

New horizons of research and practice:



All too often, studies of practitioner research in the learning and skills sector describe how practitioners struggle to improve practice without access to, or support from critical evidence produced by the research community. Other studies show how highly motivated and talented teachers and potentially good researchers find it difficult and often impossible to see their research through to a successful conclusion, either through loss of confidence or feelings of isolation. Andrew Morris (Spring 2009) emphasised how teachers need materials grounded in research evidence and how they need to be supported and encouraged to adapt them in the contexts of their practice. At the same time he noted that decision makers need summaries that collate evidence from different sources in order to draw out strategic conclusions. Continuous improvement in teaching, learning and research turns around all three operating in a productive dynamic.

Now, twenty Research Development Fellowships have been created to bring practitioners, academics and government agency officials from across England together in projects which will combine the day to day concerns of practitioners with strategic priorities for the sector. Their design is based on LSIS's research-based framework for supporting practitioner research which will be published shortly on the LSIS website. These Fellowships will build on the work of organisations such as CEL and QIA (now LSIS) and complement projects such as those run by the Institute for Learning (IfL) and the Campaign for Learning. The Fellowships have been designed in collaboration with the Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training at the University of Sunderland (SUNCETT). Their aim is to promote and sustain a research culture and ways of working which will bring about long term and effective improvements in teaching and learning across the sector as well as an opportunity for personal and professional development for the individuals involved. An update on the successful projects and their progress will be included in future editions of *Inside Evidence*.

Inside Track

Employability Challenge case studies

www.ukces.org.uk/tags/employability/employability-challenge-case-studies

This document is intended to accompany The Employability Challenge reported on page 10. The report was based on the contributions of over 200 organisations active in developing the employability skills of individuals. Twenty of these organisations participated in these case studies.

The GTC's 'Research for Teachers' resource

www.gtce.org.uk/teachers/fft/

The GTC's Research for Teachers resource consists of summaries of research reports on a variety of themes covered in this issue, including learning how to learn through assessment for learning, learner consultation and collaborative group work in mathematics. Most of the studies were conducted in schools, but many of the summaries, such as these, are relevant to the post-16 sector too.

The Maths 4 Life project

www.ncetm.org.uk/resources/8848

'Thinking Through Mathematics' materials to support the professional development of teachers of adult numeracy (see page 2) are available from this website. You can also read a review of the resource and join the Subject Learning Coaches networks to further explore the active teaching and learning approaches of 'Thinking Through Mathematics'.



Excellence Gateway – Research portal

www.excellencegateway.org.uk/research

The Research section of the Excellence Gateway, not only allows you access to previous issues of *Inside Evidence*, but a number of other valuable resources including a link to the Educational Evidence Portal (EEP), and a list of organisations working with LSIS, with links straight to their research. You also have the opportunity to get involved in discussion forums, or collaborative workrooms where you can work and share documents with colleagues in a secure environment, whilst the 'latest research' and 'news' sections offer up-to-date information on key research and important news items to be aware of, such as upcoming grants.

Reader panels

We would like to thank members of our reader panels.

Practitioner panel:

Alistair Woodcock, Quality and Standards Manager, Oxford and Cherwell Valley College

Sara Hunter, Chief Executive, Royal Artillery Centre for Personal Development (RACPD)

Alison Ashworth-Brown, Head of Engineering Academy, NG Bailey LTD

Tony Pattison, Director Quality: Learning and Teaching, Stockton Riverside College

Elizabeth Johnson, Assessor, Royal National College for the Blind

Researcher Panel:

Kathryn Ecclestone, Professor of education and social inclusion, University of Birmingham

Ann Hodgson, Faculty Director for Research, Consultancy and Knowledge Transfer / Co-Director, Centre for Post-14 Research and Innovation, Institute of Education, University of London

Garth Clucas, Assistant Divisional Manager, Survey Reports and Dissemination of Good Practice, Ofsted

Andrew Morris, Independent Consultant

David James, Reader, Bristol Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning and Education (BRILLE)