal to create a strong and integrated PGR culture a **Doctoral Research Centre (DRC)** has been established under the leadership of Elwood. Its aim has been to harness existing good postgraduate research practice and create an identified ‘home’ and intellectual space for all doctoral students on both the taught (EdD) and research (PhD) doctoral programmes. The DRC oversees our taught Doctorates (EdD/EdD TESOL) and MPhil and PhD research-based programmes across the School and actively promotes opportunities for students to support each other’s research endeavours and to lead activities. With University College Dublin (UCD) it facilitates an annual student-led all-Ireland Doctoral Research Student Conference. Numbers have been increasing annually since its inception in 2009, with over 60 paper and poster presentations from across the island of Ireland at the 2013 Conference. The DRC also oversees a student buddy system and fortnightly student-led seminar series.

QSoE students have access to a University-wide Postgraduate Researcher Development Programme (PRPD) and it is a requirement that students acquire 30 hours of training per year across the 3 years of their programme. PRPD links directly with the national (vitae developed) Researcher Development Framework ([www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk)). The programme is designed and delivered in line with the National Researcher Development statement and framework, supported by the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and the UK Research Council. This PRDP offers research students a comprehensive range of training courses to develop research skills and to enhance their employability through career and personal development. Details of the PRDP can be found at [www.qub.ac.uk/prdp](http://www.qub.ac.uk/prdp). There is a dedicated postgraduate training team as well as state-of-the-art facilities within the Queen’s PGR Student Centre. During 2011-12, 4000 attendees undertook 275 PRPD training workshops of which 19 were QSoE students. An online ‘Personal Development Planner’ tool has been developed to assist students, in conjunction with their supervisors, to carry out a training and development needs analysis as well as determining future training and development activity. There are a range of online materials that have been created for students to use, including academic writing guides and webinars. A Researcher Plus award is available to PGR students providing accreditation for the development of a range of skills that are transferrable beyond the research degree.

The Institutional Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes for supervision underpins the work of supervisors and support for students within QSoE. All research proposals are reviewed internally prior to submission and the process is overseen by the Director of the DRC. Staff must ensure that student research activities conform to appropriate ethical research standards and compliance, notably with the University’s Code of Research Conduct, and this is ensured through

the School's Research Ethics Committee. All students are required to have a supervisory team comprising a minimum of two supervisors, with a member of the team identified as the Principal Supervisor. As a condition of probation, all staff have to complete training on postgraduate research supervision.

Three students achieving major national and international awards in the current reporting period – from BERA, AERA and the 8<sup>th</sup> CiCe Research Student Conference respectively – provide further evidence of the high quality research culture for postgraduate research students in QSoE.

#### **d. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

**Income:** Further evidence of the vitality and sustainability of QSoE's research strategy has been the dramatic increase in external research income generated. For the period covered by RAE2008, QSoE was successful in attracting an average of £259k per year (total £1.8m). For the current reporting period this has risen to an average of £2,641k per year (total £13.2m) – a ten-fold increase. The majority of this funding (59%) has been gained through open competitive processes (including £195k from ESRC). One key funder has been The Atlantic Philanthropies whose funding over this period has included: the Shared Education Programme (£3.8m) and Improving Children's Lives initiative (£648k) together with smaller grants for projects within CCR (£25k) and CEE (£50k). Two notable grants awarded during the current reporting period, and that are ongoing, are: £598k from the National Institute for Health Research with Connolly as principal applicant and Miller as one of the co-applicants; and involvement in a £2.7m award from the Medical Research Council, led by the UKCRC Centre of Excellence for Public Health with Connolly as one of the co-applicants. Both of these reflect new work within the CEE in relation to its development of evaluations of public health interventions in schools. In addition, a significant new source of funding over recent years has been the Education Endowment Foundation that has made 9 separate grants to CEE worth a total of £827k to run RCTs in England (Biggart, Connolly, Miller, Thurston).

More broadly, the vitality and sustainability of QSoE's research is evident from the range of local, national and international external funders over the current reporting period. Examples include: AHRC; Atlantic Philanthropies; Astra Zenica; Barnardo's; Bernard van Leer Foundation; British Academy; British Council; Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA); Department of Education (NI); Department for International Development; Education Endowment Foundation; ESRC; European Union (various programmes); General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland; NI Commissioner for Children and Young People; NI Human Rights Commission; Nuffield; Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister; Sesame Workshop; Spencer Foundation; State Examinations Commission, Republic of Ireland; Qualification Curriculum Authority; Science and Technology Facilities Council; UNICEF; and Wellcome Trust.

The funding secured from these grants has been instrumental in facilitating a large proportion of the high quality outputs included in this unit's submission. Strategies for sustaining and enhancing income generation have been outlined above. At a School level, this will be taken forward principally by the four research centres as they continue to develop and enhance their collaborations with external organisations and agencies. Through their strategic plans, each Centre will set targets and goals for income generation for the next five years. At an individual level, the QSoE appraisal system is central to supporting individual staff in identifying opportunities for income generation and either leading the development of proposals, often through one of the centres, or supporting proposals as co-investigator (for those earlier in their career).

**Infrastructure:** Since 2008, the University-wide Research Enterprise Directorate (RED) has been the subject of significant investment, using University funding and funding from external sources. Over 30 new staff have been appointed to RED to provide specialist support to academics and researchers across a range of areas, from research applications to knowledge transfer. Investment in educational research in QSoE has been sustained since RAE2008. RED administers competitive central conference and international funds to support the work of Schools.

Within QSoE, 7 core permanent staff support research activities: 2 full-time technicians and 5 dedicated clerical staff. The 5 clerical staff include 2 staff administering the EdD and PhD programmes, 2 staff providing clerical and secretarial support to the four research centres, the Doctoral Research Centre and QSoE Research Committee and one member of staff providing administrative support specifically to the Improving Children's Lives initiative. In addition, there are currently 2.7 FTE clerical staff and 1 FTE academic-related staff employed on fixed term contracts to provide administrative support to externally funded research projects.

QSoE has used its reserves to develop branding and websites for the four research centres

## Environment template (REF5)

and to provide each Centre, and the Doctoral Research Centre, with initial start-up funds (total £125k). Beyond this QSoE has set aside a recurrent annual budget to fund: staff and research student travel (for travel that cannot be funded from University Staff Training and Development Unit and/or through external research grants); QSoE seminar series; and the office costs associated with the four research centres and Doctoral Research Centre.

**Facilities:** Staff, including contract research staff, have spacious offices located along two adjacent back-to-back large (three storey) Victorian terraces at Queen's. The DRC initiative has also seen doctoral students located within the School's core buildings. There are two large rooms for doctoral students (EdD and PhD) plus dedicated desk space and computer facilities for each full-time postgraduate taught and research student in a series of offices. There are a number of common areas, including a well-equipped social common room with a kitchen area that includes comfortable informal seating and coffee tables for 60 people located in the heart of QSoE.

QSoE has a generous equipment budget, used to support students as well as staff. PCs are renewed on a 3-year cycle, and a wide range of software is available to staff and PGR students, together with access to specialist resources in the Computing Centre, including poster services and high performance computing facilities. International PGR students are well integrated with staff and other students and all have access to the University's International Postgraduate Centre, one of only a few in the UK. QSoE is also fortunate that the new McClay Library is situated within five minutes walk from the School. This facility has 2000 reader spaces and houses 1.2 million volumes and won the RICS Sustainability Award 2010.

#### e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

QSoE continues to make a strong contribution to the wider research base locally, nationally and internationally through its strong interdisciplinary work and wide range of collaborations. Key illustrative examples of QSoE's extensive activities in this regard are provided below.

**Improving Children's Lives (ICL):** ICL is a major inter-disciplinary initiative at Queen's that is led by QSoE (Connolly). With initial investment of £2.3m in 2008 (£1.4m from Atlantic Philanthropies; £200k from HSC R&D Office; and £600k of internal university investment), the initiative involves researchers from: education; social work; sociology; psychology; public health; medicine; pharmacy; and law. ICL has sought to build research capacity, foster interdisciplinary working between researchers as well as strong collaborations with policy makers, service commissioners and practitioners across the voluntary and statutory sectors. To date ICL has delivered a large number of seminars, training and knowledge exchange events attended by 1,364 people from 353 organisations across the voluntary and statutory sector. The 10 postdoctoral research fellows employed through ICL for three years have been involved in 47 interdisciplinary proposals submitted, of which 21 have been successful and securing £1,824,795 to date. ICL has also funded 8 leading international scholars as Visiting Professors linked to participating Schools. The initial funding period ended in 2011 and the University has since agreed to make a further investment of four full-time lectureships in Education, Criminology, Psychology and Nursing and to core fund a full-time Programme Manager and also Project Administrator. In addition, ICL now makes £40k per year available internally to support interdisciplinary research activities. ICL will be hosting its first international conference in February 2014 (see: [www.improvingchildrenslives.org](http://www.improvingchildrenslives.org)).

**Centre for Shared Education (CSE):** CSE and the Ministry of Education in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), Macedonia have built significant links through UNICEF due to the Centre's body of research on intergroup contact (Donnelly, Hughes, Leitch). In addition, collaborations between CSE (Donnelly, Gallagher, Hughes) and Oxford University (Hewstone) have produced significant research contracts and a series of high quality publications and numerous joint publications (see impact case study). Also, there is an ongoing partnership between CSE, the Hebrew University, Jerusalem (Bekerman) and the Open University; Cyprus (Zembylas) led by McGlynn. This three-way partnership has resulted in a number of successful research proposals and significant research publications including the book: *Peace Education in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies* (2009, Palgrave) that received the 2011 Jackie Kirk Outstanding Book Award from the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) The collaboration also led to an international conference on Integrated Education held at Queen's University in March 2011.

**Centre for Effective Education (CEE):** Collaborations between Connolly (CEE), Wilson (Vanderbilt University) and Ritter (University of Arkansas) provide the lead for the international Education Coordinating Group of the Campbell Collaboration ([www.campbellcollaboration.org](http://www.campbellcollaboration.org)). These collaborations have led to Wilson providing training on systematic reviews and meta-

analysis at Queen's and, most significantly, Queen's is due to host the Campbell Collaboration Annual Colloquium in June 2014. In addition, the CEE ([Thurston](#)), Durham University and North Tyneside Council are collaborating on a three-year (2013-15) research grant examining the efficacy of peer tutoring in secondary schools. Also, CEE ([Connolly](#)) has worked with Durham (Gorard, Higgins, Torgersen) and York (Torgerson) to provide training on RCTs in London for the Education Endowment Foundation. CEE members have also secured a contract with Sage Publications to co-write a book on RCTs for the BERA Methodology Series ([Biggart](#), [Connolly](#), [Miller](#), [Thurston](#)). Finally, CEE ([Connolly](#), [Gallagher](#)) is leading Una: The Global Learning Initiative on Children and Ethnic Diversity ([www.unaglobal.org](http://www.unaglobal.org)) that represents a network of 70 early childhood researchers and practitioners from 33 different countries.

**Centre for Children's Rights (CCR):** At the core of CCR's mission is inter-disciplinary research and this is undertaken routinely with, for example, colleagues in Social Policy and Social Work (Byrne, Winter) on issues affecting children such as the transitions of young people with learning disabilities and/or those leaving care (for NICCY and the NIHRC). With University College Cork (Kilkelly), CCR has completed a 12 country study on the implementation of children's rights in law for UNICEF UK and are currently working on a major two year study on children's rights advocacy for Atlantic Philanthropies ([www.advancingchildrensrights.com](http://www.advancingchildrensrights.com)). UNICEF Children's Rights and Advocacy in Education division has asked CCR to be its global partner on children's rights education, a collaboration that will involve a 3 year programme of research with over 50 of UNICEF's National Committees. Other collaborations include: a research report for Eurochild on children's participation with the European Children's Rights Unit at Liverpool (Stalford); publication of an edited collection (Peter Lang) on children's rights in education in 11 different national contexts, edited by [Lundy](#) with Swadener (Arizona State), Habashi (Oklahoma) and Blanchet-Cohen (Concordia, Canada); and joint publications with University of Melbourne (Tobin, Smyth).

**Centre for Behaviour Analysis (CBA):** CBA ([Dillenburger](#)) is a partner in the STAMPP II Project (Science and the Treatment of Autism - <http://www.stamppp.com>). Funded by the EU, this project involves collaborations with colleagues across Europe: Stockholm University (Roll-Pettersson); University of Ulster (Gallagher, Keenan); Erasmus University Rotterdam (Schenk); The State Diagnostic and Counselling Centre, Iceland (Jonsdottir); and PEAT, NI (Byrne, Booth). In addition CBA, on behalf of Queen's, recently became a full partner of the global DOCTRID institute (<http://doctruid.ie>), a collaboration between the Daughters of Charity and all Irish Universities (North and South), Michigan State University and the University of Massachusetts. DOCTRID has already secured a major FP7 co-fund grant (Assistive Technology and Autism, Intellectual Disability and other Neurodevelopmental disabilities, ASSISTID) that will roll out over the next 5 years and employ 40 new international postdoctoral research fellows for 2-3 years each (value €8.8m).

**Examples of Other Contributions:** Led by [Elwood](#), QSoE was successful in winning the tender to host the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Association of Educational Assessment Europe in 2011 that attracted 200 delegates from 22 countries across Europe. Collaborations between [Elwood](#) and Baird (Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment, OUCEA) have led to significant research contracts, high quality publications and the appointment of [Elwood](#) as Senior Research Fellow within the OUCEA. Evidence and expert contributions have also been made to: The Lord Bew Key Stage 2 Review (2012); Westminster Select Committee Report on Examination Boards Administration and Qualification Reform (2012); and Ofqual A level Reform Consultation (2012).

Collaborations between QSoE ([Leitch](#)) and University of Delhi (Rampal) has resulted in a successful UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) award, which permits staff exchanges and has resulted in joint publications. [McGlynn](#) and [Niens](#) have collaborated with colleagues at the University of Montreal (Chastenay, Lamarre, Laperriere) in relation to joint symposia and publications on education in divided societies. [Gallagher](#) has been successful in collaborating with Glasgow University (Conroy) in attracting an AHRC grant on Religious Education. Collaborations with Millersville University Pennsylvania have led to visiting research positions for [Gallagher](#) and [Hughes](#) at the Office of Global Education and [Connolly](#) holds the Donald Dewar Visiting Chair in Social Justice at Glasgow University.

[Leitch](#) and [Hughes](#) are joint editors of the *British Educational Research Journal* (Wiley); [Thurston](#) is Editor in Chief of the *International Journal of Educational Research* (Elsevier); [Connolly](#) is Joint Editor of the *Journal of Early Childhood Research* (Sage) and also founding Editor of *Effective Education* (Routledge).