

# EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY-MAKING

## SIG CONVENORS

Rowena Passy  
Sarah Younie

**For various historical, political and epistemological reasons (which are well-documented in a range of sources), 'evidence-based policy' is not a neutral descriptor but instead seems to have become a highly-charged and polarising idea in educational research, with different factions in the educational research community taking contrasting or even oppositional stances. These stances have been based to some degree on pre-existing ideological and rhetorical positions and have resulted in certain theoretical and methodological stand-offs.**

This SIG, in taking a wider view of the relationship between research and policy, seeks to create an environment for robust and constructive engagement on how and under what circumstances educational research can or should be seeking to inform the processes of policy-making at different levels. The SIG draws upon a range of philosophical, conceptual and empirical understandings – including in the field of research utilisation and 'impact' – in order to (i) establish more nuanced and conducive 'professional conversations' and (ii) explore a variety of institutional arrangements, as a basis for developing and influencing research-informed policy-making. The SIG takes special care to

include colleagues working in practice and policy, as well as from research institutions; also linking up with other initiatives in this field, such as the Thematic Seminar Group funded as part of the ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme, the ESRC-funded Evidence Network, and various Social Research Association initiatives. Aims and objectives of the group To identify and enhance the various ways in which, and the supporting conditions under which, scholarly research efforts in education can have a stronger influence on policy-making processes by, for example:

- identifying key areas of policy which may be particularly supported – or contradicted – by current research evidence;
- identifying processes, environments and institutional arrangements for the mediation and 'translation' of research knowledge for decision-making;
- de-constructing barriers to the use of scholarly research in decision-making;
- exploring a range of methodologies for synthesising research knowledge;
- identifying new substantive areas, new research models and modes, and/or insufficiently understood issues for policy-relevant research.

Find out more about this SIG and BERAs other networks and communities: [www.bera.ac.uk/communities](http://www.bera.ac.uk/communities)