GTC Review of Websites

GTC required a review of websites, portals or electronic resources that offer access to research on teaching and learning, designed primarily for a teacher audience (examples include the Teacher Training Resource Bank, the Research Informed Practice Site, the Evidence in Education Portal, Practical Research for Education), to inform the way in which Research for Teachers can continue to differentiate itself and add value. This report sets out the results of the review and attaches, as appendices, visual representations of the data.

Following consultation with practitioners and national agencies we typified the function of the various research resources as ranging from simply identifying what exists to:

- Encouraging and/or supporting practitioners in interpreting, testing and refining strategies from research in their own context

- Providing easy access to theory/the underpinning rationale to enable transfer

- Enabling practitioners to relate products to own experiences

- Securing understanding of core facts and issues

- Awareness raising re: range of useful research

- Investigating the issues of interest to practitioners

In order for this review to support the work of the GTC, we have considered the nature of the outputs for each site within these broad categories and the extent to which the site/outputs focuses on outcomes for learners and links them to teaching and learning processes. The websites have been interrogated through the data extraction grid and the results presented both in a short report and graphically to enable comparisons and read across. The sequence of questions was designed to first elicit the nature of the various products available from these websites. These have been categorised and summarised below. We have also reported on the nature of the 'implications' as we felt that these did not readily lend themselves to the grid treatment. As a result of this process, the questions address issues of relevance, accessibility and transferability. Answers to these questions have been represented by means of the grid below. The data extractions took place between the 21st December 2009 and the 22nd January 2010. In total we reviewed 34 websites and collected data for 34 of these.

Sampling

Due to the large number of resources on many of the sites involved, a sampling process was used to gain a good understanding of content. This involved selecting a number of resources from the variety of reports, case studies, tools and other content that was available. We also considered the different sections available on many of the sites, for example 'resources for teachers' and 'resources for head teachers' may for different reasons provide different resources, or different approaches to research theory. By sampling across the types of resource and the sections for different audiences, in this way we gained a broad understanding which allowed us to consider the value of each site in the round.

Identifying sites

Our preliminary list of sites comprised online research or research-based resources, or those which offered access to research on teaching and learning and were designed primarily for a practitioner audience.

In order to generate this list we started with sites that are known to us from the routine scanning that we do as part of our core work on evidence informed practice. Subsequently our knowledge management team undertook a further scoping exercise and supplemented the list with additional sites, including those from other countries, which offered research resources for practitioners. We also consulted GTC on the list.

Site	URL	Based in	Data Extracted
Teacher Training Resource Bank	http://www.ttrb.ac.uk/	UK	Yes
The Research Informed Practice Site	http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/research/	UK	Yes
The Evidence in Education Portal	http://www.eep.ac.uk/DNN2/	UK	
Practical Research for Education- chargeable	http://www.pre-online.co.uk/	UK	
LSIS Excellence Gateway	http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/	UK – specifically England	
National Teacher Research Panel	http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ntrp/	UK	
TDA Mentoring and Coaching Library (requires login: UID = MCTDA P/w = mclib1)	https://mclibrary.tda.gov.uk/mentoringcoaching.aspx	UK	
NCETM	https://www.ncetm.org.uk/	UK	
Better: Evidence Based Education	http://betterevidence.org/	UK/USA	
Literacy Trust	http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/	UK	
I&DeA (formerly renewal.net)	http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/laa/home.do	UK	
TLRP Resources	http://www.tlrp.org/resources/index.html	UK	
21st Century Science – University of York	http://www.21stcenturyscience.org/	UK	
NFER - chargeable	http://www.nfer.ac.uk/	UK	
Teacher Research	http://www.teacherresearch.net/		
TeacherNet	http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/	UK	
Teachers TV	http://www.teachers.tv/	UK	
CUREE	www.curee.co.uk	Mainly UK	
SCRE	http://www.eep.ac.uk/dnn2/Organizations/SCRE/tabid/86/Default.aspx	UK – specifically Scotland	Down for maintenance
Campaign for Learning - chargeable	http://www.campaign-for-	UK	

Site	URL	Based in	Data Extracted
	learning.org.uk/cfl/index.asp		
Teacher Tap	http://eduscapes.com/tap/evidence.html	USA	
RfT	http://www.gtce.org.uk/teachers/rft/	UK	
Teachers' Corner (National Research Council, Canada)	http://www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/eng/education/teachers/index.html	Canada	
What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) (US Department of Education)	http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/	USA	
Schoolzone Educational Intelligence (Schoolzone, Cheltenham)	http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/RESEARCH/index.asp	UK	
National Research Centre of the Gifted and Talented (NRCGT) (University of Connecticut)	http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/NRCGT/resource.html	USA	
National Dissemination Centre for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)	http://www.nichcy.org/Research/Pages/Default.aspx	USA	
New Horizons for Learning	http://www.newhorizons.org/index.html		
Teachers Work (University of Auckland)	http://www.teacherswork.ac.nz/twjournal.php	New Zealand	
Access to Research Resources for Teachers (ARRT) (GTC Northern Ireland)	http://gtcni.openrepository.com/gtcni/	Northern Ireland	
Teaching Diverse Students Initiative (TDSi) (Washington DC)	http://www.tolerance.org/tdsi/development-assets	USA	
Intervention Central	http://www.interventioncentral.org/		
Florida Centre for Reading Research	http://www.fcrr.org/forteachers.htm	USA	
The Internet TESL Journal	http://iteslj.org/		
CPD Matters – TDA	http://www.tda.gov.uk/about/newsletter/nov2009/Articles/cpd_matters.aspx	UK	
Knowledge Springboard	This can be included when if and when it is available	UK	Not online yet
ECM Direct	http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/ecmleadershipdirect	UK	

Countries of included websites.

Table 1: Countries of included websites (N=37)

Country	No. of Studies
UK	24

USA	7
Not known	3
Northern Ireland	1
Canada	1
New Zealand	1

*Codes are not mutually exclusive; one website includes more than one country.

Table 2: Websites that are chargeable (N=3)

Campaign for Learning (Some downloads only)
NFER
Practical Research for Education

Question framework used for data extractions.

Encouraging and/or supporting practitioners in interpreting, testing and refining strategies from research in their own context	What outputs does the site contain? For example, tools and resources?
	Are clear implications for practitioners presented on the site? How?
	Are there illustrations from practice? If these are phase based/sectorally specific, please indicate.
	Are there examples of the research interventions? Are these detailed and illustrated and potentially transferable?
Providing easy access to theory/the underpinning rationale to enable transfer	Is the research theory accessible and understandable? How?
	Can the theory be used by practitioners? NOTE: We found very little on these questions
Enabling practitioners to relate products to own experiences	Are links to practitioners' own contexts made and how? Give a practical description
Securing understanding of core facts and issues	Are the outputs clear and accessible by practitioners? What does the site do to help practitioners find their way to the key facts and issues? (eg by decoding jargon, interpreting complex statistical analyses etc)
Investigating the issues of interest to practitioners	Are the themes and topics relevant to practitioners? How are they selected?
	Does the site consider the extent to which the site/outputs discuss outcomes for pupils, and link them to teaching and learning processes?
Look and feel of the site	How long are the resources (number of words/number of videos etc) How is the site set up? Are the resources easy to find through the navigation?
	Are the outputs on the site of high quality? i.e. Would they pass the appraisal framework we use for RfT?

Report on outputs

Between them, the various websites offered a variety of outputs.

- **Summaries of academic research** (these are mostly short, ranging from brief 'helicopter reviews' of research on the Schoolzone site, current awareness items on TDA's CPD matters website, short PowerPoint summaries ("bites") on the Teachernet site, one page articles on the literacy trust web site and briefings on the TLRP website, four-page summaries on the Research Informed Practice Site (TRIPS) to longer summaries of research on the GTC's own Research for Teachers (RfT) website, reviews of scientific research on the Better Evidence based education website and reviews of the QCDA Building the Evidence Base project on the CUREE website.
- **Summaries of other evidence** (such as policy documents and Ofsted reviews) for example, I&DeA which supports improvement and innovation in local government provides "the latest good practice we've gathered from the sector" whilst the Teacher Training Resource Bank (ttrb) contains Ofsted reviews and government guidance and the Campaign for learning website offers many items focused on policy.
- **Summaries of teacher research / case studies** on the National Teacher Research Panel (NTRP), RfT, Campaign for Learning, New Horizons for learning, the Internet TESL journal, TDA Mentoring and Coaching, Teacher Research, LSIS Excellence gateway and Evidence in Education Portal (EEP) websites
- **Guidance documents and fact sheets** such as good practice guides on the What Works Clearinghouse website, guidelines on areas such as bully prevention, reading intervention and classroom time management on the Intervention Central website and learning guides on the I&DeA site that provide in-depth training in professional issues from action learning to writing business plans, pocket books providing "easily digestible information on issues from assertiveness to working in virtual teams and book reviews summarising aspects of the latest management thinking.
- **Tools and toolkits** such as Practical Research for Education's 'carrying out your own research' toolkit, 'research tasters' which take a nugget of evidence from research and explore how users might put ideas from the evidence into practice on the Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) and RfT websites and workshop tools such as diamond 9 activities and mysteries on the TDA Mentoring and Coaching website and RfT website.
- **Teaching and learning resources** to support activities such as peer coaching and lesson planning, for example Teachers' Corner and 21st Century science provide science resources, such as tools that measure human reaction times and an interactive planisphere to learn about the night sky whilst the Internet TESL Journal provides suggested lesson plans for implementing teaching English as a scond language.
- **Rich media** consisting mostly of TV clips such as the 3,500 videos available on Teachers TV on a wide range of subjects such as behaviour management, collaborative group work and lesson ideas. The Teaching Diverse Students website contains short video clips of academics and researchers discussing aspects of academic achievement of racially and ethnically diverse students. The TDA mentoring and coaching library site contains some computer animations such as an online tool for comparing mentoring and coaching on as well as video clips to illustrate the skills and principles of mentoring and coaching.

A few of the websites (TTRB, Excellence gateway, NCETM, EEP and the TDA Mentoring and Coaching library) offer all of these resource types. Some offer only one particular type, such as teacher research (NTRP and Teacher Research) or rich media (Teachers TV). Some have a particular area of focus, such as science (21st Century Science), Every Child Matters (ECM direct), Mentoring and Coaching (TDA

Mentoring and Coaching library), Mathematics (NCETM), gifted and talented students (National Research Centre of the Gifted and Talented (NRCGT), literacy (Literacy Trust and Florida Centre for Reading Research) and special education (National Dissemination Centre for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY).

Implications for practitioners
Around half (17) of the sites provide clear implications in some form for at least some of their outputs:

- Research for Teachers has clear implications at the end of every summary
- TRIPS digests always end with implications designed to help practitioners in putting evidence and/or theory into practice
- ttrb presents implications for ITE mentors and shows the relevance for ITE students
- EEP – implications collected in the conclusion section of studies offer clear guidance for change within individual schools
- NFER – implications are presented in the "Impact" newsletter for example on using e-assessment
- Teachernet presents implications clearly at the end of each research "bite" whilst other articles contain tips and ideas for practitioners to use in their practice
- Teachers TV starts to highlight implications through the title of the video clip
- CUREE – many of the resources spell out the implications clearly
- The National Dissemination Centre for Children with Disabilities offers recommendations which directly address ways of putting research into practice
- New Horizons offer implications in the form of general learning points
- Teachers Work offers clear implications
- Access to Research Resources offers implications that vary from specific aspects of classroom teaching and learning methods to whole school changes
- Teaching Diverse students houses videos that discuss starting points for school staff when considering their own needs in areas of race, ethnicity and achievement
- Intervention Central presents implications clearly in guidance manuals with examples of how teachers can use particular strategies in their practice
- ECM direct contains a 'how to use' section
- The Literacy Trust provides recommendations at the end of some of its summaries, such as to use a wide range of texts, use open ended and challenging questioning and provide modelled and guided writing activities
- I&DeA provides a 'checklist' of implications at the end of some of its documents for example, 'What sorts of concerns do parents in your locality have about their children's education and wellbeing?'

Six of the websites (NCETM, LSIS Excellence Gateway, TDA Mentoring and Coaching library, 21st Century Science and Internet TESL, and TLRP) provide resources and tools designed to be used and adapted directly by practitioners. The Better Evidence based Education does not indicate implications as such but provides a guide to the top rated programmes as indicated by effect sizes. Around a third of the websites (10) do not spell out the implications at all. One of these, the What works website for example, focuses on the effectiveness of the intervention rather than how it can be useful to practitioners whilst the NTRP case studies model what has been achieved in other contexts.

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