

Interpretation and Communication of the Literature of Education

Dr Charles Anderson and Professor Dai Hounsell

Course Outline

This course component aims to foster a critical understanding of the interpretative possibilities and limitations of research and scholarship in education and professional development. It does not seek to develop proficiency in applying particular research methods, rather, its goal is to enhance expertise in weighing and interpreting evidence arising from contrasting research approaches.

In pursuing that aim, it examines scholarly communication in education, i.e. the channels and forms through which educational research is discussed and disseminated to a variety of stakeholders. A key concern is therefore with what might count as 'evidence', 'data' or 'substantiation' for a given claim (a theory, concept, insight or observation) in academic, professional and public domains. Similarly, it looks at how appropriate it might be to generalise from a particular finding, or apply it beyond the settings within which the research took place.

Assessment

A written assignment of 4–5,000 words is required. You will be asked to present an analytical case study in the communication of the findings of a study or set of studies drawn from recent research and scholarship in education or professional development.

Background Reading

If you would like to undertake some preliminary reading on this theme before the start of the programme, you may find one or more of the following of interest:

Bell, C. and Raffe, D. (1991) Working together? Research, policy and practice: the experience of the Scottish evaluation of TVEI. In: Walford, G., ed. *Doing Educational Research*. London: Routledge.

Hounsell, D. (1987) The Supply and Demand for Information about Education. In: Boyd-Barrett, V. and Braham, P., eds. *Media, Knowledge and Power*. London: Croom Helm/Open University, pp. 434–443.

Phelan, P. and Reynolds, P. (1996) *Argument and Evidence: Critical Analysis for the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge.