



News

For the attention of: news and education editors

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Professorial appointments bring boost to education research

The Open University's Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology (CREET) is today announcing five senior appointments as part of the university's major investment in research activity.

Joining the newly-established centre – already one of the largest educational research units in the UK – from early 2005 will be:

- Professor Guy Cook, currently Chair of Applied Linguistics at the University of Reading. An internationally renowned scholar in applied linguistics, he is particularly known for his book *The Discourse of Advertising*. His research interests include discourse analysis, the theory and practice of language teaching, literature teaching, text accessibility, language rituals and the communication of controversial technologies.
- Professor David Hargreaves, currently Professor of Child Development, Froebel Research Fellow and Director of the Centre for International Research in Music Education at Roehampton University. His main research and teaching interests are in developmental psychology and arts education, particularly music.
- Professor Kathy Hall, currently Professor of Childhood Education at the School of Education and Professional Development at Leeds Metropolitan University and Director of the Centre for Educational Research and Research Training. Her research interests include language and literacy development, assessment, primary education and children's learning.

- Professor David McConnell, currently Professor in Education at the University of Sheffield, who has an international reputation for his research in networked learning. He is Director of the Networked Learning Research Group at Sheffield and is also Director of the university's postgraduate programme in e-learning. His research interests include networked e-learning in higher education, distance learning and gender in learning.

- Professor David Messer, currently Professor of Psychology at London South Bank University. He is a developmental psychologist and is concerned with learning and cognitive development. His research interests include infancy, cognitive representations as well as children's communication and language.

They will join a multi-disciplinary group of researchers in programmes that cover the study of childhood, language, ICT in education and educational policy and practice.

The news of the appointments was welcomed by Professor Alan Bassindale, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Staff), who said: "In aiming to undertake research that is distinctive and of the highest quality, CREET requires staff of the highest calibre. Without doubt, these appointments meet that objective and I look forward to the contributions these new colleagues will make to an already significant research area."

A successful bid by CREET to Research Councils UK will allow the appointment of three new academic fellowships in research in education and educational technology. The fellowships are aimed at promising researchers in the field.

The professorial appointments are the latest outcome of the university's investment in its research activity as it brings together some of the leading researchers in earth and space sciences, education, criminology and computing in new centres of excellence. CREET is one of five new inter-disciplinary research centres to have been created; it is joined by the Centre for Citizenship, Identities and Governance; the International Centre for Comparative Criminological Research; the Centre for Research in Computing; and the Centre for Earth, Planetary, Space and Astronomical Research.

Professor Bassindale added: "The Open University believes high quality research and teaching together are essential to serving society, business and the wider community."

Editor's Notes

The **Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology** at The Open University has a core membership of 85 researchers, drawn mainly from the university's Institute of Educational Technology and the Faculty of Education and Language Studies.

The face of **The Open University** is changing as its community of students, staff, alumni and supporters begins to see the University using its new-style logo. The old blue and yellow logo – familiar to millions for 35 years – has been redesigned by world-renowned brand consultants Wolff Olins to fit with the University's 21st century aims.

While the new logo will appear on everything from stationery to course materials over the next two years, it's more than just this visible difference that the Open University community will notice. The updated logo is one in a series of changes that the largest university in the UK is making to keep it at the forefront of distance learning in higher education.

A new ten-point strategy – OU Futures – promises to provide even better service to students. Its priorities include fair access for all, an increased pace of innovation, international expansion and greater local presence throughout the UK. There can hardly be a street in the UK that does not have an OU alumnus, student or staff member within its homes.

The Open University is ranked fifth of all UK universities for teaching quality in the Sunday Times University Guide 2004 – a ranking higher than those for Oxford and University College London. More than 1,000 academics are involved in writing materials and in research that ranges from e-learning to space sciences. Another 8,000 associate lecturers provide personal tuition to more than 200,000 students.

Since its beginning in 1971, more than two million people have studied Open University degree, diploma, certificate and stand-alone courses.

Resources

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