

Teaching & Learning Research Programme

BULLETIN 01/06

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Actions requested:

- Note recent developments regarding strategic planning for research in education and for knowledge transformation in education
- Consider the main issues in ESRC's Demographic Review and send any comments to Steve Baron
- Confirm, for whom appropriate, the date of the Directors' Forum in May
- Please note the changes in the organisation and expectations for Steering Committee Critical Friend
- Consider whether you would like to tender for new TLRP's thematic developments
- Think about engaging in the interdisciplinary Technology Enhance Learning (TEL) competition
- Let us know if you are planning to go to AARE or NZ in November/December 2006
- Note the TLRP session at AERA and look out for colleagues at other AERA events
- Note the date of TLRP's 2006 conference as 20-22 November and the exciting plans for engagement with Scottish educational issues
- Consider a collaborative bid in the new supplementary impact funding scheme
- Prepare to receive a CD of the compendium of annual reports
- Consider whether your Output Summit Meeting is becoming due
- Note the TLRP website developments and contact James O'Toole if you have any suggestions
- Keep the TLRP Office informed of changes in contact details
- Welcome Joanne Penty to the Office team with particular responsibility for DSpace
- Note some new international links which are being developed
- Contact James O'Toole with any ideas for Teachers' TV programmes
- Be amazed at how busy Social Science Week was – and note our thanks to all!
- Visit the TLRP website to see the latest Programme and project publications
- Note the responsiveness of colleagues to contribute to the Foster review of FE and further work continuing on 19-19 education and training
- Welcome two TLRP's new progression projects
- Contact James O'Toole if you would like to attend WP in HE seminars
- Make a note of the WP in HE conference to be held in Ireland on May 25th
- Note the launch of the new journal *21st Century Society Journal of the Academy of Social Sciences*
- Consider attending the *This Learning Life Conference*, is being held in Bristol on 20-22 April
- Contact Routledge if you would like to claim a 10% discount on the forthcoming book *The World Yearbook of Education 2006, Education Research and Policy: Steering the knowledge-based economy*

Strategic planning for research on UK education

The National Educational Research Forum (NERF) has announced that it is to disband from 31st March 2006. A final meeting reviewed the history and achievements of NERF and considered how some legacy activities may be sustained. In particular, CfBT is now providing some support to enable Andrew Morris to continue some developmental activities which were initiated by NERF.

Discussions on the continuing need for strategic thinking in relation to educational research have taken place with BERA's Executive Council, TLRP's Steering Committee and with representatives of UK government departments. There is broad support for the formation of a new, inclusive body. It is therefore proposed that further consideration should be given to the formation of a 'Strategic Forum for Research in Education' on a UK-wide basis. This would mirror the work of ESRC's Strategic Forum for Social Science'.

As part of its commitment to the development of research quality and of the field generally, ESRC TLRP will continue to work in partnership with others to facilitate this development. Any comments on this, to Andrew Pollard, would be welcome.

Towards knowledge transformation in education

For some time NERF, with the particular support of the TDA and Microsoft, has been progressing a web-portal to ease access to research evidence in education (sometimes known as NEEP). For this, the BEI's thesaurus has now been selected as the tagging vocabulary of choice. TLRP is a core member of the development group and TLRP publications will feature on the portal once it is established (no further tagging by projects will be necessary).

More ambitiously, NERF recently published a proposal to establish a national evidence 'centre' for education – perhaps a little like www.scie.org.uk. This would be focused on knowledge transformation for policy-makers and practitioners in particular, rather than on knowledge generation. Regarding the latter of course, there are many providers but maximising the promotion, dissemination and impact of educational research is not a general strength within the field. For this reason, despite the demise of NERF itself, there is a growing perception that some form of UK provision would be worthwhile. The broad concept has again been discussed with BERA's Executive Council, TLRP's Steering Committee, within ESRC and with representatives of several UK government departments. There are obviously a number of important issues to be considered in the establishment of any new facility.

Geoff Whitty (representing BERA) and Andrew Pollard (representing ESRC TLRP) recently wrote to DfES to express support for the broad concept and setting out a number of principles which it was felt should underpin any new initiative. These included:

1. clarity and explicitness in knowledge transformation goals
2. fitness for purpose - tailoring of the resource to ensure depth and range of expertise in appropriate forms of knowledge transformation
3. independence in governance (including from government, HEIs, unions, etc);
4. openness to multiple forms of research evidence;
5. transparency in consultation procedures, institutional development and staff appointments.

We will keep you informed as the story unfolds.

Some contextualisation for the two developments described above, and TLRP's role in them, is offered in Andrew Pollard's Educational Review lecture ('Taking the initiative: TLRP and educational research', http://www.tlrp.org/pub/acadpub/APollard_Ed_Review_Lecture.pdf).

ESRC Demographic Review

The ESRC has recently published a 'Demographic Review of the UK Social Sciences'

http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/PO/releases/2006/february/demographic_review.aspx?ComponentId=13877&SourcePageId=5433

This was commissioned in January 2005 and published January 2006. It draws from secondary analyses of HESA and other data, a questionnaire survey of 315 departments and interviews and focus groups. It offers 18 case studies of disciplines (of which Education is one) and includes a specific review of the status of quantitative methods.

The review welcomes the diversity of disciplines in ESRC's aegis but it draws a distinction between disciplines with 'a primary orientation to research' and disciplines 'in which academic research overlaps with a significant concern with professional practice'. Similarly it draws a distinction between 'disciplines whose graduates often go on to work in other areas of academia' (exporter disciplines) and 'disciplines whose academic workforce is significantly dependent on staff trained in other disciplines' (importer disciplines).

The Review finds Education to be the second largest cluster with c 5000 fte staff, a practice based discipline and an importer discipline. It lies at one of the 'extremes' with research based disciplines (Geography, Sociology & Linguistics) at the other. Education has one of the highest percentage of women staff, the oldest age profile with 70% >45, 25% >55 and it has a distinctive recruitment pattern drawing from 'senior teaching professionals in secondary education'. Academics in education suffer from a salary lag compared with teaching profession with no clear career structure and a low level of international recruitment.

The Review acknowledges that there is some excellent research but suggests that there are also some structural problems. The cohort of senior research staff which pre-date changes in ITE requirements will soon retire and there is said to be a dearth of young researchers. There are too few mentors to create a confident and focussed community and, while there are high numbers of Master students, only 20 HEIs have RT recognition (a figure now superseded by the recent RT round). There is no clear career point for training in research and education undergraduate degrees are of low status and they place high demands on staff. Education is high on the political agenda and is vulnerable to sudden policy changes. The Review concludes that education as an area of research which lacks the autonomy to enable it to engage in policy debates confidently and critically - 'The issue is in large part one of creating a research culture rather than sustaining it'.

The Review offers ESRC a variety of options with an 'inevitable trade off ... between quality and long term strategy'. One option is to switch resources into exporter disciplines 'rather than investing in those disciplines apparently unable to reproduce their own research capacity by internal means'. This is not favoured on the grounds that policy and practice based disciplines are a key priority for ESRC and that dual identities are a strength rather than a weakness. The Review tends to favour enhancing research capacity in 'importer' disciplines and emphasises the need for longer-term investments 'to develop their own pool of researchers whose primary loyalty is to ... Education rather than to ... Psychology'. In particular it suggests ring fencing capacity building initiatives such as TLRP 'until these fields are able to compete with other disciplines on equal terms'.

ESRC is planning to hold a 'Town Meeting' with a relatively small group of academics in education to consider the implications of the Review.

The TLRP Directors' Team has considered the Review and welcomes the priority being given to capacity building by ESRC, the range and rigour of the Review and the highlighting of the particular structural issues facing Education. There are concerns however, that the two couplets at work in the text (Importer:Exporter; Research:Practice) work to the disadvantage of Education (and other areas of study). While, as the feedback from RAE 2001 emphasised, engagement with the social science disciplines is central to excellent educational research, the field cannot be

reduced to them. There are topics of research (e.g: pedagogical research; assessment; curriculum; management) which do not figure in the research agenda of the social science disciplines and the differing contexts mean that the 'same' topic may be approached differently. There is no simple 'product' to be traded across disciplines in an Export-Import model. Similarly the Research/Practice couplet potentially disadvantages Education when the Review slides from a distinction between a 'primary orientation to research' and 'academic research (which) overlaps with a significant concern with professional practice outside academia' (p7) to positing a continuum between 'two extremes' of 'research based' and 'practice based' disciplines (p36).

This is felt to be an unhelpful 'splitting' of the field which overemphasises the research focus of research disciplines (e.g. sociology can be seen as poorly focussed attempts at social action) and which underemphasises the research base of engagement with professional education.

Do these couplets combine to set up poor terms of trade for productive exchange between the disciplines in ESRC's aegis? What are your views?

Ahead of the 'Town Meeting' the Directors' Team has identified areas for possible responses including:

- Government policy on ITE numbers and training requirements
- Funding Council policy on infrastructure support
- Funding Council policy on RAE and centralisation of research
- ESRC policy on embedding capacity building in all its activities (e.g. Research Grants)
- ESRC special infrastructure initiatives
- ESRC ongoing infrastructural support
- HEIs resource allocation models, teaching models and staffing models
- Educational Research Communities taking more collective responsibility for the support new generations at the expense of current personal and institutional advantage.

Colleagues are invited to comment on the Review and the Directors' Team initial views on it by emailing s.baron@ioe.ac.uk.

Directors' Forum

This year the annual meeting of the Directors' Forum will be held on Wednesday 24th May. All investments, past and present, are invited to send a senior colleague (normally an award holder).

This is an opportunity to discuss major issues in relation to TLRP and the field generally – such as those referred to above.

One topic for discussion this time will be the 'big picture' of strategic priorities for TLRP in the future. For example, so far, we've done a reasonable job at forecasting key issues on which to focus our Commentaries. What's coming though? And what should we do about it?

Project and thematic series directors are invited to send us other items that they would like to see included on the agenda.

This is a major opportunity to influence the strategic direction of the Programme. Every year so far, something has happened as a result of ideas shared at this meeting – so please do come along!

Steering Committee 'critical friends' – changes in expectations

Academic and user members of the TLRP Steering Committee have greatly welcomed the opportunity to be involved in their associated projects. However, as volunteers, have been finding it a little difficult to keep up with all the invitations to seminars, presentations, Advisory Committees etc. As a result, it has been necessary to change some of the arrangements.

From Easter 2006, each major TLRP investment will only have one (rather than two) member of the Steering Committee as their Critical Friend. Such colleagues would value being kept informed of events and opportunities to engage with projects, seminars, etc. but are unable to guarantee attendance.

Please be assured that there are no changes at all in the liaison role of members of the Directors' Team.

TLRP Thematic Development: invitation to tender

TLRP's thematic strategy enables the Programme to add value across its substantive projects. The Programme is also concerned with the development of educational research as a field, and of research on teaching and learning in particular. A number of topics have been identified on which further work is required to enhance existing thematic activities or to take advantage of developmental opportunities. Applications are invited in respect of the topics listed on the TLRP website. Please follow the link on the front page. Applications are required by the end of April, with decisions expected by the end of May.

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) competition

The ESRC's Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) is collaborating with the EPSRC to extend its work into developing the new research field of 'technology enhanced learning'.

The call explicitly recognises the need for a new *interdisciplinary* research field defined in terms of learning technologies and their application. We are trying to develop knowledge of how to improve teaching and learning across all the phases of formal and informal education across the lifecourse. Other EPSRC research programmes are developing innovative digital technologies to support knowledge development and human interaction. This new research initiative will support innovation from both research areas, each challenging the other, to rethink ways of making learning more effective and to develop the new technology solutions to make that possible. Such interdisciplinary research is intended to help build new understandings of how technology can enhance learning.

The call was published on the ESRC website (<http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>) on 13 March, with a deadline of 12 May for outline proposals for large awards and full proposals for development networks. The initiative was launched through three major briefing events in London (21 March), Edinburgh (27 March), and Cardiff (30 March).

For further academic information, please view: <http://www.tlrp.org/tel>

Going 'down under'?

It has been confirmed that TLRP is to represent BERA at the forthcoming annual conference Australian Association for Educational Research in Melbourne in November. There will also be representatives at the New Zealand association's conference in December. So far, TLRP's representatives are expected to be Andrew Pollard and Mary James. Is anyone else going?

If you are attending either of these conferences, please let James O'Toole know. We may be able to work together a bit (and thereby offer a little help with some costs).

Programme session at AERA

We have not quite caught up with everyone who is going to AERA – though it is clearly quite a number of colleagues. We will no doubt be looking out for each other!

For those interested, the Programme session, where we are representing BERA, is as follows:

Time: Mon, Apr 10 - 4:05pm - 6:05pm

Building/Room: Moscone Center West / 2nd Floor, Room 2014

A strategy for the defence, improvement and promotion of educational research: an international example

In the US and across the world, educational research has faced sustained criticism in recent years. Whilst hostile political environments have often contributed to this, there have also been some telling challenges to academic communities in relation to research quality.

In the United Kingdom, critiques of the late-1990s led, among other things, to the establishment of the 'Teaching and Learning Research Programme' (TLRP) – a 60 million dollar investment. The Programme funds some 60 projects and 450 researchers – the largest programme of coordinated research which the United Kingdom has previously known. Substantive work is very wide-ranging, addressing key issues in teaching, learning and social justice across the lifecourse.

Through successive phases of funding, TLRP has attempted a process of progressive development reaching between government, user and academic communities and supporting researchers in exploring new ideas, designs and relationships. In short, rather than being something being 'done to' researchers, TLRP has tried to 'work with' the community and to self-consciously facilitate the defence, improvement and promotion of educational research.

Chair:

Geoff Whitty (President of British Educational Research Association)

Participants:

- Andrew Pollard (Director of TLRP) 'TLRP strategies for research development in education'
- Peter Blatchford (Institute of Education, University of London) and Andy Tolmie (University of Strathclyde) 'Improving the effectiveness of pupil groups in school classrooms: a TLRP project'
- Mary James (Deputy Director of TLRP) 'Professional learning by teachers: a TLRP theme'
- Gert Biesta (University of Exeter) 'Learning lives: learning, identity and agency in the lifecourse: a TLRP project'
- Miriam David (Associate Director of TLRP) 'Learning through the lifecourse: a TLRP theme'

Discussants:

- Eva Baker, President Elect of AERA, Director of the National Centre for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST), UCLA
- Michael Feuer, Executive Director, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, The National Academies, Washington

TLRP's Annual 2006 Conference: Glasgow

The venue for the Annual Conference has been finalised. The event will be held at the Crowne Plaza in Glasgow, on 20th-22nd November, so be sure to keep your diary clear on those dates. Further details will be sent out next term.

To date the annual conference has been predominantly internal to the Programme. As this phase of TLRP funding draws to a close (December 2008) so the emphasis of the Conferences is developing to maximising impact on of its portfolio of research on policy and practice across the polities of the UK. To this end the Directors' Team decided to hold the 2006 annual Conference in Glasgow with the intention of offering a major impact event in Scotland. It intended to hold similarly events in Cardiff (for both Wales and Northern Ireland) in 2007 and in London (for England) in 2008.

The first and third days of the Conference would be devoted to internal TLRP matters, with a mix of project and thematic foci.

Much of the second day of the Conference would be focussed on engagement with Scottish policy and practice communities in the light of the work of all TLRP projects (whether based in Scotland or not). Very constructive discussions have been held with key Scottish decision makers which produced the following blueprint. Three themes were identified as of core interest to the two relevant departments of the Scottish Executive: Learning; Equity; Transitions. The proposed strategy for the Conference is that the policy and practice communities will produce, well in advance of the event, a series of short briefing papers in these areas. These will be distributed to TLRP and the Applied Educational Research Scheme (AERS) research teams (AERS is to co-host this part of the Conference). In their turn such teams will produce short briefing papers about the insights their research has to offer on these matters. These papers will be pre-circulated to Conference Participants. There will then be workshops on Learning, Equity and Transitions. Each would be introduced by a policy maker/practitioner and an academic responding to the documentation, followed by group discussion on particular policy/practice challenges and the role of research in addressing these. There would finally be a plenary with feedback and a panel discussion. Additionally the Conference hopes to have a major speaker, possibly a Minister, at the Conference Dinner (Tuesday night) or on Wednesday. The possibility of a major media event is also being explored. It is proposed that the Scottish Educational Research Association will also be represented at the conference.

Please note the dates of the Conference in your diaries (20-22nd November) and send any comments on its proposed organisation to s.baron@ioe.ac.uk

TLRP budget for 2006-8 and beyond

A new award to provide the Programme infrastructure has been agreed up to 31st December 2008 – a three year period. Funding for the Programme will continue beyond that date, probably to 2010/11, because of the new investment in Technology Enhanced Learning – but it is likely to be on a reduced scale. Other possible investments which could involve TLRP are under discussion.

New supplementary funding for *collaborative* impact initiatives

As indicated in last Autumn's Bulletin, our old scheme (which exceptionally provided for awards up to £45k) has been withdrawn. We could not afford it, when considered in the light of the scale of TLRP's present portfolio of projects.

It is to be replaced by a new scheme which will support *collaborations* between projects. These may be by substantive issue, sector, theme or be based on any other intellectually sound rationale. It's up to you!

Specific documentation on this is under development and will be circulated to all projects as soon as it has been approved. Meanwhile, please consider how you might be able to work with others to maximise impact activity.

Annual Reports

Thank you to everyone who has submitted an annual report. They are being reviewed and feedback will be provided shortly. A compendium is being created, and will be sent to all project teams by April. Please note that it will not be available in hard copy this year, but will be sent to you on a CD-ROM.

Output summit meetings

These make a crucial contribution to strategic planning of outputs for impact, and are expected to take place approximately one year before the end of each award. If you are expecting this

moment, please expect a call from Sarah Douglas or make contact with her to arrange your meeting.

TLRP website developments

A re-design of some sections of the TLRP website is underway. The new site should be easier to navigate and will be partially tailored for different types of audience.

The 'News' section of the site will be more prominent, so please do keep us informed any items you would like to put forward for that section, such as press coverage your project has received or any major events or publications.

It will also have a different TLRP project featured every month, so be prepared for some extra exposure!

Any ideas about this, please contact James O'Toole.

Contact details

Please continue to keep the TLRP office informed of any changes in contact details. It would be particularly helpful if you could check those on your gateway pages and send any amendments in to James O'Toole.

DSpace

Please welcome Joanne Penty, who has joined us to help with the administration of DSpace. Joanne will be working part-time and her first task is to double check that all 2005 publications have been deposited correctly. You may hear from her over the next few weeks with queries about your depositions.

International links

Andrew Pollard and Alan Brown are on the Advisory Board of a new European FP 6 project aimed at strengthening international cooperation and networking in the field of educational research and involving three world regions: Europe, Latin America and South East Asia. The project, named SINCERE, runs for two years from January 2006. It will last 2 years and foresees, after a first context analysis and mapping phase networking activities (policy and scientific seminars, regional conferences and a final conference) aimed at enhancing dialogue, sharing and mutual exchange among educational researchers of the three regions so to contribute to the internationalisation of the educational research agenda. It is expected that this will provide a platform for dissemination of TLRP research in new international contexts.

Teachers' TV

A meeting with Teachers' TV production companies was held on 27th February 2006. Producers discussed the challenges they experienced in working with academics e.g. issues of trust, access (to schools and teachers) and time. Timing is especially critical because they have to work to a very short time spec. The important thing for projects is to get onto the agenda for commissioning 'ahead of the game' so that producers have projects in mind when they begin to develop ideas. It is worth bearing in mind that they are especially interested in illustrations of impact in the classroom, as they put it, 'what actually works, not just what is new or different'.

If you have ideas you want to suggest ideas, please contact James O'Toole who will mediate. We also have forms for making proposals for programmes to make.

A Busy Social Science Week

TLRP hosted several events as part of ESRCs Social Science Week 10th-19th March.

On the 14th TLRP Director Andrew Pollard and Mary James launched a 'Commentary' featuring ten principles of teaching and learning and drawing on the findings of TLRPs portfolio of school-focused projects at the 2006 National Teacher Research Conference, NEC Birmingham.

On the 16th an expert science education research group led by Professor John Gilbert (University of Reading) met at London's Royal College of Engineering, to ask: 'Is there a national crisis in science education? What is already known about this? What should be done?' In cooperation with the Association for Science Education, the group launched a TLRP Commentary taking stock of the major issues, reviewing available evidence and making initial judgments about possible courses of action.

The 17th saw TLRP and colleagues from the University of Cambridge and British Education Index presenting 'New technologies for the development of research knowledge in education'. The seminar featured D-space and TLRP's innovative technologies for distributed research collaboration. Latest developments were showcased from the British Education Index (BEI) - the UK's major information resource for educational research.

New publications

We are very pleased to announce the publication of a variety of new outputs.

Books and journals are available from Routledge: www.routledge.com

Other Programme publications are available to download from the TLRP website, and are free in hard copy to TLRP investments (within reason). Additional copies may be ordered from:

Bookshop at the IoE, The Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London, WC1H 0AL
tel: +44 (0)20 7612 6050
fax: +44 (0)20 7612 6407
email: ioe@johnsmith.co.uk

The first in the Improving Learning series:

Improving literacy by teaching Morphemes

Terezinha Nunes and Peter Bryant, with Ursula Pretzlik and Jane Hurry

Words consist of units of meaning, called morphemes. These morphemes have a striking effect on spelling that has been largely neglected until now. For example, nouns that end in '-ian' are words that refer to people, and so when this ending is attached to 'magic' we can tell that the resulting word means someone who produces magic. Knowledge of this rule, therefore, helps us with spelling: it tells us that this word is spelled as 'magician' and not 'magicion'.

This new book by Terezinha Nunes, Peter Bryant and their colleagues shows how important and necessary it is for children to find out about morphemes when they are learning to read and to spell. The book concentrates on how to teach children about the morphemic structure of words and on the beneficial effects of this teaching for children's spelling and for the breadth of their vocabulary. It reports the results of several studies in the laboratory and in school classrooms of the effects of teaching children about a wide variety of morphemes. These projects showed that schoolchildren enjoy learning about morphemes and that this learning improves their spelling and their vocabulary as well. The book, therefore, suggests new directions in the teaching of literacy. It should be read by everyone concerned with helping children to learn to read and to write.

Seven new Research Briefings:

Phil Hodkinson, Gert Biesta, David James, Denis Gleeson, Keith Postlethwaite
Improving Learning in Further Education: a new, cultural approach

Peter Blatchford, Maurice Galton and Peter Kutnick
Improving pupil group work in classrooms: A new approach to increasing engagement and learning in everyday classroom settings in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3

Terezinha Nunes, Peter Bryant, Jane Hurry and Ursula Pretzlik – with the collaboration of Daniel Bell, Deborah Evans, Selina Gardner and Joanna Wade.
Fractions: difficult but crucial in mathematics learning

Terezinha Nunes, Peter Bryant, Jane Hurry and Ursula Pretzlik, with the collaboration of Daniel Bell, Deborah Evans, Selina Gardner and Jenny Olsson.
Why morphemes are useful in Primary School literacy

Lydia Plowman, Christine Stephen, Susan Downey, Daniela Sime.
Supporting learning with ICT in pre-school settings

Patrick Carmichael, CARET, University of Cambridge, Richard Procter, TLRP, Institute of Education, London, Raad Al-Rawi, CARET, University of Cambridge, and other members of the CARET Staff.
IT for Education Research: using new technology to enhance a complex research programme

Two new TLRP Commentaries

Teaching and Learning in Schools

A Commentary by the Teaching and Learning Research Programme

This booklet examines what has been found out across projects and suggests ten overarching evidence-informed principles of effective teaching and learning to inform policy and practice.

Science education in schools: Issues, evidence and proposals

A Commentary by the Teaching and Learning Research Programme

A review of research published by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Association for Science Education suggests new ways of making sure that schools have enough science teachers and of improving the quality of science education for all.

Foster Review of Further Education

Kathryn Ecclestone coordinated a meeting of the various projects that could contribute a commentary on the Foster Review of FE. As a result of that meeting a briefing paper was prepared which covered issues raised from the projects and overarching policy implications, such as the relations between FE and HE, and issues for 14-19 year olds and this paper has been submitted to Foster and the DfES as an official response. A paper is also being prepared by Kathryn for publication in the TES.

Nuffield Review of 14-19 year olds

Richard Pring is continuing to coordinate a review of the various research that is being conducted and that might contribute to considerations for policies and practices of 14-19 year olds. Several of the research studies that have contributed to this review are TLRP projects, including especially the work at Oxford University Department of Educational Studies. Here Geoff Hayward's study of Vocational Education and Training which is in the Widening Participation to

HE projects is of particular significance. Questions are raised both about enhancing learning outcomes from the various TLRP projects in schools and FE, and about the interface between school and further learning or work. At this stage a report is in the process of being prepared which reviews the kinds of evidence and research that have contributed to these questions and might further inform policy debates and discussions. This work will also contribute to the Foster review and the relations between FE and HE.

TLRP Commentary on 14 – 19 Education and Training

It is expected that the TLRP commentary on 14 – 19 education and training will be published in May following some further development to ensure that it is as inclusive, coherent and well targeted as possible.

Progression Projects

As the July 2005 Bulletin announced, new TLRP scheme has been created to recognise and support new projects which have grown from or extended existing TLRP work. A 'progression project' will be officially recognised by the Programme if it can be shown that it is independently funded work which has 'spun off from', 'extended' or 'been stimulated by' a TLRP-funded project.

The first two such projects have now been given 'progression project' status.

'Group Work: Transition into Secondary', is led by Professor Keith Topping, University of Dundee, in collaboration with Professor Donald Christie and Dr Andy Tolmie, University of Strathclyde, and Dr Allen Thurston, University of Dundee. This project follows the work of the ScotSPRinG project in which gains in science understanding and in social and emotional aspects of school life were found for primary school children. Positive changes over time in quality of interaction in the classroom were associated with better outcomes. Urban single-age classes tended to start low and make the biggest gains. The new *Transition into Secondary* project follows the pupils who participated in the previous project into secondary school. It explores transfer to the secondary school environment of specific curriculum knowledge and skills and also general social, communication and teamwork skills. The project seeks to identify the necessary and sufficient conditions for effective transfer, leading to the development of a model and methods for effective transfer. It also seeks to enhance pedagogical practice in secondary schools in a cost-effective and sustainable way. Please see the project website at: <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/fedsoc/research/projects/GroupworkTransition>

'Evaluating the evaluations of the first phase of the Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) in Further Education' is an ESRC funded project running from January to September 2006. Its aim is to 'evaluate the evaluations' of the first phase of the Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) in Further Education (FE), the post-compulsory, vocational sector in England. CoVEs are specialist centres of vocational skills – a bit like the Centres of Excellence in schools. Based around four FE colleges as case studies, the project will analyse the evaluations of the initiative undertaken by 10 different stakeholder communities including central government and its agencies; professional, union and employer bodies; qualification and inspection bodies; and the Colleges and private providers. The project will 'map' the evaluations but also take a critical eye to their form and content, paying particular attention to what was not evaluated and to the impact of the evaluations. The project, based at the University of Warwick, is led by Madeleine Wahlberg and the other participants are Ian Abbott, Professor Prue Huddleston and Professor Denis Gleeson. For further information please email m.wahlberg@warwick.ac.uk. Madeline and Denis were previously involved in the Phase 2 Transforming Learning Cultures in FE project.

Collaborative seminars for the Widening Participation in HE projects

Seven WP in HE projects have agreed that it would be a good idea for them to meet together to share ideas and experiences of initiating and conducting these projects, including helping to

facilitate the research fellows/assistants finding out more about the other studies and the ways in which they might collaborate. There are to be 2 or 3 such seminars per year (including possible seminars at the annual conference).

The first one of these seminars will be held on May 25th from 1 – 4 pm at IOE, in which each project will present a short paper on emerging issues in setting up and conducting their study. Subsequent seminars will be held at other project locales such as Manchester, Oxford, Sheffield, Sunderland or Wolverhampton.

Colleagues from other TLRP projects are cordially invited to attend and if you wish to do so, please could you contact James o'toole.

Widening Access in the UK and Ireland in an International Context: Research Evidence, Student Finance and Policy Initiatives

A conference on widening participation to HE is being held in Belfast on April 3rd/4th to consider the possibilities of developing further studies for and in Ireland. The conference will discuss research evidence and policy issues from several of the TLRP projects, and discuss the possibilities of extending these to Ireland. Miriam David will present an overview of the TLRP projects in the WPInHE and other relevant studies of higher education and learning across the life course.

Launch of a new Journal

We are pleased to announce the launch the 21st Century Society Journal of the Academy of Social Sciences, on which TLRP's Miriam David is Co-editor.

The journal will launch on June 28th at 5pm here at the Institute of Education. Invitations to the launch will be sent out shortly. Further details about the journal are below:

21st Century Society Journal of the Academy of Social Sciences

To promote the Social Sciences and synthesise, reflect and advance global public debates.

The Editors of this new and innovative journal invite contributions wishing to address challenging and important social science issues of relevance to an international audience. These may be theoretical, methodological or empirical. Papers will be peer reviewed to ensure high quality, and where possible should exhibit an interdisciplinary approach, links to areas /disciplines outside the social sciences, and policy and practitioner relevance.

21st Century Society will:

- provide a focus for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research across the social sciences
- promote the social sciences and represent current trends
- provide a digest of the most important issues within the social sciences
- provide a forum for debate on the intellectual and economic future
- and provide critical reflection nationally and internationally

Papers submitted to **21st Century Society** should be between 6000- 8000 words in length including references and should be emailed to the Editors at: acssjournal@ioe.ac.uk. For full instructions for authors go to www.tandf.co.uk/journals/ifa.asp and click on the journal link.

This Learning Life Conference, Bristol, 20-22 April 2006

Education is preparing young people for the future - and that means for a learning life. Not all go to university; not all get good qualifications. But in this uncertain, entrepreneurial world, every last one will need to be good at learning. But what does that mean?

What does real-life learning actually involve? And how can schools coach students more effectively in the skills and attitudes of real-life learning?

This conference gets well-known figures from many walks of life to reflect on their learning lives, and invites all those interested in the practical future of education to muse on what these stories might mean for teaching and learning in schools and colleges.

- Ex-Secretary of State for Education Estelle Morris talks about her learning life with UK government Culture Online guru Prof Jonathan Drori.
- Scientist Lord Robert Winston opens up to BBC2's Rough Scientist Prof Kathy Sykes.
- England goalkeeping legend Ray Clemence and award-winning England Cricketer Mark Alleyne discuss learning in sport with FA Youth Coach
- John Allpress. British Chess Champion Jonathan Rowson reflects on his learning journey with Prof Guy Claxton. A household name actor (watch this space!) will talk with Bristol theatre expert Prof Martin White.
- And up-and-coming Bristol youth band The Naturals play music and talk about their learning with Prof Martin Hughes.

In addition there are keynotes and on-going reflections from Harvard's Prof David Perkins, Stanford's Prof Shirley Brice Heath, and Director of UK think-tank Demos Tom Bentley. And there will be plenty of opportunity for participants to share their thoughts and experience too.

This Learning Life is organised by Profs Guy Claxton and Rosamund Sutherland and colleagues in the University of Bristol's Graduate School of Education, and Prof Martin White, Provost of the Institute for Advanced Studies. It is sponsored by The Lifelong Learning Foundation, The Esmee Fairbairn Trust, the DfES, the General Teaching Council and TLO Ltd.

For more information, registration, and how to submit presentations, go to:
www.bris.ac.uk/education/thislearninglife

The World Yearbook of Education 2006

Education Research and Policy: Steering the knowledge-based economy
Edited by Jenny Ozga, Terri Seddon and Tom Popkewitz

Routledge are pleased to announce publication of the latest volume of the *World Yearbook of Education*, one of the most established and respected series in education, now published for over 50 years.

The *World Yearbook of Education 2006*, considers the ways in which educational research is being shaped by policy, across the globe. Policy effects on research are increasingly influential as policies in and beyond education drive the formation of a knowledge-based economy by supporting increased international competitiveness through more effective, evidence based interventions in schooling, education, and training systems.

What consequences does this increased steering have for research in education? How do trans-national agencies make their influence felt on educational research? How do national systems and traditions of educational research - and relations with policy - respond to these new pressures? What effects does it have on the quality of research and on the freedom of researchers to pursue their own agendas?

The 2006 edition has a truly global reach, incorporating policy perspectives from the OECD and the European Commission, alongside national 'cases' from across the World. It focuses on three key themes:

- Globalising policy and research in education
- Steering education research in national contexts
- Global-local politics of education research

Education Research and Policy considers the impact of the steering processes on the work and identities of individual researchers, and considers how research can be organised to play a more active role in the politics of the knowledge economy and learning society.

Contents:

PART I Globalizing Policy and Research in Education

PART II Research Steering in National Contexts

PART III Global-Local Politics of Educational Research

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