Welcome to the latest issue of the Research and Enterprise Bulletin for the Institute of Education. The Bulletin appears once a term, reporting on research and enterprise activity of the previous term. Its principal aim is to increase awareness among all staff of research and enterprise activity within the IoE, by highlighting staff publications and conference involvement, research bids made and grants received, reporting on seminars held at the IoE and providing information on support available for research and enterprise. If you have an item of news that you would like to appear in the Bulletin, please send it to me at s.j.graham@reading.ac.uk

Suzanne Graham, Director of Research and Tony MacFadyen, Director of Enterprise

Events, Summer term

We hosted a number of well-attended research seminars in the summer term, many given by IoE staff, and culminating in the Staff Research and Enterprise day on 14 June (recordings of most staff seminars are available to view on Media Site: http://mediasite.reading.ac.uk). An external speaker, Gill Brigg, teacher and theatre practitioner, spoke on the topic of ‘Passion versus protocol’ (or ‘It loses in the telling…’).

During June and July, Suzanne Graham (with Co-Investigator Ernesto Macaro, University of Oxford) ran six workshops funded by the ESRC Follow-on Fund, to disseminate to MFL teachers research findings from the team’s previous projects (with the first workshop at the Willink School). The events are being followed by the establishment of a nationwide network of teachers seeking to implement teaching principles based on this research in their classrooms. Many thanks to our project partner school, the Willink, and to Heike Bruton, Dave Marron and Chris Tibbenham for helping to bring it all about.

Jeanine Treffers-Daller organised (with Panos Athanasopoulos, University of Newcastle) an ‘Exploratory workshop on thinking, speaking and gesturing in two languages’ (sponsored by the European Science Foundation), held at Whiteknights on 12-15 September 2012. The workshop brought together a multidisciplinary team of researchers interested in exploring how language affects cognition both in terms of structuring information for the purpose of communication, and in terms of non-linguistic categorisation and perception of reality and the world.

We are always looking for research students and members of staff who would like to give a seminar, so please get in touch with me if you would like to be involved. s.j.graham@reading.ac.uk
Research groups

The following Thursdays this academic year have been reserved for Research Groups to meet (although meetings may take place at other times):

4 October 2012, 3-5pm
14 February 2013, 3-5pm
25 April 2013, 3-5pm

Research Group Convenors are as follows:

- Equity, Inclusion and Improvement: Alan Floyd: alan.floyd@reading.ac.uk
- First Language: Jessie Ricketts: j.ricketts@reading.ac.uk
- Second Language: Jeanine Treffers-Daller: j.c.treffers-daller@reading.ac.uk
- Values, Practice and Curriculum: Berry Billingsley: b.billingsley@reading.ac.uk

IoE Research Prize

This was awarded to Jessie Ricketts, for her 2011 paper:


Richard Harris was awarded the runner-up prize for the following output:


Our congratulations to both.

Research funding

IoE funding opportunity

The deadlines for the internal funding competition are as follows this academic year:

- 4 October 2012
- 24 January 2013
- 9 May 2013

For details of how to apply, please see the IoE Staff Blackboard site, in the ‘Research’ folder.

Please note that all funds need to be spent by the end of the financial year (end of July) in which they are awarded, and projects need to be planned with that factor in mind. We will also make only one award a year to any one individual member of staff as Principal Investigator.

In last term’s competition, projects funded were:

- **Powell, D.** Behavioural and neural correlates of the Rapid Automatized Naming task: a long-term, longitudinal project.
- **Ricketts, J.** Vocabulary acquisition in poor comprehenders and children with dyslexia.

**Internal RETF funding won:**

- **Harris, R.** What role does the choice of history curriculum topics play in promoting a sense of identity and social cohesion amongst young people?
- **Powell, D.** A prospective, longitudinal investigation of the cognitive precursors of literacy in very young children.
- **Ricketts, J.** Implications of poor reading comprehension at the end of secondary school.

**External funding won:**

- **Billingsley, B.** Uses and abuses of biology. Funded by the John Templeton Foundation.
- **Edwards, V.** After virtual collaboration over several months, the Templeton Foundation funded a three day meeting (August 18-20) for partners from Cape Town and the USA to work with Viv Edwards on preparing a full application for a project on ‘The development of moral imagination in children through stories’.
- **Francis-Brophy, E.** Migration Exel. European Integration Funding in partnership with Slough Borough Council. This project is aimed at engaging with newly arrived third country nationals and established community members in Slough. It will provide a structured mentor programme designed to create a dynamic interaction between new arrivals and local residents. Delivered through peer educators, the goal is to raise migrant learners’ confidence and communicative English skills while increasing long term residents’ understanding of new migrants’ experiences and integration.

**External Research proposals submitted:**

- **Croll, P., & Fuller, C.,** with G. Attwood, UWE: Into apprenticeships: a longitudinal and comparative study of education-employment transitions with a particular focus on young people entering apprenticeships. Submitted to the ESRC.
- **Edwards, V.,** with colleagues at the University of Edinburgh. Policy, pedagogy and pupil perceptions: EAL in England and Scotland. An outline proposal to the Leverhulme Trust.
- **Floyd, A.** Career trajectories of academics who become department heads - a national survey. Submitted to the British Academy.
- **Fuller, C., Harris, R., & Macfadyen, T.** The role of outdoor activities in raising educational attainment and aspirations. First stage proposal to the Nuffield Foundation.
Research project profile
LASAR – Berry Billingsley

As the PI of LASAR (Learning about Science and Religion) I have recently won my third grant in this theme which means a total funding of just under £550,000. Working with 10 research schools, we have, for example, followed the developing thinking of 36 students year by year for three years and conducted surveys of whole year groups (Yr 7, 9 and 11). Another aspect of the project is the Faradayschools.com website which is now used by teachers in 500 schools in England and has up to 400 visitors per day worldwide. I think it is fair to say that Reading is now widely considered to be leading the way in tackling the question of how schools can help young people learn about the relationships between scientific knowledge and religious belief.

Conference news

Presentations:


Goodwyn, A. (2012, May). Literary reading from a Darwinian perspective; escaping nationalism. Paper presented at The International Association for the Improvement of Mother Tongue Education International seminar, Tel Aviv.


Conference news Presentations cont.


Tissot, C. The role of SENCO: ideology and reality. Paper presented at the BERA Annual Conference, University of Manchester.


Other research news

**Viv Edwards** has been invited to join the international reviewing committee for the workshop on ‘Multilingualism and Literacy’ to be held at the 19th International Congress of Linguists in Geneva.

**Ellie Francis-Brophy** reports that the IoE is now one of the regular (host) venues for the Thames Valley Strategic Partnership on Migration – we are rotating with Slough Borough Council. This covers all issues including education of new migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

**Richard Harris and Katharine Burn** (IOE, London) conducted the 4th annual survey for the Historical Association which looks at the state of history education in the UK. This year there has been a particular focus on the impact of the EBacc - although more students have opted for history at GCSE as a result of the EBacc there are a number of unintended consequences which are likely to undermine the effective teaching of history at KS3. On the basis of this work Richard and Katharine were invited to the DfE in July to share their findings and to feed into the policy making process.

**Tony MacFadyen** has been appointed to the Research Board for the Association of Physical Education. In September, along with colleagues from Leeds Metropolitan University, he organised the BERA Physical Education & Sport Invisible College attended by over 50 delegates.

**John Oversby**, recipient of the 2011 Education Award from the Royal Society of Chemistry for his contribution to chemical education, UK, has been nominated to give a keynote address at the World Conference on Science and Technology Education 2013 Sarawak, Borneo, Malaysia, in September 2013.

**Naz Rassool and Viv Edwards** have been invited to act as consultants for a project directed by Professor Maya David at the University of Malaya on language and employability.

**Jeanine Treffers-Daller** advised the Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman, on a grant application in February 2012 and the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences, on a grant application in April 2012. She has been invited to join the Scientific Committee for The International Symposium on Bilingualism 9 (ISB9), which will be held in Singapore from 10-13 June 2013.

Enterprise news

We have continued to build relationships with schools in terms of new ITE partnership arrangements and how we might contribute our expertise. We have students from our first Schools Direct places beginning this academic year – thanks to all concerned, particularly Jonathan Allen, for their hard work on this.

In term of consultancy and CPD the IoE has continued to be enterprising in recent months. Lionel Warner ran a series of seminars for English teachers at East Kazakhstan State University, Ust-Kamenogorsk, earlier in the year. More recently Berry Billingsley and Geoff Taggart made presentations on Moral Education to a visiting Chinese delegation in association with Sino Bridge International, a partnership we hope to develop over the year. We continue to explore interesting and exciting CPD possibilities with organisations in Pakistan, China, Vietnam and Uzbekistan. Closer to home the Creative Arts and Physical Education staff led CPD events for Wokingham over the summer on improving language and literacy in these subjects.

Yota Dimitriadi continues to develop a profitable partnership with the School of Systems Engineering regarding Computer Science CPD. Many thanks also go to Berry Billingsley who organised our CPD events with John Madeski academy and those that contributed their input to these sessions which went very well. We hope to step up this partnership across the year. Colleagues will also be delighted to know that the bid to which we contributed, at the end of June, to provide Governor Training as part of the South Central Learning Partnership has been successful - congratulations to those involved.

Richard Harris hosted an event for the Centre for Holocaust Education on 29th June 2012, attended by local teachers and our trainees - it was very well received and we have been asked to host another event next year. As part of the Holocaust programme Richard was recruited as an associate to help develop a series of beacon schools for Holocaust Education.

Richard recently went to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington to do a week-long programme to work with schools in developing new teaching materials.

Berry Billingsley led a one-day event for schools on 25th September which addressed such questions as ‘What is a rat brain robot?’ ‘Can robots one day be essentially human?’ ‘Would a super-intelligent robot think humans are its gods?’ 300 teenagers and teachers from 16 schools quizzed Cybernetics Experts, Theologians and Philosophers from Reading, Birmingham, London and Oxford to decide whether humans are now taking nature out of God’s hands and whether science can be consistent with a religious perspective on what it means to be human.
Staff publications

Publications


Fuller, C., Goodwyn, A., & Green, J. (Eds.) (2012). English Teaching: Practice and Critique, Volume 11, Numbers 1 and 2 (May and July 2012): Special Issue: Research methodologies as framing the study of English/literacy teaching and learning (Part 1 and 2).

Graham, S., Macfadyen, T., & Richards, B. (2012). Learners’ perceptions of being identified as very able: insights from Modern Foreign Languages and Physical Education. Journal of Curriculum Studies, 44, 323-348.


Post-graduate research students

Graduation

Naom Nyarigoti was awarded her PhD at the degree ceremony in July. Her research on ‘Continuing professional development: an ethnographic case study of secondary school English language teachers in Kenya’ was supervised by Viv Edwards.

Our congratulations to Naom.

Naom Nyarigoti and Viv Edwards
Other PGR news

Phan Le-Ha, visiting Professor at The University of Reading and Honorary Academic, Vietnam National University Hanoi, Vietnam, gave a seminar on The geopolitics of knowledge: engaging with ideas/theories beyond Western boundaries. This was held during her recent visit to the IoE and was attended by PGRs across the University. Her academic base is in Culture and Pedagogy at the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia.

The Summer term PGR seminar day was held on Saturday 19th May in Old Whiteknights House, home of the University Graduate School. Presentations were made by Tom Parkinson on ‘Researching popular music pedagogy: methodological issues’ (supervisors Mary Stakelum and Suzanne Graham); Shahla Yassaei on ‘Stories unfold: an odyssey into secondary teachers’ reflection in the UK’ (supervisors Suzanne Graham and Mary Stakelum); Thanda Mhlanga on ‘The construction of the professional identities of middle managers in English Further Education colleges’ (supervisors Brian Fidler, Naz Rassool and Alan Floyd); Suttawan Sriwantaneeyakul on ‘Factors affecting critical reading abilities of Thai undergraduate students’ (supervisors Suzanne Graham and Andy Goodwyn). A guest presenter was Sarah Smart who recently completed her ESRC funded doctoral study under the supervision of Naz Rassool and Trevor Davies. The Autumn term seminar day is scheduled for Saturday 10 November.

PGR student profiles

Anna Tsakali

My name is Anna Tsakalaki and I was brought up in Athens, Greece. Through my working experience as a language teacher in Primary and Secondary Education, I came to realise how important it is for each pupil in the classroom to feel supported and capable of achieving their best. Experiencing smaller or larger everyday success in school brings confidence and happiness to students, and, the way I see it, this is what makes a good learner and a happy child.

The need to offer appropriate support to all my students, but specifically to those facing particular learning difficulties, led to my further academic studies in Special and Inclusive Education and to my current PhD. Making written language accessible to all students is one of my main concerns when teaching. That is why in my research I chose to investigate spelling practice for dyslexic and typically developing pupils. I will try to identify any specific spelling patterns that pupils of primary school find difficult to spell in their native language and link these errors to the ways in which we learn how to spell. My hope is that this research’s findings will be of use to teachers, as it is aiming to point out specific misspellings-to-expect of pupils of this age as well as any factors to predict spelling difficulties.

Two main factors played a major role in my decision to do my PhD research at the IoE, University of Reading: a strong academic staff with members specialised in my topic and a supportive research environment (facilities, learning support) to back me up. During my first year of studies, I was warmly welcomed by all the members of the academic staff, whom I have met either as my supervisors or through active research groups and seminars, and who were always open to listen to my queries, and to offer advice and practical help, when needed. I have also found extremely useful the Doctoral Students/Staff Committee’s meetings once per term,
where students and tutors discussed on ways to facilitate our research work at the Institute. Finally, I am very excited about the growing Doctoral Students’ Community, whose members meet regularly to talk on our projects, discuss recent research in Education, and share our ideas, anxieties... or a cup of tea!

Overall, I am delighted to have been given several opportunities to present my work at internal and external seminars and conferences and to participate as an assistant in other research projects apart from my own. These are all new experiences to a young researcher and I am glad I was offered these opportunities and that I am doing well. If I was to give any advice to my colleague students, it would be to be enthusiastic, organised and determined. During my studies so far, I got all the help I needed, as long as I asked for it clearly and persistently. I think I’ll continue this way!

Leah Muteru

Tell us a bit about yourself (who you are and where you are from):

My name is Leah Muteru. I am Kenyan. I am a secondary school teacher of Food Technology/ Catering having graduated from Kenyatta University in 1999 with a BED Home Economics (honours).

What inspired you to do doctoral work?

It was not until I pursued my MA (Education and Professional studies) at Kings College, London in 2008 that I realised how much I had enjoyed it. However, I couldn’t take up opportunities for a PhD as we had a new arrival in the same year! When I learnt about the part-time Ed Doctorate course at Reading in 2010, I went ahead and made my enquiries and subsequent application to study.

What is your research about?

My research is about parental involvement in the school lives of their children. There is both theory and legislative support for involving parents in the school lives for their children. Parental involvement leads to educational gains of children. Specifically, I will involve black African Points Based System migrants who are in work. I will seek to find out how they play out their parenting roles with respect of getting involved in their children’s school.

Why did you choose Reading University?

The Ed Doctorate course is carefully structured and well resourced. We have three teaching weekends every year for the first two years and it is very accessible. Teaching starts 0830 onwards and there is ample parking hence though I live in Bedfordshire, I manage well. The University Library and the online catalogues are equipped with some of the finest literature in education. I only have myself to blame for not exhausting the available resources!

What tips would you give to other students?

The only advice I can give anyone joining the Ed Doctorate course at Reading is that though it takes effort and a lot of hard work as long as one is well disciplined in terms of study time, they will be absolutely okay. The expertise of the academics you have the opportunity to work with and the sense of belonging to such a welcoming and supportive community of Ed. D colleagues is just a bonus.