

## **The SERA lecture 2103: Scottish Research in a Global Context – Dependence, Independence or Interdependence?<sup>1</sup>**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Educational research in Scotland has a very distinguished history and has made a major contribution in several aspects of methodology, not least in the relationships between researchers, policymakers and practitioners.

The paper considers the Scottish contribution to the development of educational research past, present and future and the significance of interactions at three levels – the UK, European and global. Against the backdrop of the forthcoming independence vote, it is argued that the historic distinctiveness of educational provision in Scotland – both before and after devolution - has been a significant benefit to the research community here. However, there are some internal dependencies that may need active nurturing, if the benefits of this independence are to be sustained. Furthermore there are critical elements of interdependence, at all three levels, which will be important in pursuing an aspiration to maintain research of the highest quality that will support learners and teachers in the years ahead.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Educational research in Scotland has a very distinguished history and has made a major contribution in several aspects of methodology, not least in the relationships between researchers, policymakers and practitioners (in itself sometimes an unhelpful categorisation!).

Distinctiveness is one the themes that permeates the text of *Scottish Education*, edited by Tom Bryce and Walter Humes, now impressively into its fourth edition (Bryce and Humes, 1999, 2003, 2008; Bryce, Humes, Gilles and Kennedy, 2013). As a proud owner of all four editions (and as a proud contributor and section editor to two of them) I must say it is fascinating to monitor how things have been changing. Part of this changing scene of course is caught in the changing sub-title of each edition after the first one:

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