Institution: Bath Spa University
Unit of assessment: UoA 25 - Education

a. Overview

Bath Spa University's distinctive research in Education is conducted at the intersection of theory, policy and practice in the fields of inclusion, primary science, international education and creativity. It derives from our core activities as an outstanding provider of undergraduate programmes in Education Studies, Initial Teacher Education and Continuing Professional Development. Our areas of research excellence are clustered around the following groups:

● **Centre for Research into Inclusion and Vulnerable Learners** (CRIVL).This group has undertaken the major Big Lottery-funded *Dyslexia and Multilingualism* project during the REF qualifying period (Mortimore 1), and also examines the complex issues surrounding ethnicity and religious identity in British schools (Bhatti 2,3, Cush 1,2).

● **Centre for Research in Early Scientific Learning** (CRESL). This group has attracted over £150K in external funding during the REF qualifying period for research into the use of e-portfolios to support science assessment in primary and secondary schools (Davies 1); the use of position-linked datalogging to develop pupils' interpretation skills in environmental science and the characteristics of creative learning environments (Davies 4).

● **International Education Research Group** (IERG). This newly-formed group has internationally significant expertise in the education policy and structures of the European Union (Jones 1-4), international Higher Education (Liu 1) and the role of education in post-conflict reconciliation (Paulson 1-4).

● **Creative and Cultural Education Research Group** (CCERG). This group, which is closely aligned with the University vision of excellence in creativity, culture and enterprise, researches the potential for intercultural understanding through arts education (Bianchi 1,2).

● **Education Policy in Practice** (EPIP) unit. This group has undertaken analysis of UK education policy in relation to social inclusion (Riddell 1-3, Simon 1,2,4) and workforce skills development (Hordern 2-4). Gibson's work is particularly significant in challenging instrumental assumptions underlying government policy in the areas of economics and citizenship education (Gibson 2-4).

b. Research strategy

In RAE 2008 we declared the goal of building on our established reputation as an outstanding provider of teacher education to become a research-led centre of excellence at the intersection of theory, policy and practice. The strategic objectives we set ourselves were achieved as follows:

1. To provide support for applied research and work with partnership schools: a new appointment of Head of Research in the School has enabled all academic staff to receive regular, personal support for developing applied research with partnership schools. This has resulted in the initiation of ten applied research projects with partner schools.
2. To obtain more external funding for research: the unit attracted £590K in external funding during the qualifying period compared with £128.5K for the RAE 2008 period.
3. To increase the number of staff engaged in publications particularly those completing masters and PhDs: 81 per cent of academic staff in the Unit have published during the REF period, by comparison with 54 per cent in the period leading up to RAE2008.
4. To continue to expand the School's postgraduate research programme: this has grown from

nine students in 2007 to 16 in 2013; meanwhile seven have completed.
5. To continue to give targeted support for research concerned with pedagogy: University Pedagogical Research grants have been won by four staff, resulting in publication (e.g. Mortimore 2).
6. To develop research centres and groups to cluster research around areas of expertise, target funding for active researchers and provide a structure for new researchers to be inducted and mentored: two centres, two groups and a 'policy into practice' unit have been established (see above), each of which received seed funding and have resulted in REF outputs.

As our research culture developed, additional objectives were set and achieved:

7. To initiate and maintain an annual cycle of research activity monitoring meetings with academic staff.
8. To supplement the existing School research seminar series and reading group with a series of writing and publication workshops; two such workshops were held in 2011-12.
9. To identify a core group of research-active staff with the potential to be entered for REF 2014 and use QR funding to release them from some teaching to pursue particular publication objectives; five staff were supported in this way in 2010-11, with a further three in 2011-12.
10. To develop the administrative support for research within the School through the allocation of dedicated, specialised administrative time; a 0.4 administrator was allocated in 2011-12.

Future research strategy
Bath Spa University's institutional research strategy focuses on the three areas of research quality and reputation; postgraduate research and teaching; and public engagement and knowledge exchange. Building on our success in strengthening the research culture within the School during the past six years, our strategic objectives for 2014-19 are:

1. Research Quality and Reputation
1.1 To invest in key areas of strength which attract external funding and deliver high-quality research outputs with impact. This will be achieved by reviewing our current research groupings, use of teaching buy-out, incentivisation grants and external mentoring. Target: each research group and centre to produce four published outputs per year, of which at least 15 per cent are of three star quality or above.
1.2. To promote collaboration within and between centres and groups, and to develop mechanisms to support interdisciplinary approaches with colleagues in other Bath Spa schools. This will be achieved through interdisciplinary research seminars and funding bids. Target: each centre and group to develop at least one cross-disciplinary project per year involving staff from other schools.
1.3 To develop strategic alliances with international research organisations through personal contact and targeted approaches. Target: each research centre and group to bid for two external grants over the period 2014-19 in collaboration with a recognised centre of research excellence, either in the UK or internationally.
1.4 To grow research income from public and private sector funders, including charities and international organisations, through targeted applications and strategic research collaborations. This will be achieved through building our capacity to support preparation of high-quality research grant applications, internal peer review and sharing good practice within the Unit and between schools. Target: five successful funding bids per year.

2. Postgraduate Research and Teaching
2.1 To recruit and develop promising academic staff and postgraduate research students to generate critical mass in research in our areas of strength. Target: each research centre and group to recruit at least two new research-active staff members and two PhD students over the period 2014-19.
2.2 To enhance the postgraduate student experience through the development of research

methods training in collaboration with colleagues in the departments of Sociology and Psychology. Target: Five PGR students per year complete research methods training.

2.3 To seek funding for PGR studentships attached to research projects run by our centres and groups. Target: one externally-funded PGR studentship per research centre/group over the 2014-19 period.

3. Public Engagement

3.1 To engage educators at all levels in our research, using our partnerships with schools and other settings and the opportunities offered by new models of teacher education to extend the impact of our work and foster a spirit of innovation and inquiry amongst teachers and practitioners. Target: two research projects initiated per year in collaboration with our school partners.

3.2 To communicate the excellence and impact of our educational research themes, approaches, and outcomes to a broad professional audience through a redesigned research website and use of social media, highlighting the work of each centre and group, with regularly-updated newsfeed and links to seminars, conferences and outputs in the Bath Spa University research repository. Target: 500 hits on research centres and groups webpages per year plus 1000 Twitter followers.

3.3 To optimise knowledge exchange with our partners in local and national government, educational trusts, businesses and professional organisations, both in the UK and internationally, with the support of the University's new Knowledge Exchange Officer. Target: two successful KTP applications by 2019.

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

Bath Spa University's staff development strategy sets out the ways in which building research capacity forms a key part of induction, probation and annual review. The School of Education is increasingly targeting the recruitment of new staff with PhD qualifications (or undertaking PhD study) with a track record of research and publication (or evidence of capacity) in addition to being excellent professional practitioners. There have been several notable successes with this strategy (e.g. Bhatti, Hordern, Jones, Liu, Paulson). To develop the capacity of new staff to undertake research and publication they all meet with the Head of Research in the School as part of their induction process to identify their needs and plan a programme for research development. Heads of Departments are informed of the outcomes of these meetings and are involved in reviewing progress. Both new colleagues and emergent researchers are given a research mentor to provide support for research activity and publications. New colleagues are encouraged to apply for support from the University's New Researcher Funding Scheme. Teaching commitments are reduced for new staff and, where appropriate, new staff are inducted into existing research centres or projects, e.g. within CRESL two new staff are currently involved in externally-funded research.

Other new and existing staff without research qualifications are strongly encouraged (and funded) to undertake doctorates; join research centres or groups; attend research seminars and writing workshops; present at conferences (funded) and meet with the Head of Research annually to review progress. Our two visiting professors (Geoff Whitty and David Halpin) also provide support with writing for publication and developing funding bids. Every member of academic staff has a contractual entitlement to 35 days per annum (pro rata) for research and scholarly activity, whilst external research income is used (where applicable) to buy in hourly-paid lecturing staff to release principal and other investigators.

Bath Spa University has recently undertaken an audit of existing practice in relation to the support and career development of research staff across the University. An Action Plan on how we align ourselves with the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

has been approved by the European Commission and as a working document, updated regularly through an annual self-assessment of progress through the University Research, Consultancy and Scholarship Committee (http://www.bathspa.ac.uk/research/hr-excellence-in-research). Our commitment to equality and diversity is evidenced by our status as a Stonewall diversity champion and our *Investors in People* badge. We were awarded the HR Excellence in Research award in January 2012, which reflects the University's current and on-going commitments to maintaining an active research portfolio.

In 2010 the University introduced a research-based career route through Readerships and Professorships by application. Role profiles for each of the researcher grades are published on the web so that research staff can ascertain the expectations for grades above and seek to develop these skills as their career progresses, and these have been mapped against the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) phases to create a career progression framework and a research staff development programme, which is available to all academic staff and postgraduate research students.

ii. Research students

Our research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols. This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees. There is a one-stop shop for PGR support at the Postgraduate Centre at Corsham Court and additional support for international postgraduates through a dedicated international student office. The Graduate School provides training and development for students and staff through a programme of development workshops, a suite of on-line resources, and termly Graduate Forums. The Graduate School also provides some financial support for PGR students wishing to present at conferences or undertake archive or fieldwork.

The School of Education has a strong postgraduate research culture, with16 PhD students currently registered. PGRs participate in lunchtime research seminars (16 seminars in 2012-13) and present their work alongside that of academic staff. Additionally, three PhD symposia are run each year, offering an opportunity for research students to give brief synopses of the progress of their research to each other, share common methodological issues and gain support from others working in similar areas and circumstances.

Management of research degrees is undertaken by the School's Head of Research and Graduate Affairs, who meets informally with prospective candidates; guides them through the application process; suggests appropriate supervisors; sits on the interview panel and undertakes induction, including talking new students through the School Research Student Handbook. A PhD student representative sits on the School Research, Consultancy and Scholarship Committee, which has a strategic overview of School recruitment and management of research degrees, together with oversight of student progression. Six research students are attached to our own research centres including an overseas student working in Kuwait, supervised through CRIVL. Our practice of using external supervisors with specific expertise to support many of our research students means that they have access to academics from a range of HEIs, including the Universities of Bristol, Exeter, and Brighton, the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, and the Open University.

Several submitted staff contribute to the PhD programme, through supervision (Davies, Gibson, Jones, Mortimore, Riddell) or as Head of Research and Graduate Affairs (Davies). In 2013-14, for the first time we are offering two fee-waiver PhD scholarships.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

The School of Education has generated £590K in external income over the REF period; all of it subject to competitive bidding processes. Significant awards include:

- £71K from Big Lottery Fund to CRIVL (26.2K spent to date) as part of an award of £500K in association with the British Dyslexia Association for *Dyslexia and Multilingualism* (2010-12) (Mortimore 3).
- £90K from BECTA and AstraZeneca Science Teaching Trust (AZSTT) to CRESL in collaboration with Goldsmith's University of London for Assessment and Technology Research: the *e-scape* (e-solutions for Creative Assessment in Portfolio Environments) project (2007-11) (Davies 1).
- £63K from AZSTT to CRESL for *Ecomonitoring in Key Stage 2* project and subsequent follow-on initiatives (2008-13) .
- A new award (September 2013) of £136.5K for CRESL to become a Primary Science regional hub undertaking a major research project on *Teacher Assessment in Primary Science* (TAPS), to be disseminated through the Department for Education (DfE) (2013-16).

Our strategies for generating grant income appropriate to the disciplines include:

- Using our University subscription to Cos.Pivot grant finding software to identify suitable sources of income on an individual, unit and University level.
- Allocating staff time for writing applications and providing advice and guidance from the Head of Research and Graduate Affairs within the Unit.
- Diversifying our funding pool to include non-standard and charitable sources.
- Applying in collaboration with other universities (e.g. Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth, Open University, Goldsmiths', Dundee, Jyvaskyla) to broaden the scope of projects, add specific research expertise and increase the chances of success.

The School was awarded QR funding totalling £226,342 during the REF period. This was spent on:

- Funding academic staff to present papers at national and international research conferences.
- Funding academic staff sabbaticals (by competitive application).
- Funding teaching cover for staff to write articles for refereed academic journals (by competitive application).
- Funding to enable research centres to run events and apply for external funding.
- Staff training (e.g. PhD supervisor training, writing workshops, funding seminars).

Bath Spa University has a Research Office under the leadership of the Vice-Provost (Research & Graduate Affairs) which gives support through experienced professional staff for the research grant application and research developments including knowledge exchange and researcher development, advice on calls for bids, and advice on alternative funding sources (e.g. industry/charity funding) in collaboration with the Development and Alumni Relations and Business Support offices. The University has also invested in an Institutional Repository – ResearchSPAce - launched in April 2013 to maximise access to research outputs.

The School is developing an Institute for Education in 2014 at our Hartham Park Campus in Wiltshire which, with the appointment of a new Professor of Teacher Education, will facilitate the bringing together of theory, policy and practice through closer engagement with our partnership and Teaching Schools. It will be the focus of a major research project to compare new models of teacher education, through two funded PhD studentships and the provision of conference and research facilities for trainees, teachers, pupils and academic staff to work on collaborative projects.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

Each of our research centres and groups supports collaborative and interdisciplinary research within the unit and beyond. For example:

- CRESL collaborates with the School of Education, Social Work and Community Education at the University of Dundee (Davies 4), which brings together the disciplines of creativity studies and education, the Technology in Education Research Unit at Goldsmiths' University of London (Davies 1), which brings together the disciplines of science and technology education, the software development company TAG Developments (Davies 1) and the educational technology manufacturer ScienceScope.
- CRIVL collaborates with staff in the School of Society, Environment and Enterprise within the University, and with the British Dyslexia Association (Mortimore 3), which brings together the disciplines of specific learning difficulties and bilingualism.
- IERG collaborates with the Conflict and Education Research Group and Department of Education at the University of Oxford (Paulson 2), the International Center for Transitional Justice (Paulson 4), and the Centre for Globalisation, Education and Societies in the Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol (Jones 2).
- CCERG collaborates with the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership through the Bristol Initiative Trust (Bianchi 1).
- EPIP's The *In Care, In School* project, which has attracted national attention (see section 3b) has involved collaboration with a local authority, a film company, the Who Cares? Trust and the ASDAN charitable social enterprise and awarding body.

Our international collaborations include those with:

- USA: Bhatti (CRIVL) is collaborating with the College of William and Mary on a joint research project 'Language Learning and Cultural Responsiveness', involving undergraduate students and partner schools in both institutions.
- Spain: we have a long-standing exchange programme with the University of Vic - Catalonia, which has recently involved undertaking a joint comparative study on high-stakes educational assessment in Nepal, Catalonia and England. Data collected in all three countries are currently being analysed, with a view to joint publication.
- Zambia: our undergraduate student placement at Mufulira College of Education has led to a research project examining participants' learning from the experience (Davies 2)
- Turkey: CRIVL recently hosted *Promoting Inclusion with Cognitive Approach in European Countries* (PICA), an Erasmus Intensive Programme in collaboration with Marmara University, Istanbul, and involving delegates from Turkey, Belgium, Czech Republic, Hungary and Spain.
- China: IERG is currently hosting an ESRC seminar series: *Global Citizenship in Higher Education: Evolving Policy and Practice from a Comparative Perspective* (2012-14) in collaboration with Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Other participating universities include City University London, Taiwan National University, Tsinghua University in Beijing, the University of California and University of Arizona.
- South Africa: CRIVL collaborated with the Universities of the Western Cape and Witts,and the South African Association of Learning Differences (SAALED).
- Austria: The Unit has established collaborative arrangements for PGR training via a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Interactive Media and Educational Technologies, Danube University Krems, Austria, which enables our PGR students to undertake modules from the Krems MRes using a blended learning programme, whilst Austrian graduates from this programme can be supervised for PhD study in educational technology by staff from the School of Education at Bath Spa University.

To facilitate collaboration within Bath Spa University, the Research, Consultancy and Scholarship Committee makes funding available to support the establishment of cross-School research groups

and centres. In the School of Education, a termly research newsletter and annual seminar series alert colleagues to each other's research initiatives. The Education Policy in Practice (EPIP) unit also brings groups of researchers from across the School together with other academics and professionals for collaborative projects, for example the *Emotion Coaching* project involving CRIVL staff, a PhD student and two other colleagues from the disciplines of early childhood education and psychology.

Colleagues in the School of Education make significant contributions to their disciplines by hosting conferences and working with external conference organising committees. For example:

- Mortimore is on the committee for the *British Dyslexia Association* 2014 conference.
- Gibson hosted the Annual Conference of the International Association of Citizenship, Social and Economics Education at Bath Spa University in 2011, and subsequently edited a special double issue of the international journal *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education,* featuring papers from the conference.
- Davies regularly reviews papers for the European Science Education Research (ESERA), British Educational Research Association (BERA) and Design and Technology Association (DATA) conferences.

We regularly contribute to scholarship and debate by giving papers at international conferences:

- European Conference on Education Research (ECER) (Bhatti 2013, Gibson 2011, 2013, Simon 2011).
- Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) (Ruggiero 2012).
- European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) (Rose 2012).
- European Science Education Research (ESERA) (Davies 2009, 2011).
- Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) (Jones 2013, Paulson 2013).

Our editorial responsibilities include:

- Editorial board membership of *PATOSS Bulletin*, *Mathematics Today, Children, Youth and Environments* and the *Australian Journal of Environmental Education.*
- Davies has reviewed research project proposals for the European Commission, ESRC and Wellcome Foundation, and is a National Judge for the Rolls Royce School Science Prize.
- Several staff have acted as external examiners for PhDs during the REF period, including Bhatti, Davies, Mortimore and Rose.
- We have also acted as external panel members for programme validations in education studies (e.g. Davies 2013 at Liverpool Hope University).

Staff make active contributions as committee members of professional associations such as:

- Association for Science Education (ASE).
- National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE).
- Association for Teachers of Mathematics (ATM).
- Association for the Professional Development of Early Years Educators (TACTYC).
- National Society for Education in Art & Design (NSEAD).
- British Education Studies Association (BESA).