

The Teaching and Learning Research Programme: Progress Report

By Sir David Watson,
Director of the University of
Brighton and Chair of the
Programme Steering
Committee.

The ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme has now been under way for over two years. In view of the announcement of the changes in the Programme Office (see page 2), it seems an appropriate time to take stock of what we have achieved so far.

First of all, I would like to express my personal appreciation for the work of Professor Desforges and Dr Kanefsky in leading the Programme in this vital period of establishing and then breathing life into the Programme. As they complete their contracts early in the New Year, they will be able to look back on a major contribution to national and international understanding of how we can raise the attainment of learners through imaginative and responsible research. All of us engaged with the Programme - the Steering Committee, its officers, the researchers and their partners - have benefited from Charles' wisdom, vision and energy. He has been supported with great professionalism and drive by John, especially in terms of winning support for and wider interest in the programme. Theirs will be a tough act to follow, and I am pleased that they have been able to help us lay plans for the maximum degree of continuity as the Programme moves into its next phase.

As you will be able to see by surfing the Programme website, we have already made much progress towards our objectives of raising attainment, advancing research excellence and supporting best practice.

In particular we have:

- commissioned £10 m. worth of outstanding research projects and networks, following a large scale, high quality competition. These significant investigations will report between 2003 and 2005;
- attracted comprehensive practitioner and policy community engagement with individual projects (in some cases on an unprecedented scale). These groups are contributing to all stages of the research from planning to the conduct and transformation of the research into settings and forms where it can help to raise achievement;

- set up a landmark, innovative research capacity building network. The Network's website is at <http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/capacity/>
- contributed to developments in theory and methods in the field through publications on research methods, research strategy, impact, knowledge transformation, brain research, as well as a review of reviews on teaching and learning. All these are available on our website at <http://www.ex.ac.uk/ESRC-TLRP/>
- built up an extensive infrastructure of partnerships in support of impact, with policy organisations, research institutions, campaigning bodies and other key centres of opinion;
- developed effective international partnerships for mutual consultancy, benchmarking, advancing research methods and capacity building. This exchange of ideas and strategic thinking has been valuable to both to the Programme and the broader UK policy context; and, last but not least,
- attracted £10.5 m. of new funding for a third phase of research in post-compulsory education.

Much remains to be done. Detailed research under Phase III will not start until 2003, when the projects already in progress will begin to produce their major reports. There is also a huge amount of work for us to do to keeping in touch with all of you who share our interest in doing the best we can for all our learners. We trust that this third newsletter will help us to meet that important obligation.

New Director to be Appointed

The ESRC has begun the search for a new Director and support team for the Programme, in succession to Professor Charles Desforges and Dr John Kanefsky who have announced their intention not to seek further contracts. The new Director will take over in March 2002 and will recruit a new support team. The current Programme Office will work with the appointee to ensure a smooth transition to the new directing team.

The new Director is being recruited by open advertisement (the text in on our website at <http://www.ex.ac.uk/ESRC-TLRP/jobadv.htm>). It is hoped that an appointment will be made in November, which will allow the new appointee to work closely with the existing team and contribute to the finalisation of the Specification for Phase III of the Programme. They will also be able to play an early role in advising potential bidders in the formulation of their outline proposals.

Professor Desforges said: "It has been an immensely fulfilling task to see the first two Phases of the Programme successfully commissioned, to lead consultation on

the agenda for Phase III and to contribute to the Programme's work in developing best practice in teaching and learning throughout the UK. However, the substantial extension in its life involved in Phase III, making the Programme a 10 year undertaking, means that the commitment of the Director will be more prolonged than originally envisaged."

"As I do not wish to see the Programme through to 2008, now seems the most sensible time to hand over to a new Director. I wish the new appointee every success, and both Dr Kanefsky and I will work closely with the person appointed, to ensure the smoothest possible transition to the new Programme Office."

Research Training Fellowships

The Programme has recently started a pilot scheme for research training fellowships in collaboration with the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and with support from DfES. They are open to practitioners in any area of teaching and learning who want to study for a research Doctorate while continuing in their current post / profession; the fellowships provide buy-out for some of their time.

Each fellowship is attached to, and has a mentor from, one of the Programme's project teams. Two fellowships have recently been awarded:

- Steve Hodgkinson of Lewes Tertiary College will be working with the project on "Improving Effectiveness of Pupil Groups in Classrooms"

- Mark Goodrham of Leeds College of Technology will be associated with the project on "Transforming Learning Cultures in Further Education"

The ESRC will be inviting applications for a second round of fellowships this autumn. Further details and how to apply should be posted on the ESRC website at <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/prog/tlguide.htm> by the time this newsletter reaches you.

Knowledge Base for Teaching and Learning

By Professor Charles Desforges, Programme Director

All readers of this newsletter are committed to enhancing learners' achievements broadly conceived. We already have an extensive knowledge base on teaching and learning from which we can work. A lot of this knowledge is tacit. It is manifest in the arts and practices of effective teachers. Some of the knowledge base is explicit. It can be stated as propositions, tried and tested by scientific research. In this article I summarise the main principles of this scientific knowledge base relevant to enhancing attainment.

In a major review of school learning processes, John Bransford¹ has identified the key features of successful learning environments. Such environments are **learner centred, assessment driven, knowledge rich** and **community connected**.

'Learner centred' does not refer to the rhetoric of the Plowden era. It refers to the fact that every learner enters any learning setting with a pre-formed and pre-forming corpus of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Their experience will be successful in terms of learning to the degree that it starts where the learner is and moves on from there.

All educational systems are driven by assessment and accountability systems. Quality learning environments are designed in recognition of this. The assessment system is valid in learning terms only to the degree that it promotes achievement.

'Knowledge rich' environments require learners to achieve understanding rather than mere recall. Such environments are designed in recognition of the human brain's capacity to thrive on information complexity and redundancy. A key characteristic of these environments is that knowledge transfer is promoted.

'Community connection' works in recognition of the fact that learners spend four times as many hours in the community as they do in classrooms. The community is, therefore, a vital resource and context in which understandings can be developed and validated. A learning environment is successful to the degree that it capitalises on opportunities afforded elsewhere.

These propositions constitute the educational equivalent of Newton's laws of motion in physics. They provide a solid foundation on which to ask questions of any learning environment and on how to understand why some environments are more successful in promoting learning than others. They also provide a design specification for improving any learning environment.

Converting scientific knowledge into practical action requires the development of the equivalent of engineering knowledge. Sir Isaac Newton understood the forces necessary to send a projectile to the moon but he could not do it. That took more than 300 years of developments in engineering.

Teaching and Learning

The basic design features of successful learning environments - learner centred, assessment driven, knowledge rich, community connected - require extensive working to develop the intellectual and practical tools necessary to maximise the practicality of delivery. The TLRP is already working on aspects of this. Robin Millar and his colleagues are developing diagnostic, assessment and lesson planning technologies related to what we know about learners' understandings of science concepts. Jean Rudduck and her team are exploring the implications and skills necessary to making the best response to pupils' perspectives. Other research communities are advancing our knowledge and skills in formative assessment and in linking educational establishments with their communities, specifically with learning in mind. There is yet a long way to go but the journey will be quicker if teachers and researchers everywhere ask these questions of current provision: 'to what degree is it learner centred; is the assessment system here driving our desired learning outcomes; is this environment promoting understanding and transfer; are we capitalising on learning opportunities in the community and what do we have to learn to improve on all these counts?'

The current discourse of teaching is dominated by so-called issues; the gender issue, ICT, teaching thinking and so on. These issues may be a dangerous distraction. They are certainly not at the core of teaching and learning. Learning is the core. This in turn puts learners centre stage.

In that light it will come as no surprise to find that studies which ask the question 'where do we get our best return on effort in enhancing attainment?' show that the closer the attention paid to increasing learners' intellectual activity, the bigger the impact on attainment. Wang² and colleagues reviewed the impact on pupil attainment of a wide range of policies and practices in the US schooling system. Variables and initiatives considered included national and state educational policies, curriculum legislation and innovation, reform of qualification and assessment systems, reform of teacher certification practices, reforms in classroom practices and interventions in learning skills development.

Wang and her team were able to show that most of these initiatives had negligible effects on student attainment. The researchers identified the top four factors in promoting achievement to be:

- pupils' cognitive and metacognitive activity
- the orderly flow of appropriate classroom work
- time on task
- home support

There are few surprises here. Learners learn more to the degree that their minds are engaged in thinking and learning (cognition) and reflecting on thinking and learning (metacognition). The more they do that the more they learn. Perhaps the surprise is that so many educational policies and practices are not consistent with these widely established and intuitively reasonable prescriptions.

The research challenge is to learn how to maximise pupils' intellectual engagement with the curriculum. This is the common core of the projects in the Programme, although it is particularly evident in the teams lead by Carol McGuinness and by Mary James.

References:

Bransford, J.D., Brown, A.L., & Cocking, R., (Eds.). (1999). *How people learn: mind, brain, experience and school*. Washington; National Academy Press.

Wang, M.C., Haertel, G.D., & Walberg, H.J., (1993). Toward a knowledge base for school learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 63,3, 249-294.

Evidence Based Practice in Science Education

What should we teach *about* science and how?

By Jonathan Osborne, King's College London and Mary Radcliffe, University of Southampton.

The major aim of the Evidence Based Practice in Science Education (EPSE) network is to explore ways in which teachers, and others involved in science education, can make greater use of research to enhance pupils' learning in science. As part of that investigation, we have sought to develop a body of evidence about what should be taught about the nature of science and how it might be taught.

As the relationship between science and society has changed, school science has not remained immune. School science achieved a major advance in the 1980s by winning the argument that it should be a compulsory element of the curriculum for all to age 16. However, this was done without any analysis of its aim and purpose and much of the curriculum still shows its origins as pre-professional preparation for that small minority who will become our future scientists.

The growing prominence of socio-scientific issues on the political agenda and the debate surrounding the public understanding of science led the Network to the conclusion that school science could no longer afford to marginalise or ignore developing a better understanding of the processes and social practices of science. We believe that such understandings are an essential element to engaging in scientific debate in contemporary society. Our arguments for this were developed in the widely circulated report *Beyond 2000: Science Education for the Future*. (Millar and Osborne, 1998). Thus a curriculum 'for all' could only be justified if it offered something that was of universal value and was not predominantly for a small minority.

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Evidence based practice in science education - cont'd

However, whereas the academic community can normally be relied on to provide a coherent, consensual account of what must be taught in science, this is not the case for philosophers, sociologists of science and scientists. Disagreement in this community has reached such a level that it has commonly been termed 'the science wars'. How can we ask teachers of science to teach, interpret and develop major ideas about the processes of science if there is no such consensual account amongst the experts?

The aim of this study was, therefore, to use the Delphi technique with a community of experts drawn from philosophers, sociologists, science educational experts, scientists, science teachers and science communicators to see if any agreement about a simplified account of science for the school curriculum could be established. Twenty three individuals were recruited whose work and status had been recognised through publications, Fellowship of the Royal Society or national awards for their teaching. Using a three round Delphi study, which began using a very open-ended questionnaire asking participants what they thought should be taught about the nature of science, the methods of science and the social practices of science, we gathered their views and ideas. From our analysis of the data, a set of 30 distinct themes emerged which were reduced to 18 for the third round. Of these 18, nine themes had a high level support by over two thirds of the participants in the final round.

This finding led us to conclude that these ideas attract sufficient consensus to form the core of an account of science, albeit a simplified one, that should be part of the compulsory school science curriculum from age 5-16. Our themes also had similarities with many "nature of science" components that are beginning to appear on national curricula across the English-speaking world. Thus, the first contribution of this research has been to provide for the first time empirical evidence of the importance of this component to the science curriculum and consequently to strengthen the case for its inclusion as a compulsory component of the science curriculum.

This is, of course, only the first step. There is a long way between establishing a case for what should be taught and its implementation. The particular difficulty in this area is that very few teachers of science (especially in primary schools) have well-grounded skills in the nature of science. For most of us educated in science, our understanding is often acquired by a process akin to osmosis; even then it relies on norms and empiricism and is influenced little by recent scholarship. Consequently teaching **about** science has had a low priority and there is not a well-established body of pedagogical knowledge about how this component should be taught.

For example, the normal task of the science teacher is to transmit a body of well-accepted consensual and reliable knowledge - in essence, to persuade their students of the veracity of the scientific world view. In such circumstances, it almost undermines the science teacher's rhetorical task if they are asked to expose the fact that science-in-the-making is often accompanied by controversy, plural interpretations of the data and uncertainty.

Consequently, during the past year (2000-01), we have worked with a group of 11 teachers drawn from KS2 to KS4 to see what are the difficulties and dilemmas posed by a curriculum that might ask them to teach more about science. Meeting for three days in the autumn term, we explored how the themes that emerged from the Delphi study might be taught, what resources were available and developed a range of approaches. From January to July, the teachers taught a minimum of eight lessons addressing these themes and were observed and videoed by the research team at regular intervals. In addition to these data sources, teachers have kept diaries and provided interviews. We have furthermore tested the understanding of the pupils before and after the set of lessons.

From this set of data we will develop a set of case studies that we hope will provide a body of evidence about approaches that are successful and the skills and abilities that teachers need to develop to teach a novel and distinctive element of the science curriculum which has hitherto been neglected. We will make the results available initially through our website

<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/educ/projs/EPSE>. Teachers and others who would like to be informed should e-mail an expression of interest to Helen Parker hp7@york.ac.uk.

Reference:

Millar, R., & Osborne, J.F., (Eds.). (1998). *Beyond 2000: Science Education for the Future*. London: King's College London.

The Use of Evidence to Support Experimentation and Change in Practice in Schools

By Mel Ainscow and Andy Howes, University of Manchester

The Research Network, 'Understanding and Developing Inclusive Practices in Schools' involves three universities, three LEAs and twenty-five schools addressing the issue of barriers to participation and learning. We want to understand the complexity of the individual 'case'. There is much to learn from attention to aspects of this complexity, alongside comparison and contrast to clarify and challenge our thinking. Three strategic questions guide our exploration.

How is inclusion constructed and worked on?

We are developing detailed descriptions of how schools and LEA use available resources to reduce barriers to learning and participation experienced by students, and how these approaches are developing as a result of their action research activities. In particular, these are accounts of the development (or not) of processes involving change in school organisation, culture, teaching and learning practices, such that acceptance, participation and attainment of previously marginalised pupils increases.

Knowing about a school and being involved in the process of change are two sides of the same coin. We see this as being essentially a social process. So a central collaborative strategy is the use of 'group interpretive processes' as a means of analysing and interpreting evidence about particular educational contexts. It involves an engagement with the different perspectives of practitioners, students and academics in ways that encourage critical reflection, collaborative learning and mutual critique (Wasser and Bresler, 1996). This overcomes some of the reported limitations of action research such as generalisability (Adelman, 1989).

Example: using evidence to encourage dialogue.

In one school we jointly facilitated an inservice training day for the staff, including teachers, the Head, support workers and the secretary. The SENCO led a circle time session, where we all said what we liked about the school, and what we would like to change. We spent time learning more about the children in the school, through reflection on what staff already know. Data from classroom and playground observations created a climate of openness and sharing. Groups of staff agreed on incidents in their experience which related to inclusion, then read them out, stopping short of the end and inviting other groups to guess what happened next. At the end of the morning colleagues interviewed each other about what they had learnt about similarities and differences between their children, and how they feel the school caters for diversity.

In the afternoon, staff moved from the question 'How should we approach difference?' to agree on a common theme for development: 'Supporting Achievement for All'.

Through experiences such as these, those within the school are learning the value of using evidence, including their own existing knowledge, in rethinking relationships and structures within their community.

The descriptions which we develop from this engagement are attempts to represent the key actions and interactions of all stakeholders involved in the construction of inclusion in particular settings, over a period of two and a half years. We focus on those actions which relate to the teaching and learning of marginalised pupils. We also take opportunities to develop detailed accounts of interactions in and around the schools.

As we participate in dialogue with our partners, we are seeking to understand the different ways in which stakeholders think about difference, participation and attainment. In this way, the accounts cover multiple perspectives.

What influences these developments?

As we develop the accounts our aim is to examine the thinking *behind* practice. With this in mind, we first of all analyse our accounts in terms of social processes of learning. Secondly, we focus on the ways in which broader social structures involving ethnicity, gender and class impact on and form a context for the development of inclusive practices. Our purpose here is to learn how these issues get 'played out' in particular schools and LEAs. Again, we find that this is usually best done with our practitioner colleagues.

Example: The power of listening to children's views

An inservice morning for support staff and teachers strengthened the general perception of being involved together in action research, in this case in relation to the teaching of writing. We reconsidered our own experience of writing, then looked at the way children understand the process, and the barriers and resources that they bring to it. Children's questionnaire responses helped staff to notice strong similarities between the ways in which they as adults and children approach writing. Staff also noted the clarity of development through the school. Older children made many more comments about the content and purpose of their writing.

Many staff were shocked when we looked at what children said they didn't like about writing. Children's feelings of failure and inadequacy at writing were particularly powerful. We broke into groups and looked at what we could learn from this together, constructing a list of important issues: ownership, writing for a purpose, taking notice of children's points of view on things. In the second part of the morning we used drama to explore possible strategies.

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Project Reports

The use of evidence to support experimentation and change in practice in schools - cont'd

What does this lead us to conclude and recommend?

Our aim, then, is to develop theory about processes leading to changes in schools' use of resources (widely defined) to address barriers to participation and learning. This theory will be based on an analysis of the role and practice of educational practitioners and students in particular socio-economic contexts.

We have found that schools experience many difficulties in collecting and analysing data about their policies and practices, and we have helped staff to develop skills in using observational and statistical data and in listening to the voices of students and parents. The engagement of staff with such data is a powerful strategy for generating a more open dialogue about marginalisation.

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References:

Adelman, C. (1989) The practical ethic takes priority over methodology. In Carr, W. (ed.) *Quality in Teaching*. London: Falmer

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Transforming Our Perceptions of Pupils

By Helen Demetriou and Jean Rudduck, Homerton College, Cambridge

There have been expressions of doubt and scepticism about consulting pupils about teaching and learning, sometimes because the idea is novel and a threat to the established order of things and sometimes because teachers and researchers are uncertain what the boundaries of pupil capability in consultation are.

The most common arguments against consulting pupils that we encounter are:

- pupils are seen as having insufficient experience to discuss and make recommendations about teaching and learning;
- it is seen as inappropriate for pupils to be involved in matters that are the professional responsibility of teachers;
- there is insufficient time in the curriculum for consulting pupils;
- it is thought that some pupils will abuse the opportunity to comment;
- there is distrust of the authenticity of pupils' comments (and an expectation that interviews will elicit either 'please the teacher' or 'get the teacher' responses).

There is also the question of levels of linguistic competence that may be affected by pupils' anxiety about being interviewed. Morrow (1999) found that when pupils had a choice about how to communicate their thoughts, younger children (8 to 11 years of age) chose to draw, and older children, especially girls, to write.

So why consult pupils?

Various claims are made by researchers about the advantages of talking about teaching and learning:

- pupils might do better in school if they were treated with respect as learners;

- it will help pupils develop a more 'professional' language for discussing learning and for reviewing their progress as learners;
- if pupils talk openly about their strengths and weaknesses as learners they are less likely to disengage because they think that teachers see them as useless;
- pupils' ideas can make a substantial contribution to the agenda for school improvement;
- when pupils are helped, through discussion, to understand what they are aiming to achieve they become more committed and effective learners, able to reflect on their own achievements and improve them.

Most of the written testimony comes from studies conducted by external researchers (Black and Wiliam, 1998; MacBeath *et al*, 2000; Rudduck *et al*, 2000). One of the concerns of our Network Project is to represent teachers' progress in different contexts.

Teachers' changing perceptions of pupils' abilities to discuss teaching and learning

The aim of one of our Network's projects is to enhance teachers' confidence in the processes and possibilities of consultation, and to help them evaluate the impact. En route, many teachers have said how their perceptions of pupils have changed as a consequence of listening to them talk seriously and constructively about learning in school. Reports from two of the nine schools involved in the project show how teachers are moving from work with a small number of pupils to wider consultation. One is a village primary school and the other an urban secondary school.

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School A

The headteacher, through her determination, vision and belief in pupils as active participants in their own learning, has helped rescue this small primary school from special measures and its work has now been positively evaluated by OFSTED. The headteacher initially worked on two fronts:

- helping older pupils to understand what learning is about. As a result of consultation, the importance of dialogue between pupil and teacher emerged and pupils are now more inclined to ask, without anxiety, about aspects of classroom work that they don't understand. A form ('This is what I need to help me learn and this is how I learn best') is regularly used for feedback and pupils and teachers together are revising it;
- helping older pupils' understand learning objectives and regularly reviewing how far they have got; the group now has much fuller ownership of the direction of its work.

She is now extending the work by

- developing a system of pupil representatives working with staff and governors to discuss ideas for curriculum change originating from the pupils;
- planning how to introduce consultation with younger pupils.

The headteacher wants to ensure that pupils' comments on teaching and learning are regularly discussed in staff meetings and she plans to review, fundamentally, the nature of the teacher-pupil learning relationship.

The headteacher is positive but realistic: *'...it's not something you can go easy on. You've got to keep working at it and keep reinforcing it...'*. Overall, she admits: *'It's made me want to lose the patronising attitude to giving children their own voice and turn that into...pupils to be our partners. And I get very excited about it!'* (Network Newsletter No. 1, 2001).

School B

The headteacher of this large secondary school felt that some pupils were not achieving their full potential and that the school needed a more positive climate for learning. She highlighted the need to listen to pupils' views and experiences as a starting point for change.

A strong focus, initially, was on understanding and talking about learning targets. Testimony from individual pupils indicates the popularity and progress of the new initiatives: *'We make the targets for us now...and that's better because I think we know more about ourselves than the teachers...in a way, because we know more what our strengths and weaknesses are'* (girl, year 7). A year 8 boy also comments: *'It's not just for the adults to do everything - the children get involved too'*.

The headteacher is now planning to extend the work by consulting all pupils in the school about their preferred learning styles and this new dimension of the work has been included in the school development plan.

The introduction of regular consultation sessions with pupils about teaching and learning has, in the headteacher's opinion:

- provided a useful channel of communication and source of ideas for development strategies; and
- helped pupils to feel a greater sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning and for the school as a learning environment.

Conclusions

These two examples demonstrate that it is possible, in both primary and secondary, large and small schools to introduce opportunities for pupil consultation into the regular activities of the school. It seems that the more teachers consult pupils and encourage pupils' participation, the more appreciative they are of the usefulness of the feedback pupils offer and as a consequence they come to see pupils differently. Teachers claim that such involvement makes pupils more communicative, enthusiastic and mature in their approach to school life and learning - and that the results are better. These are the claims. The problem, for the research team and the schools, is substantiating the claims in ways that would be persuasive to those who remain sceptical.

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Phase three update

The Programme has been consulting widely on the research priorities for our new Phase III. This will focus mainly on post-compulsory education but includes transitions from school to other learning and teacher education / CPD. The task is now to incorporate all the advice we have received from the practice and policy communities, learners, researchers and expert advisers into a Research Specification. We will then take this forward into commissioning specific projects to deliver on the research agenda. We expect the timetable will be broadly as follows:

We hope to finalise the Phase III Specification in December/January and issue a Call for Proposals immediately thereafter. This will identify the core priorities and set out what will be needed and when from applicants. It will give as much guidance as possible on the type, size and structure of bids thought most likely to be successful and describe how applications will be reviewed and evaluated.

As with Phase II, it is certain that stress will be placed on conducting research as a partnership between policy makers, practitioners and researchers. Transforming research evidence collaboratively to maximise its contribution to improving policy and practice will also be central to the objectives for Phase III.

The Programme and others recognise the need to build research capacity in those areas, particularly given the very broad scope of Phase III. There is a relatively limited research tradition in many of the component sectors of

post-compulsory education. It is therefore anticipated that, as a further aid to capacity building, a summary of the expected key features / themes of Phase III will be published on the Website in November without prejudice to the final specification.

It is anticipated that outline applications will be sought by March / April 2002 and shortlisting decisions will be made in the summer. Full applications would be required in the autumn and final funding decisions announced in early 2003. Individual projects would start as soon as possible thereafter and last up to five years, so the Programme will now run to 2008.

Seminars and other meetings are proposed for January and February 2002 to discuss the Specification with potential bidders. We will announce the dates and locations on our website (<http://www.ex.ac.uk/ESRC-TLRP/>) well in advance. We will also e-mail organisations and individuals we know to be interested. Additional advice will be available by telephone, e-mail and individual discussion.

Further copies of this Newsletter are available from the address below or can be printed from the Programme website, as can the Post-compulsory version.

The ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme's prime objective is to support research which will lead to improvements in the achievement of learners of all ages, in all sectors and contexts of education, training and lifelong learning throughout the UK. It has total funding of £23 million from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).and is managed by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

Strategic management of the Programme rests with a Steering Committee of practitioners, academics and other users chaired by Professor Sir David Watson, Director of the University of Brighton. See the Programme Website for a full list of members.

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