

Education: **The State of the Discipline**

The progress of Education: An analysis of data
from the Research Excellence Framework

AUGUST 2023

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ABOUT BERA

The British Educational Research Association (BERA) is the leading authority on educational research in the UK, supporting and representing the community of scholars, practitioners and everyone engaged in and with educational research both nationally and internationally. BERA is a membership association and learned society committed to advancing research quality, building research capacity and fostering research engagement. We aim to inform the development of policy and practice by promoting the best quality evidence produced by educational research.

Our vision is for educational research to have a profound and positive influence on society. We support this by promoting and sustaining the work of educational researchers. Our membership, which is more than 2,500 strong, includes educational researchers, practitioners and doctoral students from the UK and around the globe.

Founded in 1974, BERA has since expanded into an internationally renowned association. We strive to be inclusive of the diversity of education research and scholarship, and welcome members from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, theoretical orientations, methodological approaches, sectoral interests and institutional affiliations. We encourage the development of productive relationships with other associations within and beyond the UK.

We run a major international conference each year alongside a diverse and engaging series of events, and publish high-quality research in our peer-reviewed journals, reports, book series and the groundbreaking BERA Blog. We recognise excellence through our awards and fellowships, provide grants for research, support the career development of our members, and nurture an active peer community organised around networks, forums and special interest groups.

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EDUCATION: THE STATE OF THE DISCIPLINE

The State of the Discipline initiative aims to provide a clear, comprehensive account of the state of education as an academic discipline in universities; as a field of practice; and as a significant and central element of social and political policy in the four nations of the UK.

Reports from each stage of the initiative will equip stakeholders in every part of the sector with the most objective and powerful information on which to base their advocacy for the importance of education and education research. It will also be key to informing decision-making processes within BERA. Two elements are central to the initiative:

- the definition of education as an academic discipline that shares characteristics with many other disciplines, including those that have been established for much longer in universities worldwide;
- the intersections between education research and practice including in teacher education and training, which in recent work has been articulated as ‘close-to-practice research’.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report was subject to peer review from the steering group appointed by BERA to oversee the Education: The State of the Discipline initiative.

This report was published in August 2023 by the British Educational Research Association.

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Munoz-Chereau, B., & Wyse, D. (2023). *Education: The State of the Discipline. The progress of Education: An analysis of data from the Research Excellence Framework*. British Educational Research Association. <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/education-the-state-of-the-discipline-progress-of-education>

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Introduction from BERA: About this report

BERA has had a longstanding interest in the state of education: as an academic discipline in universities, as a field of practice, and as a significant and central element of social and political policy. In the last decade, the nature of work in universities has been subject to a range of significant changes. Some of these changes have been recognised by trade unions, for example, increased casualisation of the workforce and changes towards more teaching-only contracts. The Research Excellence Framework (REF) also continues to be an influence on the ways in which universities work. In 2019, mindful of the ongoing changes within many UK universities, with resultant impacts on BERA members, BERA Council approved the development of an initiative to examine the state of education as a discipline taking account of the four nations of the UK. The ultimate purpose of this initiative was to equip those interested in the development of education with the most objective and powerful information on which to base their advocacy for education.

In January 2020 BERA commissioned a systematic review (SR) which was designed to inform the State of the Discipline initiative. The SR reviewed the research on the structures and processes – both formal and informal – that influence research activities in the UK. Following an open tender, the review was awarded to a team from the Universities of Dundee and Exeter, and their final report was published in September 2021 (Boyle et al., 2021).

Once the report and its recommendations had been considered by BERA's leadership committee, the association commissioned additional projects to explore the state of education further. The first of these to be published was a commission to analyse existing data in order to gain a more detailed understanding of the profile of academic staff working in education departments in universities in the UK, with particular regard to equality and diversity and protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The report from this project was published in January 2023 (Belluigi et al., 2023).

Alongside this, BERA commissioned a team to carry out a survey of education researchers' perceptions of their work and identities in relation to education research in universities. The purposes of this survey were to a) provide robust data about the state of education as an academic discipline in universities in the UK; b) examine the structures and processes that influence opportunity for, and engagement in, research activity for staff working in university education departments. The report from this project was published in May 2023 (Morris et al., 2023).

BERA has also drawn upon the most recent REF exercise to inform our understanding of the state of the discipline. One aspect of this was to commission a selection of case studies to demonstrate the outstanding impact of education research across a broad spectrum of settings. These case studies were published in June 2023 and demonstrate education to be a vibrant and exciting academic discipline, recognising methodological and epistemological diversity (BERA, 2023). Examples were assembled to reflect the impact of high-quality research on educational policy, practice and understanding, both in the UK and internationally, across early years, primary, secondary and higher education.

The second aspect, contained in this report, was to commission a quantitative assessment of the progress of education as an academic discipline in UK universities through analysis of REF reports and publicly available data, and to look at this alongside other disciplines. We are grateful for the work of Bernardita Munoz-Chereau, supported by Dominic Wyse, in producing this report and for the insight it provides on current issues for education as an academic discipline.

August 2023

Executive summary

‘The progress of Education: An analysis of data from the Research Excellence Framework’ is the final project of BERA’s first Education: The State of the Discipline initiative. Mindful of the pivotal role that the Research Excellence Framework (REF) has played in shaping academic disciplines in UK universities over the past decade, an exploratory quantitative analysis of REF reports and publicly available data from the REF was conducted. The research questions guiding the report are:

1. What is the progress of Education as an academic discipline according to analysis of data comparing the 2014 and 2021 REF exercises?
2. How does the progress of Education as an academic discipline compare with a selection of other academic disciplines according to analysis of data comparing the 2014 and 2021 REF exercises?

Publicly available data from REF quality profiles available for 2014 and 2021 were analysed. First, the two separate datasets were combined and matched by higher education institution (HEI) in order to compare ‘like with like’ as far as possible. The analysis was restricted to merged samples formed by HEIs that submitted to the unit of assessment (UoA) 23 Education and four comparisons: UoA 1 Clinical Medicine; UoA 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience; UoA 21 Sociology; and UoA 27 English Language and Literature in REF 2014 and REF 2021.

The progress of each discipline was calculated by comparing the proportion of research activity judged to be from 4* to unclassified in the REFs. Hence, Education’s progress was determined by observing if on average the percentage meeting the standard 4*, 3*, 2*, 1* and unclassified improved, worsened or stayed the same from 2014 to 2021 by overall quality profile; outputs; impact; and environment sub-profiles. The findings show that Education improved its research quality as measured by REF results from 2014 to 2021 regarding its overall quality profile, as well as the outputs, impact and environment sub-profiles. Yet Education sub-profiles revealed a differential quality, as much clearer progress was identified in impact and outputs, but perhaps to an extent at the expense of its environment. Also Education appeared to improve its research quality to a lesser degree than the similar and different UoAs selected as comparators.

As an important part of HEIs’ funding is driven by REF quality indicators, the identified gaps have strong implications. Particularly, it appears that there is room for improvement in Education’s environment sub-profile, as well as in the rate of progress in its overall quality profile when compared with similar and different UoAs. Overall, the results can be considered in relation to the evidence from the other four State of the Discipline projects, which can be used to identify key features that can be acted on in future.

1. Introduction

This BERA ‘State of the Discipline’ project report presents an exploratory quantitative analysis of data from the Research Excellence Framework (REF). This report explores the progress of Education as an academic discipline in UK higher education institutions (HEIs) through the analysis of publicly available data of REF quality profiles.

1.1 WHY EXPLORING THE PROGRESS OF EDUCATION AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE MATTERS

Education research has periodically attracted criticisms about its quality. As a result, BERA has, over many years, undertaken work to provide a robust evidence-based case for the quality of education research. This work includes identifying the positive aspects of education research, and education as an academic discipline in universities, but also critically reflecting on any weaknesses in the research ecosystem and seeking to address such weaknesses. Given the societal importance of education in relation to people’s life-chances, work to address the quality of education research and its contribution to knowledge has multiple potential benefits. The work undertaken for this report is the final project in the current iteration of the BERA ‘State of the Discipline’ initiative. The design of the analyses and comparisons drew conceptually from the paper of Dominic Wyse’s Presidential Address (Wyse, 2020).

By focusing on progress in education research across two points in time we can explore developments, trends and changes beyond a single moment to describe a longitudinal trajectory. However, as the recommendations proposed by Lord Stern’s independent review of REF 2014 resulted in changes in REF 2021, we acknowledge that ‘caution must be exercised in comparing outcomes and results between the two exercises’ (REF, 2022a – see ‘Key differences to REF 2014’¹). More precisely, aspects regarding staff and weighting of the sub-profiles provide some limitations to our analyses which are detailed in Table 1.1.

¹ <https://ref.ac.uk/guidance-on-results/guidance-on-ref-2021-results/#2014>

Table 1.1
Changes between REF 2014 and REF 2021

	REF 2014	REF 2021
Staff submitted	Selection of staff	100% of staff with significant responsibility of research
	Current staff	Current and former staff
Output requirement	4 outputs per staff member	1 to 5 outputs per staff member
Weighting of sub-profiles for overall profile	Outputs (65%)	Outputs (60%)
	Impact (20%)	Impact (25%)
	Environment (15%)	Environment (15%)
UoAs	36 UoAs	34 UoAs

Given the aforementioned changes, this exploratory analysis needs to be considered with other sources of evidence to draw firm conclusions.

1.2 WHAT IS THE REF AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

During the past decade the REF research assessment has been used by Research England, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) and the Department for Economy, Northern Ireland (DfE) to strategically distribute about £2 billion per year of public funding for research, based on quality-related indicators.

The four UK higher education funding bodies share the aim of maintaining ‘a world-class, dynamic and responsive research base across the full academic spectrum within UK higher education’ through:

1. providing accountability for public investment in research and evidence of the benefits of this investment;
2. providing benchmarking information and establishing reputational yardsticks for use in the HE sector and for public information;
3. informing selective allocation of funding for research (REF, 2022a).

In 2014 the REF replaced the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), and started including an assessment of the broader impact of UK higher education institutions (HEIs)’ research on the economy, society, culture, public policy, and services, health, the environment and quality of life within the UK and internationally.

The REF is carried out through expert reviews by panels for each of the 34 subject-based units of assessment (UoAs) guided by four main panels. The expert panels tasked with the reviews include senior academics, international members and research users from the private, public or third sectors who make use of university research in their organisation or professional activity (REF, 2022b).

For each university’s submission the REF expert panels determine their overall quality profile, which is the result from the weighting of three sub-profiles: research outputs, research impact and research environment. The REF describes these sub-profiles as follows:

‘Outputs are the published or publicly available products of research, which can take many forms. These include books, monographs, chapters in books and journal articles as well as performances, exhibitions and other practice research outputs, software, patents, conference proceedings, translations, and digital and visual media’ (REF, 2022c).

Impact refers to ‘the effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia’ (REF, 2022c).

Environment means the institutional setting ‘for supporting research and enabling impact within each submitting unit’ (REF, 2022c).

For each of these sub-profiles, experts judge the extent to which each HEI submission reaches originality, significance and rigour. For REF 2021, outputs account for 60% of the overall quality profile, impact represents 25%, and environment the remaining 15%. The primary outcome of assessment implemented by the expert panels is to award an overall quality profile to each submission, using the following star-level system:

Table 1.2
Quality profiles: Definition of starred levels

Four stars	Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Three stars	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
Two stars	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
One star	Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified	Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work; or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of REF assessment.

2. Methodology

The analyses for this project were guided by two research questions:

1. What is the progress of Education as an academic discipline according to analysis of data comparing the 2014 and 2021 REF exercises?
2. How does the progress of Education as an academic discipline compare with a selection of other academic disciplines according to analysis of data comparing the 2014 and 2021 REF exercises?

2.1 DATA

In order to answer the research questions, public data from REF quality profiles available for 2014 (REF, 2014) and 2021 (REF, 2022d) were analysed. First, the two separate datasets were combined into one dataset in which 2014 and 2021 results were matched by HEI. The spreadsheet for the combined dataset has 21 columns with variables such as HEIs' name, UK country, profile (overall, outputs, impact and environment), and proportion of 4* per year.

2.2 SAMPLE

In order to compare 'like with like' as much as possible, the analysis was restricted to a merged sample, that is those Education departments that submitted to REF in 2014 and in 2021. From the 76 Education departments within HEIs that submitted to the REF in 2014 and 83 that submitted in 2021, we created a dataset with the 69 institutions that submitted to the Education UoA on both occasions.

Table 2.1 shows the breakdown of the samples from 2014, 2021 and the merged sample size. It also shows the same information for the selection of comparator disciplines that was made for this work. The selection

sought disciplines that could either be seen as relatively close to education research in some respects but also those that could be seen as more distant in order to have wide variations in the comparisons of disciplines. The criteria for the selection of comparator disciplines were as follows:

- Sociology was selected because like Education it is considered as a social science, and it is a discipline regarded by some as a founding discipline of Education (see for example McCulloch, 2002).
- Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience was selected because Psychology as a discipline is regarded by some as a founding discipline of Education. The inclusion of Neuroscience, and its emphasis on science, is also relevant to methodological debates in education research. It is also a relatively 'young' discipline compared to some.
- Clinical Medicine was chosen because this discipline is periodically compared with Education, for example taking account of the place of professional training in both Education and Medicine. Medicine is a more well-established discipline historically.
- English Language and Literature was chosen mainly because it was expected to have considerable differences in the way the discipline was understood. The important emphasis on literature as an art form has some links with Education, for example in research that focuses on the teaching of English Literature. English Literature is between more established disciplines (such as Medicine), and younger disciplines (such as Education).

Table 2.1

Sample of disciplines and institutions from REF 2014 and REF 2021

UoAs	REF 2014	REF 2021	Merged sample (REF 2014 and REF 2021)	REF 2014 or REF 2021	Percentage of institutions included in merged sample
UoA 23 Education	76	83	69	90	76.6%
UoA 1 Clinical Medicine	31	31	30	32	93.7%
UoA 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	82	93	76	99	76.7%
UoA 21 Sociology	29	37	26	40	65%
UoA 27 English Language and Literature	89	92	88	93	94.6%

Note: See Appendix for details of HEIs included and excluded in the analysis.

The UoA 23 Education merged sample that was selected for the analyses represents 76.6% of the 90 Education departments that have submitted to the REF at least once in 2014 or 2021. Regarding the comparison group, UoA 1 Clinical Medicine merged sample represents 93.7% of the 32 departments that have submitted to the REF at least once; UoA 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience merged sample represents 76.7% of the 99 departments that have submitted to the REF at least once; UoA 21 Sociology represents 65% of the 40 departments that have submitted to the REF at least once; and UoA 27 English Language and Literature merged sample represents 94.6% of the 93 departments that have submitted to the REF at least once.

It is important to note that the size of the disciplines submitting to the REF vary considerably. While UoA 23 Education is similar in size to UoA 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience and UoA 27 English Language and Literature with over 90 HEIs submitting to REF historically, UoA 1 Clinical Medicine and UoA 21 Sociology are considerably smaller, with 32 and 40 HEIs submitting respectively. The high percentage of HEIs included in the merged sample particularly for UoA 27 English Language and Literature (94.6%) indicates stability, whereas the low representation of UoA 21 Sociology in the merged sample (65%) points to changes due to an increase in the number of HEIs in the discipline submitting to REF 2021.

2.3 METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The progress of Education's quality from 2014 to 2021 was calculated by comparing the proportion of research activity judged to be from 4* to unclassified in REF 2014 and REF 2021. Hence, Education's progress is determined by observing if on average the percentage meeting the standard 4*, 3*, 2*, 1* and unclassified improved, worsened or stayed the same from 2014 to 2021 by overall quality profile; outputs; impact; and environment sub-profiles. To improve the legibility of tables, percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number so totals may not add to exactly 100%.

As higher grades are used to allocate REF funding, Education and the four UoA comparisons were further analysed by establishing a quality threshold at 3* by adding the 4* and 3* percentages for each REF profile. By establishing this quality threshold, complexity is reduced, allowing description of the total quality trend of each UoA.

3. Findings

3.1 THE PROGRESS OF EDUCATION AND OTHER UOAS BETWEEN 2014 AND 2021

3.1.1 Overall REF profiles

Table 3.1
Overall REF profiles

		Grades				
		4*	3*	2*	1*	Unclassified
Education	2014	21%	38%	31%	10%	1%
	2021	29%	35%	26%	10%	1%
	Change	8%▲	3%▼	5%▼	=	=
Sociology	2014	25%	46%	27%	3%	0%
	2021	40%	40%	19%	2%	0%
	Change	15%▲	6%▼	8%▼	1%▼	=
English Literature	2014	27%	41%	26%	6%	1%
	2021	41%	41%	16%	1%	0%
	Change	14%▲	=	10%▼	5%▼	1%▼
Clinical Medicine	2014	35%	46%	16%	1%	1%
	2021	44%	46%	10%	0%	0%
	Change	9%▲	=	6%▼	1%▼	1%▼
Psychology	2014	26%	41%	27%	5%	1%
	2021	32%	40%	23%	4%	1%
	Change	6%▲	1%▼	4%▼	1%▼	=

As seen in Table 3.1, Education increased its overall profile of 4* ratings by 8% points difference (from 21% in 2014 to 29% in 2021). This increase co-occurred with a 3% points difference reduction in 3*, and 5% points difference reduction in 2*, whereas 1* and unclassified remained the same. In comparison with other UoAs, this overall trend is similar. However, Education's 4* progress was only higher than Psychology (6% points difference), so was lower than Clinical Medicine (9% points difference), English Literature (14% points difference) and Sociology (15% points difference). Also it is interesting to note that for the 2021 data while all the comparison UoAs were graded at 4* in more than 30% of their submissions, Education is the only discipline which was marginally below this threshold with 29% of 4*.

3.1.2 Outputs REF sub-profiles

Table 3.2
Outputs REF sub-profiles

		Grades				
		4*	3*	2*	1*	Unclassified
Education	2014	18%	40%	32%	9%	1%
	2021	26%	36%	27%	10%	1%
	Change	8%▲	4%▼	5%▼	1%▲	=
Sociology	2014	20%	47%	31%	2%	0%
	2021	40%	38%	20%	2%	0%
	Change	20%▲	9%▼	11%▼	=	=
English Literature	2014	26%	40%	28%	5%	0%
	2021	42%	41%	16%	1%	0%
	Change	16%▲	1%▲	12%▼	4%▼	=
Clinical Medicine	2014	24%	53%	21%	1%	1%
	2021	37%	49%	13%	0%	0%
	Change	13%▲	4%▼	8%▼	1%▼	1%▼
Psychology	2014	19%	43%	32%	5%	1%
	2021	26%	44%	26%	3%	1%
	Change	7%▲	1%▲	6%▼	2%▼	=

As can be seen in Table 3.2, Education's outputs sub-profile increased on average its 4* ratings by 8% points difference (from 18% in 2014 to 26% in 2021). This increase co-occurred with a 4% points difference reduction in 3*, and 5% points difference reduction in grade 2*, whereas 1* increased marginally. Unclassified remained the same. In comparison with other UoAs, this trend is similar. However, Education's 4* progress was only higher than Psychology (7% points difference), so was lower than Clinical Medicine (13% points difference), English Literature (16% points difference) and Sociology (20% points difference). Also, it is interesting to note that while Sociology, Clinical Medicine and English Literature were graded 4* in more than 35% of their submissions, Education and Psychology were below this threshold, each with 26% 4* grades.

3.1.3 Impact REF sub-profiles

Table 3.3
Impact REF sub-profiles

		Grades				
		4*	3*	2*	1*	Unclassified
Education	2014	28%	36%	26%	10%	1%
	2021	38%	32%	22%	7%	1%
	Change	10%▲	4%▼	4%▼	3%▼	=
Sociology	2014	40%	42%	15%	3%	0%
	2021	41%	45%	15%	0%	0%
	Change	1%▲	3%▲	=	3%▼	=
English Literature	2014	28%	47%	19%	6%	0%
	2021	42%	39%	17%	3%	0%
	Change	14%▲	8%▼	2%▼	3%▼	=
Clinical Medicine	2014	70%	24%	4%	2%	0%
	2021	60%	36%	4%	0%	0%
	Change	10%▼	12%▲	=	2%▼	=
Psychology	2014	47%	35%	14%	4%	1%
	2021	44%	35%	15%	5%	1%
	Change	3%▼	=	1%▲	1%▲	=

As seen in Table 3.3, Education's impact sub-profile increased 4* ratings by 10% points difference (from 28% in 2014 to 38% in 2021). This increase co-occurred with a 4% points difference reduction in 3*, 4% points difference reduction in grade 2*, and 3% points difference decrease in grade 1*. Unclassified remained the same. In comparison with other UoAs, this trend is different. Education's 4* impact progress was only lower than English Literature (14% points difference) so was higher than Sociology (1% points difference), Clinical Medicine (-10% points difference) and Psychology (-3% points difference). In 2021 while all the other comparison UoAs received 4* in more than 40% of their submissions, Education is below this threshold with 38% of 4*.

3.1.4 Environment REF sub-profiles

Table 3.4
Environment REF sub-profiles

		Total of profile environment				
		4*	3*	2*	1*	Unclassified
Education	2014	25%	30%	30%	13%	1%
	2021	24%	32%	26%	17%	1%
	Change	1%▼	2%▲	4%▼	4%▲	=
Sociology	2014	26%	46%	25%	3%	0%
	2021	39%	38%	21%	3%	0%
	Change	13%▲	8%▼	4%▼	=	=
English Literature	2014	29%	37%	25%	8%	1%
	2021	37%	45%	16%	1%	0%
	Change	8%▲	8%▲	9%▼	7%▼	1%▼
Clinical Medicine	2014	38%	49%	13%	0%	0%
	2021	45%	50%	5%	0%	0%
	Change	7%▲	1%▲	8%▼	=	=
Psychology	2014	28%	41%	23%	8%	0%
	2021	34%	34%	25%	7%	0%
	Change	6%▲	7%▼	2%▲	1%▼	=

As seen in Table 3.4, Education’s environment sub-profile decreased by 1% points difference in its 4* ratings (from 25% in 2014 to 24% in 2021). This decrease co-occurred with an increase of 2% points difference in 3*, 4% points difference reduction in grade 2*, and 4% points difference increase in grade 1*. Unclassified remained the same. In comparison with other UoAs, this trend is different. Education’s 4* impact progress was the only negative, while Sociology (13% points difference), English Literature (8% points difference), Clinical Medicine (7% points difference) and Psychology increased their 4* ratings. In 2021 while all the other UoAs received 4* in more than 30% of their submissions, Education was below this threshold with 24% of 4*.

3.1.5 Above 3* overall REF quality threshold

Table 3.5
Overall 4+3

		Grades	
		4*+3*	2*+1*+ unclassified
Education	2014	59%	41%
	2021	63%	37%
	Change	4%▲	4%▼
Sociology	2014	70%	30%
	2021	80%	20%
	Change	10%▲	10%▼
English Literature	2014	67%	33%
	2021	82%	18%
	Change	15%▲	15%▼
Clinical Medicine	2014	82%	18%
	2021	90%	10%
	Change	8%▲	8%▼
Psychology	2014	66%	34%
	2021	72%	28%
	Change	6%▲	6%▼

Table 3.5 shows that when comparing REF 2014 and 2021 data on the overall profile for the quality threshold above 3*, Education as a sector increased its quality by increasing its proportion of 4* and 3* from 2014 to 2021 by 4% points difference, while decreasing the number of lower grades (2*, 1* and unclassified) by the same amount. While this trend is consistently observed in the other UoAs, Education quality grades remained lower than its comparators and was the only one rated below 70% in 2021.

3.1.6 Above 3* outputs REF quality threshold

Table 3.6
Outputs 4+3

		Grades	
		4*+3*	2*+1*+ unclassified
Education	2014	58%	42%
	2021	63%	37%
	Change	5%▲	5%▼
Sociology	2014	66%	34%
	2021	78%	22%
	Change	12%▲	12%▼
English Literature	2014	66%	34%
	2021	83%	17%
	Change	17%▲	17%▼
Clinical Medicine	2014	77%	23%
	2021	86%	14%
	Change	9%▲	9%▼
Psychology	2014	62%	38%
	2021	71%	29%
	Change	9%▲	9%▼

Table 3.6 shows that when comparing REF 2014 and 2021 data on the outputs sub-profile for the quality threshold above 3*, Education increased its quality by increasing its proportion of 4* and 3* from 2014 to 2021 by 5% points difference, while decreasing the number of lower grades (2*, 1* and unclassified) by the same amount. While this trend is consistently observed in the other UoAs, Education quality grades remained lower than its comparators and was the only one rated below 70% in 2021.

3.1.7 Above 3* impact REF quality threshold

Table 3.7
Impact 4+3

		Grades	
		4*+3*	2*+1*+ unclassified
Education	2014	64%	36%
	2021	70%	30%
	Change	6%▲	6%▼
Sociology	2014	81%	19%
	2021	85%	15%
	Change	4%▲	4%▼
English Literature	2014	74%	26%
	2021	81%	19%
	Change	7%▲	7%▼
Clinical Medicine	2014	94%	6%
	2021	96%	4%
	Change	2%▲	2%▼
Psychology	2014	81%	19%
	2021	79%	21%
	Change	2%▼	2%▲

Table 3.7 shows that when comparing REF 2014 and 2021 data on the impact quality for the threshold above 3*, Education as a sector increased its quality by increasing its proportion of 4* and 3* from 2014 to 2021 by 6% points difference, while decreasing the number of lower grades (2*, 1* and unclassified) by the same amount. While this trend is observed in most of the other UoAs (except Psychology which decreased by 2% points difference), Education is the only one reaching below 79% in 2021.

3.1.8 Above 3* environment REF quality threshold

Table 3.8
Environment 4+3

		Total of profile environment	
		4*+3*	2*+1*+ unclassified
Education	2014	55%	45%
	2021	56%	44%
	Change	1%▲	1%▼
Sociology	2014	73%	27%
	2021	76%	24%
	Change	3%▲	3%▼
English Literature	2014	66%	34%
	2021	82%	18%
	Change	16%▲	16%▼
Clinical Medicine	2014	88%	13%
	2021	95%	5%
	Change	7%▲	8%▼
Psychology	2014	69%	31%
	2021	67%	33%
	Change	2%▼	2%▲

Table 3.8 shows that when comparing REF 2014 and 2021 data on the environment quality for the threshold above 3*, Education as a discipline increased its quality marginally by increasing its proportion of 4* and 3* from 2014 to 2021 by 1% point difference, while decreasing the number of lower grades (2*, 1* and unclassified) by the same amount. While this trend is observed in most of the other UoAs (except Psychology which decreased by 2% points difference), Education is the only one reaching below 60% in 2021.

4. Conclusion and discussion

The analysis of REF 2014 and 2021 data which provides some findings about the progress of Education as an academic discipline, shows that Education has improved its research quality as measured by REF results from 2014 to 2021. This holds true if Education quality is estimated by comparing the proportion of 4*, or 4* and 3* ratings in terms of overall quality profile, as well as the outputs, impact and environment sub-profiles. It also appears that the Education sub-profiles reveal a differential quality, as Education showed much clearer progress in the proportion of 4* impact and outputs, but perhaps to an extent at the expense of its environment.

The analysis of Education's relative progress in comparison with similar and different UoAs shows that the comparison UoAs not only improved their research quality as measured by REF results from 2014 to 2021, but tended to do this to a greater degree than Education. Hence, Education research quality measured by the proportion of 4* and 4*+3* in every profile in both REF submissions tended to be lower than the other four UoAs.

By comparing Education as a discipline with other similar and different UoAs, it is possible to suggest that Education research quality has progressed in the past decade, but the task is far from complete. Indeed, there is much room for improvement in Education's research quality. Regarding its sub-profiles, environment appears to be the one in need of priority attention.

Finally, a word of caution must be put forward. While the merged sample used in the analysis is drawn from 100% of the HEIs that submitted in 2014 and 2021, it varies in representation of disciplines from 65% for Sociology to 94.6% for English Language and Literature of the HEIs that submitted to a REF once. In order to

take a longitudinal view, the report privileged analysing data from the same sample, without including those HEIs that submitted only once. As REF takes a cross-sectional census approach, this difference in research design can explain differences in findings. Yet, it is encouraging that similar trends have been reported as the state of the discipline by the chair of the REF 2021 Education Sub-panel (James, 2023).

Another limitation of the approach taken for this report is that the information about staff submitted to the respective REFs (percentage of eligible staff submitted) is not included in the analysis. This was the case because the rules for including staff and their work varied from one exercise to the next.

Although this analysis does not allow us to answer questions regarding why Education shows a different profile of progress in comparison with other UoAs, it adds to the evidence of the other 'State of the Discipline' projects which can be used to identify key features that can be acted on in future. As an important part of HEIs' funding is driven by REF quality indicators, the identified gaps have strong implications for Education. Particularly, it appears that there is room for improvement in Education's environment sub-profile, as well as in the rate of progress in its overall quality profile when compared with our selection of similar and different UoAs.

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Appendix

HEIs included and excluded in the analysis

Table A1: UoA 23 Education merged sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007783	University of Aberdeen	1
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	2
10000571	Bath Spa University	3
10007152	University of Bedfordshire	4
10006840	University of Birmingham	5
10007140	Birmingham City University	6
10007811	Bishop Grosseteste University	7
10006841	University of Bolton	8
10000886	University of Brighton	9
10007786	University of Bristol	10
10000961	Brunel University London	11
10007788	University of Cambridge	12
10001143	Canterbury Christ Church University	13
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	14
10007848	University of Chester	15
10007842	University of Cumbria	16
10007851	University of Derby	17
10007852	University of Dundee	18
10007143	University of Durham	19
10007789	University of East Anglia	20
10007144	University of East London	21
10007823	Edge Hill University	22
10007790	University of Edinburgh	23
10007792	University of Exeter	24
10007794	University of Glasgow	25
10007762	Glasgow Caledonian University	26
10002718	Goldsmiths College	27
10007148	University of Huddersfield	28
10007149	University of Hull	29
10003645	King's College London	30
10007768	Lancaster University	31
10007795	University of Leeds	32

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10003861	Leeds Beckett University	33
10007151	University of Lincoln	34
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	35
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	36
10004048	London Metropolitan University	37
10004113	Loughborough University	38
10007798	University of Manchester	39
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	40
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	41
10007832	Newman University	42
10007138	University of Northampton	43
10007154	University of Nottingham	44
10007773	The Open University	45
10007774	University of Oxford	46
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	47
10007801	University of Plymouth	48
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	49
10007802	University of Reading	50
10007776	Roehampton University	51
10007157	University of Sheffield	52
10005790	Sheffield Hallam University	53
10007158	University of Southampton	54
10007804	University of Stirling	55
10008010	Stranmillis University College	56
10007805	University of Strathclyde	57
10007159	University of Sunderland	58
10007806	University of Sussex	59
10007807	University of Ulster	60
10007784	University College London	61
10007163	University of Warwick	62
10007164	University of the West of England, Bristol	63
10007800	University of the West of Scotland	64
10003614	University of Winchester	65
10007166	University of Wolverhampton	66
10007139	University of Worcester	67
10007167	University of York	68
10007713	York St John University	69

Table A2: UoA 23 Education 2014 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000571	Bath Spa University	2
10000886	University of Brighton	3
10000961	Brunel University London	4
10001143	Canterbury Christ Church University	5
10002718	Goldsmiths College	6
10003614	University of Winchester	7
10003645	King's College London	8
10003861	Leeds Beckett University	9
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	10
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	11
10004048	London Metropolitan University	12
10004113	Loughborough University	13
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	14
10004797	Nottingham Trent University	15
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	16
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	17
10005790	Sheffield Hallam University	18
10006299	Staffordshire University	19
10006566	University of West London	20
10006840	University of Birmingham	21
10006841	University of Bolton	22
10007138	University of Northampton	23
10007139	University of Worcester	24
10007140	Birmingham City University	25
10007143	University of Durham	26
10007144	University of East London	27
10007146	University of Greenwich	28
10007148	University of Huddersfield	29
10007149	University of Hull	30
10007151	University of Lincoln	31
10007152	University of Bedfordshire	32
10007154	University of Nottingham	33
10007157	University of Sheffield	34
10007158	University of Southampton	35
10007159	University of Sunderland	36

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007163	University of Warwick	37
10007164	University of the West of England, Bristol	38
10007166	University of Wolverhampton	39
10007167	University of York	40
10007713	York St John University	41
10007762	Glasgow Caledonian University	42
10007768	Lancaster University	43
10007773	The Open University	44
10007774	University of Oxford	45
10007776	Roehampton University	46
10007783	University of Aberdeen	47
10007784	University College London	48
10007784	University College London	49
10007786	University of Bristol	50
10007788	University of Cambridge	51
10007789	University of East Anglia	52
10007790	University of Edinburgh	53
10007792	University of Exeter	54
10007794	University of Glasgow	55
10007795	University of Leeds	56
10007796	University of Leicester	57
10007798	University of Manchester	58
10007799	Newcastle University	59
10007800	University of the West of Scotland	60
10007801	University of Plymouth	61
10007802	University of Reading	62
10007804	University of Stirling	63
10007805	University of Strathclyde	64
10007806	University of Sussex	65
10007807	University of Ulster	66
10007811	Bishop Grosseteste University	67
10007814	Cardiff University	68
10007823	Edge Hill University	69
10007832	Newman University	70
10007842	University of Cumbria	71
10007843	St Mary's University, Twickenham	72
10007848	University of Chester	73

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007851	University of Derby	74
10007852	University of Dundee	75
10008010	Stranmillis University College	76

Table A3: UoA 23 Education 2021 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000571	Bath Spa University	2
10000886	University of Brighton	3
10000961	Brunel University London	4
10000975	Buckinghamshire New University	5
10001143	Canterbury Christ Church University	6
10002718	Goldsmiths College	7
10003614	University of Winchester	8
10003645	King's College London	9
10003678	Kingston University	10
10003861	Leeds Beckett University	11
10003863	Leeds Trinity University	12
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	13
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	14
10004048	London Metropolitan University	15
10004113	Loughborough University	16
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	17
10004351	Middlesex University	18
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	19
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	20
10005790	Sheffield Hallam University	21
10006840	University of Birmingham	22
10006841	University of Bolton	23
10007114	University of the Highlands and Islands	24
10007137	University of Chichester	25
10007138	University of Northampton	26
10007139	University of Worcester	27
10007140	Birmingham City University	28
10007143	University of Durham	29
10007144	University of East London	30

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007145	University of Gloucestershire	31
10007147	University of Hertfordshire	32
10007148	University of Huddersfield	33
10007149	University of Hull	34
10007150	University of Kent	35
10007151	University of Lincoln	36
10007152	University of Bedfordshire	37
10007154	University of Nottingham	38
10007157	University of Sheffield	39
10007158	University of Southampton	40
10007159	University of Sunderland	41
10007160	University of Surrey	42
10007163	University of Warwick	43
10007164	University of the West of England, Bristol	44
10007166	University of Wolverhampton	45
10007167	University of York	46
10007713	York St John University	47
10007762	Glasgow Caledonian University	48
10007768	Lancaster University	49
10007773	The Open University	50
10007774	University of Oxford	51
10007776	Roehampton University	52
10007783	University of Aberdeen	53
10007784	University College London	54
10007786	University of Bristol	55
10007788	University of Cambridge	56
10007789	University of East Anglia	57
10007790	University of Edinburgh	58
10007792	University of Exeter	59
10007794	University of Glasgow	60
10007795	University of Leeds	61
10007798	University of Manchester	62
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	63
10007800	University of the West of Scotland	64
10007801	University of Plymouth	65
10007802	University of Reading	66
10007804	University of Stirling	67

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007805	University of Strathclyde	68
10007806	University of Sussex	69
10007807	University of Ulster	70
10007811	Bishop Grosseteste University	71
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	72
10007823	Edge Hill University	73
10007832	Newman University	74
10007842	University of Cumbria	75
10007848	University of Chester	76
10007850	University of Bath	77
10007851	University of Derby	78
10007852	University of Dundee	79
10007854	Cardiff Metropolitan University / Prifysgol Metropolitan Caerdydd	80
10007858	University of Wales Trinity Saint David / Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant	81
10008010	Stranmillis University College	82
10037449	University of St Mark & St John	83

Table A4: UoA 1 Clinical Medicine merged sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10003270	Imperial College of Science, Tech and Medicine	1
10003324	Institute of Cancer Research: Royal Cancer Hospital	2
10003645	King's College London	3
10003958	Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine	4
10006840	University of Birmingham	5
10006842	University of Liverpool	6
10007154	University of Nottingham	7
10007157	University of Sheffield	8
10007158	University of Southampton	9
10007163	University of Warwick	10
10007771	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	11
10007774	University of Oxford	12
10007775	Queen Mary University of London	13
10007782	St George's Hospital Medical School	14
10007783	University of Aberdeen	15
10007784	University College London	16
10007786	University of Bristol	17

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007788	University of Cambridge	18
10007789	University of East Anglia	19
10007790	University of Edinburgh	20
10007792	University of Exeter	21
10007794	University of Glasgow	22
10007795	University of Leeds	23
10007796	University of Leicester	24
10007798	University of Manchester	25
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	26
10007801	University of Plymouth	27
10007803	University of St Andrews	28
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	29
10007852	University of Dundee	30

Table A5: UoA 1 Clinical Medicine 2014 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10003270	Imperial College London	1
10003324	Institute of Cancer Research: Royal Cancer Hospital	2
10003645	King's College London	3
10003958	Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine	4
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	5
10006840	University of Birmingham	6
10006842	University of Liverpool	7
10007154	University of Nottingham	8
10007157	University of Sheffield	9
10007158	University of Southampton	10
10007163	University of Warwick	11
10007771	London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine	12
10007774	University of Oxford	13
10007775	Queen Mary University of London	14
10007782	St George's Hospital Medical School	15
10007783	University of Aberdeen	16
10007784	University College London	17
10007786	University of Bristol	18
10007788	University of Cambridge	19
10007789	University of East Anglia	20

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007790	University of Edinburgh	21
10007792	University of Exeter	22
10007794	University of Glasgow	23
10007795	University of Leeds	24
10007796	University of Leicester	25
10007798	University of Manchester	26
10007799	Newcastle University	27
10007801	University of Plymouth	28
10007803	University of St Andrews	29
10007814	Cardiff University	30
10007852	University of Dundee	31

Table A6: UoA 1 Clinical Medicine 2021 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10003270	Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	1
10003324	Institute of Cancer Research: Royal Cancer Hospital	2
10003645	King's College London	3
10003958	Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine	4
10006840	University of Birmingham	5
10006842	University of Liverpool	6
10007154	University of Nottingham	7
10007157	University of Sheffield	8
10007158	University of Southampton	9
10007163	University of Warwick	10
10007771	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	11
10007774	University of Oxford	12
10007775	Queen Mary University of London	13
10007782	St George's Hospital Medical School	14
10007783	University of Aberdeen	15
10007784	University College London	16
10007786	University of Bristol	17
10007788	University of Cambridge	18
10007789	University of East Anglia	19
10007790	University of Edinburgh	20
10007792	University of Exeter	21
10007794	University of Glasgow	22

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007795	University of Leeds	23
10007796	University of Leicester	24
10007798	University of Manchester	25
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	26
10007801	University of Plymouth	27
10007803	University of St Andrews	28
10007806	University of Sussex	29
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	30
10007852	University of Dundee	31

Table A7: UoA 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience merged sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000824	Bournemouth University	2
10000961	Brunel University London	3
10001282	University of Northumbria at Newcastle	4
10001478	City, University of London	5
10001726	Coventry University	6
10002718	Goldsmiths College	7
10003270	Imperial College of Science, Tech and Medicine	8
10003614	University of Winchester	9
10003645	King's College London	10
10003678	Kingston University	11
10003861	Leeds Beckett University	12
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	13
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	14
10004078	London South Bank University	15
10004351	Middlesex University	16
10004797	Nottingham Trent University	17
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	18
10005337	Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	19
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	20
10005553	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	21
10006840	University of Birmingham	22
10006841	University of Bolton	23
10006842	University of Liverpool	24

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007137	University of Chichester	25
10007138	University of Northampton	26
10007139	University of Worcester	27
10007141	University of Central Lancashire	28
10007143	University of Durham	29
10007144	University of East London	30
10007147	University of Hertfordshire	31
10007149	University of Hull	32
10007150	University of Kent	33
10007151	University of Lincoln	34
10007154	University of Nottingham	35
10007155	University of Portsmouth	36
10007157	University of Sheffield	37
10007158	University of Southampton	38
10007163	University of Warwick	39
10007165	University of Westminster	40
10007167	University of York	41
10007713	York St John University	42
10007760	Birkbeck College	43
10007764	Heriot-Watt University	44
10007767	University of Keele	45
10007768	Lancaster University	46
10007774	University of Oxford	47
10007776	Roehampton University	48
10007783	University of Aberdeen	49
10007784	University College London	50
10007786	University of Bristol	51
10007788	University of Cambridge	52
10007789	University of East Anglia	53
10007790	University of Edinburgh	54
10007791	University of Essex	55
10007792	University of Exeter	56
10007794	University of Glasgow	57
10007795	University of Leeds	58
10007796	University of Leicester	59
10007798	University of Manchester	60
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	61

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007801	University of Plymouth	62
10007802	University of Reading	63
10007803	University of St Andrews	64
10007804	University of Stirling	65
10007806	University of Sussex	66
10007807	University of Ulster	67
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	68
10007823	Edge Hill University	69
10007832	Newman University	70
10007848	University of Chester	71
10007849	Abertay University	72
10007851	University of Derby	73
10007852	University of Dundee	74
10007855	Swansea University / Prifysgol Abertawe	75
10007857	Bangor University / Prifysgol Bangor	76

Table A8: UoA 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience 2014 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000824	Bournemouth University	2
10000961	Brunel University London	3
10001282	University of Northumbria at Newcastle	4
10001478	City, University of London	5
10001726	Coventry University	6
10002718	Goldsmiths College	7
10003270	Imperial College London	8
10003614	University of Winchester	9
10003645	King's College London	10
10003678	Kingston University	11
10003861	Leeds Beckett University	12
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	13
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	14
10004078	London South Bank University	15
10004351	Middlesex University	16
10004797	Nottingham Trent University	17
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	18

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10005337	Queen Margaret University Edinburgh	19
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	20
10005553	Royal Holloway, University of London	21
10006299	Staffordshire University	22
10006840	University of Birmingham	23
10006841	University of Bolton	24
10006842	University of Liverpool	25
10007137	University of Chichester	26
10007138	University of Northampton	27
10007139	University of Worcester	28
10007141	University of Central Lancashire	29
10007143	University of Durham	30
10007144	University of East London	31
10007146	University of Greenwich	32
10007147	University of Hertfordshire	33
10007149	University of Hull	34
10007150	University of Kent	35
10007151	University of Lincoln	36
10007154	University of Nottingham	37
10007155	University of Portsmouth	38
10007157	University of Sheffield	39
10007158	University of Southampton	40
10007160	University of Surrey	41
10007163	University of Warwick	42
10007165	University of Westminster	43
10007167	University of York	44
10007713	York St John University	45
10007760	Birkbeck College	46
10007764	Heriot-Watt University	47
10007767	Keele University	48
10007768	Lancaster University	49
10007774	University of Oxford	50
10007776	Roehampton University	51
10007783	University of Aberdeen	52
10007784	University College London	53
10007786	University of Bristol	54
10007788	University of Cambridge	55

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007789	University of East Anglia	56
10007790	University of Edinburgh	57
10007791	University of Essex	58
10007792	University of Exeter	59
10007793	University of South Wales	60
10007794	University of Glasgow	61
10007795	University of Leeds	62
10007796	University of Leicester	63
10007798	University of Manchester	64
10007799	Newcastle University	65
10007801	University of Plymouth	66
10007802	University of Reading	67
10007803	University of St Andrews	68
10007804	University of Stirling	69
10007805	University of Strathclyde	70
10007806	University of Sussex	71
10007807	University of Ulster	72
10007814	Cardiff University	73
10007823	Edge Hill University	74
10007832	Newman University	75
10007833	Glyndŵr University	76
10007848	University of Chester	77
10007849	University of Abertay Dundee	78
10007851	University of Derby	79
10007852	University of Dundee	80
10007855	Swansea University	81
10007857	Bangor University	82

Table A9: UoA 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience 2021 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000571	Bath Spa University	2
10000824	Bournemouth University	3
10000961	Brunel University London	4
10001143	Canterbury Christ Church University	5
10001282	University of Northumbria at Newcastle	6

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10001478	City, University of London	7
10001726	Coventry University	8
10001883	De Montfort University	9
10002718	Goldsmiths College	10
10003270	Imperial College of Science, Tech and Medicine	11
10003614	University of Winchester	12
10003645	King's College London	13
10003678	Kingston University	14
10003861	Leeds Beckett University	15
10003863	Leeds Trinity University	16
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	17
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	18
10004078	London South Bank University	19
10004320	The Metanoia Institute	20
10004351	Middlesex University	21
10004797	Nottingham Trent University	22
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	23
10005337	Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	24
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	25
10005553	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	26
10005790	Sheffield Hallam University	27
10006840	University of Birmingham	28
10006841	University of Bolton	29
10006842	University of Liverpool	30
10007137	University of Chichester	31
10007138	University of Northampton	32
10007139	University of Worcester	33
10007140	Birmingham City University	34
10007141	University of Central Lancashire	35
10007143	University of Durham	36
10007144	University of East London	37
10007145	University of Gloucestershire	38
10007147	University of Hertfordshire	39
10007148	University of Huddersfield	40
10007149	University of Hull	41
10007150	University of Kent	42
10007151	University of Lincoln	43

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007154	University of Nottingham	44
10007155	University of Portsmouth	45
10007157	University of Sheffield	46
10007158	University of Southampton	47
10007161	Teesside University	48
10007163	University of Warwick	49
10007165	University of Westminster	50
10007166	University of Wolverhampton	51
10007167	University of York	52
10007713	York St John University	53
10007760	Birkbeck College	54
10007764	Heriot-Watt University	55
10007767	University of Keele	56
10007768	Lancaster University	57
10007773	The Open University	58
10007774	University of Oxford	59
10007776	Roehampton University	60
10007783	University of Aberdeen	61
10007784	University College London	62
10007785	University of Bradford	63
10007786	University of Bristol	64
10007788	University of Cambridge	65
10007789	University of East Anglia	66
10007790	University of Edinburgh	67
10007791	University of Essex	68
10007792	University of Exeter	69
10007794	University of Glasgow	70
10007795	University of Leeds	71
10007796	University of Leicester	72
10007798	University of Manchester	73
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	74
10007801	University of Plymouth	75
10007802	University of Reading	76
10007803	University of St Andrews	77
10007804	University of Stirling	78
10007806	University of Sussex	79
10007807	University of Ulster	80

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007811	Bishop Grosseteste University	81
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	82
10007823	Edge Hill University	83
10007832	Newman University	84
10007848	University of Chester	85
10007849	Abertay University	86
10007850	University of Bath	87
10007851	University of Derby	88
10007852	University of Dundee	89
10007855	Swansea University / Prifysgol Abertawe	90
10007856	Aberystwyth University / Prifysgol Aberystwyth	91
10007857	Bangor University / Prifysgol Bangor	92
10007858	University of Wales Trinity Saint David / Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant	93

Table A10: UoA 21 Sociology merged sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007783	University of Aberdeen	1
10007849	Abertay University	2
10007760	Birkbeck College	3
10007786	University of Bristol	4
10000961	Brunel University London	5
10007788	University of Cambridge	6
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	7
10001478	City, University of London	8
10007144	University of East London	9
10007790	University of Edinburgh	10
10007791	University of Essex	11
10007792	University of Exeter	12
10002718	Goldsmiths College	13
10003645	King's College London	14
10007768	Lancaster University	15
10007796	University of Leicester	16
10004063	The LSE and Political Science	17
10007798	University of Manchester	18
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	19
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	20

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007774	University of Oxford	21
10007776	Roehampton University	22
10007160	University of Surrey	23
10007806	University of Sussex	24
10007163	University of Warwick	25
10007167	University of York	26

Table A11: UoA 21 Sociology 2014 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	1
10007760	Birkbeck College	2
10000961	Brunel University London	3
10001478	City, University of London	4
10002718	Goldsmiths College	5
10003614	University of Winchester	6
10003645	King's College London	7
10004063	London School of Economics and Political Science	8
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	9
10007144	University of East London	10
10007160	University of Surrey	11
10007163	University of Warwick	12
10007167	University of York	13
10007768	Lancaster University	14
10007773	The Open University	15
10007774	University of Oxford	16
10007776	Roehampton University	17
10007783	University of Aberdeen	18
10007786	University of Bristol	19
10007788	University of Cambridge	20
10007790	University of Edinburgh	21
10007791	University of Essex	22
10007792	University of Exeter	23
10007796	University of Leicester	24
10007798	University of Manchester	25
10007799	Newcastle University	26
10007806	University of Sussex	27

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007814	Cardiff University	28
10007849	University of Abertay Dundee	29

Table A12: UoA 21 Sociology 2021 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000961	Brunel University London	2
10001478	City, University of London	3
10002718	Goldsmiths College	4
10003645	King's College London	5
10004063	The LSE and Political Science	6
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	7
10005337	Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	8
10007138	University of Northampton	9
10007140	Birmingham City University	10
10007143	University of Durham	11
10007144	University of East London	12
10007145	University of Gloucestershire	13
10007157	University of Sheffield	14
10007160	University of Surrey	15
10007163	University of Warwick	16
10007167	University of York	17
10007713	York St John University	18
10007759	Aston University	19
10007760	Birkbeck College	20
10007768	Lancaster University	21
10007774	University of Oxford	22
10007776	Roehampton University	23
10007783	University of Aberdeen	24
10007786	University of Bristol	25
10007788	University of Cambridge	26
10007790	University of Edinburgh	27
10007791	University of Essex	28
10007792	University of Exeter	29
10007795	University of Leeds	30
10007796	University of Leicester	31

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007798	University of Manchester	32
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	33
10007806	University of Sussex	34
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	35
10007849	Abertay University	36
10007857	Bangor University / Prifysgol Bangor	37

Table A13: UoA 27 English Language and Literature merged sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000571	Bath Spa University	2
10000961	Brunel University London	3
10001143	Canterbury Christ Church University	4
10001282	University of Northumbria at Newcastle	5
10001883	De Montfort University	6
10002718	Goldsmiths College	7
10003645	King's College London	8
10003678	Kingston University	9
10003863	Leeds Trinity University	10
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	11
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	12
10004113	Loughborough University	13
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	14
10004797	Nottingham Trent University	15
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	16
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	17
10005553	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	18
10005790	Sheffield Hallam University	19
10006840	University of Birmingham	20
10006841	University of Bolton	21
10006842	University of Liverpool	22
10007137	University of Chichester	23
10007138	University of Northampton	24
10007139	University of Worcester	25
10007140	Birmingham City University	26
10007141	University of Central Lancashire	27

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007143	University of Durham	28
10007145	University of Gloucestershire	29
10007146	University of Greenwich	30
10007147	University of Hertfordshire	31
10007148	University of Huddersfield	32
10007149	University of Hull	33
10007150	University of Kent	34
10007151	University of Lincoln	35
10007152	University of Bedfordshire	36
10007154	University of Nottingham	37
10007155	University of Portsmouth	38
10007156	University of Salford	39
10007157	University of Sheffield	40
10007158	University of Southampton	41
10007159	University of Sunderland	42
10007160	University of Surrey	43
10007163	University of Warwick	44
10007164	University of the West of England, Bristol	45
10007165	University of Westminster	46
10007166	University of Wolverhampton	47
10007167	University of York	48
10007713	York St John University	49
10007760	Birkbeck College	50
10007767	University of Keele	51
10007768	Lancaster University	52
10007772	Edinburgh Napier University	53
10007773	The Open University	54
10007774	University of Oxford	55
10007775	Queen Mary University of London	56
10007776	Roehampton University	57
10007783	University of Aberdeen	58
10007784	University College London	59
10007786	University of Bristol	60
10007788	University of Cambridge	61
10007789	University of East Anglia	62
10007790	University of Edinburgh	63
10007791	University of Essex	64

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007792	University of Exeter	65
10007793	University of South Wales / Prifysgol De Cymru	66
10007794	University of Glasgow	67
10007795	University of Leeds	68
10007796	University of Leicester	69
10007798	University of Manchester	70
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	71
10007801	University of Plymouth	72
10007802	University of Reading	73
10007803	University of St Andrews	74
10007804	University of Stirling	75
10007805	University of Strathclyde	76
10007806	University of Sussex	77
10007807	University of Ulster	78
10007811	Bishop Grosseteste University	79
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	80
10007823	Edge Hill University	81
10007832	Newman University	82
10007843	St Mary's University, Twickenham	83
10007848	University of Chester	84
10007852	University of Dundee	85
10007855	Swansea University / Prifysgol Abertawe	86
10007856	Aberystwyth University / Prifysgol Aberystwyth	87
10007857	Bangor University / Prifysgol Bangor	88

Table A14: UoA 27 English Language and Literature 2014 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000571	Bath Spa University	2
10000961	Brunel University London	3
10001143	Canterbury Christ Church University	4
10001282	University of Northumbria at Newcastle	5
10001883	De Montfort University	6
10002718	Goldsmiths College	7
10003645	King's College London	8
10003678	Kingston University	9

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10003863	Leeds Trinity University	10
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	11
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	12
10004113	Loughborough University	13
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	14
10004797	Nottingham Trent University	15
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	16
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	17
10005553	Royal Holloway, University of London	18
10005790	Sheffield Hallam University	19
10006840	University of Birmingham	20
10006841	University of Bolton	21
10006842	University of Liverpool	22
10007137	University of Chichester	23
10007138	University of Northampton	24
10007139	University of Worcester	25
10007140	Birmingham City University	26
10007141	University of Central Lancashire	27
10007143	University of Durham	28
10007145	University of Gloucestershire	29
10007146	University of Greenwich	30
10007147	University of Hertfordshire	31
10007148	University of Huddersfield	32
10007149	University of Hull	33
10007150	University of Kent	34
10007151	University of Lincoln	35
10007152	University of Bedfordshire	36
10007154	University of Nottingham	37
10007155	University of Portsmouth	38
10007156	University of Salford	39
10007157	University of Sheffield	40
10007158	University of Southampton	41
10007159	University of Sunderland	42
10007160	University of Surrey	43
10007161	Teesside University	44
10007163	University of Warwick	45
10007164	University of the West of England, Bristol	46

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007165	University of Westminster	47
10007166	University of Wolverhampton	48
10007167	University of York	49
10007713	York St John University	50
10007760	Birkbeck College	51
10007767	Keele University	52
10007768	Lancaster University	53
10007772	Edinburgh Napier University	54
10007773	The Open University	55
10007774	University of Oxford	56
10007775	Queen Mary University of London	57
10007776	Roehampton University	58
10007783	University of Aberdeen	59
10007784	University College London	60
10007786	University of Bristol	61
10007788	University of Cambridge	62
10007789	University of East Anglia	63
10007790	University of Edinburgh	64
10007791	University of Essex	65
10007792	University of Exeter	66
10007793	University of South Wales	67
10007794	University of Glasgow	68
10007795	University of Leeds	69
10007796	University of Leicester	70
10007798	University of Manchester	71
10007799	Newcastle University	72
10007801	University of Plymouth	73
10007802	University of Reading	74
10007803	University of St Andrews	75
10007804	University of Stirling	76
10007805	University of Strathclyde	77
10007806	University of Sussex	78
10007807	University of Ulster	79
10007811	Bishop Grosseteste University	80
10007814	Cardiff University	81
10007823	Edge Hill University	82
10007832	Newman University	83

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007843	St Mary's University, Twickenham	84
10007848	University of Chester	85
10007852	University of Dundee	86
10007855	Swansea University	87
10007856	Aberystwyth University	88
10007857	Bangor University	89

Table A15: UoA 27 English Language and Literature 2021 sample

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	1
10000571	Bath Spa University	2
10000824	Bournemouth University	3
10000961	Brunel University London	4
10001143	Canterbury Christ Church University	5
10001282	University of Northumbria at Newcastle	6
10001478	City, University of London	7
10001883	De Montfort University	8
10002718	Goldsmiths College	9
10003614	University of Winchester	10
10003645	King's College London	11
10003678	Kingston University	12
10003861	Leeds Beckett University	13
10003863	Leeds Trinity University	14
10003956	Liverpool Hope University	15
10003957	Liverpool John Moores University	16
10004113	Loughborough University	17
10004180	Manchester Metropolitan University	18
10004797	Nottingham Trent University	19
10004930	Oxford Brookes University	20
10005343	Queen's University Belfast	21
10005553	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	22
10005790	Sheffield Hallam University	23
10006840	University of Birmingham	24
10006841	University of Bolton	25
10006842	University of Liverpool	26
10007137	University of Chichester	27

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007138	University of Northampton	28
10007139	University of Worcester	29
10007140	Birmingham City University	30
10007141	University of Central Lancashire	31
10007143	University of Durham	32
10007145	University of Gloucestershire	33
10007146	University of Greenwich	34
10007147	University of Hertfordshire	35
10007148	University of Huddersfield	36
10007149	University of Hull	37
10007150	University of Kent	38
10007151	University of Lincoln	39
10007152	University of Bedfordshire	40
10007154	University of Nottingham	41
10007155	University of Portsmouth	42
10007156	University of Salford	43
10007157	University of Sheffield	44
10007158	University of Southampton	45
10007159	University of Sunderland	46
10007160	University of Surrey	47
10007163	University of Warwick	48
10007164	University of the West of England, Bristol	49
10007165	University of Westminster	50
10007166	University of Wolverhampton	51
10007167	University of York	52
10007713	York St John University	53
10007760	Birkbeck College	54
10007767	University of Keele	55
10007768	Lancaster University	56
10007772	Edinburgh Napier University	57
10007773	The Open University	58
10007774	University of Oxford	59
10007775	Queen Mary University of London	60
10007776	Roehampton University	61
10007783	University of Aberdeen	62
10007784	University College London	63
10007786	University of Bristol	64

Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	N
10007788	University of Cambridge	65
10007789	University of East Anglia	66
10007790	University of Edinburgh	67
10007791	University of Essex	68
10007792	University of Exeter	69
10007793	University of South Wales / Prifysgol De Cymru	70
10007794	University of Glasgow	71
10007795	University of Leeds	72
10007796	University of Leicester	73
10007798	University of Manchester	74
10007799	University of Newcastle upon Tyne	75
10007801	University of Plymouth	76
10007802	University of Reading	77
10007803	University of St Andrews	78
10007804	University of Stirling	79
10007805	University of Strathclyde	80
10007806	University of Sussex	81
10007807	University of Ulster	82
10007811	Bishop Grosseteste University	83
10007814	Cardiff University / Prifysgol Caerdydd	84
10007823	Edge Hill University	85
10007832	Newman University	86
10007843	St Mary's University, Twickenham	87
10007848	University of Chester	88
10007852	University of Dundee	89
10007855	Swansea University / Prifysgol Abertawe	90
10007856	Aberystwyth University / Prifysgol Aberystwyth	91
10007857	Bangor University / Prifysgol Bangor	92

About the authors

Bernardita Munoz-Chereau is a lecturer at the Centre of Educational Leadership, Department of Learning and Leadership, Institute of Education, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society; she is also an educational psychologist. The main focus of Bernardita's research is educational effectiveness, school improvement and accountability. She has conducted quantitative analyses of secondary datasets to estimate contextual value-added assessments of pupil learning funded by the ESRC Global Challenges Research Fund; UCL institutional data to support an Athena Swan Bronze application; and survey data for the School Partnership Project funded by the Education Endowment Foundation and other organisations.

Dominic Wyse is a professor of early childhood and primary education at the Institute of Education, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society. He is founding director of the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Pedagogy (0-11 Years), a research centre devoted to improving young children's education. Dominic was president of BERA from 2019 to 2022, and is currently vice-president. The main focus of Dominic's research is curriculum and pedagogy, which includes a sustained contribution to knowledge about teaching writing, reading and creativity. Dominic has extensive experience of working at the interface of research, policy and practice, particularly in relation to his work on national curricula but also including his work on education as an academic discipline. Dominic's research on reading, writing and curriculum has attracted widespread media attention. His current research projects include Children's Agency in the National Curriculum (CHANT, funded by the Leverhulme Trust).



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