**People and expertise**

We have highly experienced educationalists and researchers who are able to support you with school and classroom based action research. This support can take a range of forms from whole school presentations on Action Research to individual mentoring with classroom projects. We have found that setting up small, collaborative working groups is both supportive and effective, but please contact us to discuss your individual needs (Jon.James@bristol.ac.uk).

Action research is also a feature of both our master's and doctoral programmes.

**What’s involved in Action Research?**

Action Research is a method of systematic enquiry that teachers undertake as researchers of their own practice. The enquiry involved in Action Research starts with a problem or issue, and then follows the stages outlined below:

1. Choose an initial problem or something that you want to change in your own practice

2. Through reading and discussion reconsider the ways you have been thinking about this problem and formulate a research question that you will try to answer.

3. On the basis of your reading, your understanding of the school context, and your own values design a possible solution to your problem that it is within your power to implement.

4. Take the action and monitor whether you are actually doing what you intend to do

5. Evaluate. Identify your successes; look for reasons for these and identify possible generalisations. Do this with others to provide alternative perspectives.

7. Identify the things that did not work: look for reasons for these and identify possible generalisations.

8. Re-enter the loop at 2 if possible to develop new understanding and plan new action to address the problems identified in 7.

As an action researcher, or teacher-researcher, you will generate research. Enquiring into your practice will inevitably lead you to question the assumptions and values that are often overlooked during the course of normal school life. Assuming the habit of inquiry can become an ongoing commitment to learning and developing as a practitioner. As a teacher-researcher you assume the responsibility for being the agent and source of change.

**Starting out**

When schools are starting out on action research we are happy to tailor our Continuing Professional Development offer to focus on supporting teachers and allied education professionals to develop as action researchers. We can also award credit for educational research work under our advanced offering of postgraduate, professional development programmes. In the first instance a member of staff at the School of Education can:

* come to facilitate a staff meeting as a one-off prompt to start a project;
* help you to design and undertake a research enquiry;
* visit your school on a regular basis to support a collaborative working group.

**Examples**

The key feature common to all Action Research projects is that it involves practitioner researchers planning for and reflecting on the outcomes of a change in their practice in an ongoing cycle of plan-act-reflect. Some examples of projects:

* Piloting research with a local secondary school to explore learners’ non-compliance.
* Using a Participatory Action Research approach to develop therapeutic interventions for young people who experience social and emotional difficulties at school
* Supporting a collaborative group of mathematics teachers working on research into widening participation in higher education.
* Using an ethnographic approach to investigate the ways in which teachers’ use the multilingual and multicultural resources of migrant children and their families as assets for learning in school.
* Supporting a collaborative group of NQTs in science in developing and evaluating their practice in differentiation to include learners with English as Additional Language.