

TLRP/1

15th November 1999

The ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme, the largest programme of research in education and training in the United Kingdom, has been launched today (15th November 1999) by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Lifelong Learning, Mr. Malcolm Wicks.

The aim of this Programme is to raise the attainment of learners. It represents a new approach to research on teaching and learning, and will make an important contribution to developing the evidence base for teaching and learning at both the individual and the policy level. Collaboration is also central to the Programme; all the projects will feature extensive partnership with users and practitioners at all stages, and they will have a strong voice in ensuring the practical significance of the research questions and embedding the findings in general practice.

The Programme has been commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) with funding of £12.5 m. from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly and the Department for Education and Employment.

Welcoming the start of the Programme, Mr. Wicks said:

"I am delighted to be able to welcome this five year Programme, which will be of great practical value to teachers and trainers, and make a long term difference in the outcomes of teaching and learning throughout the education and training system."

"The Programme will help increase learners' achievement at all ages by improving the research base of education and training, turning research findings into better teaching and learning, and developing the system's capacity for further improvement. It has the potential to make an important contribution both to providing the UK with the skills and capabilities in needs in the new millennium and to improving the personal fulfilment of learners."

Programme Director Professor Charles Desforges, said: "This

Programme represents a major opportunity to improving teaching and learning by promoting evidence based policy and practice. It is also an exciting challenge for the education and training communities, enabling them to build on their achievements."

Under **Phase I** of the Programme, four Research Networks and two Career Development Associates, totalling £ 1.9 m. over 3 years, have been conditionally approved for funding by the ESRC. The Research Networks chosen are:

- Prof. M. Ainscow (Manchester), Prof. T. Booth (Canterbury Christ Church) and Prof. A. Dyson (Newcastle): *Understanding and Developing Inclusive Practices in Schools*. [improving outcomes for marginalised learners by overcoming barriers to their achievement]
- Prof. R.H. Millar (York), Dr. J.T. Leach (Leeds), Dr. J.F. Osborne (Kings College) and Dr. M. Ratcliffe (Southampton): *Evidence Based Practice in Science Education*. [advancing learners' attainment in science through developments in research-based practice]
- Prof. H.N. Rainbird (UC Northampton), Prof. K.M. Evans (Surrey), Prof. P.M. Hodgkinson (Leeds) and Dr. L. Unwin (Sheffield): *Improving Incentives to Learning in the Workplace*. [improving attainment in workplace learning through understanding incentives to learn]
- Professor J. Rudduck (Homerton College), Dr. M. Arnot (Cambridge), Dr. M. Fielding (Sussex) and Prof. K. Myers (Keele): *Consulting Students about Teaching and Learning: Process, Impact and Outcomes*. [enhancing attainment, motivation and commitment through pupils' perspectives on teaching and learning]

The Career Development Associates selected are:-

- Mrs. J. Flutter (Homerton College): *Pupil Voice* [linked to the Network on Consulting Students.
- Mr. M.J. Newman (Middlesex University): *the Effectiveness of Problem-Based Learning in Promoting Evidence Based Practice* [nursing education].

Following extensive and wide-ranging consultation, a Call for Proposals has also been issued for **Phase II** of the Programme, the main research phase. Submissions have

been requested from research teams throughout the UK for up to £8.5 m. of funding for research in three areas:

- how to increase motivation and engagement in learning processes;
- how to transform advances in research on human cognition, classroom processes, professional expertise and telematics to promote learners' achievement; and
- how to achieve continuous improvement of learning communities.

Projects will run for 3-4 years and will involve multi-disciplinary research teams working closely with practising teachers, trainers and users at all stages of the project. They will also ensure that research findings are widely adopted.

Notes for Editors:

(a) The Launch on 15th November

This takes place at 11.00 in the Smeaton Room, Institution of Civil Engineers, One Great George Street, London SW1P 3AA. Mr. Wicks will speak at 11.15 and Prof. Desforges at 11.45.

Mr. Wicks has to leave at 11.45 but will be available for interview before he speaks. Prof. Desforges will be available before and after the Launch.

(b) Background on the Programme

The Teaching and Learning Research Programme aims to generate significant long term benefits for learners at all ages and across the whole range of educational and training contexts, including pre-school, primary and secondary school, FE, HE, community, adult and continuing education, and the many forms of professional, industrial and commercial training. The Programme will also work to increase research capacity for teaching and learning, to promote further improvements in learning through evidence based practice. The Programme will feature the involvement of practitioners in contributing to and using research, and foster collaborative work between disciplines and across sectors. Researchers will work closely with teachers, trainers and students to ensure their findings are reliable and are communicated clearly, so teachers and trainers can use them to make significant advances in learners' attainment.

The projects announced today under Phase I of the Programme are scheduled to begin their work early in 2000 and to run for 3 years. The Research Networks are partnerships between institutions aimed at improving the

evidence base of teaching and learning. The individual Networks propose to research the following:

- Ainscow, Booth and Dyson: Understanding and Developing Inclusive Practices in Schools. This Network aims to define, evaluate and disseminate practices designed to help improve outcomes for marginalised groups of learners by understanding and overcoming barriers to their achievement.
- Millar, Leach, Osborne and Ratcliffe: Evidence Based Practice in Science Education. This Network aims to advance learners' attainment in science through developments in research-based practice
- Rainbird, Evans, Hodgkinson and Unwin : Improving Incentives to Learning in the Workplace. This Network aims to improve attainment in workplace learning based on a better understanding of the operation of incentives.
- Rudduck, Arnot, Fielding and Myers: Consulting Students about Teaching and Learning: Process, Impact and Outcomes. This Network aims to enhance attainment, motivation and commitment through promoting the use of pupils' perspectives on teaching and learning.

The Call for Proposals on Phase II has a deadline for submission of project proposals in January 2000. The research consortia should comprise inter-disciplinary research teams including appropriate teaching and learning practitioners and managers. Their projects will be required to show how they will work in partnership with potential users of the research throughout the course of the Programme and communicate their findings to all interested parties. Projects will start from September 2000 onwards, and Programme is looking to support approximately 10-15 large projects addressing the following three research themes:

- How can motivation and engagement in learning processes be increased?
- How can advances in research on human cognition, classroom processes, professional expertise and telematics be transformed to promote learners' achievement?
- How can the continuous improvement of learning communities be attained most effectively?

A small number of research fellowships focused on the development and utilisation of advanced research methods may also be funded as an integral part of project proposals.

(c) Programme Steering Committee

Strategic management of the Programme rests with a Steering Committee of practitioners, other users and academics from a wide range of UK institutions. The Committee are:-

Chairman: Professor Sir David Watson, University of Brighton;
Vice-Chair: Professor Sally Brown, University of Stirling;
Members: Ms Patricia Clark, Avondale Primary School, London; Mr. Keith Davies Carmarthenshire LEA; Professor Carol Fitz-Gibbon, University of Durham; Professor Caroline Gipps, Kingston University; Professor David Hargreaves, University of Cambridge; Professor Ken Mayhew, Pembroke College, Oxford; Miss Gill Newton, NHS Executive; Professor David Raffe, University of Edinburgh; Professor Jim Ridgway, University of Durham; Ms Judy Sebba, Department for Education and Employment; Ms Jenny Shackleton, Independent Consultant; Mrs Margaret Threadgold, Swanshurst School, Birmingham; Professor Geoff Whitty, Institute of Education; and Professor David Wood, University of Nottingham. Non-voting Members are Dr Derek Adams, Welsh Office and Dr Fiona Paterson, Scottish Executive.

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Programme Websites:

<http://www.ex.ac.uk/ESRC-TLRP/>

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/prog/tlguide.htm>