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Major educational research programme moves to Cambridge

The Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge celebrates two major achievements this week. Yesterday it was awarded a 5 rating in the Research Assessment Exercise and today the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) has announced the appointment of Andrew Pollard, Professor of Education at Cambridge, as the new Director of its Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP).

As new TLRP Director Professor Pollard will be responsible for leading the largest co-ordinated programme of research in education and training in the United Kingdom with a budget in excess of £24 million. The research programme, which covers all sectors and contexts of education, training and lifelong learning in the UK, is dedicated to finding ways to improve the achievement of learners of all ages.

Professor Pollard takes up his post at the end of February 2002. He will take on responsibility for co-ordinating the current portfolio of activities under Phases I and II of the Programme and will play a leading role in the development of Phase III of the Programme focused upon post-compulsory education and lifelong learning commissioning of which is due to commence in January 2002.

Professor Pollard said:

"I look forward to the challenges of TLRP and am delighted that it is coming to Cambridge. Working with many other education researchers, we have a unique opportunity to contribute to policy and practice in educational institutions, workplaces and beyond. The Faculty of Education is committed to 'improvement in the quality of teaching and learning' and to 'the development of a more informed, intelligent, thoughtful and just society'. TLRP will help us in fulfilling these ambitions."

Professor Donald McIntyre, Head of the Faculty of Education says that the TLRP programme is emblematic of the approach to educational research at Cambridge:

"We aim to work in close partnership with schools and LEAs to produce research of real, practical help to policy makers and frontline teachers. We want to produce research which is methodologically rigorous and theoretically informed, but it has to be useful."

The transfer of TLRP to Cambridge is further proof of the development of education at the University. In the last few years there has been significant institutional change, as both teacher training and educational research have been brought together under the auspices of a unified Faculty of Education, and Homerton College has become a fully-fledged Cambridge college.

These changes have been accompanied by a rising profile for educational researchers at the University. Professor Pollard is one of a number of distinguished educationalists who have moved to Cambridge in recent years - others include Professors Jean Rudduck and John Gray who joined from the University of Sheffield in 1994 and Professor John MacBeath who moved to Cambridge last year from the University of Strathclyde.