

LESLEY SAUNDERS: CURRICULUM VITAE (SHORT)

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KEY SKILLS, ABILITIES AND EXPERIENCE

I am a highly experienced researcher, evaluator and policy adviser, with a demonstrated ability to:

- use research and evaluation to improve how policy problems are analysed and policy solutions formulated, and to monitor progress towards specified goals;
- utilise a wide range of conceptual, qualitative and quantitative skills to investigate policy and practice issues, and to understand both intended and unintended changes;
- communicate, in person and in writing, with diverse audiences, and relate equally well to policy, practitioner and academic groups;
- support practitioners to value and use research and evaluation as an integral part of their professional practice;
- encourage, support and motivate colleagues, especially researchers in the early stages of their careers;
- deliver projects to time and budget, and produce cogent, high quality and fit-for-purpose outputs and outcomes.

Over the last 25 years I have acquired substantial expertise and experience in researching and evaluating the management of systemic educational change. I have conducted major projects including large-scale commissioned evaluations of national programmes, innovative research and development studies, in-depth qualitative projects and reviews of particular research fields.

I am used to working at a national strategic level, and I know how to create and present research/evaluation data and values for both policy and practice environments. I understand, and can mediate, the challenges for policy-makers and practitioners in appraising and using quantitative and qualitative evidence for managing their strategic priorities. I am also a qualified teacher, with experience in primary, secondary and adult phases, and a lively appreciation of the day-to-day issues facing teachers.

As senior policy adviser at the General Teaching Council for England, I designed and implemented the organisation's research strategy, and commissioned and managed a large number of research and evaluation projects – especially in the field of teachers' professional development – to guide the GTC's policy development. As principal research officer at the National Foundation for Educational Research, I built an extensive portfolio of work for a variety of clients.

I have worked on several international and overseas projects, including the design of the national curriculum evaluation for post-communist Slovenia, a series of school improvement case studies for the British Council, the content for a World Bank website resource on school and teacher effectiveness worldwide, a series of evaluations of inclusive education in Kosovo for Save the Children, and a major contribution to the monitoring and evaluation strand of an EU-funded project to develop a sector wide approach in education, also in Kosovo.

I have published a large number of reports and articles, written for a wide variety of audiences – policy-makers, teachers, academics, students – and I am an experienced speaker at interactive seminars as well as formal conferences.

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I. Qualifications, professional memberships and honorary posts

MA in Classics (University of Cambridge); Postgraduate Certificate of Education (University of Oxford) (with distinction); DPhil (University of Oxford). Member of the British Educational Research Association and the Social Research Association, and registered with the General Teaching Council as a qualified teacher.

Current honorary posts:

- Visiting Professor, London Centre for Leadership in Learning, Institute of Education;
- Research Fellow, University of Oxford Department of Education;
- Associate, Leadership for Learning Network, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.

I am a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and was made an Honorary Fellow of the College of Teachers in 2008.

II. Recent consultancy work, November 2008 – March 2011

Since starting to work in an independent capacity, I have completed a variety of commissions, including:

- designing and conducting an independent evaluation of an innovative bi-lingual multicultural pre-school project, for Save the Children in Kosovo; and subsequently designing and conducting an evaluation for the same client of their whole inclusive education programme, together with recommendations for action at a difficult time of transition;
- chairing the verification panel for the pilot phase of the Teacher Learning Academy Stage 4 presentations, for the General Teaching Council;
- writing a suite of online Masters-level materials on commissioning and consuming research, for the Applied Educational Research Scheme/British Educational Research Association;
- leading seminars and giving guest lectures on the role of creativity in research and in teaching;
- contributing expertise in monitoring and evaluation to an EU-funded project to develop a sector-wide approach in education in Kosovo, following the government's commitment to educational reform.

III. Main previous employment

Senior Policy Adviser for Research, General Teaching Council for England, 2000 – 2008

The GTC was established by an Act of Parliament in autumn 2000; I created, implemented and developed the GTC's research strategy, and in the process recruited and built an effective team. I interpreted the function of research as being both to support the GTC as a research-informed organisation in terms of its policy-making and advice to government, and to promote teaching as a research-informed profession. I worked very closely with policy and communications colleagues to embed research and evidence into the GTC's work, particularly on teachers' professional development and teaching/learning. I was instrumental in setting up the GTC's highly-rated research website for teachers.

Principal Research Officer and Head of School Improvement Research Centre, National Foundation for Educational Research, 1987 – 2000

At the NFER I undertook large-scale commissioned evaluations of government programmes (some with a substantial quantitative element), in-depth qualitative studies and theoretical investigations, and work for overseas Ministries and other agencies. In England, I worked with schools and local authorities to develop qualitative and quantitative indicators of institutional effectiveness. I co-wrote one of the NFER's popular publications *Raising Attainment in Secondary Schools: A Handbook for Self-Evaluation*. I was responsible – with

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Dr Ian Schagen, Head of Statistics – for developing the NFER's 'value-added' service to schools, which provided both useable management information for schools and LEAs, and national datasets of importance to the investigation of school effectiveness.

In my staff development role, I developed the research skills and knowledge of my immediate team members and took responsibility for coordinating the Department's staff development programme. I designed and delivered staff development modules in Project Leadership and in Report Writing. I set up, and for four years coordinated, a programme of research seminars.

IV. Other professional activities

I was selected to serve as a founding member of the UK's National Educational Research Forum; and I set up the Special Interest Group on educational research and policy-making for the British Educational Research Association. I served as a member of the education sub-panel for the UK Research Assessment Exercise 2008. I have taught in the primary, secondary and adult sectors and I was a school governor for ten years; I acted as an external examiner for the Open University for the MA in Reflective Primary Practice. I am now an assessor for the NFER's Research Engaged School/College Award and I serve on the Professional Committee of the College of Teachers. I lead creative writing workshops for young people and adults – including teachers and senior leaders – and, by invitation, work as poet-in-residence at educational events.

V. Interests

I am a published and award-winning poet: my publications include *Christina the Astonishing*, co-authored with Jane Draycott and illustrated by Peter Hay (Two Rivers Press, 1998); *Her Leafy Eye*, a collaboration with artist and horticulturalist Geoff Carr (Two Rivers Press, 2009); *No Doves* (Mulfran Press, 2010); and a pamphlet *Some Languages Are Hard to Dream In*, with black and white prints by Christopher Hedley-Dent (also Mulfran Press, 2010). In 2009 I was a visiting scholar at New Hall (now Murray Edwards College), Cambridge, creating a poetry project around the college gardens; and in 2010 I held a residency at Acton Court, a Tudor House built for King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

VI. Consultancy rates

My fees are between £400 and £750 per day, depending on the nature of the work.

VII. Selected recent publications

I have over fifty sole-authored and a similar number of co-authored publications, including most recently:

SAUNDERS, L. (2004). *Grounding the Democratic Imagination: Developing the Relationship between Research and Policy in Education. Professorial Lecture*. London: Institute of Education.

SAUNDERS, L. (2007). (Ed) *Educational Research and Policy-making: Exploring the Border Country Between Research and Policy*. London: Routledge.

SAUNDERS, L. and SOMEKH, B. (2009). 'Action research and educational change: teachers as innovators.' In: NOFFKE, S.E. and SOMEKH, B. (Eds) *The Sage Handbook of Educational Action Research*. London: Sage Publications.

SAUNDERS, L. (2009). *Commissioning and Consuming Research in Education*. A suite of four M-level resources. Available online at: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/commissioning-and-consuming-research-in-education/>

SAUNDERS, L. (2009). *Developing and Sustaining Models of Inclusive Education in Kindergartens and Primary Schools in Kosovo/a*. Independent Evaluation Report. Unpublished report, available on request.

SAUNDERS, L. (2010). 'The challenges of small-scale evaluation in a foreign country: reflections on practice', *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, **22**, 3, 199–213.