

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Degrees of Impact

Professor Christine Halse from the Centre for Educational Research is collaborating with NSW Department of Education and Training South Western Sydney Region to evaluate the impact of a professional doctorate program on education quality. This research is funded by the NSW Department of Education and Training (NSW DET).

'This research is part of a long-term collaborative partnership to deliver a new model of professional teacher education called a professional doctorate (EdD) to senior education leaders in the South Western Sydney region of NSW DET' says Professor Halse. 'The degree is research based and is designed to deliver a structured program of research led by the practical needs and problems encountered in the education workplace. Of critical importance to both the EdD program students and the research partners is the need to assess whether participation in the EdD has a positive effect on candidates' careers and professional practice, on the schools of participants and on public education in the region.'

The current study will track the experiences of EdD candidates in their first year of study through focus groups. Interviews with the South Western Sydney Regional Director and school education directors will also be conducted to gauge perceptions of the impact of EdD study. Similar data will be gathered from academics who teach in the EdD program. Themes about perceived and observed effects of EdD study will be compared to objective measures such as school performance statistics and candidate progress. The research team aims to use this information to build an assessment tool that can measure EdD impact via a set of standard indicators.



These research findings will enhance the design and quality of the EdD program, but more importantly, it will result in the development of a tool that can be used to measure impact of the EdD within the South Western Sydney region. This "EdD impact metric" has the potential to be adapted to other disciplines where professional doctorates have become prevalent, such as health sciences and business. It may also improve education quality within the South Western Sydney region by increasing the number of people studying real-world teaching problems through an EdD program in future.

Project Title: The impact of the EdD on Public Education

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