

# Society for Research into Higher Education

**SRHE**

| annual report 2008

# Mission Statement

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The Society for Research into Higher Education is a UK-based international learned society concerned to advance understanding of higher education, especially through the insights, perspectives and knowledge offered by systematic research and scholarship. The Society aims to be the leading international society in the field, as to both the support and the dissemination of research.

More fully, its broad aims are to:

- stimulate new forms of research and inquiry into higher education as a field of study
- assist in developing research capacity in relation to the field
- encourage and support those coming into the field of higher education studies
- develop a network of scholars and researchers in the field of higher education studies
- offer fora for the presentation of research and scholarship in the field
- promote the development and widening of research methodologies in the field
- provide opportunities for the publication of research and scholarship in the field
- develop opportunities through which researchers in the field can engage with policy makers, practitioners within higher education and other potential interested parties so that policy and practices may be shaped by research.

In fulfilment of these ends, year-on-year, the Society will:

- maintain and develop a database of researchers and scholars in the field in the UK and internationally
- seek to encourage the work of those newly embarking on research in the field
- conduct conferences and seminars that both bring researchers together and enable researchers, policy-makers and others to engage with each other
- produce and support various forms of research-based publications
- establish and support a number of networks of members, each focused on a particular dimension of higher education where research may have a role to play
- provide advice to and engage with relevant national and international research and policy debates.

From time to time, the Society may itself undertake research (perhaps funded by others) or sponsor directly a research project of its own.

# Strategic Goals

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- **To work to enhance the role of Higher Education Research within the higher education sector**  
*The Society is concerned that Higher Education Research should form a more central and significant part of the process of evolving and shaping the higher education sector.*
- **To encourage and support newer researchers coming into the field of Higher Education Research**  
*The Society regards the help and support which it can provide to newer researchers in higher education as one of its most important contributions to the higher education sector. The Society is well placed to offer a range of essential and valuable resources to this group.*
- **To provide opportunities for the publication of research and scholarship**  
*The Society's publications are central to the Society's reputation, public profile and longer term financial stability. It is of paramount importance that the Society continues to support, nurture and develop these publications and remains open and alert to any new publishing ventures.*
- **To organise conferences and seminars that both bring researchers together and enable researchers, policy makers and others to engage with one another.**  
*The provision of well planned and expertly run conferences and seminars offers the Society a wealth of opportunities to engage with members, to promote and stimulate research, to disseminate research to a wider audience and work collaboratively with partners and policy makers in the field. An annual programme of stimulating events must form the bedrock of our services to members and is a key element in building our public profile and reputation.*

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## President

**Professor Sir David Watson**

## Vice-Presidents

**Sir Christopher Ball** RSA  
**Professor Sir Clive Booth**  
**Professor Roger Brown**  
**Professor Robert Burgess**  
**Lord Ron Dearing**  
**Dr Mary-Louise Kearney**

**Professor Guy Neave**  
**Baroness Perry** of Southwark  
**Baroness Sharp** of Guildford  
**Sir William Taylor**  
**Professor Ulrich Teichler**  
**Professor Leslie Wagner** CBE

## Fellows

**Professor Ronald Barnett**  
Institute of Education, University of London  
**Dr Marianne Bauer**  
University of Gothenburg  
**Professor David Boud**  
University of Technology Sydney  
**Professor John Brennan**  
Open University  
**Professor Angela Brew**  
University of Sydney  
**Professor Burton R Clark**  
University of California  
**Ms Harriet Croft**  
Bristol  
**Professor David Dill**  
Stanford University  
**Professor Lewis Elton**  
University College London  
**Professor Noel Entwistle**  
University of Edinburgh  
**Professor Oliver Fulton**  
University of Lancaster  
**Professor Sinclair Goodlad**  
Imperial College London  
**Professor Gunnar Handal**  
University of Oslo  
**Professor Mary Henkel**  
Brunel University  
**Professor Dai Hounsell**  
University of Edinburgh  
**Dr Peter Maassen**  
University of Oslo  
**Professor Simon Marginson**  
Monash University, Australia

**Professor Ference Marton**  
University of Gothenburg  
**Professor Louise Morley**  
University of Sussex  
**Professor Ingrid Moses**  
University of Canberra  
**Professor Gareth Parry**  
University of Sheffield  
**Professor John Pratt**  
University of East London  
**Professor James Ratcliffe**  
Pennsylvania State University  
**Professor Sheldon Rothblatt**  
University of California  
**Professor Sir Peter Scott**  
Kingston University  
**Professor Michael Shattock**  
Institute of Education, University of London  
**Mr John Skelton**  
Milton Keynes  
**Professor Alan Smithers**  
University of Buckingham  
**Professor Ted Tapper**  
University of Sussex  
**Professor Malcolm Tight**  
University of Lancaster  
**Professor Gareth Williams**  
Institute of Education, University of London  
**Dr John Wyatt**  
Chichester  
**Professor Mantz Yorke**  
University of Lancaster

# President's overview

All around the world the expectations of higher education grow and grow, and they can be contradictory. Universities and colleges are expected to serve governments, economies, societies, groups and individuals in a wide variety of ways. At the same time they must be true to themselves, their founding purposes, their mission and character, and the better parts of the academic enterprise.

Research into higher education plays a vital role here. A recent report from the European Science Foundation on *Higher Education in Europe Beyond 2010*, spoke eloquently about its role in "resolving conflicting social and economic expectations", as well as overcoming "public myths on the strengths and weaknesses of certain features of higher education". Many members of the team that put this multi-national report together are members of the SRHE, thus confirming the role of our Society at the heart of that ongoing debate.

This has been another fine year for the Society, significantly as a result of the efforts of our leaders: the Director and her colleagues; the Council; the Committee Chairs and Members; and the Convenors of the Networks. Once again, on behalf of the membership as a whole I would like to express our thanks for their vision, tenacity, and responsiveness to this huge agenda.

As I indicated in this space last year, there is, of course always, unfinished business. We shall continue to work hard to build appropriate alliances at home and abroad, to establish that complex (but vital) relationship between research and institutional self-study, to ensure that policy-makers are aware of the insights and the challenges posed by serious research findings, and to build capacity. We occupy vital intellectual territory, and we have much to offer to both scholarly and practice communities. This report indicates clearly how far we have come, but also hints at where we want to go.

I look forward to another rich and stimulating conference in Liverpool and another year of solid scholarly achievement.



**Professor Sir David Watson**  
President

# Governing Council

## Officers

### Chair

**Professor George Gordon**  
University of Strathclyde

### Vice Chairs

**Professor Rosemary Deem**  
University of Bristol

**Professor Bruce Macfarlane**  
University of Portsmouth

### Honorary Treasurer

**Mr David Palfreyman**  
New College, Oxford

## Members

**Ms Jill Armstrong**

York St John University

**Professor Ronald Barnett**

Institute of Education, University of London

**Professor Paul Blackmore**

King's College London

**Dr Richard Blackwell**

HEFCE

**Ms Rebecca Bunting**

University of Portsmouth

**Professor Sue Clegg**

Leeds Metropolitan University

**Professor Rob Cuthbert**

University of the West of England

**Professor Vaneeta-marie D'Andrea**

University of the Arts, London

**Professor Miriam David**

Institute of Education, University of London

**Professor Rosemary Deem**

University of Bristol

**Dr Joelle Fanghanel**

City University

**Professor Yvonne Hillier**

University of Brighton

**Professor Bruce Macfarlane**

University of Portsmouth

**Ms Janice Malcolm**

University of Kent

**Professor Robin Middlehurst**

Leadership Foundation

**Professor Gill Nicholls**

University of Salford

**Professor Stephen Rowland**

UCCL

**Professor Maria Slowey**

Dublin City University

**Dr Denise Whitelock**

Open University

**Professor Gina Wisker**

University of Brighton

## Director/Company Secretary

Ms Helen Perkins

## Executive

Barbara Blake (Operations Manager)

Franco Carta (Finance Manager)

Carol Salmon (Administrative Assistant)

# Chairman's introduction

It is very pleasing to be able to report that on a wide range of measures this has been another successful year for the Society. Membership numbers have continued to grow. We are now close to the challenging target which our President, Professor Sir David Watson, suggested in 2005 in his speech at the opening reception of the Edinburgh Conference.

The level of attendance at the 2007 Conference in Brighton was most encouraging, as was the quality of the papers and symposia. Once again the dedicated event for Newer Researchers, which now precedes the Annual Conference, was a well-attended and lively occasion. The innovation of holding an early evening session on the work of various Networks of the Society attracted a great deal of interest, which has in fair measure carried through in the levels of attendance at subsequent network events.

Our publications remain very strong. Indeed the success of *Studies in Higher Education* is such that the publishers and the Society are on the point of signing an agreement to increase the annual output to eight issues.

The new series of Postgraduate Guides has been launched and we are exploring further publishing possibilities.

Considerable efforts have been made to improve the website and make greater use of electronic communication with our membership. Of course nowadays this is a continuing challenge and there will be further improvements over the next 12-24 months.

The success of the Society owes a great deal to the efforts of our staff. It is a small team, most of whom actually work part-time. The team of Barbara Blake (Operations Manager), Franco Carta (Finance Officer) and Carol Salmon (Administrative Assistant) is led by Helen Perkins, our Director. At conference time the team is supported by our conference organiser, Francois Smit.

Another two constituencies must be recognised and associated with the success of the Society,

Firstly all of our members, individual and corporate, your support, enthusiasm and intellectual endeavours are the fundamental keystones of the Society. I hope you are proud to be a central component of our work and feel that it is indeed, a lively and effective organisation. Many of you already give a lot of time to further the aims and objectives of the Society. If members would like to get more involved by taking charge of a Network or sitting on one of the Standing Committees SRHE would be very pleased to hear from you.

Secondly I wish to record my thanks to the Officers, members of Council, Chairs of the Committees of Council, Convenors of the Networks and the Chair of the Conference Organising Committee for their vital contributions throughout the year. That substantial number further swells when one adds Committee members, speakers at Network Events, Speakers at the Annual Conferences, authors who seek publication in *Studies* or *HEQ*, colleagues who agree to act as referees for our journals or as reviewers of conference proposals, members of the Editorial Boards of the publications, and all those who gladly respond and help out in various ways when we seek assistance with one of our activities.

Last year I signalled that the Council was considering what additional resources should be allocated to furthering the Strategic Plan of the Society and how those should be prioritised. A small working group is addressing those issues and I am confident that we will move from the necessary phase of careful evaluation to that of agreed actions during 2009.

Of course the path of progress for the Society will doubtless entail tricky sections. For example we have recently been informed that our five year lease of space in the Institute of Physics will not be renewed and the Society will be looking for premises in London early in 2008.

Gauging risk is an especially testing challenge for Council, yet it is one that is of increasing importance especially since we are a registered company and charity. Council regularly reviews papers outlining the risk analysis for the Society. Careful attention is paid to every item. One illustration may provide a  
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## Chairman's introduction continued

useful insight to readers. The venue for the Annual Conference is an extremely significant issue. When Liverpool was mooted as the 2008 location, in large measure because of the accolade of Capital of Culture 2008, concerns were expressed that there could be implications in terms of level of attendance. This is important for the Society in two differing ways; firstly, in the Strategic Plan where we aspire to high levels of engagement and impact. Conference attendance levels are a broad indicator of the vibrancy of the Society and the health of our field of research. Secondly, it can have significant financial implications, especially if attendance levels were markedly lower than anticipated. However, all the signs for 2008 are positive with a record number of proposals received (379) and a record number of delegates booking for conference.

Many of you will read these words at the Liverpool Conference. Hopefully not only will you have found it an enjoyable and interesting event but you will have decided, if that is not already your practice, that the SRHE Conference must become a regular part of your academic calendar.

If you have not offered an article to our publications, I encourage you to consider this option. Likewise we hope to welcome members, non-members and potential new members at some of our Network Events in 2009, which are open to all.

Each year the Society considers suggestions from members on those they would like to be considered for the appointment of Fellow of the Society. In 2008 the Society was pleased to welcome seven newly elected Fellows:

Professor Angela Brew, University of Sydney,  
Professor Gunar Handal, University of Oslo,  
Professor Dai Hounsell, University of Edinburgh,  
Professor Louise Morley, University of Sussex,  
Professor Michael Shattock, Institute of Education,  
University of London and Professor Mantz Yorke,  
University of Lancaster.

Also in 2008 the Society was pleased to appoint two new Vice Presidents: Professor Roger Brown, recently Southampton Solent University, and Professor Bob Burgess, University of Leicester.

The Society is pleased to continue the tradition of honouring colleagues for their achievements and service to the sector.



**Professor George Gordon**  
Chairman

# Overview from the Society's Director

On joining the Society in January 2005 one of my first priorities was to work with the Governing Council to construct a business plan for the next four years, 2005-2008, designed to take the Society forward from a position where its sphere of influence seemed to have contracted in recent years, the membership numbers were falling and strategic priorities, especially those linked to financially realistic propositions, were not entirely clear. Under the term of Professor Ronald Barnett as Chair much had been done to address these issues, especially in terms of identifying a clear mission statement and memorably "putting the R back into SRHE". What was needed at this time was a strategy for developing these ideas further and setting out a plan for realising the Society's potential and delivering some specific targets aimed at fulfilling some of the objectives identified. A four year business plan was therefore formulated and agreed with SRHE Council and, under the leadership of first Professor Ronald Barnett and then Professor George Gordon, this plan was put into practice. Coming towards the end of 2008 this is an apposite moment to reflect on what has been achieved in this time.

The 2005-2008 Business Plan identified four Strategic Goals and Actions. These are set out below with just a few illustrations of the actions and initiatives taken to advance these aims. This review of achievements underlines a period of very positive growth and forward momentum on which the Society can now build.

## SRHE Strategic Aims 2005 to 2008

### I To work to enhance the role of Higher Education Research within the Higher Education sector

#### Aims

The Society's aims in this regard are two-fold:

- to identify areas of practice and policy where the research base could be developed and to stimulate such research;
- to advance an understanding of the opportunities afforded by research evidence amongst leaders within the higher education sector and within Government and its agencies.

#### Achievements

- The Society undertook an assessment of current research interests and identified certain priorities for action. One of these related to capacity building in the sector and the Society has made a very considerable contribution to work in this area through the ESRC and other routes.
- The Society has greatly improved its response to consultations and requests for advice and input and has taken many opportunities to make a considered and evidenced based contribution. The responsibility for responses on consultations is now formally delegated to the Society's Research and Development Committee and this process has enhanced the quality of the content and greatly speeded up response times.

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## 2 To encourage and support newer researchers coming into the field of Higher Education Research

### Aim

- The Society regards the help and support which it can provide to newer researchers in higher education as one of its most important contributions to the Higher Education Sector. The Society is well placed to offer a range of essential and valuable resources to this group.

### Achievements

- The Newer Researchers Network has been launched and goes from strength to strength.
- The Postgraduate and Newer Researchers' Conference is now an integral part of the SRHE Annual Conference and attracts growing numbers of newer researcher presenters. This nurturing environment has led to many newer researchers going on to author and present papers at the main conference. The Annual Prize for Newer Researchers has been significantly revamped and now attracts a much wider range of high quality applications. Other new initiatives include a mentoring scheme for prize winners and many new benefits for winners, including involvement on the Research and Development Committee of the Society to bring a newer researcher perspective to the debate.

## 3 To provide opportunities for the Publication of research and scholarship

### Aims

To advance these goals the Society will;

- continue to review, monitor and support the Society's publications under the auspices of the Publications Committee;
- investigate opportunities for new publishing ventures in collaboration with other bodies, as appropriate;
- explore opportunities to develop a greater international dimension to the Society's publishing output and contributions to existing international publications.

### Achievements

- The Publications Committee has overseen a review of all the Society's journals and publications, leading to a new agreement with the publishers for increasing the frequency of publication of *Studies in Higher Education* from 6-8 issues, appointment of new Editors for *Higher Education Quarterly*, the introduction of new online submission and refereeing systems for both journals and a detailed assessment of the market for monograph publishing and the future success of the SRHE book series.
- The second series of *Guides in Postgraduate Education* produced by the Postgraduate Issues Network has been launched and already six new titles have been commissioned, authored and published, with three more in preparation. A new publication from the Student Experience Network containing student essays reflecting on 20 years of schooling has also been prepared for publication. All these new titles have been produced entirely in house.
- The Editorial boards of both the Society's journals have been restructured to include greater international representation and input.

## 4 To organise Conferences and Seminars that both bring researchers together and enable researchers, policy makers and others to engage with one another

### Aims

To advance these goals the Society will;

- run an Annual Conference which affords the opportunity to bring together the Higher Education research community and offers a range of opportunities for the presentation of research;

- support the Annual Conference with a series of one day seminars on specific topics, run by the Society independently and, as appropriate, in collaboration with other bodies;
- establish and support a series of Networks of members, each focused on a particular dimension of higher education;
- bring a professionalism and expertise to the way in which all events are designed, promoted, managed and run which will enhance and underpin the Society's reputation.

#### Achievements

- The success of the SRHE Annual Conference, increasing year on year since Edinburgh in 2005, has been a major factor in building the Society's reputation and sphere of influence. Levels of abstract submissions and delegate attendance break new records each year and this event has become a major draw for researchers into higher education, nationally and internationally, and a very important networking and knowledge exchange activity in the higher education calendar.
- The Society has combined forces with HEFCE and UALL to run events on preparing for the RAE; the Student Experience Network combined with a number of other bodies to lead an event on the "Criticality of Education"; plans are now also underway for a new series of seminars on research into key policy issues for Universities UK.
- The Society's Networks have taken on a whole new lease of life under some very hard working and innovative Convenors and provide a stimulating range of events throughout the year; many reported on separately in this report. The Society's many Networks have become the major focus for the discussion of policy and research based issues.
- Great attention has been paid to the professionalism of all SRHE events and a range of new materials and display products have been developed for all events. All the Society's conferences and events are managed and run entirely in house by the small SRHE central team to ensure consistency of standards and adherence to best practice.

Looking ahead the Society is now very well placed to take some further steps forward with its plans and most particularly to begin investing in some specific projects now that the Society's finances have been placed on a more secure footing and some of the key income streams underpinned. A new set of key strategic objectives has been agreed for 2009-2011 and the Governing Council will be putting in place a business plan designed to deliver these targets in the early part of 2009. These plans will focus on the following 4 core objectives;

- 1 Promoting Research Methodologies**
- 2 Contribution to Policy Discussion & Review**
- 3 Pursuing the International Agenda**
- 4 Developing Publication Opportunities**

This very broad brush summary of just some of the achievements against targets represents a great deal of work by the Chair and Officers of the Society, the members of Governing Council, the members of all the Society's Standing Committees, the very dedicated Network Convenors as well as a great many members of the Society who contribute as speakers at events, as paper referees and editorial board members, to name just a few areas of contribution, and of course by the SRHE team. The Society is extremely fortunate to be able to draw on these resources and fully recognises the benefits this brings.



**Helen Perkins**  
Director

# Standing Committees

## Governance & Appointments

### Professor Ronald Barnett (Chair)

Institute of Education,  
University of London

### Ms Rebecca Bunting

University of Portsmouth

### Professor Rob Cuthbert

University of the West of England

### Professor George Gordon (ex Officio)

University of Strathclyde

### Professor Bruce Macfarlane

University of Portsmouth

### Professor Louise Morley

University of Sussex

### Mr David Palfreyman (ex Officio)

New College, Oxford

### Professor John Pratt

University of East London

### Professor Sir David Watson (ex-Officio)

Institute of Education,

University of London

### Ms Helen Perkins

Director, SRHE

## Management

### Professor George Gordon (Chair)

University of Strathclyde

### Professor Ronald Barnett

Institute of Education,

University of London

### Dr Richard Blackwell

HEFCE

### Professor Sue Clegg

Leeds Metropolitan University

### Professor Rosemary Deem

University of Bristol

### Professor Yvonne Hillier

University of Brighton

### Professor Bruce Macfarlane

University of Portsmouth

### Mr David Palfreyman

New College, Oxford

### Professor Sir David Watson (ex Officio)

Institute of Education,

University of London

### Ms Helen Perkins

Director, SRHE

## Membership

### Ms Rebecca Bunting (Chair)

University of Portsmouth

### Ms Jill Armstrong

York St John University

### Dr Joelle Fanghanel

City University

### Professor George Gordon (ex Officio)

University of Strathclyde

### Mr David Palfreyman (ex Officio)

New College, Oxford

### Professor Sir David Watson (ex Officio)

Institute of Education,

University of London

### Ms Helen Perkins

Director, SRHE

## Publications

### Professor Sue Clegg (Chair)

Leeds Metropolitan University

### Professor Paul Blackmore

King's College London

### Professor George Gordon (ex Officio)

University of Strathclyde

### Professor Lee Harvey

### Mr William Locke

Open University

### Dr Lisa Lucas

University of Bristol

### Professor Ian McNay

University of Greenwich

### Mr David Palfreyman (ex Officio)

New College, Oxford

### Professor Malcolm Tight

Lancaster University

### Professor Sir David Watson (ex Officio)

Institute of Education,

University of London

### Dr Celia Whitchurch

Institute of Education,

University of London

### Ms Helen Perkins

Director, SRHE

## Research & Development

### Professor Rosemary Deem (Chair)

University of Bristol

### Professor George Gordon (ex Officio)

University of Strathclyde

### Professor Yvonne Hillier

University of Brighton

### Dr Elisabeth Lillie

University of Ulster

### Ms Janice Malcolm

University of Kent

### Professor Louise Morley

University of Sussex

### Professor Gill Nicholls

University of Salford

### Mr David Palfreyman (ex Officio)

New College, Oxford

### Professor John Pratt

University of East London

### Dr Arwen Raddon

University of Leicester

### Ms Nicola Spurling

University of Lancaster

### Professor Sir David Watson (ex Officio)

Institute of Education,

University of London

### Ms Helen Perkins

Director, SRHE

## Governance and Appointments

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As its name implies, there are two aspects to the work of this Committee: Governance and Appointments. However, the 'Governance' dimension only came recently onto the work of this Committee and so this report deals mainly with 'Appointments' matters.

In relation to appointments, the Committee tries to ensure that key positions in the Society are determined in an orderly way, especially – but not only - the Society's Vice-Presidents and Fellows. So far as Vice-Presidents are concerned, it is important to the wellbeing of the Society that we have Vice-Presidents who are associated with the Society and who can strengthen the Society in some way, whether – for example – through their own position in the wider society, their networks, their influence and/or their advice, wisdom and expertise. The Committee would welcome suggestions from members of the Society as to individuals who might be considered in this way. They need not be and probably will not be members of the Society.

So far as Fellows are concerned, in the current year the Committee considered a number of suggestions and has been able to recommend that the title of 'Fellow' be conferred on two individuals. For 2009, the cycle for the conferring of the title of Fellow will start early in the calendar year – according to a timeline established by the Committee - and members of the Society are encouraged to help to identify other members of the Society (or even themselves!) who might be considered in this way. Fellows must be current members of the Society.

So far as the Society's 'Governance' is concerned, the Committee has noted that a number of arrangements and practices in the Society have – over the past decades – come to differ from those set out in the Society's Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Committee will be taking time in 2009 to tidy up the latter so that its formal primary legal documents are put onto a sound and proper footing for the early twenty-first century. At that time, the Committee will also consider other aspects of the Society's governance.

**Professor Ronald Barnett, Committee Chair**

## Membership

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The remit of this Committee is to keep under review all matters relating to membership of the Society, to monitor membership levels and changes, to review and develop new member services and advise on the overall content of the various membership packages with a particular view to offering a range of benefits and value for money for all members.

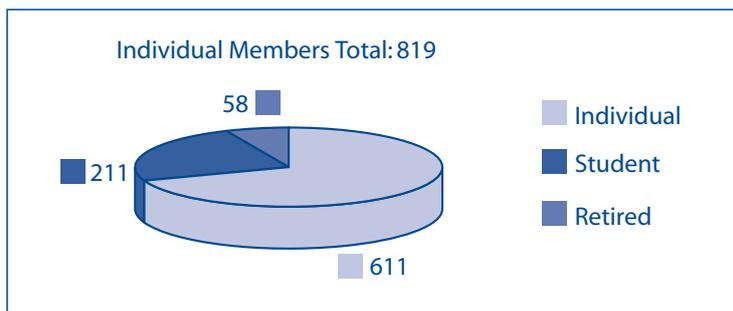
During the year Dr Richard Blackwell stood down as Chair of this Committee and the role of Chair was taken over by Ms Rebecca Bunting. Dr Joelle Fanghanel joined the Committee as a new member from the SRHE Council.

This year the Committee has focused attention primarily on individual membership packages as Corporate membership has been the subject of a separate review by the SRHE Council, linked with the review of the publishing benefits which form the main element of the Corporate membership package. Individual membership has continued to rise with 880 individual members at 31 July 2008 compared to 703 members at 31 July 2007.

## SRHE Membership: Status Report 31 July 2008

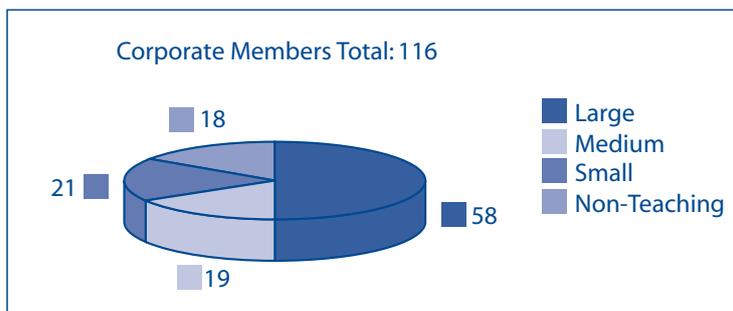
### Current Membership

Individual	611
Student	211
Retired	58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>880</b>



### Corporate

Large	58
Medium	19
Small	21
Non-Teaching	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>116</b>



Since introducing a discounted membership rate for individuals attending the Society's Annual Conference, the Society has seen a greater fluctuation in membership numbers over the course of the year. This stems in part from a significant rise in the number of student members, many of whom may not remain in membership for a long period. The Committee will be addressing the particular needs of this group and looking at some restructuring possibilities within the individual membership for early career researchers.

Meeting the needs and priorities of all members is a primary concern for the Society. Recognising the prevailing economic climate, and taking cognisance of prevailing rates in similar membership organisations, the Committee decided this year to hold individual membership subscription rates at current levels for one year and this recommendation was accepted by the SRHE Council. In addition all SRHE Network events are now free to Society members and this has proved a very attractive benefit for existing members as well as a marketing tool for both the Network events and the Society generally.

The Committee will be focusing on developing the range of benefits to members in the course of the next year, looking especially at further developing web based services and the regular communication with members on higher education research topics and activities. These plans need also to be viewed in the context of delivering public benefit; balancing the needs of members with wider public engagement will also be a focus of activity for the Committee in the coming year.

**Rebecca Bunting, Committee Chair**

## Publications

### Membership

This year we have been pleased to welcome new members to the Committee: Dr Celia Whitchurch, then Assistant Editor and now joint Editor of HEQ, joined as a full member and Mr William Locke and Dr Lisa Lucas joined us from October 2007, Professor Paul Blackmore became a member in May 2008. These additions have strengthened the Committee's expertise and will contribute to building capacity for the future.

## Major activities

The Committee oversees all SRHE publications and works to ensure that the Society gains maximum benefits both financially and reputationally from our Journals and book Series. This year has been a particularly important one in which we have made major strategic decisions in relation to *Studies in Higher Education*, we have seen the appointment of Dr Whitchurch to the role of Editor alongside HEQ's existing Editor Professor Lee Harvey, and have undertaken considerable work thinking about how to strengthen the OUP/McGraw Hill SRHE book Series.

After lengthy discussions with the publishers and Editor, the Committee made the strategic decision to recommend to Council that *Studies in Higher Education* should increase from 6 to 8 Issues per year. This move has been under discussion for two years and while the academic case for an increase had been made in May 2007, based on the continued increase in papers submitted and consequent high rejection rate, the Committee did not at that stage recommend the increase but rather agreed to explore the business case further and to monitor the introduction of Manuscript Central. Following additional work undertaken in conjunction with the publishers and Editor, it was agreed at the May 2008 meeting that a recommendation to move from 6 to 8 Issues should go to Council. The Committee was satisfied that the balance between opportunities and risks were now weighted towards opportunities and that the move to 8 Issues would allow the Journal to build on previous success and move forward. *Studies in Higher Education* has major significance for the Society in terms of income and prestige so the decision was important for the future of the Society as well as the Journal. The Committee felt that its careful evidential approach was warranted and would like to acknowledge the contribution of both the Editor Professor Malcolm Tight and publishers to this process. The transition to Manuscript Central has gone smoothly and the Journal is now in a position to capitalise on the additional capacity in 2009 and build on the opportunities this expansion affords.

The Committee also undertook a review of the OUP/McGraw Hill SRHE book Series. The Series is a major asset to the Society in terms of visibility and credibility. The Committee commissioned Anthony Haynes, an independent consultant, to produce a report to help the Committee in its thinking. His analysis identified some tensions between market forces and the Society's aspirations for the Series. We recognise that this is a particularly difficult time for book publishing and that hard commercial decisions do have to be undertaken, however, we are also mindful that McGraw Hill do not have a specific remit for publishing monographs and the commissioning of titles for the Series had been mainly reactive in recent years. Previous efforts to introduce a more proactive approach, such as the appointment of series Editors, have not proved successful. The Committee has, therefore, undertaken to continue a dialogue with McGraw Hill about how the Series might be taken forward. The Committee will continue this work next year and in particular to more clearly articulate the Society's aspirations for the Series and how it might be improved.

The Committee has continued to discuss a number of issues concerning *Higher Education Quarterly* following the difficult transition period to the new Editorial Team. The input of Dr Celia Whitchurch to these debates has been invaluable, as has the support of the publishers. Dr Whitchurch has now been appointed Editor alongside Professor Harvey and the team are seeing improvements in submission rates and are reassured about quality. This consolidation now puts HEQ in a good position to undertake some strategic work, strengthening the distinctive character of HEQ. Plans include setting in motion discussions on an application for inclusion into ISI, and the rapid introduction of Manuscript Central to ease production. Although the Society does not own the title the *Higher Education Quarterly*, the contract is one which recognises the Society's interest and we will therefore continue to be proactive in ensuring the Journal's success.

The Committee has received regular reports from *Research into Higher Education Abstracts* and in particular the problems associated with the transition to the new online system for the selection of abstracts. The Committee supported the introduction of the new system and remains grateful

to Professor Ian McNay for all his endeavours to try and ensure that production has continued in difficult circumstances and in working with a new system that has not always delivered anticipated functionality. The Committee is committed to Abstracts continuing to offer readers current information and is working with the publishers to ensure that the new system can deliver this. Despite recent innovations in the ways academics search and receive alerts we are convinced of the value of Abstracts as an important benefit for individual members of the Society.

### SRHE Postgraduate Guides

Six Guides are in print in the new series. The Guides have been re designed and relaunched and continue to be popular.

### SRHE Journals

All the Society's journals listed below published on time during the period:

#### Studies in Higher Education (Routledge Taylor & Francis/SRHE)

#### Higher Education Quarterly (Wiley Blackwell/SRHE)

#### Research into Higher Education Abstracts (Routledge Taylor & Francis /SRHE)

#### New titles in the OUP/McGraw Hill SRHE Series

*Podcasting for Learning Universities*, Gilly Salmon and Palitha Edirisingha (eds) (July 2008)

*From Vocational to Higher Education*, Gavin Moodie (October 2008)

*Gender and the Changing Face of Higher Education: A Feminized Future?* Carole Leathwood and Barbara Read (December 2008)

*Study, Power and the University*, Sarah Mann (December 2008)

*Entrepreneurialism in Universities and the Knowledge Economy: Diversification and Organizational Change in European Higher Education*, Michael Shattock (December 2008)

*The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, Rowena Murray (ed) (December 2008)

### Professor Sue Clegg, Committee Chair

## Research and Development

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The Research and Development Committee has dealt with a wide range of issues this year. Two members have stepped down in 2008 after giving excellent service to the Committee over a long period of time – Professor Gareth Parry (Sheffield) and Professor Rob Cuthbert (UWE) – and we shall miss their contribution greatly. Professor Yvonne Hillier is also stepping down as Network Co-ordinator at the end of 2008 and the Committee would like to place on record its thanks to Yvonne for the splendid job she has done over the past four years.

### Visitors

In September 2007, the Committee had a visit from Helen Goreham, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, to discuss possible joint ventures and findings from some recent LFHE projects presented at the 2007 Annual Conference. In September 2007, the Committee welcomed Professor Andrew Pollard, Director of the ESRC TLRP, and also the main driving force behind the formation of the Strategic Forum on Education Research (SFRE), which is intended to be a forum in England where researchers, policy makers and practitioners can exchange ideas, suggest strategic directions for future research, facilitate capacity building and promote knowledge transfer. SRHE is represented on SFRE's steering group by its Chair.

## Conferences

The 2007 Conference in Brighton was overseen by the R&D Committee and a Conference Committee chaired by Professor Miriam David, Institute of Education, University of London (with Professor Yvonne Hillier from Brighton University overseeing the Student Conference) and was considered by all concerned to have been very successful. R & D also oversee future plans for conference venues and themes and the former, in particular, has been the subject of several discussions over the last year. Plans for the 2008 Conference in Liverpool were well underway at the time of writing; the Conference Committee this time has been chaired by Professor John Pratt (UEL), whilst Dr Arwen Raddon (Leicester) has been responsible for the Student Conference.

## Visits

The R & D chair and the SRHE Director Helen Perkins attended a UNESCO workshop in Paris in January 2008, with a view to exploring how the Society could expand its links with UNESCO.

## Newer Researchers' Prize

The arrangements and benefits of the former New Researchers' Award have been completely revised for 2008, following concerns that the award was not really reaching its target audience (those who are just completing or have just completed a postgraduate award) and did not offer sufficient support for those who were its recipients, as well as possibly falling foul of the new Full Economic Costing system. The new arrangements were trialed in 2008, whereby the award is now a prize, with a package of benefits going directly to the recipients. We had a much stronger field of applicants than in 2007 and we made two awards, to Dr Saranne Weller (Kings College London) and Dr Barbara Crossouard (University of Sussex). Both recipients receive an award of £2,000 towards the funding of their winning projects and will join the Society's Research and Development Committee for a year from January 2009. In addition they will receive a year's free membership of the Society, a year's free subscription to the Society's journals and have the benefit of an appointed mentor to help them with their projects. The SRHE Prize is jointly funded by Routledge Taylor & Francis.

There is still an issue over the eligibility of international members for this prize, which the Committee will revisit in 2009.

## Policy Forum

The Committee has been considering ways of reviving the former Policy Forum, and following a helpful report from Professor Louise Morley, we are considering a format which holds events 2 or 3 times a year; commissions work where appropriate, has an invited audience and is directly linked to SRHE's own strategic plan.

## Responses to Consultations

The Committee has made a number of responses to consultations over the past year, including to HEFCE about the new arrangements for the Research Excellence Framework that will replace the RAE, to UNESCO for the 2009 World Social Science Report and to ESRC on how to implement their strategic plan.

## Professor Rosemary Deem, Committee Chair

## SRHE Editorial Boards

### Higher Education Quarterly

**Professor Lee Harvey (Editor)**

**Dr Celia Whitchurch (Editor)**

Institute of Education,  
University of London

**Dr David Smith (Books Reviews Editor)**

University of Leeds

**Dr Richard Blackwell**

HEFCE

**Professor Sue Clegg**

Leeds Metropolitan University

**Dr Harry De Boer**

University of Twente

**Professor Rosemary Deem**

University of Bristol

**Dr John Douglass**

University of California, Berkeley

**Professor Mary Henkel**

Brunel University

**Professor Richard James**

University of Melbourne

**Professor Marek Kwiec**

Poznan University

**Dr Reitemetse Obakeng Mabokela**

Michigan State University

**Professor Bruce Macfarlane**

University of Portsmouth

**Professor Simon Marginson**

Monash University

**Professor Luanna Meyer**

Victoria University

**Professor Jose Gines Mora**

University of Valencia

**Professor Gareth Parry**

University of Sheffield

**Ms Helen Perkins**

Director, SRHE

**Professor Richard Taylor**

University of Cambridge

**Dr Liz Thomas**

The Higher Education Academy

### Issues in Postgraduate Education

**Professor Pam Denicolo**

**(Editorial Board Chair)**

University of Reading

**Dr Tim Brown**

University of Surrey

**Ms Gill Clarke**

University of Bristol

**Professor Sue Clegg**

Leeds Metropolitan University

**Professor Miriam David**

Institute of Education,

University of London

**Dr Martin Gough**

University of Kent

**Dr Hafdis Ingvarsdottir**

University of Iceland

**Professor Michael Kompf**

Brock University, Ontario Canada

**Professor Alistair McCulloch**

Edge Hill University

**Dr Janet Metcalfe**

Vitae, formerly UK Grad

**Professor Gareth Parry**

University of Sheffield

**Ms Helen Perkins**

Director, SRHE

**Dr Peter Stokes**

University of Central Lancashire

**Professor Diana Woodward**

Napier University

### Research into Higher Education Abstracts

**Professor Ian McNay (Editor)**

University of Greenwich

**Ms Helen Perkins**

Director, SRHE

**Professor Harriet Thomas**

**(Assistant Editor)**

University of Greenwich

### Studies in Higher Education

**Professor Malcolm Tight (Editor)**

Lancaster University

**Professor John Richardson**

**(Chair Editorial Board)**

Open University

**Professor Ronald Barnett**

Institute of Education,

University of London

**Professor Clare Callender**

London South Bank University

**Professor Sue Clegg**

Leeds Metropolitan University

**Professor Rosemary Deem**

University of Bristol

**Professor Erik Meyer**

University of Durham

**Professor Louise Morley**

University of Sussex

**Dr Rowena Murray**

University of Strathclyde

**Professor Gareth Parry**

University of Sheffield

**Ms Helen Perkins**

Director, SRHE

**Professor Sir Peter Scott**

University of Kingston

**Professor Mary Thorpe**

Open University

## Higher Education Quarterly ---

2007-2008 has been our first full year of operation as joint Editors, and we have maintained a steady flow of submissions, averaging almost ninety per year. Of these, approximately 25 per cent are accepted for publication, and we are pleased that we have been able to increase the international spread of papers and subject matter. Furthermore, we have a healthy surplus of material for the future.

We have also been delighted to welcome Dr Richard Blackwell, Professor Sue Clegg, Dr John Douglass, Professor Richard James, Professor Luanna Meyer, Professor Jose Gines Mora, and Professor Bruce Macfarlane to the Editorial Board, and the composition of the Board now fully reflects the international scope of *Higher Education Quarterly*. We thank both our new and continuing members for their sterling contribution in supporting the journal, and in particular for their vital work in refereeing papers. It is also a pleasure to welcome Dr David Smith, who has already made a significant contribution as Book Reviews Editor.

A special issue of papers drawn from projects conducted with the support of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education was published in October 2008, and another is in preparation for January 2010. The latter will be guest edited by Gareth Parry on "*The English Experiment*", and include papers on issues around educational growth at sub-degree level, foundation degrees, skills development and employer involvement.

The 'early online' process and the production arrangements in Singapore are now working smoothly.

Finally, we wish to thank Ruth Harris, the Managing Editor, for her magnificent support of us and the journal on a day-to-day basis.

**Lee Harvey and Celia Whitchurch, Editors**

## Issues in Postgraduate Education ---

The SRHE Postgraduate Guides have proven a very popular series and meet a growing demand for advice and guidance on the practical issues involved in the management, teaching and supervision of postgraduates who come from a wide variety of disciplines and backgrounds often with widely different needs.

A new series of Guides was launched in 2007 containing a number of new titles as well as some revisions of the most popular guides from the first series.

Guide 1 was launched at the conference last December: Martin Gough and Pam Denicolo's *Research Supervisors and the Skills Agenda: Learning Needs Analysis and Personal Development Profiling* followed by Guide 2; Penny Tinkler and Carolyn Jackson's *A Guide for Internal and External Doctoral Examiners*; Guide 3: Val Farrar and Richard Young's *Supervising Disabled Research Students*; and Guide 4, a second edition of Eunice Okorocho's *Supervising International Research Students*.

In 2008 we published Guide 5, Alistair McCulloch and Peter Stokes' *The Silent Majority: Meeting the Needs of Part-time Research Students*, followed in September by the 6th Guide in Series Two, *Supervision Teams: Making them Work*, Anne Lee and Pam Denicolo. The final Guides, expected for December 2008 are Ian Haines and Tony Fell's Guide on the Bologna Process and one from Tony Bromley on the evaluation of the impact of researcher development programmes. Also planned are Guides on ethics and governance in postgraduate education and on induction of postgraduates.

The Editorial Team, led by Pam Denicolo, welcomes suggestions for future Guides, especially if these include identified potential authors/volunteers.

For information on the work of the Postgraduate Issues Network, please see the Network report.

**Pam Denicolo, Chair**

## Research into Higher Education Abstracts \_\_\_\_\_

Last year, the report anticipated the introduction of electronic processing for *Abstracts*. Despite best efforts on both sides, a fully-functioning electronic workflow still evades us. As with any new system, there have been some teething problems, but we are working hard towards a positive outcome together with the publishers (Routledge/Taylor & Francis).

Inevitably perhaps, the new system has resulted in the later appearance of some issues during 2008. It is envisaged that the aim of improved efficiency and effectiveness and the quality of service to our readers will be achieved in the long term.

We have reverted to our traditional (paper-based) workflow for the first issue of 2009, while we review and reflect on the experiences we have gone through. My thanks go to Harriet for her patience and support, and to Caitlin Rogers of Routledge/Taylor & Francis in Philadelphia for all her efforts to meet the needs of the editors.

While I am expressing thanks, I want to give an honourable mention to Jim Hartley, an Emeritus Professor at Keele. For many years, Jim has been a consistent submitter of articles that we would not usually have encountered, and not all of them written by him, though he does lead the field this year with six entries. Paul Greenbank of Edge Hill is second, with four.

With the emphasis on process, content has not been neglected, but has gone on much as before. The small change we have tried to introduce is to include abstracts of doctoral theses in the field, and a few have now been included, sent by the students or their supervisor. I hope we can continue this, to give coverage to emergent researchers in the field. Further submissions are welcome, following the format indicated in the journal.

**Ian McNay, Editor**

# Studies in Higher Education

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The journal continues in good health.

At the beginning of May 2008, in the words of the chair of our Editorial Board, we finally joined the 21st century (or was that the 20th?), by going over to the online submission and refereeing of articles. So far, this has proved to be a surprisingly easy step to take – ably supported, of course, by the training and guidance provided by the publishers, Taylor & Francis. Indeed, in some ways it has made aspects of my job easier and less time-consuming; though, at the same time, it has added to the overall workload, as online working has been followed, as expected, by an increase in the numbers of articles submitted. So far, submission rates are up by about 50%, such that on average I now receive a new article every day, along with (typically) at least a couple of queries. I have seen no evidence as yet of any overall decline in the quality of submissions.

The continuing increase in the volume of submissions received, and the anticipated (and realised) further increase consequent upon going over to online operations, led to the Society and publishers agreeing earlier this year to my recommendation for a further increase in the frequency of publication. This will go up from six to eight issues a year in 2009. Making the formal case for this increase revealed not only the steady rise in the volume of submissions since I became editor, but also the declining proportion that came from the United Kingdom. This is now down to below 30%, with *Studies in Higher Education* now well on its way to becoming a truly international journal.

Thanks are due, as ever, to the members of our Editorial Board and international Advisory Board. I am also grateful for the continuing efforts of the many referees we use, as well as our book reviewers, contributing authors and readers, without all of whom journals like this could not function.

**Malcolm Tight, Editor**

## SRHE Network Convenors

### Academic Practice

**Professor Bruce Macfarlane**  
University of Portsmouth  
Bruce.Macfarlane@port.ac.uk

### Access and Widening Participation

**Dr Penny Jane Burke**  
Institute of Education,  
University of London  
P.Burke@ioe.ac.uk

### Higher Education Close Up

**Professor Paul Trowler**  
University of Lancaster  
p.trowler@lancaster.ac.uk

### Higher Education Policy

**Dr Carole Leathwood**  
London Metropolitan University  
c.leathwood@londonmet.ac.uk

### Higher and Further Education Issues

**Dr Jill Jameson**  
University of Greenwich  
jjameson@gre.ac.uk

### Newer Researchers

**Dr Arwen Raddon**  
University of Leicester  
Arwen.raddon@leicester.ac.uk

**Mr Romulo Pinheiro**  
University of Oslo  
rt.pinheiro@uv.uio.no  
**Ms Nicola Spurling**  
University of Lancaster  
a.spurling@lancaster.ac.uk

### Postgraduate Issues

**Professor Pam Denicolo**  
University of Reading  
p.m.denicolo@rdg.ac.uk

**Dr Martin Gough**  
University of Kent  
a.m.gough@kent.ac.uk

**Professor Alistair McCulloch**  
Edge Hill University  
Alistair.McCulloch@edgehill.ac.uk

**Dr Richard Race**  
Roehampton University  
r.race@roehampton.ac.uk

### South West Higher Education Research

**Professor Rosemary Deem**  
University of Bristol  
r.deem@bristol.ac.uk

### Student Experience

**Professor Patrick Ainley**  
University of Greenwich  
patrickjdainley@aol.com

**Dr Mark Weyers**  
University College London, UCL  
m.weyers@ucl.ac.uk

# SRHE Networks

SRHE Networks have held a number of successful events this year. Network convenors were particularly pleased to be involved in the planning of the SRHE Annual Conference in December 2007 where they took responsibility for leading the review of abstracts in key themes. We held a 'Meet the Networks' event prior to the Conference Dinner and gained useful insights into the events and activities that members and potential participants would be interested in. We intend to repeat this approach in the 2008 Conference and are aware that being together in one space helps facilitate interest in and synergy between the network themes.

We are aware that whilst all events provide excellent speakers and possibilities for discussion, they do not always attract large numbers and we are hoping to address this. As a result, Network convenors have begun to identify different models of activities. We recognise that some participants travel long distances to attend meetings and we are considering the inclusion of full day events along with the more traditional shorter two hour seminars. We are also considering combining two or more Networks to host a theme of interest to a wider community, something that has already been successfully achieved with the Student Experience Network which collaborates with the British Sociology Association.

We were pleased to be able to introduce a no fee policy for SRHE members attending Network events during 2008. Utilising some of the funds earmarked for investment in strategic initiatives and member services. We hope that this will both encourage members to participate and also extend the benefits of membership for individuals.

We hope to launch an international event supported by Professor John Taylor at the University of Southampton and also plan to draw together people interested in policy, the student experience and postgraduate issues in a joint Network event during 2009.

This is my final year as Co-ordinator of the Network convenors. During the past four years, we have managed to create a community of practice where convenors meet regularly, discuss their ideas and exchange information. Network convenors have taken a more central role in the annual conference and we look forward to maintaining this role in the future. The Society is very fortunate that Professor Paul Blackmore from King's Institute and a member of SRHE Council has agreed to take on the role of Networks Co-ordinator.

I would particularly like to thank all the convenors for the time and dedication they have given to this important area of the Society's work and wish them well in the future. I would also like to thank Barbara Blake and Helen Perkins for the commitment they have devoted to the Networks.

I commend to you the detailed reports from the individual Network convenors as they set out in greater detail some of the key issues and research evidence central to the Society's role in providing understanding of higher education, especially through the insights, perspectives and knowledge offered by systematic research and scholarship.

**Yvonne Hillier, Networks Co-ordinator**

## Academic Practice

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The Academic Practice Network, founded by Professor George Gordon, exists to share perspectives and research findings on the evolving and changing nature of the academic role. While the phrase 'academic practice' is increasingly used within higher education, a shared intellectual meaning should not be assumed. Therefore, this Network is important in developing an understanding both of the changing *nature* of academic practice and its *effects* on students and wider society. There are a range of research interests and perspectives reflected by the Network. These include colleagues with an interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning, particular roles in academic practice such as leadership and service, socio-cultural aspects of academic work, and the complex nature of academic identity. The shifting nature of 'academic practice' means that the Network also includes a number of colleagues in learning support roles. Regular events are a feature of the Network in providing opportunities for discussion, dissemination and networking.

During the 2007/8 academic year, the Network held three events. The first one, *HE Lecturers researching HE issues*, organised jointly with SEDA, was led by Barry Stierer (University of Westminster) and contained contributions from Anne Wheeler (University of Wolverhampton), Paul Blackmore (King's College, London), Dorothy Oakey and Carole Roberts (both of University of Salford). The seminar addressed the vexed question of the status HE lecturers' 'practitioner research' (including pedagogic research). Despite HEIs having invested in forms of support for lecturers wishing to investigate (for example) pedagogic practice and student learning in recent years, committing oneself to this kind of research can be perceived, to quote Barry, as 'a form of career suicide' and 'a booby prize'. The seminar led to a useful discussion about how those with responsibility for leading practitioner research within institutions can best carry out their role and try to tackle some of the associated challenges.

Napier University in Edinburgh was the venue of our second event with a focus on *Researching student learning*. Convened by Lesley Gourlay (now at King's College, London), it included presentations by Carolin Kreber (University of Edinburgh) and Ray Land (University of Strathclyde). Carolin's session drew on a recent study exploring the idea or meaning of 'authenticity in teaching' and, in conjunction with it, the sort of academic identities needed to bring about the 'knowing' and 'being' in students usually associated with preparedness for the complexities and challenges of today's world. Ray presented a new conceptual framework, building on the notion of the 'threshold concept' based on his work with Jan Meyer. This was explained as akin to a portal which opens up a previously inaccessible way of thinking, representing a transformed way of understanding, interpreting, or viewing something, without which the learner cannot progress. Helping students to comprehend a threshold concept is central to their academic progress and transforming their view of subject matter and effecting a transition involving 'troublesome knowledge'.

In May, we held an event entitled *Academic leadership at the local level* at the University of Chester organised by Kate Irving (University of Chester). Academic leadership is often defined exclusively in terms of those holding senior roles such as Heads of Department, Deans or Vice Chancellors. The idea of this event was to reflect on research into the challenges facing those operating at a more 'local' level. We heard presentations about course and module leaders (Paul Blackmore, King's College), Teaching Fellows (Elizabeth Noonan, University College Dublin), and learning and teaching co-ordinators (Kate Irving). Paul Blackmore emphasised the importance of tacit, social and situated knowledge in the absence of formal development processes. The disesteemed nature of leadership roles performed by Teaching Fellows and learning and teaching co-ordinators was a strong theme in the presentations by Elizabeth Noonan and Kate Irving. Elizabeth used the metaphor of 'academic housework' to describe the work of Heads of Teaching while Kate stressed the ambiguous (and often powerless) role of learning and co-ordinators who tend to act as an unofficial 'go-between' between front line academics and faculty managers.

Members of the Network have also been active this year in helping to review abstracts for the forthcoming SRHE Annual Conference in the closely allied research domain of 'Academic Practice, Work and Cultures'. There were 87 abstracts submitted to this stream demonstrating the depth and range of interest in this research area. Academic writing practice is one of the topics which appear to be attracting growing interest if the number of proposals in this area is anything to judge by. Much of this research and support activity is directed at staff as much as students, possibly as a result of the growing expectations academics face to publish. I would like to acknowledge the support of Janice Malcolm, Karen Smith, Lesley Gourlay, Joelle Fanghanel, Romulo Pinheiro, Paul Blackmore, Barry Stierer and Anita Walsh, who helped me with the reviewing process this year. I would also like to thank everyone who came to one of our events and the various speakers for giving their time freely.

In 2008/9, the Network has three events planned to take place at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, King's College, London and the University of Portsmouth. In addition, we are planning a joint event with the Postgraduate Issues Network focused on researcher development for the Spring of 2009. Once again we are trying to ensure that we engage as many members as possible through a variety of themes and geographic locations for these seminars. Details of each event are available through the SRHE website. I would welcome suggestions from SRHE members who have ideas for future seminars.

**Bruce Macfarlane, Convenor**

## Access and Widening Participation \_\_\_\_\_

The Access and Widening Participation Network brings together colleagues who are concerned with issues of access, participation, inclusion, equity and social justice in higher education.

Due to study and travel commitments in 2008, activity on the Network has been less than hoped, however, a new programme will be developed commencing in the Spring of 2009 and Members of the Network and the Society will be informed through the website and via emails. If you would like to become a member of the Network please contact: [srheoffice@srhe.ac.uk](mailto:srheoffice@srhe.ac.uk). Ideas for future events and seminars are welcome.

**Penny Jane Burke, Convenor**

## Higher and Further Education Issues \_\_\_\_\_

The Higher Education-Further Education (HE-FE) Network is a national research network convened by Dr Jill Jameson. The Network meets once or twice a year in London, Sheffield and other selected venues to debate recent research items of interest to the dual sectors of higher and further education. Attendance at meetings ranges from c.20-30 people, including research-interested colleagues from across the UK.

During 2008, the Network recruited a number of new members whose work is focused on higher and further education research and/or HE in FE and/or FE from an HE perspective. A further expansion in Network numbers and an increase in events held by the Network is planned for 2009, with an additional focus on holding a variety of research seminars relating to HE-FE research in

specific subject areas, for example on leadership and management, literacy, e-learning and other fields in which there is a high level of HE-FE activity and interest nationally.

#### **Professor Ann-Marie Bathmaker: SRHE HE-FE Seminar 13th May**

An SRHE HE-FE Research Network Meeting was held at The Society for Research in Higher Education in 76 Portland Place London on Tuesday 13th May, 2008 at 3.00–5.30 pm. The key event of the afternoon was a seminar presentation and discussion led by Professor Ann-Marie Bathmaker of the Faculty of Education at the University of the West of England (UWE), who presented on the topic:

*'Constructing identities in new forms of higher education: student transitions in the context of 'dual sector' institutions'*

Ann-Marie is Professor of Applied Research in Further Education and Lifelong Learning at the University of the West of England (UWE). She explored the construction of various identities in new forms of higher education, focusing on the role of 'transitions' in the context of 'dual sector' higher and further education institutions. The session provided an opportunity for those interested in research in HE-FE to engage with the concept of 'student transitions' as well as 'dual sector' institutions and to participate in debate on this important area of work.

Ann-Marie's presentation was based on research contributing to the ESRC TLRP project entitled *Universal Access and Dual Regimes of Further and Higher Education*. This project comprises research from the University of the West of England team as well as the work of researchers in the University of Sheffield and the University of Leeds. The context of the talk was based on widening participation in HE and dual sector institutions within the *FurtherHigher (FH)* Project. Further information on Anne-Marie's presentation can be found on the SRHE website: [www.srhe.ac.uk/networks](http://www.srhe.ac.uk/networks) Further information about the FurtherHigher Project is available at: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/furtherhigher/>

#### **Forthcoming events and meetings**

A number of additional seminar events relevant to higher and further education research will be held in 2008-09 to which SRHE HE-FE network members will be invited, in a joint arrangement with the Learning and Skills Research Network London and South East (LSRN LSE).

#### **With thanks to Professor Gareth Parry**

During the year 2007-08, Professor Gareth Parry of Sheffield University, who has for many years acted as Co-Convenor of the SRHE HE-FE Network, informed SRHE that he sadly needed to withdraw from this duty, in view of important work demands elsewhere. We thank Gareth for his many years of support to the Network and hope to invite him back one day as a presenter to the HE-FE Network to discuss his research with SRHE Network colleagues.

#### **Jill Jameson, Convenor**

## Higher Education Close-up \_\_\_\_\_

The Higher Education Close-up is a virtual network for qualitative research into higher education. You can find us at: <http://jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/HIGHER-EDUCATION-CLOSE-UP.html>.

Membership has now grown to over 90 subscribers based in institutions around the globe. The fourth Higher Education Close Up Conference (the virtual network's one 'physical' event) took

place 26–28 June 2008 in Cape Town, South Africa: <http://www.closeup4.uct.ac.za>. This was deemed by all to have been a very successful and enjoyable conference. The next Close Up Conference is planned for Leeds Met University in 2009.

**Paul Trowler, Convenor**

## Higher Education Policy

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The Higher Education Policy Network will be of interest to all those concerned with higher education policy including academics, practitioners, managers, policy-makers and organisations with an interest in the HE sector. The Network aims to facilitate presentation and discussion related to higher education policy to enable the sharing of information and ideas about developments in HE policy with a view to enhancing the potential of research to inform policy.

Two well-attended events have taken place this year:

The first was on ***Privatisation and the Higher Education Market*** on 1st May. Two speakers, presented their work in this area. Christian Gilde, from the University of Bath, gave a paper on *'Safeguarding the University: The commercializing of higher education'* in which he drew on research with American higher education institutions to ask how contemporary universities can safeguard themselves against the market, and against state forces that threaten their relative autonomy. Professor Stephen Ball then examined some of the trends in the 'privatisation' of higher education services and the role of education exports in the global knowledge economy in a paper entitled: *'Trading in Higher Education: the selling of knowledge in a flat world'*. Stephen suggested that the idea of public sector higher education was no longer a meaningful analytic concept. Needless to say, these two papers provoked a lively and interesting debate.

The second event, on 30th June, was on ***Working Class Students, Widening Participation and Institutional Diversity***. This began with a paper by Professor Gill Crozier (University of Sunderland) and Professor Diane Reay (University of Cambridge) on *'Capital Accumulation: Working Class Students Learning How to Learn in HE'*. They drew on data on working class students' experiences from a recent ESRC/TLRP funded study conducted in four higher educational institutions to explore the structural conditions that impact on students' academic progress, the relationship between the social and the academic and the impact on students' ability to learn and succeed. The second paper, *'Institutional Stratification and Higher Education Policy: Choice, Diversity and Social Justice'*, presented by Professor Carole Leathwood (London Metropolitan University), examined contemporary UK government policy on institutional diversity in the higher education sector. This paper picked up on some of the themes of institutional stratification highlighted in Gill and Diane's research to lead into a discussion of the implications for social justice.

**Carole Leathwood, Convenor**

## Newer Researchers

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The Newer Researchers Network is for individuals who consider themselves as 'newer researchers' in the field of higher education. The Network recognises the broad range of career paths that newer higher education researchers have followed and aims to embrace and reflect this diversity in its programme of seminars and activities. The Network aims to provide opportunities for new researchers to develop links with national and international peers, share their developing research and build capacity as researchers within a supportive research community.

The team took over convening the Network in January 2008, following on from the 4th Postgraduate & Newer Researchers' (PGNR) Conference in December 2007 at Sussex University.

In 2008, we have continued to explore new activities that we can offer to newer researchers in the field of HE. Data was collected from participants at the PGNR and main SRHE conferences to find out more about the kinds of events and activities people would like to attend. This showed us that online networking opportunities are important, which we are currently exploring. SRHE pamphlets aimed at newer researchers were seen as particularly useful, and popular events would include topics related to newer researchers and publishing.

Capacity building is an important role for this Network. So we were particularly pleased to work with the Postgraduate Issues Network (PIN) on a recent joint event organised by Dr Martin Gough and Dr Arwen Raddon. This workshop offered 8 participants the opportunity to present an academic paper in a supportive environment which was set up to be similar to a conference session. The presentations were videoed and presenters received verbal and written feedback from the audience and the sessions chairs, and were asked to complete a reflective assignment on what they learned from the day. This event was part of a project being carried out by Dr Martin Gough, one of the convenors of the PIN. Demand was much higher than places offered, and the feedback from participants was very positive, so we are keen to repeat a similar joint event in 2009. For 2009, we will also be looking to put on further capacity-building events on areas identified by the small survey mentioned above.

A major activity for us this year has been the planning and organisation of the 5th PGNR conference. We have included new activities in the day and plenty of opportunities for networking and sharing information. Our keynote speaker will be Professor Lynn McAlpine, considering experiences of UK and Canadian doctoral students, supervisors and research staff and academic careers. New conference activities include 'academic speed-dating', to enhance networking, and a careers session in which established researchers will share their career journey, considering successes, challenges and tips for newer researchers. We have also built in capacity-building elements, such as involving newer researchers in the chairing of sessions and as discussants for the keynote.

This year produced the largest response so far to the call for proposals for the PGNR conference with over 70 submissions. Following the review process, there will be over 60 people presenting on the day, with a range of papers, a workshop, a symposium, a roundtable and a poster session. Many more people have signed up to attend as delegates on the day, and we are pleased to see a very international delegate list. So this promises to be an exciting and productive day!

Nicola will be stepping down from her role on the Network and her involvement in the SRHE R&D Committee to focus on other areas. So we would like to express our sincere thanks to her for her efforts on the Network. We plan to have two new convenors in place for 2009 and look forward to another exciting year ahead.

**Arwen Raddon, Nicola Spurling, Romulo Pinheiro, Convenors**

## Postgraduate Issues

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The Network provided an invigorating impetus to the new academic year on 16th October with a session on **Issues around Strategies for Writing Postgraduate Theses**, led by Rowena Murray, Reader in the University of Strathclyde Educational and Professional Studies Department and prolific writer on academic writing. Rowena ensured that there was plenty of audience participation to illustrate her consideration of different writing strategies: free-writing, generative writing, writing to prompts and structuring/outlining. Discussion centered on participants' views about the place and relevance of these strategies for thesis writing. Our considerations were complemented by recorded insights from research with postgraduate students and academic writers on how they use such strategies and adapt them, and on how some resist them or deny using them. For further consideration the presentation included some of the complexities of naming, developing and personalising writing strategies, with a view to teasing out links between 'writing' and intellectual/cognitive processes and the development of the research question and thesis argument. Phyllis Crème, Senior Research Fellow in Academic Literacies in the UCL Centre for the Advancement of Learning & Teaching and author on the subject, provided a response.

On 25th February, Ian Haines suggested some answers to the question: **What does a supervisor need to know about Bologna (and beyond)?**, now that ten years have passed since the Sorbonne Declaration. In the last three years discussions on the doctorate have escalated and have been a very significant part of the work of the European University Association, the Bologna Follow-up Group and others. Although some UK academics have been involved in these discussions, there are many issues that are not fully resolved that may yet impact on the doctorate in the UK while many supervisors are unaware of the issues that have been agreed and their ramifications. The question requires us to address various issues: the fundamental nature and role of the doctorate and its duration, entry points, mobility, appropriate funding, doctoral students as early stage researchers, the requirements of supervisors, appropriate assessment in an EHEA where practice is extremely varied, the research environment, maintaining diversity, acceptance or otherwise of the Professional Doctorate, the European Doctorate, employment and employability of doctoral candidates, the global impact of the Bologna Process. Ian, with Professor Tony Fell, is in the process of producing a Guide on the Bologna process for supervisors.

On 23rd June, Anne Lee of the University of Surrey introduced her ongoing research, and Stan Taylor of Durham University provided a response, on **New Approaches to Postgraduate Supervision and Supervisor Development**. Through engaging the audience in activities to identify attitudes and stylistic tendencies in relation to supervising, Anne identified different conceptual models of supervision which either the institution or the individual may hold and questioned whether such views wittingly or unwittingly create a particular type of experience or a particular type of student.

As a sort of Network "double-bill", discussion then continued in the form of a rejoinder on the issues specific to **Part-Time Research Study**, led by Alistair McCulloch, which focused on issues debated in a Guide published in May and co-authored with Peter Stokes. Alistair was hoping to have introduced the new Guide at a Network seminar planned for May to be led by Dee Gilmore-Stewart of the University of Manchester. Dee had issued a survey of opinion on the value of part-time research study but was, to our loss, unable to present on the findings and the issues at that time.

The Society's Annual Conference Organising Committee took the step to provide a session in the schedule last December in Brighton for the Networks to promote their work and be available to talk to delegates over a congenial drink or two. Our Network took part in this and will do so

again at the forthcoming conference in Liverpool. Our joint event with the Newer Researchers Network held on 21st October was something of a departure from the normal format. In this event we provided a developmental opportunity for newer researchers to present their work on higher education, followed by a discussion on the issues around presenting and other generic skills in research practice.

If you have an idea for a topic to present on do get in touch with one of the convenors.

For information on the associated "Guides" *Issues in Postgraduate Education: Management, Teaching and Supervision*, please see the report from the Editor.

**Pam Denicolo, Alistair McCulloch, Martin Gough and Richard Race, Convenors**

## South West Higher Education Research \_\_\_\_\_

The Network now has over 140 members on its mailing list, including academics, doctoral students and administrators, representing almost all the higher education institutions in South West England and a number in South Wales as well as people working in FE and for HEFCE and the research councils. The majority of our meetings take place on a Tuesday evening from 17.45 to 19.30, with a speaker and then a discussion in small groups, with a final whole group round up of questions to the presenter.

Between October 2007 and June 2008 we held eleven evening meetings, with topics ranging from what it means to manage research in contemporary universities and why top research universities should be led by top scholars to why some adults with the qualifications for higher education don't enter it. Speakers included Lynn McAlpine from Oxford University's Institute for the Advancement of University Learning, three Bristol University PhD students (all of whom have now graduated), Sue Heath from Southampton University, David Smith from Leeds University/Evidence UK and Amanda Goodall from Warwick Business School. Professor Angela Brew, University of Sydney, was an academic visitor at Bristol University in summer 2008 and contributed to a number of sessions between April and June. See <http://www.bris.ac.uk/education/research/centres/c-shape/> for presentation outlines.

In July 2008 we held a one-day workshop for final stage research students, with 30+ from 8 different HEIs attending. There were sessions on CVs, writing the final draft, vivas and publishing, with session leaders from the universities of Bristol, Cardiff, Southampton and the University of Wales Institute Cardiff.

Speakers for 2008-9 include Jane Kenway from Monash University and Lesley Scanlon from Sydney University and topics range from academic mobility, how university administration is developing in a 'third space', academic literacy, an evaluation of the HEFCE Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and widening participation. We hope to run a further student workshop in July 2009.

**Rosemary Deem, Convenor**

## Student Experience

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The Student Experience Network (SEN) brings together students, teachers, researchers and those working in various capacities of student support to find out what the nearly two million full- and part-time undergraduate home students in UK higher education are learning in the widest sense of the word from their experiences both within and outside of formally institutionalised study.

The SEN held three meetings in 2008, advertised jointly with the British Sociological Association's Researching Students Study Group. In addition, the Network Event at 2007 Annual Conference was a good opportunity to gather new contacts and ideas for future meetings. Many suggested more variety of paper presentations than at 2007 and so the SEN 'theme' at 2008 Conference has some symposia as well as two and three paper sessions. Thanks are due to the new co-convenor of the Network, Dr. Mark Weyers of UCL, for his efforts in tidying up all the submissions and also Dr. Martin Gough of Kent University whose Postgraduate Network merged with the (undergraduate) SEN for the occasion and who therefore also contributed to refereeing submissions. While accepting many of the submissions, I think all reviewers felt many were based on very small samples, mainly by teachers perhaps keeping their research interest alive by writing about their students, and that they often tend therefore to reinvent the wheel. We need to think of a way to accumulate and compare data on the student experience more systematically and also to involve more students (under- and/or post-graduate).

We started 2008 with a very well attended Forum on the Future of Higher Education at SRHE in London on 23rd January. Chaired by Gary Day and with Roger Brown, Bob Brecher, Wes Streeting (now President of NUS) and Colin Waugh editor of *Post-16 Educator*, we hope to be able to contribute to the discussion and possibly further debate on future fees.

Our next day event was on June 24th at De Montfort in Leicester on 'Widening to What? Youth work perspectives on the student experience'. The event was hosted by the Youth and Community Work Department who involved several students in presenting black and adult dimensions of their experience. Hopefully we will develop further the application of youth work perspectives to the student experience. We also need to look more at experiences of widening participation, not just in the pre-92 Universities, where there have been several studies, but in the Million+ post-92 universities which most 'widening participation students' attend. We did at least compare their experiences with those of overseas students when in the afternoon Dr. Thushari Welikala launched her booklet with Chris Watkins on *Improving Intercultural Learning Experiences in HE, Responding to cultural scripts for learning*, but there is more to be done on commonalities of 'outsider' student experiences of HE. This was taken further by the last event of 2008 at UCL organised by Mark Weyers on 14th November on 'Enhancing the International Student Experience'. Will Archer (iGraduate), Val Clifford (Oxford Brookes) and Catherine Montgomery (Northumbria) spoke on the variety of challenges facing international students coming to the UK to study and methods for enhancing their learning experience. Mark Weyers also launched a new DVD titled: *Enhancing the International Student Experience*.

The calendar year concluded with an event on November 14th "Enhancing the Student Experience".

As well as a DVD, we are also launching a Network book at Annual Conference, funded by the HEA Subject Centre for Sociology Politics and Anthropology: *'Twenty years of schooling... Student Reflections on their educational journeys by University of Greenwich Sociology students (only £10!)*.

**Patrick Ainley and Mark Weyers, Convenors**

# SRHE Conferences 2007

## Reshaping Higher Education

### Annual Conference, Brighton, Sussex, 11–13 December 2007

The 2007 SRHE Annual Conference(s) were held for a second year running in Brighton, the Main Conference at the Thistle Hotel on the 11th to the 13th of December and the Postgraduate and Newer Researchers Conference, at the University of Sussex on the 10th.

There were a number of significant advantages in returning to previous venues where prior learning can really be an advantage. There were also significant financial benefits in that we were able to build on some excellent relationships established in the first year. These factors contributed significantly to the level of profitability recorded for the events.

Overall the Main Conference was another considerable success for the Society. It attracted record numbers of abstract submissions, record numbers of delegates and very good ratings. Despite some significant issues occasioning comment, especially in relation to the time constraints on presenters in a very busy programme and the limited discussion time in some sessions, the Conference was rated in overall summaries as even better than the previous year. The administration of the event, especially the management and running of the Conference itself, were significant areas attracting very positive comments.

For the second year running the Conference attracted an increase in abstract submissions (289 in 2007 compared to 145 in 2006) and again, an increase in delegate numbers to 345 in 2007 against 320 in 2006. The quality of submissions was generally high and the Conference attracted submissions from a wide range of researchers internationally, including many new faces who had not attended or contributed to an SRHE conference before.

In the final academic programme there were 152 individual paper presentations, 20 symposia (containing 67 individual papers), one round table and 11 Interactive poster sessions. This was a total of 234 papers presented.

In overall summary of the evaluations received, the academic content was felt to be high, and the programme wide-ranging and well put together. The Thistle Hotel, Brighton once again proved to be an excellent venue and we could not have received better support from their conference management team. The hotel provided excellent networking opportunities in the Atrium and the library terrace and another first this year was the staging a Network event on the library terrace which gave delegates the opportunity to meet with the Convenors and other members of all the Society's Networks and discuss topics for future events and activities.

The 2008 SRHE Conference starts on December 8th with the Postgraduate and Newer Researchers Conference followed on the 9th to the 11th by the Main Conference. Both Conferences this year will be held in the same venue, the Britannia Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool (European Capital of Culture 2008), with the theme Valuing Higher Education. At the time of writing all the signs are that we are in for another successful conference.

**Helen Perkins, Conference Director**

# SRHE Conferences 2007

## Postgraduate and Newer Researchers Conference

**University of Sussex, 10 December 2007**

The Postgraduate and Newer Researchers (PGNR) Conference, now an established and key part of the SRHE Annual Conference was held on Monday 10th December 2007 at Bramber House, University of Sussex. This was again a very successful event attracting over 60 delegates and providing a stimulating programme of speakers and individual presentations (32 papers were presented). It was jointly sponsored by the University of Brighton and the University of Sussex. The presenters covered a range of topics which related to four themes: academic practice, teaching and learning, the student experience and higher education policy. We were delighted that Dr Arwen Raddon and Professor John Pratt could join us to start our Conference with two keynote presentations about how important early research is to subsequent academic careers and what research newer researchers could pursue. The Conference included a panel of experienced editors and authors discussing a range of topics including how to get published and what topics would be relevant for future publishing. A warm thanks to Professor Malcolm Tight, Valerie Hey, John Pratt and Dr Arwen Raddon for participating in the panel and offering helpful advice to delegates.

The Conference concluded with a drinks reception sponsored by the University of Brighton. We have noticed how many delegates have found the one day event stimulating and encouraging. We look forward to staying in touch with many of the delegates as they become fully involved in research into higher education and continue to attend network activities and conferences offered by SRHE.

**Yvonne Hiller, PGNR Conference Chair 2007**

# Honorary Treasurer's report

The Society's turnover has increased again, to some £430,000 (against c£365,000 last year) – reflecting mainly a growing annual conference (£150,000 : £120,000 2006) and our increased earnings from the journals (£150,000 : £130,000). This means that we have this year transferred another £50,000 to Reserves (now at over £340,000), of which £60,000 is a restricted fund and some £150,000 is our semi-permanent contingency fund – leaving c£125,000 as an expendable reserve for deploying on special projects over the next few years (along with the anticipated continuing annual surplus of £50-£75,000 arising from increasing earnings on journals and assuming a continued £20,000 income from the conference).

Expenditure has also increased (£310,000 to £370,000), partly reflecting the larger conference (£100,000 to £130,000) and increases in pay-roll, IT, etc. In addition, during the year the small central team was brought back up to its full complement of 4 staff, 2 part-time and 2 full-time. Such cost-increases are, however, sustainable in the context of the anticipated medium-term increase in and security of the Society's key sources of income (the corporate subscriptions at c£75,000 and income from one journal of c£100,000). Discussions are ongoing with all our publishers on revenue generation and we anticipate some potential rise in income in the 2008/2009 financial year.

As mentioned above, the increased income will not only cover the Society for rising costs, but will also allow the Society to embark on new activities to the extent of up to £75,000 pa over 3-5 years.

The thanks of the Treasurer need, as ever, to be recorded to the Director and her Team for keeping a tight control on expenditure and maximising income from all other income streams including ensuring that the Conference does not run at a loss, that subscriptions are collected and that financial detail is carefully monitored.

**Mr David Palfreyman**  
Honorary Treasurer

# Annual Report and Accounts

## Report of the Directors/Trustees for the year ended 31 July 2008

The members of the SRHE Governing Council who are also trustees/directors are pleased to present their report and summarised audited financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2008.

### Reference and administrative details:

**Charity Number: 313850**

**Company Registration Number: 868820**

**Registered office and operational address:**

**76 Portland Place, London W1B 1NT**

### Directors/Trustees:

Ms Jill Armstrong  
 Professor Ronald Barnett (Past Chair)  
 Professor Paul Blackmore (from 01/08)  
 Dr Richard Blackwell  
 Ms Rebecca Bunting  
 Professor Sue Clegg  
 Professor Rob Cuthbert  
 Professor Vaneeta-marie D'Andrea  
 Professor Miriam David  
 Professor Rosemary Deem (Vice Chair)  
 Dr Joelle Fanghanel (from 01/08)  
 Professor George Gordon (Chair)  
 Dr Myszka Guzkowska (to 31/12/07)

Dr Lydia Hartwig (to 31/12/07)  
 Professor Lee Harvey (to 31/12/07)  
 Professor Yvonne Hillier  
 Professor Bruce Macfarlane (Vice Chair)  
 Ms Janice Malcolm  
 Professor Robin Middlehurst  
 Professor Gill Nicholls  
 Professor Katherine Oglesby (to 31/12/07)  
 Mr David Palfreyman (Hon Treasurer)  
 Professor Stephen Rowland  
 Professor Maria Slowey  
 Dr Denise Whitelock (from 01/08)  
 Professor Gina Wisker

### Director of the Society and Company Secretary: Ms Helen Perkins

#### Auditors:

Critchleys  
 Chartered Accountants  
 Avalon House  
 Marcham Road  
 Abingdon  
 Oxon OX14 1UD

#### Banks:

The Co-operative Bank  
 62-64 Southampton Row  
 Holborn  
 London  
 WC1B 4ND

CAF Bank Ltd  
 25 Kings Hill Avenue  
 Kings Hill  
 West Malling  
 Kent  
 ME19 4JQ

#### Solicitors

Bates, Wells & Braithwaite  
 London LLP  
 206 Cannon Street  
 London  
 EC4M 6YH

## Structure, Governance and Management

### Governing Document

The Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 31st December 1965. It is a registered charity with the Charity Commission. SRHE is a Learned Society and Membership Organisation offering two classes of membership: Ordinary, being any individual engaged or interested in research into higher education and its related fields, and Corporate: any body corporate or partnership or educational establishment engaged or interested in research into higher education and its related fields. There are currently 849 members.

### **Recruitment and Appointment of Council Members (directors/trustees)**

The directors of the company are also trustees for the purposes of charitable law and under the Company's Articles are known as Members of the Governing Council.

Appointments to the Governing Council are drawn from the membership via a process of nominations by Society members. This is a formal process that takes place annually prior to the AGM. Nominees are considered on the basis of their knowledge and expertise, and their capacity to serve the Council. Appointees are experts in their field and will have good leadership and governance skills to ensure the future relevance and sustainability of the Society.

### **Trustees induction and training**

As current members of the Society new trustees are already familiar with the aims and objectives of the charity. Incoming trustees will receive relevant Charity Commission documents outlining the roles and responsibilities of a trustee, together with a copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the current Business Plan and recent Annual Reports and Accounts of the Charity. Both the Chair and the Director, together where possible, will meet with the appointee to discuss the legal obligations and brief them on the internal administration of the charity. It is the charity's aim to update trustees on any new legislation that may affect the governance of the charity as it arises, and further; to offer ongoing support and where thought necessary, consider and action further training.

### **Organisation**

The Governing Council of the Society is responsible for the strategic direction, policy and financial management of the charity. The Council consists of 22 members, including 4 Officers, a Chair, two Vice Chairs and one Treasurer. The initial term of office for elected trustees is 3 years, following which trustees will retire and stand for re-election if they so choose. One third of the trustees retire annually but may stand for re-election if they so choose. The Governing Council meets three times a year.

A Management Committee formed from the elected Officers of the Society including the Committee Chairs and two Council members nominated by Governing Council is charged with keeping under review and dealing with issues affecting the day to day and other management of the Society, especially relating to financial and employment issues, within the overall policies laid down by the Governing Council.

Four Standing Committees with members drawn from elected Council members and Co-options from the membership meet three times a year to monitor, review and drive forward the objectives of the charity.

A Director is appointed by the trustees to lead the Society and to manage the day to day operation of the charity. The Director is supported by a small executive team consisting of: the Operations Manager, the Finance Manager and an Administrative Assistant.

### **Related parties**

There are no related parties.

### **Risk management**

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- An annual review of the risks the charity may face;
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The review has identified the following risk areas (sample):

- Failure to meet Members' expectations/decline in membership;
- Termination of publishing contracts;
- Failure to break even on the SRHE Conference;
- Litigation: Employment and Copyright issues in particular;
- Failure to recruit and retain skilled staff.

The process of review has been valuable in building a better understanding of the risks that may jeopardise the future of the charity and has allowed us to put in place systems and checks to minimise those risks and hence to work confidently towards building a solid foundation for future success of the Society.

### Objectives and Activities

The object of the charity is the advancement of understanding of higher education through the support and dissemination of research and scholarship.

In pursuit of this objective we:

- Develop research capacity through a variety of means;
- Support the Society's membership and provide to them a range of benefits and services;
- Encourage and support new entrants into the field of higher education research;
- Develop opportunities through which researchers can engage with policy makers, practitioners and others so that policy and practice may be shaped by research;
- Provide opportunities and support for the publication and dissemination of research and scholarship in the field;
- Develop and support a network of scholars and researchers in the field of higher education studies;
- Organise and promote opportunities for the presentation of research and scholarship.

To extend access to these opportunities and to promote the best possible knowledge exchange the Society has opened up many of its resources for wider public benefit. This has been achieved through developing an open access website and publishing information in more accessible forms than solely academic journals.

### Achievements and performance

Under the Society's business plan 2005-2008 the Society identified four priorities for action in 2007/2008:

- To work to enhance the role of higher education research within the Higher Education Sector
- To encourage and support newer researchers coming into the field of higher education research
- To provide opportunities for the publication of research and scholarship
- To organise conferences and seminars that both bring researchers together and enable researchers, policy makers and others to engage with one another.

The Society has been successful in responding to all four priorities. The Society has significantly raised its profile through engagement at a number of different levels and brought the knowledge of the research base more to the forefront in policy discussions and has engaged particularly with the ESRC in driving forward some new initiatives in capacity building.

This year has seen the launch of the Society's Newer Researchers Network and we held another very successful Newer Researchers and Postgraduate Conference at Sussex University led by Professor Yvonne Hillier from Brighton University.

The Publications Committee has pursued close relationships with the publishers of all the Society's books and journals. New developments aimed at improving the flow of submissions and information available to authors are being introduced for all the Society's journals. 2007 to 2008 saw the launch and publication of five new titles in the Society's popular Postgraduate Guides series plus 1 in the current academic year, led by Professor Pam Denicolo and supported by Dr Martin Gough, Professor Alastair McCulloch, Dr Richard Race and the Society's Director, Ms Helen Perkins.

The 2007 Annual SRHE Conference attracted record numbers of high quality submissions and excellent delegate attendance, exceeding numbers for 2006. We were joined by a large number of our overseas members and colleagues confirming the growing reputation of the Society outside of the UK. The conference was very highly rated and provided an excellent forum for discussion and debate on issues central to higher education worldwide.

The main conference is underpinned by a broad series of open access network events that take place throughout the year led by the Society's Network Convenor.

The Society has re-launched the Prize for Newer Researchers offering winners wider opportunities to engage with the Society. The year saw an excellent field of applicants and we look forward to continued growth and excellence next year.

### **Financial review**

A formal budget is prepared each year in June based on operational projections. The Management Committee appointed by Governing Council reviews the budget in detail and looks at performance against budget in the preceding year. The annual budget is endorsed by the Management Committee and ratified by Governing Council. The Management Committee and Governing Council meet quarterly and a process of financial review is a major item at all of these meetings. Quarterly financial statements are prepared and performance against budget is reviewed and assessed and remedial action agreed as and when necessary.

The Financial Statements for the year ended July 31 July 2008 show a positive outcome for 2008, noting total funds received at July 31 2008 as £429,169 against £365,009 in 2007 with total funds carried forward as £342,785 against £294,133 at the same time last year.

We are grateful to our Hon Treasurer, Mr David Palfreyman, our Director, Ms Helen Perkins and the small executive team for achieving this positive result for the Society.

### **Investment powers and policy**

The Society may invest the monies of the Society not immediately required for its purposes in or upon such investments, securities or properties as may be thought fit.

It is the policy of the Society to invest funds only on a low risk basis and where capital is fully protected.

### **Reserves policy**

The trustees have examined the Society's requirements for reserves in the light of the main risks to the organisation and its operational needs. It has established a policy whereby it retains a level of reserve which will safeguard against unforeseen occurrences in the Society's position in order to ensure that all contractual obligations outstanding can be met. The trustees have established the level of reserves for 2008 to 2009 (that is those funds that are freely available) that the charity ought to have at £150,000. This sum reflects a slight increase on the previous period.

The reserves policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it fully supports the needs of the Society and reflects relevant Company and Charity Law.

### Plans for future periods

The Society has reviewed the current business plan for 2005 – 2008 and drawn up a set of strategic priorities to build on these plans in the next planning period 2009 – 2011. The Society's additional plan will focus on promoting Research Methodology in higher education research, extending the Society's involvement in policy discussions and pursuing an appropriate international agenda. The focus on publications and promoting opportunities for the publication and dissemination of research will also continue to be a strategic priority as will the delivery of benefits to members and servicing their needs through communications via the Society's Newsletter; web development and other means.

### Council responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Company Law requires the Members of the Council to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity at the end of the financial year and of its surplus or deficit for the financial year. In doing so the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting criteria and then apply them consistently;
- Make sound judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enables them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each trustee has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information. The trustees confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and which they know the auditors are unaware of.

### Auditors

A resolution will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting that Critchleys Chartered Accountants be re-appointed as auditors of the charity for the ensuing year.

Approved by the Council on 16 October 2008 and signed on its behalf by:

**George Gordon, Director**

Society for Research into Higher Education  
Statement of Financial Activities  
For the year ended July 31 2008

	Unrestricted Funds 2008 £	Restricted Funds 2008 £	Total Funds 2008 £	Total Funds 2007 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds:</b>				
<i>Voluntary income:</i>				
Donations and gifts	2,000	-	2,000	3,500
<i>Activities for generating funds:</i>				
Investment income – interest receivable	14,056	4,144	18,200	12,009
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</b>				
Subscriptions	102,286	-	102,286	100,084
Miscellaneous income	-	-	-	29
Conference revenue	151,044	-	151,044	118,080
Publication sales	3,738	-	3,738	353
Periodicals and royalties	151,901	-	151,901	130,954
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>425,025</b>	<b>4,144</b>	<b>429,169</b>	<b>365,009</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>				
<b>Cost of generating funds</b>				
Costs of generating voluntary income	1,144	-	1,144	2,843
<b>Charitable activities</b>	<b>371,368</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>371,368</b>	<b>310,720</b>
<b>Governance costs</b>	<b>8,005</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,005</b>	<b>7,155</b>
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>380,517</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>380,517</b>	<b>320,718</b>
<b>Net incoming resources and net movement in funds</b>	<b>44,508</b>	<b>4,144</b>	<b>48,652</b>	<b>44,291</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward	236,318	57,815	294,133	249,842
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>280,826</b>	<b>61,959</b>	<b>342,785</b>	<b>294,133</b>
	=====	=====	=====	=====

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

# Society for Research into Higher Education

## Balance Sheet

### at July 31 2008

	Note	2008	2007
		£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible assets		978	643
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Stock of guides		4,223	2,154
Debtors		30,196	22,194
Cash at bank and in hand		390,518	340,304
		<u>424,937</u>	<u>364,652</u>
<b>Creditors</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year		(83,130)	(71,162)
		<u>341,807</u>	<u>293,490</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>			
		341,807	293,490
<b>Net Assets</b>			
		342,785	294,133
		=====	=====
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>			
Designated funds		-	561
General funds		280,826	235,757
		<u>280,826</u>	<u>236,318</u>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>			
		61,959	57,815
		<u>342,785</u>	<u>294,133</u>
<b>Total Funds</b>			
		342,785	294,133
		=====	=====

These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small entities and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2007).

These accounts are not the statutory accounts but a summary of financial information relating to the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet. The full accounts, on which an unqualified auditor's report was issued, can be obtained from 76 Portland Place, London W1B 1NT.

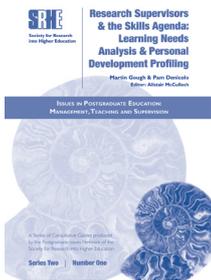
Approved and authorised for issue by the Council on 16 October 2008 and signed on its behalf by:

**G Gordon, Director and D Palfreyman, Honorary Treasurer**



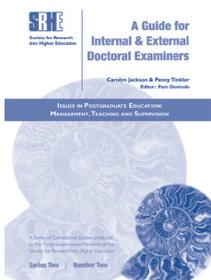
# NEW SERIES OF SRHE POSTGRADUATE GUIDES

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## RESEARCH SUPERVISORS AND THE SKILLS AGENDA: LEARNING NEEDS ANALYSIS AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROFILING Martin Gough and Pam Denicolo Series Two, Number One

The first part of this thought-provoking Guide outlines Learning Needs Analysis and Personal Development Profiling and provides suggestions for their implementation. The second summarises national policy developments and their implications. In the third part, the authors develop positive arguments for embracing the skills agenda rather than merely complying with dictats from above. This Guide is aimed not only at supervisors, institutional managers and policy makers, but also at novice researchers themselves. By raising awareness of skills and personal development processes, common understandings between supervisors and novice researchers can be facilitated, to the benefit of the individual and the research.



## A GUIDE FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DOCTORAL EXAMINERS Carolyn Jackson and Penny Tinkler Series Two, Number Two

'This Guide provides a compact and intelligently prepared resource for all those involved in doctoral examinations. The first part handles preliminary questions while the next two parts take the reader through the process, including assessing the thesis, preparing for the viva, the viva itself and its aftermath. The work engages its subject with...authority, clarity, integrity and sensitivity in relation to all dimensions of the doctoral examination process...demonstrating a clear feel for the politics and realities of the event. Mindful of employing a wide range of disciplinary examples it also makes succinct yet highly relevant use of theory. This Guide will be of great value to all individuals, experienced and novice alike, who sit in the viva room.'

Dr Peter Stokes, Department of Strategy and Innovation, University of Central Lancashire



## SUPERVISING DISABLED RESEARCH STUDENTS Val Farrar and Richard Young Series Two, Number Three

'This very practical Guide takes you to the heart of the issue. It is written from the researcher perspective using actual case histories encountered by the authors during their HEFCE-funded Premia project to improve provision for disabled postgraduate researchers. The Guide takes you through each stage of the PhD research degree by asking practical questions. If you are working with a disabled researcher it will give you the understanding and the confidence to ensure that you can respond to their needs. If you are working with non-disabled researchers it will also give you food for thought: inclusive practice is good for all.'

Dr Janet Metcalfe, Chair & Head, Vitae



## SUPERVISING INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH STUDENTS Second Edition Eunice Okorocho Series Two, Number Four

'This short Guide provides a level of awareness of intercultural matters, yet should appeal to a wide variety of people with relatively little time for exploring such matters in depth. It deftly points the reader away from easy stereotyping, by opening up opportunities for reflection on practice and creating an awareness of the potential for constructive solutions to communication problems in a university or college context. The Guide presents issues which have remained fairly constant through the decades of the existence of research degree programmes.'

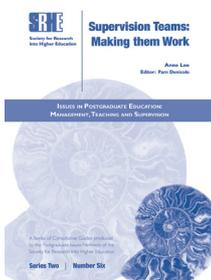
Dr Martin Gough and Dr Françoise Carénas, Guide editors



## THE SILENT MAJORITY: MEETING THE NEEDS OF PART-TIME RESEARCH STUDENTS Alistair McCulloch and Peter Stokes Series Two, Number Five

'In this Guide, Alistair McCulloch and Peter Stokes break new ground in addressing and foregrounding the needs of part-time research students. Whereas many standard sources assume a full-time context for doctoral study, the authors highlight the situation of the part-time majority of mainly mature students pursuing research degrees.... McCulloch and Stokes point to the power relations encountered in the doctoral process, as between the student and the supervisor, department and institution; and as expressed in what they call the cultural web of doctoral learning and socialisation.... To better the conditions for part-time students is, they believe, a way of improving the experience of all research students.'

Professor Gareth Parry, School of Education, University of Sheffield



## SUPERVISION TEAMS: MAKING THEM WORK Anne Lee Series Two, Number Six

'This Guide provides a useful and very readable overview of teamwork in research degree supervision. Anne Lee draws on her own international research to alert the reader to a range of...issues which need to be considered and addressed for the supervisory team to work effectively. She gives some useful definitions of supervisory roles and responsibilities, and provides questionnaires to help participants to clarify their own expectations. A wealth of helpful advice is provided about addressing problems in team supervision and for supervisors' personal development.'

Professor Diana Woodward, The Graduate School, Napier University, Edinburgh



**Society for Research into Higher Education**

Registered office: 76 Portland Place, London W1B 1NT

Tel: 020 7637 2766 Fax: 020 7637 2781

Email: [srheoffice@shre.ac.uk](mailto:srheoffice@shre.ac.uk) <http://www.srhe.ac.uk>

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