## SERA Leadership in Scottish Education Network (SERA LiSEN)

## Annual Report 2019

The network has continued to thrive over the past year with 155 members drawn from schools, local authorities, the 3rd sector, Education Scotland and the GTCS. We would like to congratulate Professor Margery MacMahon for her appointment as Head of School of Education at the University of Glasgow. Unfortunately, this means that Margery will no longer have the time to devote to SERA LiSEN and will therefore be stepping down from the role in November. I am pleased to say that Dr Zoe Roberston, Senior Teaching Fellow at Moray House School of Education and Sport, has agreed to step into Margery’s shoes. I am sure that we would all like to take this opportunity to thank Margery for her involvement in acting as Co-Convenor for SERA LiSEN. It has been a pleasure working with her.

### SERA LiSEN Events hosted over the year

In November 2018, a joint seminar held at the University of Glasgow, hosted by the University of Glasgow and SERA LiSEN, with Dr Mary Lynne Derrington focussed on the topic of *Supervising and Evaluating Teachers in an Era of Policy Mandates.* Thanks to Margery for organising this. For the remainder of the year, our work has focussed on one of the Scottish Government’s key educational priorities – closing the poverty-related attainment gap. To this end, we have jointly hosted three events with the SERA poverty network, the University of Strathclyde and the University of Edinburgh. This has articulated very closely with the work which I, as Co-Convenor of SERA LiSEN, undertook over the past year in jointly leading a Scottish Universities Insight Institution (SUII) seminar series – *Poverty, attainment and wellbeing: Making a difference to the lives of children and young people*. The organising team for the seminar series had representation from four Scottish universities (including Co-Convenors of the SERA Poverty Network, Professor Stephen McKinney, University of Glasgow, and Professor John McKendrick, Glasgow Caledonian University), five 3rd sector organisations and two local authorities and brought together 16 academic disciplines and professions to examine this complex problem. I am pleased to say that the Scottish Government took a great deal of interest in the work and Dr Gale MacLeod, University of Edinburgh and Co-Lead of the seminar series, and myself met with around 40 representatives of the Scottish Government to discuss the implications of the work and a meeting also took place with Patricia Watson, Assistant Director of the Scottish Attainment Challenge at Education Scotland. Access to the full set of materials (including video and audio recordings of presentations and other inputs), creative visioning images and sets of research briefs for children’s services, schools and policy makers can be found on the SUII website[[1]](#footnote-1).

We organised two further seminars specifically for SERA LiSEN and the poverty network to widen access to this body of work. The first, hosted at the University of Strathclyde on Tuesday 5th March, featured a facilitated conversation with Professor Kathryn Riley talking about her book, *Place, belonging and school leadership*. Emeritus Professor John MacBeath gave a very erudite introduction to her book and talk. This was also the focus of her keynote address at the SUII seminar series the following morning. The second, *A conversation with Professor Roger Slee*, University of South Australia, held at the University of Edinburgh on the 8th of March, also provided an opportunity for the audience to engage with Roger (our Keynote on seminar 3 Day 2) and explore his new book, *Inclusion isn’t dead. It just smells funny.* This conversation was facilitated by Professor Sheila Riddell. Emeritus Professor Pamela Munn, gave a very illuminating summary of the key insights from the conversation with Roger. The final event, at the University of Strathclyde on the 10th of June, was hosted jointly between the two SERA networks and SUII and provided an opportunity to disseminate the research briefs and explore them with our audience.

### Forthcoming Events

The annual meeting for the network will take place at the SERA Conference hosted at the University of Edinburgh on Wednesday 20th November, 4.30pm – 5.30pm. A workshop, hosted jointly by SERA LiSEN and the poverty network, on Friday 22nd November, 9.30am-10.30am, provides an opportunity to explore more fully the research briefs emanating from the SUII seminar series *Poverty, attainment and wellbeing: Making a difference to the lives of children and young people*. Professor Stephen McKinney, Dr Gale Macleod, Professor John McKendrick and myself will lead the workshop. Please note that, if you wish to attend either the network meeting and/or the workshop, you would need to register and pay for attendance at the Conference. <https://www.sera.ac.uk/conference/>.

Zoe and I look forward to welcoming you to further over the course of the session. If you have any suggestions to foreground research in educational leadership, please feel free to contact us.

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Professor Margery McMahon, SERA LiSEN Co-Convenor

Dr Zoe Roberston, incoming SERA LiSEN Co-Convenor

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1. <https://www.scottishinsight.ac.uk/Programmes/OpenCall201819/PEAW.aspx> The password to access the videos of the work undertaken with children focussing on their sense of belonging to school (the theme of the 3rd seminar) is Insight. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)