

**Exploring the role and contribution of Assistant  
Educational Psychologists to service delivery in England.**

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the  
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## **Thesis Abstract**

### **Exploring the role and contribution of Assistant Educational Psychologists to service delivery in England.**

The role of assistants to complement the work of fully qualified practitioners has been recognised, however, there remains a lack of research (Collyer, 2012) relevant to the current context of service delivery of educational psychology services (EPSs), including the commissioning of services and demands for EPSs.

Paper One used A Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses framework (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff & Altman, 2009) to search, screen and identify research relevant to psychology paraprofessionals. An exploratory multiple embedded case study was conducted across two local authorities in England (Paper Two). Participants included five assistants, 12 educational psychologists (EPs), and four senior/principal EPs. Focus groups and group interviews were completed using semi-structured interview schedules. Transcriptions were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis to draw cross case conclusions.

Seven relevant studies were reviewed and synthesized in Paper One to find that within clinical and educational psychology, assistants are used in a variety of ways, completing discrete tasks, or working in conjunction with fully qualified psychologists to extend psychological input. Across the two cases, the rationale for employment was due to difficulties recruiting fully qualified EPs and the interrelationship of function was explored along with the benefits and challenges to the deployment of assistants. Both papers found that assistants contribute to service level developments and work directly with service users. Key features to facilitate the successful deployment of assistants included training and supervision. Employment as an assistant was associated with career progression onto professional training.

Implications of findings are considered in relation to practice in Paper Three and the findings dissemination strategy includes; the publication of both studies; presentation of the research to participants; the circulation of a summary to principal EPs; and presenting the research at a practitioner conference.

## **Declaration**

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.



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I would also like to thank my family and friends for their understanding and support over the past three years including a special thanks to my fellow TEPs. I have made lifelong friendships along the way. Finally, but by no means least, I would like to say a huge thank you to my wife, Izzy for her unfaltering support, encouragement and the love she has given me from my undergraduate degree to now.

## **Introduction**

### **Aims of the Research and Preliminary Research**

The current research topic originated from the research commissioning process at The University of Manchester. The author as a first-year trainee educational psychologist, was approached by educational psychologists (EPs) to undertake research proposals which had been identified as areas in need of further investigation. Initially, the research commissioner, an EP working as a sole trader proposed the research in relation to a model whereby assistant EPs were school-based working under the EP's supervision. Preliminary research completed in 2016 explored the assistant role in two differing contexts by gaining the perceptions of two EPs who worked closely with assistants (sole trader and local authority principal EP). Qualitative interview data was collected and analysed. Findings highlighted the need for future research to expand upon the evidence base by exploring current practice among local authority educational psychology services (EPSs), in relation to the deployment of assistants due to the lack of an existing theoretical model to guide the advancement of knowledge. From this initial preliminary research, aims of the current research were established and conceptually altered from the initial research pitch. It was hoped that an understanding of the potential of the assistant EP role to contribute to delivery of a portfolio of psychological services in conjunction with qualified practitioners would be uncovered.

To draw upon other fields working within similar contexts to similar aims, Paper One aims to answer the research question: What is the contribution of paraprofessionals within applied psychology? This is achieved through a systematic literature review and evaluation and analysis of the existing empirical research that

included the contribution of assistant psychologists within applied psychology. The empirical research in Paper Two aims to explore the role of assistant psychologists within EPSs in England via a multiple embedded case study to answer the following research questions: (1) What is the current rationale for employing assistant EPs within local authority EPSs in England? (2) What is the inter-relationship of function between EPs and assistants and how do services utilise assistant capacity? (3) What have been the perceived benefits/ challenges to the use of assistant EPs in local authority EPSs?

### **Overall Strategy**

A comprehensive systematic literature review (Paper One) explores the empirical research regarding the deployment of paraprofessionals within applied psychology. Final papers include evidence of assistant psychologist contributions within predominantly clinical and educational psychology. The rationale for Paper Two to conduct an exploratory piece of empirical research to extend the current literature was established. Alternative methodological approaches were considered such as a large-scale survey to uncover the current establishment of assistant roles within EPSs. However, while this would allow for EP perspectives and the prevalence of the posts to be explored, the author also wished to explore the interrelationships between roles. Therefore, it was considered necessary to explore the detail of emerging perspectives and how these relate. The findings of Paper Two reinforce many of the findings of Paper One and extend this understanding by exploring in greater depth the current contribution of assistant EPs and the interrelationship of function with fully qualified EPs within local authority EPSs. Paper Three considers the significance of the findings and the benefits of dissemination of the research at

individual, organisation and professional levels to inform decisions and processes regarding the deployment of assistant EPs and promote further research into this otherwise underexplored role. This includes both Papers One and Two being submitted for publication in an open access journal, therefore, formatting including referencing and sub-headings, are in accordance with the journal author guidelines (see appendices A6 and B9). Supplementary information that was not required for submission of both Paper One and Two to research journals is included within the appendices.

### **The Researcher's Professional Background and Relevant Experience**

Prior to starting on the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at The University of Manchester the author had worked as a special educational needs support assistant within a primary school, and most recently worked as an assistant EP for a local authority EPS. As the author has previously worked as an assistant EP, they have prior experience of the processes surrounding local authorities employing assistants and the potential gains of this, for the service, assistants and the stakeholders. Conversely, in their previous role the author considered there was a lack of clarity regarding aspects of the role and remit of the work undertaken. Therefore, this initiated the researcher's personal interest in the current research topic and they recognised the need for exploration of an otherwise under researched role to benefit the profession, individuals and ultimately promote positive outcomes for children/young people.

### **Axiology.**

Axiology concerns the role of researcher values in knowledge generation (Thompson, 2010), therefore is recognised to influence epistemology and ontology

principles. As Darlaston-Jones, (2007) explains “we bring to our research our worldviews complete with bias and prejudice – it is not possible to separate the me from the research” (p. 25). Due to the researcher’s own experiences of being an assistant EP, preconceptions of the value of the role were significant to recognise and it was imperative that the researcher retained a high level of reflexivity throughout the research. The exploratory case study was conceptualised by the author with an intention to promote the research base in this area to benefit the profession and the individuals within it and promote a supportive profession. It is vital to acknowledge the researcher’s own values and beliefs which may have influenced the research, from data collection through to analysis and write up. Therefore, the researcher ensured that the semi-structured interview schedules (see appendix B5 and B6) were inclusive of open ended questions and that the data was explored for inductive findings. However, it is recognised that it is impossible to entirely remove the researcher’s own stance from the process. Further attempts to minimise any potential bias were made including inter-coding and member checking of main findings.

### **Rationale for Engagement and Positioning for Data Access**

Due to the author’s previous experience of working within an EPS as an assistant EP, the researcher held an interest in the potential of the role and how their experience compared to other local authorities. It is considered that the participants’ engagement was likely to be driven by an interest in how research could inform their own practices and highlight the potential benefits and ways in which challenges may be overcome. One of the EPSs was the author’s previous employer during their time as an assistant EP, therefore participants are likely to have been further interested and motivated due to their personal associations with the author. The second EPS was recruited through pre-existing personal links through The University of Manchester.

The researcher was able to travel to attend service/team meetings to enrol participants and conduct group interview/ focus groups with assistants, EPs and senior EPs who had agreed to take part in the research. This was made possible due to research time and budget that were available through their programme of doctoral study.

## **Philosophical Orientation**

### **Ontology and epistemology.**

Ontology concerns the ‘study of being’, what constitutes reality (Crotty, 1998, p. 10) whereas epistemology and epistemological assumptions are concerned with “how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 7). Therefore, it is important for researchers to consider and take a position regarding their perceptions of how things are, as different paradigms inherently will take differing assumptions of reality and knowledge which is reflected in methodology (Scotland, 2012). The researcher took the stance of critical realist, which underpinned the research and is evident in the research methods selected. Critical realism combines two forms, ontological realism and epistemological constructivism and realism (Maxwell, 2012), which allows the researcher to investigate tentative explanations for events (Robson, 2011) whilst acknowledging the significance of social structures. Critical realism therefore questions the ‘polarized debate between positivism and constructivism’ and emphasizes certain criteria, regardless of methodology, including ‘explicit theorising, identification of causal processes, and appropriate contextualisation’ (Elger, 2010. p. 256). Elger (2010) suggests these features may begin to explain why critical realists are often attracted to case study research which is evident within Paper Two. It was not considered that the events

could be understood if viewed as ‘variables’ e.g. through positivist measures.

Therefore, the author’s critical realist stance resulted in attempts to understand the meaning that participants attributed to the subject, whilst recognising that reality is not necessarily accessible. In line with this epistemological position the author adopted a qualitative methodology to elicit participant views and allowed the researcher to triangulate information in the absence of an absolute ‘truth’.

Furthermore, in line with critical realism both an inductive and deductive approach was taken to analysis.



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**Paper One: The contribution of assistant psychologists in  
the UK**

Prepared for in accordance with author guidelines for submission to the European  
Journal of Training and Development (Appendix A6)

**Word count:** 6359/7000 (all text including references)

## **Paper One: The contribution of assistant psychologists in the UK**

### **Abstract**

#### **Purpose**

Within the context of changes to the model of service delivery of psychological services in the United Kingdom (Lee and Woods, 2017), during a period of financial restrictions (Ayres & Pearce, 2013) and high workloads (Truong & Ellam, 2014), the purpose of the current review was to explore the contribution of paraprofessionals within psychological services.

#### **Design/Methodology/Approach**

A Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses framework (Moher, *et al.*, 2009) was used to search, screen and identify research relevant to psychology paraprofessionals. Following exploration through relevant databases, seven studies met the criteria for inclusion in the current review.

#### **Findings**

The findings outlined the contribution of assistant psychologists in the UK and the potential wide remit of the role was uncovered, including contributions at a service level and direct work with service users. Key features to facilitate the successful deployment of assistants were highlighted. The association between employment as an assistant psychologist and subsequent progression into professional training was also revealed.

#### **Practical implications**

Implications of findings from this review highlight the potential of assistant psychologist roles being embedded within multi-agency working, and the role of the assistant psychologist in offering a ‘graduated response’ within service delivery.

#### **Originality/value**

The paper explored an otherwise limited research base and reinforces the need for future research to explore and develop the roles of psychology paraprofessionals in light of the evolving context of delivery of psychology services.

**Keywords** paraprofessionals, assistant psychologist, contribution, educational psychology, clinical psychology

**Paper type** Literature review

## **Introduction**

### ***The deployment of paraprofessionals***

The term paraprofessional, is defined as “a person to whom a particular aspect of a professional task is delegated, but who is not licensed to practise as a fully qualified professional” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017, para. 1) and the contribution of paraprofessionals, within health care, law and education has been extensively explored. The wide remit and benefits of the paralegal’s role has been explored (Diehl, 2009; Howell & Orlinsky, 2007) and Shepherd and Todd (2016) drew upon commonalities across professions by exploring the management of paraprofessionals within further education and the National Health Service (NHS) to inform practice within the legal services sector. Confusion however, regarding what paralegals can and should be doing is widespread (Edes, 2007). Within health care, paraprofessional roles are well established; e.g nursing assistants and radiography assistants and within education paraprofessionals have been deployed with increasing frequency as classroom support for students with disabilities (Giangreco, *et al.*, 2012). Research therefore, has aimed to refine effective professional development opportunities for special education paraprofessionals (Brock and Carter, 2015), inform practice and policy (Webster and Blatchford, 2013) and illuminated the challenges of the use of paraprofessionals within the classroom (Blatchford *et al.*, 2009). The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, assess the success of paraprofessional roles within education, however regulations or guidelines for paraprofessionals are lacking within psychological services. Within public services there has been an increase in the number of assistant posts (Bach *et al.*, 2007) and this has been influenced by the social-political climate which has influenced the structure and delivery of services.

### ***The social-economic climate and the delivery of psychological services***

Within the UK, traditionally most psychological services have been embedded within Local (Health) Authorities (L(H)As) (Dunsmuir and Hardy, 2016) and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service. These are often relatively large teams which offer services to state establishments e.g. hospitals, prisons and schools. Following the global economic crisis in 2010, there have been substantial cuts to public spending (Ayres and Pearce, 2013) and L(H)As have experienced significant restrictions upon the delivery of public services which resonate with the international focus upon cost effective service delivery (e.g. Castelnuovo, *et al.*, 2016). Particularly in public sector services there is an increasing pressure to make financial savings at a time of increasing workloads. Considering the deployment of paraprofessionals within other professions it is pertinent to explore the contribution of similar roles within applied psychology.

The contribution of paraprofessionals to the delivery of psychology services emerged in the 1960s (Kalafat and Boroto, 1977), and since this time, statutory regulation for seven groups of qualified psychologists has been introduced in the UK through the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (2009), though the respective standards do not apply to paraprofessionals. The role of assistants that contribute to children's services, including assistant clinical psychologists (ACPs), has been prominent in practice and historically associated with successful application to the clinical professional training (Clare, 1995). Research has highlighted the potential of the assistant role to complement the work of fully qualified practitioners (Farrell *et al.*, 2006) and recent proposals in the joint Department of Health (DoH) and

Department for Education (DfE) review of the training arrangements for clinical and educational psychology (National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) and Health Education England (HEE), 2016) suggested that a role of “Assistant Psychologist is developed as a new post-graduate qualification” (p. 34), therefore it is timely to explore the wider use of psychological paraprofessionals within the current socio-political climate.

The use of assistant educational psychologists (AEPs) has been previously established. Data was collected regarding AEP posts up until the 2013 workforce survey (Truong and Ellam, 2014), subsequently evidence “indicated that employers had converted previous AEP posts into Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) practice placements” (p. 9). This shift followed the move in 2009 from a one year master’s level degree to a three-year educational psychology doctorate (Woods *et al.*, 2015), which created a new pool of TEPs, who became available and in search of bursaried placements, at a similar cost level to that of AEP employment. The removal of the prerequisite to be a qualified teacher and the introduction of longer one year and two-year placements as part of the doctorate training, arguably lent itself to the creation of an additional paraprofessional role, which services have utilised as part of their core establishment. Similarly, in the UK, the forensic psychology training routes have been dominated by the BPS Qualification (e.g. BPS, 2015) as have occupational, health, counselling and sport psychology. These qualifications involve a minimum time spent gaining supervised practice as a trainee psychologist, leading to substantial numbers of trainees working within the profession. Ways in which service capacity can be expanded is an imminent priority at a time when educational psychology services (EPSs) are becoming an increasingly

stretched resource (Truong and Ellam, 2014) as many EPSs transition to a ‘traded’ model of delivery, in which EPs’ time is directly requested and commissioned by schools according to perceived need (Lee and Woods, 2017).

### ***Rationale***

A review of the research evidence base may establish the current utilisation and contribution of paraprofessionals within applied psychology, and may indicate, or contra-indicate, new possibilities such as the identification of cost-effective service response, or the potential of restructuring professional training to reflect the experience gained in assistant roles. Within the current political and economic climate and the increasing pressure for services to maximise their efficiency, while working with the best interests of service users, the contribution of each role within a profession structure becomes increasingly significant (Lee and Woods, 2017). By investigating how paraprofessionals are contributing to service delivery across applied psychology, evidence of best practice may be highlighted and applied across disciplines and to other fields working within similar contexts towards similar aims. The current paper therefore, addresses the following literature review question (RQ):

What is the contribution of paraprofessionals within applied psychology?

## **Method**

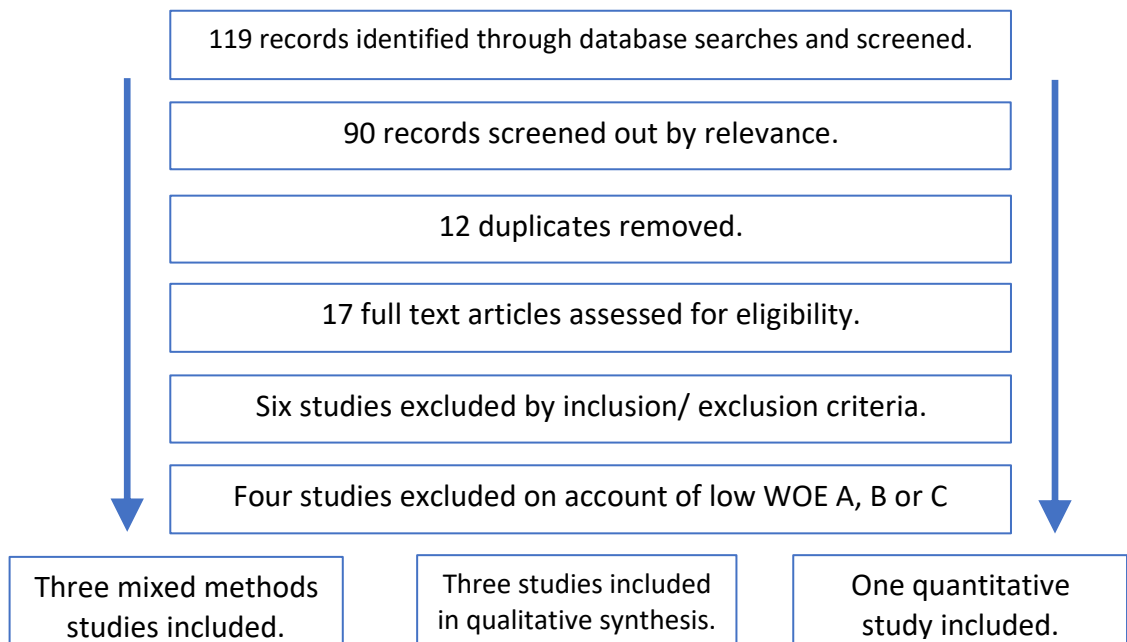
### ***Search criteria***

A Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) (Moher *et al.*, 2009) was used to search, screen and identify suitable papers (see Figure one). Relevant studies were identified by searching several databases



including PsycINFO, ERIC, Medline, the British Education Index (EBSCO) and Google Scholar. The author established search terms through personal correspondence with UK professionals from each field of applied psychology (educational, clinical, forensic, occupational, counselling, health, and sport) to ensure that all the disciplines of professional psychology were represented in the searches (e.g. L Egan 2016, pers.comm., 15 August). The key terms “Assistant Psychologist,” “Psychologist Assistant,” “Facilitator of Interventions,” “Psychological Practitioner,” “Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner,” “Primary Care Wellbeing Practitioner,” “Graduate Mental Health Worker,” and “Improving Access to Psychological Therapies High Intensity Therapist” guided the searches. Studies were identified through these searches, as well as an additional hand-search of the references cited in the relevant articles.

Figure 1. PRISMA Flowchart (Moher et al., 2009).



### ***Inclusion and exclusion criteria***

The initial 119 papers sourced were screened against four inclusion criteria: (a) written in English; (b) published in peer reviewed journals; (c) report has service delivery focus; (d) paraprofessional roles worked under supervision of fully qualified psychologists. Three exclusion criteria were applied: (a) published pre-2000; (b) opinion/ non-empirical pieces; finally, (c) papers that focused solely upon research assistant roles. From this, 90 papers were excluded and 17 were read fully, through which, six papers were excluded on account of the supervision of the paraprofessional not being clearly stated, or being conducted by other professionals as opposed to psychologists, e.g. medical general practitioner. This resulted in 11 remaining papers, which were examined in full against evaluative frameworks to ensure that the most relevant and reliable data were used to answer the RQ.

### ***Evaluation of the research***

Papers were assessed using Gough's (2007) three Weight of Evidence (WoE) criteria to ensure that less reliable or less appropriate research was identified within the review. Firstly, to establish methodological quality (WoE A) each paper was scored according to review frameworks specific to the design of each paper (quantitative investigation, quantitative evaluation or qualitative evaluation/investigation) which have been applied in several recent systematic literature reviews (e.g. Bond *et al.*, 2013; Ezzamel and Bond, 2016; Snape and Atkinson, 2016). Points were allocated for each positive criterion identified within the paper such as: analysis close to the data (qualitative evaluation/investigation); clear RQ (quantitative investigation); or the use of a randomised group design (quantitative evaluation). Three papers were read and rated by both authors (with the second author in the role of academic supervisor). Initial independent mean percentage agreements were calculated with a

minimum of 70%. Subsequent in-depth discussion allowed for moderation of interpretation of the evaluation criteria for each paper and resulted in the post discussion mean coefficients of scores being in full agreement for two out of the three papers and 96% for the third. Mixed methods papers were dual scored using the relevant quantitative and qualitative checklists and credited the higher rating in the event of disparities. Papers which scored low on WoE A (qualitative <5/14; quantitative evaluation  $\leq$ 3/8; quantitative investigation <5/15) were excluded. Secondly, WoE B considered each study's methodological appropriateness (Gough, 2007). Papers were positively rated for inclusion of: (a) a clear description of the process of work (e.g. intervention); (b) outcome measures concerning the paraprofessional contribution; (c) including multiple perspectives (e.g. service users, management). Finally, papers were scored in relation to WoE C which assessed the relevance of focus to the aims of the current review (Gough, 2007). Each paper was positively scored for evidence of: a) clear description of the context of the assistant role (team/ service); b) qualified practitioner support available to assistant (e.g. supervision); and c) clarity of the paraprofessional's specific contribution. Four papers that either scored low on WoE A or evidencing fewer than two of the above criteria on WoE B or C were excluded from the final synthesis. For each of the seven included studies, an overall WoE (WoE D) was calculated from the combined scores of each WoE A, B and C.

### ***Data synthesis***

Gough, Oliver and Thomas (2013) describe the process of synthesis as “an attempt to integrate information and produce a more definitive answer to the review question than the individual studies included the review can provide” (p.18).

Given the variation in the included studies' focus and methodologies, a 'configurative' approach to synthesis allowed for a greater understanding of the aspects that relate to the RQ (Gough *et al.*, 2013). An inductive approach to thematic synthesis was adopted as it was assumed that the studies were highly relevant due to the comprehensive screening for eligibility. All of the text within the findings or results sections of each paper was systematically mapped out and compiled to establish patterns across the sample to present an even handed and comprehensive summary of the reported data. It soon became apparent that not all studies addressed the initial literature review question directly, which highlighted the iterative process of synthesis. This resulted in a set of findings which were broader than the scope of the initial research question and inclusive of inductive themes. The researcher considered further iterations of the initial research question to more accurately reflect the inductive analysis process and subsequent findings. However, the author considered that as the initial research question had driven the screening process, it was important to retain the original aims, whilst acknowledging the potential importance of inductive findings.

Table 1. Table of included papers

### Investigative studies

Author/year	Title	Country/ ies	Field	Sample	Design	Findings
<b>Overall WoE D</b>						
1. Coller (2012)	The roles, functions and implications of assistants in Scottish educational psychology services, a national survey	Scotland	Educational psychology	21 assistants, 15 managers.	Exploratory qualitative survey: semi-structured interviews via telephone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Becoming qualified EP main reason for becoming AEP.</li> <li>- Seven different job titles reported.</li> <li>- Most assistants on temporary contracts.</li> <li>- Difficulties in recruiting EPs led to the employment of assistants in four services.</li> <li>- Assistants gain better understanding of EP role.</li> <li>- Most assistants spent half the week on research.</li> <li>- Most assistants worked directly with C/YP, primarily running interventions.</li> <li>- Casework perceived as beyond AEP competence.</li> <li>- Less likely receive supervision if in research assistant role.</li> </ul>
2. Counsell & Court (2000)	Working as an assistant educational psychologist: A personal view	UK	Educational psychology	Two assistants	Personal account: descriptive exploration of the role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Examples of practice.</li> <li>- AEP receive two-week training block (interpersonal skills; the role of the EP; the stages of assessment).</li> <li>- AEPs worked closely with EPs in school, often jointly.</li> <li>- AEP role increased confidence in applying for EP training.</li> </ul>
3. Hughes, Campbell & Byrne. (2015)	Profiling assistant psychologist experiences in Ireland and the United Kingdom	UK and Republic of Ireland	Various fields of psychology	136 psychology graduates who currently or previously held assistant posts. (73 worked in the Rol; 63 UK based)	Mixed methods: online survey investigation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Profiled demographics of assistants e.g. most had undergraduate qualifications.</li> <li>- Prior clinical experience most relevant in securing post.</li> <li>- Entry to doctorate program biggest motivator.</li> <li>- Majority of Rol posts were voluntary.</li> <li>- Most assistants had service user contact. CBT most commonly used therapeutic approach.</li> <li>- Half of Rol assistants dissatisfied with training (18% of UK).</li> <li>- Individual supervision most common.</li> </ul>

### Investigative studies

Author/year	Title	Country/ ies	Field	Sample	Design	Findings		
<b>Overall WoE D</b>								
4. Lyons (2000)	4. Training and supporting assistant educational psychologists	UK	Educational psychology	Eight assistants	Qualitative investigation. n.	- AEP work predominantly at stage 3 of the CoP. - Most AEP time spent on direct work in schools. - Various support and training including initial two weeks training. - AEP contribution valued by school staff.		
<b>Evaluative studies</b>								
Author/ year	Title	Country	Field	Sample	Design	Outcome measures	Findings	Assistant contribution
<b>Overall WoE (D)</b>								
5. Maddern, Franey, McLaughlin & Cox. (2004)	5. An evaluation of the impact of an inter-agency intervention programme to promote social skills in primary school children	UK	Clinical and educational psychology	Eight children with severe emotional and behavioural problems.	Mixed methods Evaluation. Pre-and Post.	Qualitative: - Friendship, Anger Management, and Bullying questionnaires. - Playground Observation Schedule. Quantitative: - Visual Analogue Scales. - Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory. - Spence Children's Anxiety Scale. - Social Competence with Peers questionnaire. - Observation Checklist. - Conners' Rating Scale.	Post-test: - Lower child anxiety, oppositionality, hyperactivity & ADHD scores. - Increased anger management and child sense of control. - Increased playground cooperative behaviour, Assistant psychologist collected data and provided ongoing day-to-day contact with the school pupils and teachers.	Assistant psychologist part of team leading intervention.

**Evaluative studies**

<b>Author/ year</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Field</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Design</b>	<b>Outcome measures</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Assistant contribution</b>
<b>Overall WoE (D)</b>								
6. Monsen, Brown, Akthar, & Khan. (2009)	An evaluation of a pre-training assistant educational psychologist programme	UK	Educational psychology	Two cohorts of assistants (20 in total).	Mixed methods- evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measure of input (work based work tracking)</li> <li>- Measure of impact (85 TMRFs).</li> <li>- Measures of perceptions (stakeholders &amp; assistants)</li> <li>- Annotated case studies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aim of AEP to increase capacity.</li> <li>- Most time spent on project work.</li> <li>- AEPs conducted casework, research, training &amp; literature reviews.</li> <li>- Interventions involving AEPs had a positive effect on outcomes.</li> <li>- Unclear distinction of AEP &amp; EP; leaflet piloted improved clarity of roles.</li> <li>- School staff valued work in schools on a regular and sustained basis.</li> </ul>	Included in findings.
WoE D: High								
7. Rose (2013)	A preliminary investigation into the influence of therapist experience on the outcome of individual anger interventions for people with intellectual disabilities.	UK	Clinical psychology	37 individuals with intellectual disability & anger control difficulties.	Quantitative evaluation: Pre- and post two group design.	<p>Pre-and post:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structured interviews with carer and participants.</li> <li>- British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS).</li> <li>- An adapted Anger Inventory.</li> </ul>	<p>Post intervention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction in Anger Inventory scores.</li> <li>- Greater reduction in anger scores in experienced therapist's group.</li> <li>- Significant reduction in Anger Inventory Scores</li> </ul>	Assistants delivered the intervention.
WoE D: Medium								
<p>19 seen by experienced therapist &amp; 18 by assistant.</p>								

## **Findings**

### ***Characteristics and context of the assistant psychologist role***

Each study is outlined in Table 1, studies included the fields of educational and/or clinical psychology. No papers identified solely focus upon the other psychological fields. AEP and ACP will be referred to as such, to distinguish between the fields. Sample sizes ranged from two to 136 participants; Hughes *et al.* (2015) included the greatest number of ACPs within their research (136), however their data included assistants, from various psychologies and did not distinguish the contributions in relation to the respective fields. Therefore, the current deployment of assistants across services could not be established. In Scotland 13 out of 15 managers surveyed had previously or were currently employing AEPs, suggesting that the role was to some extent part of the service establishment (Collyer, 2012). A shortage of qualified EPs (Collyer, 2012; Monsen *et al.*, 2009) and the perceived benefits of developing the profession led to the employment of AEPs. Many AEP posts were temporary contracts of one or two years (Collyer, 2012; Lyons, 2000; Monsen *et al.*, 2009). The majority of ACPs were working in volunteer roles in the Republic of Ireland (RoI) compared to only one in ten posts being voluntary in the UK (Hughes *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, most AEPs were required to have a minimum of two years' experience of working with children and young people (C/YP), and a BPS accredited undergraduate psychology degree (Lyons, 2000; Monsen *et al.*, 2009). Collyer (2012) suggested that posts not requiring this level of previous experience may reference those working as research assistants. Whilst the aims of the included studies were varied, within this review the contribution of the assistant role was categorised by the author into two distinct aspects, i.e.: (a) service level; (b) direct work with service users.



### ***Service level contributions***

Four studies included the assistant contribution to research projects (Collyer, 2012; Hughes *et al.*, 2015; Maddern *et al.*, 2004; Monsen *et al.*, 2009). A substantial amount of time, roughly half a working week for most assistants (Collyer, 2012; Hughes *et al.*, 2015; Monsen *et al.*, 2009), was dedicated to project work, including gathering and inputting and analysing data, though the time allocated varied significantly in Hughes *et al.* (2015) findings (between one to 30 hours per week). Less commonly studies reported the completion of administrative tasks; the majority of ACPs spent a proportion of their time completing administrative duties (Hughes *et al.*, 2015), however Monsen *et al.* (2009) found that this only accounted for 8.8% of the AEPs' time.

### ***Direct work with service users***

In all seven studies the assistants worked directly with service users under off-site supervision. Over 90% of ACPs had direct contact with service users (Hughes *et al.*, 2015) and Lyons (2000) reported that AEPs spent “the majority of their time carrying out direct work in schools” (p. 273). Three studies raised the challenge of distinguishing between EPs and AEPs (Counsell and Court, 2000; Lyons, 2000; Monsen *et al.*, 2009); an initial planning meeting with schools to clearly define the AEP workload (Counsell and Court, 2000) and an AEP handbook (Monsen *et al.*, 2009) were implemented to overcome this.

### ***Group work (systemic and intervention).***

Several studies included information regarding systemic work within institutions. Lyons (2000) highlighted the AEP contribution to school improvement including delivering training to groups of staff, which was reinforced by Counsell and Court's

(2000) personal account. It appeared that the AEP role allowed assistants to offer on-going support and training to consolidate staff learning of training delivered.

Monsen *et al.* (2009) evaluated the AEP contribution by gaining feedback from service users, and group work (including staff training), and research were valued.

The majority of ACPs carried out group work (Hughes *et al.*, 2015). Consistently AEP group work took place in schools (Collyer, 2012; Counsell and Court, 2000; Lyons, 2000), including delivering social skills groups (Counsell and Court, 2000).

Madderns *et al.*'s (2004) primary aim was to evaluate the impact of an inter-agency programme to support social skills in primary school children. The assistant contribution was not only seen as being one of a team (community psychiatric nurse, clinical psychologist and support from learning support assistant) to deliver the intervention, but the assistant also provided on-going contact with pupils, teachers and parents which was suggested to be "pivotal to the successful running of the group" (p. 151) by all professionals involved in leading the group.

#### ***Individual work with service users.***

Except for Maddern *et al.* (2004) all the studies included one to one work within the contributions of assistants; this covered involvement with a range of professionals and laypersons. AEPs were involved with working one to one with school staff and C/YP, including undertaking interviews and consultation (Lyons, 2000; Monsen *et al.*, 2009). Collyer's (2012) findings contrasted this, with 'offering advice to staff' and 'consultation' given as examples of tasks considered to be out of the AEP's competence. However, 'offering advice to staff' was raised by AEPs (six responses) and consultation was only raised by one manager which limits the possibility of generalising findings.

Individual casework was a prominent feature of the AEP role (Lyons, 2000), (half a day per week (Collyer, 2012); 23% of the AEP's time (Monsen *et al.*, 2009)). An assistant conducting individual assessment was evidenced in five of the studies (Collyer, 2012; Counsell and Court, 2000; Hughes *et al.*, 2015; Lyons, 2000; Monsen *et al.*, 2009), including the administration of psychometric assessments. Three studies however, raised that test administration was not within the assistant's competence without adequate training (Collyer, 2012; Hughes *et al.*, 2015; Lyons, 2000).

In line with the role of clinical psychologists, ACPs were involved in delivering therapeutic interventions (Hughes *et al.*, 2015; Rose, 2012). Hughes *et al.* (2015) found that cognitive behavioural therapy was the most common form of therapy, while Rose (2012) specifically aimed to investigate the influence of therapist experience (experienced clinical psychologist or ACP) on the outcome of an individual anger intervention. There was an overall reduction in anger inventory scores with a greater reduction for the group seen by an experienced therapist. However, using a calculated 'reliable change' index, the difference in proportion of clients achieving reliable change between experienced and less experienced therapist groups was not statistically significant. Furthermore, it is possible that, due to the broad range of needs that participants displayed, (differential) adaptations may have been required which challenged fidelity of the therapy delivered. The rationale for an ACP carrying out intervention was not elaborated on; it was stated that allocation was based on the capacity of the clinicians to take new clients and within the discussion the possibility of a stepped care model was raised. This highlights one potential structure of the inter-relationship of function between fully qualified psychologists and ACPs.

### ***Support and training***

All of the included studies made reference to support for the assistants including; supervision (Maddern *et al.*, 2004; Rose, 2012); group/peer supervision (Collyer, 2012; Counsell and Court, 2000; Hughes *et al.*, 2015; Lyons, 2000; Monsen *et al.*, 2009); or shadowing opportunities (Collyer, 2012; Counsell and Court, 2000; Hughes *et al.*, 2015). Regarding training, induction/ initial block trainings were mentioned in several studies (Collyer, 2012; Counsell and Court, 2000; Lyons, 2000); Hughes *et al.* (2015) highlighted assistant dissatisfaction with their training (half of assistants in RoI and 18 percent of the UK based assistants). The frequency of supervision varied across the studies from weekly (Rose, 2012) compared to six weekly sessions (Collyer, 2012). Supervision to ensure adherence to intervention programmes was recognised (Rose, 2012), and the potential of work being considered out of competence without appropriate supervision (Collyer, 2012). Collyer (2012) noted that assistants were not members of a professional body and considered the implications of AEPs pursuing relevant experience to secure a place on professional training, therefore the potential danger of seeking work beyond their competence. Since the writing of Collyer's study, the HCPC Standards of Proficiency for Practitioner Psychologists, (HCPC 2015, p. 8) includes that psychologists must exercise professional judgement and retain responsibility for decisions along with participating in mentoring and supervision, which clarifies that accountability remains with the supervising psychologist. Reflective supervision was one means to mediate issues of competence and accountability and Collyer (2012) found that AEPs supervised by a manager were less likely to experience reflective focused components to their supervision than those under the supervision of a main grade EP. Sporadic timing, the focus of supervision and the exclusion of self-care

elements were reasons for dissatisfaction (Hughes *et al.*, 2015, p. 109). Lyons summarised the significance of support (2000); “the effectiveness of the work of AEPs is only sustainable through the supervision, support and training provided at all levels within the service” (p. 276).

### ***Assistant psychologist career progression***

Five studies (Collyer, 2012; Counsell and Court, 2000; Hughes *et al.*, 2015; Lyons, 2000; Monsen *et al.*, 2009) found that assistants had subsequently obtained training places and Hughes *et al.* (2015) stated that this was the most common reason for job satisfaction. Gaining an understanding of the EP role, early intervention and the application of psychology, resulted in the AEPs’ increased confidence to become qualified (Collyer, 2012; Counsell and Court, 2000). This reinforces the significance of Collyer’s (2012) reference to ‘grow your own EP’ when discussing the rationale for employing AEPs, which suggests a perceived strategic link between employment as an AEP and career progression.

## **Discussion**

### ***Main findings and implications***

#### ***Competence and supervision***

The current review aimed to explore the contribution of paraprofessionals within applied psychology and findings indicate that assistant psychologists are to some extent part of the psychological service structure and are being used in a variety of ways, completing discrete tasks, or working in conjunction with fully qualified psychologists to extend psychological input. However, there is an apparent lack of clarity within the included studies regarding the distinction between assistant and fully qualified psychologist work. Similarly, there is a lack of detail regarding how

and why, certain tasks are delegated/ allocated to an assistant psychologist which merits further exploration. The review suggests that assistants contribute at both a service level and by conducting direct work with service users. Inconsistencies, or variations across contexts were highlighted, regarding what is considered within or beyond an assistant's competence (e.g. administering assessments), which parallels similar challenges in other fields also utilising paraprofessionals (Edes, 2007), with difficulties arising regarding how best to communicate this to service users. Monsen *et al.* (2009) highlighted the creation of an AEP handbook and information leaflet to distinguish between the role of an AEP and a fully qualified EP, and another potential way to clarify the assistant remit may be to draw upon professional guidance. While guidance therefore, similar to that created for ACPs (BPS, 2011) may promote consistency within psychological fields, the HCPC Standards of Proficiency for Practitioner Psychologists (2015) are clear that qualified practitioners must retain responsibility for delegated work. Similarly, the importance of supervision was highlighted in the review, particularly to ensure adherence to the delivery of intervention programmes and that tasks were within assistants' competence.

### *Conceptualising stepped care*

Another pertinent finding was in relation to assistants conducting therapy and supplementing the work of fully qualified psychologists. An anger management intervention delivered by assistants harnessed change (although greater change was observed when delivered by experienced therapists) (Rose, 2012), and Monsen *et al.* (2009) credited added value outcomes to the AEP's direct work with individuals. This highlights a potential structure for service delivery: therapeutic intervention

offered via a graduated approach based upon level of need, with assistants delivering initial intervention. While the majority (59%) of the assistants' casework contributions in Monsen et al. (2009) targeted social, emotional and behavioural needs, this was not separated or explored when reporting the targeted outcomes as measured by Target Monitoring and Review Form. Future research therefore, could usefully establish the crucial elements required for successful therapeutic intervention and how an assistant could be supported to deliver such programmes and ensure fidelity to programmes. Within educational psychology, education establishments were the predominant setting for direct work; Lyons (2000) included findings of a previous study (Lyons, 1999) in their evaluation of the AEP role stating that "the majority of school staff welcome their [AEP] service and find their regular and practical input helpful; they value their time in that it supports closer communication between schools and the service" (p. 275). This highlights the potential of the role to enhance the qualified psychologist's input and potentially extend involvement through follow up work and availability to apply principles of noticing and adjusting in situ. The findings highlighted the assistant capacity to liaise with service users and offer on-going support was significant to their success. This is a timely finding considering the current excess demand for psychological services and shortages of fully qualified EPs (Truong and Ellam, 2014).

### ***Assistant role diversification***

Findings indicate that the majority of assistants contribute to research, furthermore Collyer (2012) identified the establishment of research assistants as an additional discrete paraprofessional role, highlighting another potential role diversification. Notably, several studies identified in the searches (e.g. Farrand *et al.*, 2007) were

excluded due to the supervision being delivered by other professionals such as general practitioners or psychiatrists. This would indicate that certain paraprofessional roles are embedded within a multi-professional context and are not defined or governed solely in relation to professional psychology. Maddern *et al.* (2004) provide evidence of successful multiagency practices which may be implemented across psychological disciplines in line with recent social and political changes in the UK that promote an integrated system of working within L(H)A services. It may be helpful therefore, to explore and evaluate the potential contribution of paraprofessional roles that contribute to service delivery across professions, including but not limited to psychological services, with particular regard for the statutorily defined responsibilities and accountabilities of registered practitioners.

#### ***Assistants' progression onto professional training***

Employment as an assistant psychologist as a stepping stone into the profession was apparent (cf. Clare, 1995), although not the focus of the current review. Studies that specified contract type and length indicated that many AEP posts were temporary contracts of one or two years (Collyer, 2012; Lyons, 2000; Monsen *et al.*, 2009), in line with progression onto professional training (NCTL and HEE, 2016).

#### ***Uneven paraprofessional research base***

Clinical psychology has an established structure of paraprofessionals working in conjunction with fully qualified psychologists and roles are constantly evolving such as Graduate Mental Health Worker. Despite including several titles within the search terms, all the included studies used the term assistant psychologist. This highlights a



lack of high quality research in relation to other paraprofessional roles that are working in conjunction with fully qualified psychologists, and it may be useful for future research to explore the hierarchical structures in place within the different fields of applied psychology.

Within forensic psychology, alternative placement-based practitioner programmes are emerging offering self-funded forensic psychology practice doctorates in a similar format to that of the educational psychology doctorate, which may result in increasing numbers of trainees available as an alternative to existing paraprofessional roles. While research has explored practice regarding trainees within the fields of psychology (e.g. Foltz *et al.*, 2014), it may be similarly beneficial to explore other paraprofessional roles working in conjunction with fully qualified psychologists to inform deployment and accountability.

### ***Limitations***

#### ***Lack of international scope***

This review was unintentionally limited to studies conducted within the UK and RoI. It may have been possible to expand the dataset by extending contact internationally, where assistants may also be established, to elicit a greater number of role descriptors. However, the comprehensive investigation of psychology paraprofessionals' contributions within two closely related national contexts allowed for valid comparisons and conclusions to be drawn and the emergent questions raised are potentially relevant to psychology services outside the UK. Contextual factors such as a focus upon cost effectiveness (Castelnuovo *et al.*, 2016) and the

significance of engaging with supervision is relevant to registered practitioners worldwide (Silva *et al.*, 2016).

### *Limited UK evidence base*

Systematic reviews enable us to establish not only what is currently known, but also highlights lack of evidence (Gough *et al.*, 2013). The lack of research regarding the employment of assistant psychologists is recognised due to the relatively small numbers of studies identified in the current literature review. Furthermore, several of the included studies pre-date the current context for the delivery of psychological services, such as traded EP services (Lee and Woods, 2017) and the introduction of statutory regulation for psychologists (HCPC, 2009), which may limit the generalisability of some findings. Despite the spread of papers across time, earlier papers (e.g. Lyons, 2000) identified high levels of demand from schools for EP services, which parallels the current context despite the apparent utilisation of TEPs (NAPEP, 2015). Therefore, the “need for creative approaches to practice that support EPs to refocus their role” (Lyons, 2000, p. 273), such as the deployment of AEPs, is applicable in current practice. The finding that the assistant roles promoted positive outcomes for service users through direct work, implicitly suggests that the roles may maximise efficiency within services e.g. a graduated cost-effective service response. However, the current review data lacked the necessary detail to explore fully how assistant psychologists can extend or enhance the work of fully qualified practitioners, which future research could detail more explicitly. In line with Salkovskis (1995) hourglass model of knowledge progression, future research could initially explore a ‘typical case’ illuminating current LA practice regarding the role of assistant psychologists, prior to larger scale, focused enquiry being undertaken.

## **Conclusion and summary of implications**

The current review highlights a lack of clarity and consistency regarding what is deemed an appropriate remit for assistant psychologists working within the UK and the RoI. This is pertinent in light of the association between employment as an assistant psychologist and subsequent progression onto professional psychological training, which is apparently promoted by employers. It appears that distinctive assistant roles co-exist, including discrete research assistant roles and assistant psychologists who contribute to the delivery of psychological services. Ways in which assistant psychologists can expand the delivery of psychological services at both a systemic and individual level include a stepped approach to intervention. This may be particularly significant in a context where services have had to become increasingly accountable for their work, and versatile in their approach to service delivery (cf. Lee and Woods, 2017). Further research may clarify the hierarchical structures within psychological services and how these can be organised when paraprofessionals are embedded within multiagency teams. The current review identified studies relating to predominantly clinical and educational psychology within the UK and RoI. Future research may wish to explore the utilisation of paraprofessionals internationally and within all fields of applied psychology. Despite the apparent uneven paraprofessional research base in applied psychology, the current review highlights the versatility of the assistant role to extend the reach of psychological services. It will be useful to practice for future research to identify in more detail those service delivery practices and structures which maximise the potential contribution of assistant psychologists alongside fully qualified psychologists.

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**Paper Two: Exploring the role of Assistant Educational  
Psychologists within Local Authority Educational Psychology  
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**Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within  
local authority Educational Psychology services in England.**

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## **Paper Two: Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England.**

Following consistently high demands for educational psychology services (EPSs) (Truong & Ellam, 2014) and recent influences upon the delivery of EPSs (Lee & Woods, 2017), the contribution of assistant educational psychologists (EPs) was explored via a multiple case study design. Participants included assistant psychologists, EPs and senior/principal psychologists from two local authority EPSs in England.

Recorded focus groups and interviews were transcribed and a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was conducted to produce a cross case analysis. It was found that the role emerged from EP recruitment difficulties and that assistants work in diverse ways to enhance and extend the EPS offer to schools to improve outcomes for children, however the role did not reduce the demand of EP workloads.

Challenges to the successful deployment of assistant EPs were highlighted along with implications for practice and future research.

Benefits for the assistants themselves included career progression experience.

Keywords: assistant educational psychologist, contribution, paraprofessionals, school psychology, role.

## **Introduction**

### *The impact of the changing social, economic and political context upon the delivery of educational psychology services (EPS).*

Historically, a number of government agendas e.g. the Every Child Matters agenda (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2004), have worked towards a more integrated system of working across health, social care and education services, which promoted flexible commissioning across services. Since 2010, a number of changes to the social, political and educational systems have had a significant impact upon the delivery of EPSs in the UK (Woods, 2014). Lee and Woods (2017) summarise recent social-political developments that have led to a process of decentralization, driven by a vision of more flexible, cost effective and consumer orientated services, that reshaped public service settings (Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP), 2011) with substantial cuts to public spending (Ayres & Pearce, 2013).

The development of integrated services at a time of local authority (LA) financial restrictions accelerated the move to a commissioning model (AEP, 2011), which has had a major impact upon service delivery of EPSs. Initially this resulted in high numbers of educational psychologist (EP) posts being cut from LAs (AEP, 2011). In response many EPSs evolved to become either ‘semi-traded’ or ‘fully commissioned’ services (Lee & Woods, 2017) with many EPs moving to work within private limited companies, social enterprises, or as sole traders, in competition with (LA) psychological services. EPSs have had to become increasingly accountable for their work and versatile in their approach to service delivery to maintain their delivery capacities and distinctive contribution within the sector (Farrell, Woods, Lewis, Rooney, Squires, & O’Conner, 2006; Lee & Woods, 2017).

### *The evolving role of EPs*

Historically, EPSs have reported difficulties recruiting EPs (Truong & Ellam, 2014), evidenced by a steady increase of vacancies over the past three years (National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) & Health Education England (HEE), 2016). Furthermore, the 2013 EP workforce survey found that the workforce appeared to be ‘aging’ and ‘a greater demand for services than could be met’ was reported (Truong & Ellam, 2014, p. 6). Many EPSs have utilised associates and agency workers to meet this deficit in workforce capacity, as schools are frequently demanding more time from EPs (Farrell et al., 2006; Stobie, Gemmell, Moran, & Randall, 2002; Truong & Ellam, 2014).

Several changes have affected EPS delivery and exacerbated the pressures on LA services. In September 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provisions within the Children and Families Act (2014) were introduced, which increased the statutory demands upon LA EPSs. The EP role expanded to work with children and young people (C/YP) up to the age of 25, coupled with the statutory duty to provide psychological advice to inform the conversion of an estimated 300,000 previous SEND ‘Statements of Need’ to ‘Education, Health and Care Plans’ (NCTL & HEE, 2016). Difficulties in recruitment and increasing workloads, have been previously cited as reasons for employing assistants (Lyons, 2000; Monsen, Brown, Akthar, & Khan, 2009), therefore the effects of a high number of EPs potentially retiring, whilst the demand on services is high, reinforces the need for increasing EPSs’ capacity, however research has not yet explored this opportunity in relation to the current context. The utilisation of paraprofessionals is established in a number of fields including law, health care and education, yet recent literature reviews have highlighted a lack of empirical research regarding the

deployment of paraprofessionals within applied psychology (The Authors, *submitted*).

The restructuring of training for EPs in 2006 (Farrell, et al., 2006) from the one-year masters course, to the three-year doctorate (NCTL & HEE, 2011) had implications for EPSs. This change encouraged applicants from a broader range of professional backgrounds and the demand for EP funded training places remains high, as reflected in the steady increase in the number of government funded EP training places in recent years (K. Woods, personal communication, April 21, 2016). Subsequently, this restructuring created an influx of trainee educational psychologists (TEPs) seeking practice placements and employers may have converted previous assistant posts into TEP practice placements (Truong & Ellam, 2014). Nevertheless, demand for EPs continues to exceed supply (NAPEP, 2015) despite the contribution of TEPs, which highlights that there remains a need for alternative ways to expand service capacity. Previous research has indicated that the assistant psychologist role provides ideal experience to progress onto professional training (Clare, 1995; Collyer, 2012). Therefore, whilst EPSs struggle to recruit EPs, the use of assistants to increase service capacity may be one way to lighten EP workloads whilst supporting the growth of the profession (Monsen et al., 2009).

### ***Deployment of assistant EPs***

Within this broader social political context there has been an increase in the number of assistants across public sectors (Bach, Kessler, & Heron, 2007). Challenges to the utilisation of assistant capacity however include: a risk of a loss of control; both an under and over expectation of assistants (Thornley, 2000); concerns regarding the assistant capacity being used for existing workload, as opposed to stimulating new

ways of working (Nancarrow & Mackey, 2005) and the need to establish a clear remit of work (Rezin & Tucker, 1998). Woodruff and Wang, (2005) raised that without guidelines indicating what may be within an assistant's competence, supervisors may be tempted to allow supervisees to take on more work than is ideal. The BPS sets a threshold of standards for best practice in the UK and have previously published guidance regarding the role of clinical assistant psychologist (BPS, 2016), but clarification of the role within educational psychology remains lacking. Nash, et al. (2003) reinforced the need for regular supervision, which has been recognised as essential for TEPs, however adds further demands to over-stretched services (BPS, 2010; Gonsalvez & Milne, 2010).

Research exploring the role of assistant psychologists is limited and outdated (The Authors, *submitted*). The assistant psychologist role however, is one potential solution to recruitment difficulties (Monsen et al., 2009) and a means to expand psychological input to schools (Lyons, 2000). Assistant EPs can contribute at whole service level (e.g. research projects) and conduct direct work with service users (Monsen et al., 2009). This highlights a potential benefit to EPS users through expanded psychological service delivery, especially considering the business imperatives that govern transitions to traded services (Lee & Woods, 2017). Statutory regulations were introduced in 2009, by the UK's Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) though the influence of statutory responsibility upon practitioner paraprofessional roles and the influence upon the interrelationship of EP/assistant function remains underexplored.

Monsen et al., (2009) noted the gains for the service and the assistants themselves and Farrell et al., (2006) reinforced that "EPSs should consider how assistant EPs and TEPs can make a contribution that complements those of fully

qualified EPs” (p. 12). Without further exploration, to drive evidenced based practice, the posts may be vulnerable to a number of pitfalls as highlighted by Collyer (2012): “the dearth of research means there is no transparency as to their role, remit and function and how they are supported, supervised and developed” (p. 160). This may become increasingly significant following proposals that suggest a modification to clinical and educational psychology training arrangements “through greater integration of training” (NCTL & HEE, 2016, p. 5) and the potential of the assistant psychologist role may be developed as a new post graduate qualification, which would allow individuals an automatic interview if applying for the educational or clinical psychology doctorate training (NCTL & HEE, 2016). This may be an attractive option to graduates due to the high competition for course places. Furthermore, the proposed changes may have many financial implications including a reduction in the cost of the doctorate course for the government funder. Considering the evolving context of EPSs and models of service delivery discussed, the current paper aims to investigate the deployment and contribution of assistant EPs within LA EPSs to illuminate current practice.

## **Methodology**

### ***Design***

The study adopted an exploratory multiple embedded case study design (Yin, 2014) (see figure 2) within a critical realist epistemological position. The application of a critical realist position allowed the researcher to investigate tentative explanations for events (Robson, 2011), whilst acknowledging the significance of the social structures. This allowed the researcher to explore the role of assistant EPs, whilst retaining a holistic view of the real-life events to answer the following research questions (RQ):

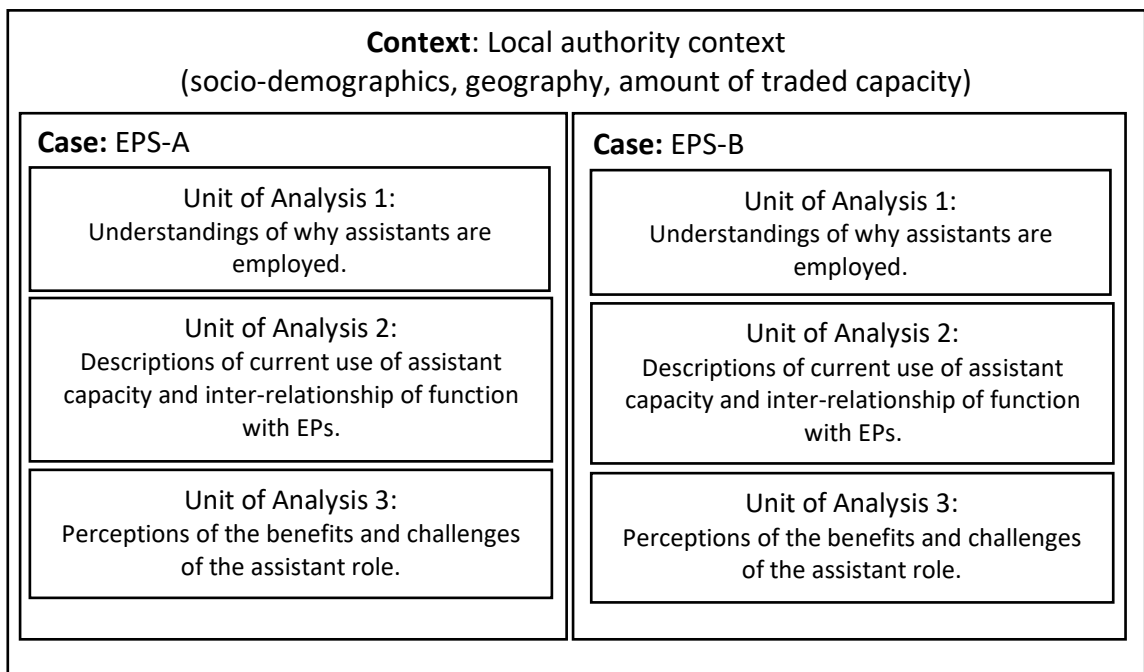


- (1) What is the current rationale for employing assistant EPs within LA EPSs in England?
- (2) What is the inter-relationship of function between EPs and assistants and how do services utilise assistant capacity?
- (3) What have been the perceived benefits/ challenges to the use of assistant EPs in LA EPSs?

Alternative research approaches were considered, including a large-scale survey, however the topic lacks research and an established theoretical model from which to guide a quantitative exploration. A small-scale study to explore current practice therefore, was deemed most appropriate in line with Salkovski's (1995) framework for the systematic advancement of knowledge through research. Case studies are considered particularly relevant to examine contemporary issues within real-world contexts, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, the utilisation of a multiple embedded case study (Yin, 2014) (see Figure 2) was considered ideal. The identification of sub-units of analysis (UoA) allowed for a more detailed level of inquiry and focused the researcher upon the RQs at all stages of the research process, while remaining attentive to the surrounding contextual factors as is visually represented in Figure 2. For example, each UoA related to each research question; this allowed the researcher to ensure that adequate data was collected for each. The UoAs therefore, influenced the development of semi-structured interview schedules to ensure that adequate attention was paid to each UoA. Furthermore, it was considered that certain UoAs would need to be inclusive of specific participant groups. UoA 1 was considered in greater depth within the management/ senior EP contributions, conversely UoA 3 was recognised to benefit from multiple perspectives. Therefore, the UoA aided the

researcher in focusing their inquiry and data collection methods. Similarly, during the process of analysis each UoA along with the relevant propositions guided the initial stage of deductive analysis and ensured that adequate attention was given to answering each RQ.

Figure 2. Multiple embedded case studies and units of analysis



### *Sampling and participant recruitment*

Two LA EPSs were recruited via purposive sampling through links with the regional university educational psychology training provider, or by knowledge of the first author from previous employment. This allowed the author to ensure the homogeneity of the sample; cases were similar in terms of having an established model of using assistants (at least one year) and a minimum of two assistants at the time of data collection. The researcher sought to enlist EPSs within contrasting LA contexts, to enhance the potential generalisability of the findings (see Table 2). The researcher attended team meetings at both EPSs to present an overview of the current

study and to enrol participant groups by offering several potential dates for the data collection. Each participant was required to give written informed consent.

### *Group interviews and focus groups (FG)*

Group interviews and FGs are considered well suited to explorations and case study methodology (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Yin, 2014). To ensure that the RQs were addressed adequately, semi-structured schedules were used to guide all FGs and group interviews (see appendix B5 and B6). The questions guiding the FG structures were derived from the RQs and pertinent elements from existing literature. The groups varied from two to five participants, which was ideally suited to a conversational structure. Each group discussion was recorded on an encrypted audio recording device only available to the researcher.

To ensure that all three RQs could be addressed fully from each participant perspective whilst ensuring that participants felt safe and secure to express their ideas without judgment, the PEP/Service Manager from each service was given the option of participating in the EP focus group or being interviewed individually (see Table 2). The FGs with EPs consisted of EPs who had direct experience of working with assistant EPs, including those in supervisory roles. Data collection was completed between November 2016 and June 2017. Audio recordings were fully transcribed and anonymised by the author. In line with the critical features of a case study design (Yin, 2014), the study benefited from triangulating multiple sources of evidence through gaining the views of multiple participant groups and examining supporting documentation. Supplementary documentation included job descriptions, EPS literature and assistant allocations.

Table 2. Demographics of each EPS case and data collection.

<b>Contextual Information</b>	<b>Local Authority A</b>	<b>Local Authority B</b>
Area classification	County council with five district councils	Metropolitan borough (five districts)
Geographical area	>1000 square miles	37 square miles
Population	>675, 000	>220, 000
English Indices of Multiple deprivation (2015)	Within the 10% least deprived	Third of the area amongst the 10% most deprived

### **Educational psychology service (EPS):**

Management structure	One Service Manager, two Senior EPs (SEP)	One Principal EP (PEP)
Number of EPs	14 full time equivalent EPs (across three teams)	14 full time equivalent EPs
Number of TEPs	One third year TEP	One third year and two second year TEPs
Number of AEPs	Two assistant EPs	Three assistant EPs
Length of AEP contract	One year fixed term contract	One year fixed term contract

### **Data collection**

Assistant EP group interviews (time in post when interviewed)	EPS-A, Assistant EP1: (in post 7 months) EPS-A, Assistant EP2: (in post 5 months)	EPS-B, Assistant EP1: (1 year, 10 months) EPS-B Assistant EP2: (10 months) EPS-B Assistant EP3: (10 months)
EP focus groups/ group interviews	Management group interviews: 1. (EPS-A, service manager and EPS-A, SEP1) 2. (EPS-A, SEP1 and EPS-A, SEP2)  EP Focus groups: 1. 4 EPs	EP focus group: EPS-B, PEP and four EPs

### ***Analysis and integration of data***

Themes were drawn from the data by undertaking a combined deductive and inductive approach to the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher immersed themselves in the data by first transcribing the data and a considered approach was taken to the sequence of analysis to avoid semantic habituation during initial coding. The researcher remained vigilant of their own epistemological and ontological stance to ensure that a whilst a deductive approach was taken, guided by propositions (Yin, 2014) (see appendix B1), alternative explanations were examined, and the data was revisited to explore inductive findings. The data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six stages of thematic analysis. Cross case conclusions were drawn from the two case studies, as it was assumed that the cases would predict similar results following the multiple case replication design (Yin, 2014).

### ***Research quality and trustworthiness***

To support the trustworthiness of the analysis, an independent researcher qualified to Masters level and currently studying to doctoral level in educational psychology coded sections from the three different participant groups and compared with the researcher's initial coding, which resulted in a high level of agreement. For credibility, member checking was conducted with the participants from each EPS at Stage Four of the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) which evidenced complete agreement from all participant groups regarding the comprehensiveness of superordinate and main themes.

### ***Ethical considerations***

The current research was conducted in line with University Ethical Practice Policy (2014), the BPS (2014) Code of Human Research Ethics and the HCPC (2016) Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics and ethical review was carried out by a regional university and ethical approval was granted on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2016. No formal contact was made with participants prior to obtaining ethical approval. Confidentiality to time and place was reiterated prior to any discussions and the researcher remained vigilant of potential sensitivities including; job security and the restructuring of services. The researcher was contactable (via email) following the data collection to answer any queries.

## **Findings**

A cross-case analysis of main themes was established, highlighting cross-case similarities and differences; main themes were grouped within the following super-ordinate themes:

- Recruitment strategy and rationale for the employment of assistants
- The utilisation of assistant capacity and diversity of assistant contribution
- Benefits of the assistant role/contribution
- Interrelationships within the EPSs
- Support to facilitate effective use of assistant capacity
- Challenges (and solutions) to the deployment of assistants
- Future directions: additional paraprofessional roles

### ***Recruitment strategy and rationale for the employment of assistants***

The initial rationale for employing assistants within both EPSs was “because of our staff shortages and we wanted to increase the capacity of the service” (EPS-A, SEP2), due to the excess demand for EPSs. This highlighted the potential of the

assistant role as part of a long-term recruitment strategy and there was a sense that promoting the assistant role was investing in the profession as “they might come back as well, or ... benefit the profession as a whole” (EPS-B, EP1). The high number and quality of assistant applicants was a common finding which drove the impetus to continue to recruit assistants. The senior management of each EPS considered the interest in the role to be due to the number of graduates wishing to gain psychological practice experience and the potential gains for the service by utilising an “untapped part of the workforce” (EPS-B, PEP). Other findings relating to recruitment included: alternative ways to increase capacity such as the use of agency/ associate EPs; the high turnover of assistants due to successful application to the EP training and how the role continues to evolve over time with each intake. The development of the role was described as ‘organic’ (EPS-B, Assistant EP1) and EPS-A, EP4 recognised that “the reasons for us recruiting in the first place ... probably aren’t necessarily the reasons we would say now, because when we first recruited people we weren’t really sure what an assistant EP could be within the service”.

***The utilisation of assistant capacity and diversity of the assistant contribution***

The assistants’ capacity was used for a variety of tasks epitomised by EPS-A, Assistant EP2; “it is quite a mix of doing some service related projects and then doing projects in schools and then ... 1:1 intervention and ... group interventions, so it is quite varied”. It was found that these contributions derived from a perceived need, either at an individual, whole school or EP service level which was likely to be continually changing, therefore sustaining the diversity of the role. Tasks undertaken by assistants were organised into two distinct categories: a) contributions at a whole service level, b) direct work with service users. These findings were triangulated

with supporting documentation, including job descriptions and assistant work logs (see Table 3).

Table 3. Work completed/ offered by assistants.

<b>Tasks undertaken/ able to offer</b>	<b>EPS-A</b>	<b>EPS-B</b>
<b>Whole service level/ service development</b>	<p>Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a resource base regarding bereavement and loss</li> <li>• Developing a vocational profile</li> <li>• Transition project</li> <li>• Promoting the implementation of RIX WIKIs</li> <li>• County wide survey regarding the Hospital School Outreach Service</li> <li>• Parent and pupil EPS evaluation</li> </ul> <p>Research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing resources for Talking Mats</li> <li>• Researching software for iPads</li> <li>• Researching whole class/school behaviour audit tools</li> </ul>	<p>Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of service delivery</li> <li>• Virtual school projects</li> <li>• Critical incidents</li> </ul> <p>Research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure impact of interventions i.e. Reading Buddies</li> <li>• Pre &amp; post measures for provision mapping</li> </ul>
<b>Whole school</b>	<p>Training/ workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precision teaching workshops for teaching assistants (TAs)</li> <li>• Supporting emotional literacy support assistants (ELSA) training days</li> <li>• ‘Breaking down the barriers’ intervention</li> <li>• Autism friendly classrooms</li> </ul> <p>Supporting schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating, implementing and modelling: visual supports; social stories</li> </ul>	<p>Training/ workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADHD</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Confidence and self-esteem</li> <li>• Social skills</li> <li>• Precision teaching training</li> <li>• Attention skills</li> <li>• MEMo</li> <li>• Emotion coaching</li> <li>• Emotionally friendly schools</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project using soft systems methodology to look at ‘fear of failure’</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attachment aware schools</li> <li>• ASD friendly early years settings</li> <li>• Attention in the early years</li> </ul> <p>Action Research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The effectiveness of a sensory room</li> <li>• Pre &amp; post measures for provision mapping</li> <li>• Managed moves</li> <li>• The review of the child development forum</li> </ul>
<b>Direct work with C/YP</b>	<p>Casework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administering tests</li> <li>• Observations</li> <li>• Home visits</li> </ul> <p>Individual intervention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social &amp; emotional work around bereavement</li> <li>• School refusal</li> <li>• Emotional literacy support</li> <li>• Cognitive behaviour therapy and psycho-educational work (school refuser)</li> <li>• Solution focused coaching sessions</li> </ul> <p>Group work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resiliency</li> <li>• Mindful attention programme</li> <li>• Motivation</li> </ul> <p>Statutory: scribing writing the outcomes meetings.</p>	<p>Casework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administering tests (WIAT, checklists)</li> <li>• Home visits</li> <li>• Gathering pupil views</li> </ul> <p>Individual intervention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coping power</li> <li>• Self-esteem and anxiety</li> <li>• Social skills e.g. developing friendships</li> <li>• Therapeutic work (looked after children)</li> </ul> <p>Group work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle of friends</li> <li>• Peer mediation</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• Mathematics intervention</li> </ul> <p>Statutory: contributing to post 16 casework (information gathering).</p>

*Assistant contributions at a whole service level*

Assistant contributions to project work across both cases was found to be highly significant to their perceived value (e.g. “we’re very dependent on them you know for some of the projects” EPS-B, PEP) and the project work was often considered to

be “good for the county or good for the service” (EPS-A, Service Manager).

Assistants also completed administrative tasks, accounting for roughly half a day a week for EPS-B assistants, and the assistant role provided a ‘buffer’ between what would have traditionally been considered admin duties and the role of EPs (EPS-A, EP3). This included tasks to complement the work of EPs e.g. creating resources that require a level of psychological knowledge, but that would not be an efficient use of EP time.

### *Systemic work in schools*

Systemic work within education settings was a common theme across both cases. EPS-B assistants were involved in a number of action research projects such as a “school has just got a sensory room, so they want a piece of research on the effectiveness” (EPS-B, Assistant EP3). This was reinforced by EPs: “[Assistant] support for any bits of action research that we’re doing has been really helpful” (EPS-B, EP4). Training was another example of systemic work undertaken by the assistants in schools.

### *Work with C/YP and their families*

A large proportion of assistant time was used to carry out direct work with C/YP and families. There was a potential for assistants to contribute to statutory tasks and in EPS-A the assistants attended ‘writing outcomes’ meetings to assist with transcribing, particularly if a locum EP was to attend. Conversely, EPS-B reported that the assistants had contributed to EHCP assessments, specifically for the post 16 cohort following a surge in requests, this included “gathering pupil views, but they also did some elements of assessments as well” (EPS-B, EP3).

Tasks completed by an assistant were to some extent informed by their current competence, which was based upon their previous experience (e.g. EPs seeking out assistants with a specific skill set). Another finding related to the challenge of “how do we match the demand we have as a team to the skills that they’re bring in?” (EPS-B, EP1).

#### *Assistant contributions within a traded service*

Charging schools for assistant time differed across the EPSs. EPS-B explained that the assistants were “highly marketable” (EPS-B, EP3) and clients purchased assistant time at a reduced cost to that of EPs and schools were “billed for both of them together” (EPS-B, EP4). Chargeable time was found to “include everything: the preparation; the delivery; and any write up; or meetings; or anything you have to have around that piece of work” (EPS-B, Assistant EP3). Conversely, despite EPS-A stating in their original assistant role description that “the direct work provided in schools by assistants will be charged at the usual EPS rate”, EPS-A, SEP1 explained that charging’s “something we’ve grappled with, and something that’s changed ... it all just became too complicated and it was all just a bit of a barrier really, so we’re just giving them away now, in terms of their time [i.e. role reverts to core resource]”.

#### *Benefits of the assistant role*

Benefits of the role were categorised into: a) benefits for the service/profession; b) assistant benefits; c) benefits for service users (including school and C/YP) as the role extends the reach of psychology. Firstly, benefits for the service included enhancing the services through bringing new ideas, knowledge and energy, which emerged from each of the EP focus groups: “it’s that injection of excitement into the

service and that feeling of bringing in things that are new and current... I think that's really nice for us to have around us, that sense of interest and excitement and newness and just different thinking. I think we gain from that" (EPS-A, EP7).

Furthermore, the rationale to include the assistant role as part of a long-term recruitment strategy was considered potentially beneficial for services. Secondly, the assistants were found to directly benefit from the experience and opportunities to develop their skills and confidence; the role was considered ideal to facilitate career progression onto the doctorate which was promoted by services. Finally, service users, including the C/YP and families, were found to benefit from assistant EP involvement as EPS-A, SEP2 explained that "I think the EPs that have used them, would say they've made a phenomenal difference to individual cases". The assistant capacity to liaise with those involved with individual cases, was found to empower staff and "increase confidence in schools" (EPS-A, SEP1). The extension of the EP involvement was found to promote positive outcomes so that assistants "leaving isn't quite the end" (EPS-A, Assistant EP1).

### ***Interrelationship of function within the EPSs***

A large proportion of the assistant workload arose from and was allocated by management, furthermore individual EPs generated work for assistants and the structure of allocations was summarised by EPS-A, SEP1:

"LAA SEP2 oversees the workload of the two assistants; so a request for a piece of work would go to her, only so that she has an overview of their time, so if they're inundated with requests she might help them to prioritise, but the responsibility and the ownership remains with the EP requesting the piece of work to supervise the assistant through that piece of work not EPS-A SEP2".

This highlighted that EPs retain responsibility for assistant work they generate; “it’s your piece of work, you own it” EPS-B, PEP (see time expense challenge below).

This also held implications regarding tasks not considered appropriate for an assistant to complete: across both EPSs, statutory work (with the few exceptions as mentioned above), including writing advice, was considered to be outside an assistant’s remit. Certain tasks ignited debate regarding the appropriateness of delegation to an assistant, including administering psychometric assessments or gathering parental feedback. Things that influenced the decisions regarding whether a task was appropriate for an assistant included whether it was deemed more efficient for an EP to complete (e.g. gaining qualitative information from assessments), assistant competence as not qualified (e.g. giving advice) or whether it may place an assistant in a vulnerable position (e.g. gaining parent feedback). In EPS-A the impact of geography was reported to be an “issue that they’re not now in our office” (EPS-A, EP8) and it was found to be helpful to have assistants based with the EPs to stimulate work; “when there are two people among the whole service, particularly based in a different part of it, it’s much harder to, you can’t even have those kind of water cooler type conversations” (EPS-A, EP2). Significantly, the assistant contributions were not found to reduce the EP workload. However, it was found that the assistant role extends and enhances the offer to service users. Firstly, there were frequent mentions of how the assistant contributions extended EPS input by completing tasks to complement EP involvement, including delivering training and recommended interventions, “...to then consolidate what she’d [EP] been doing” (EPS-A, Assistant EP2). This finding was reported by assistants in both services: “I think most of the stuff we’ve done has been a follow up” (EPS-A, Assistant EP2).

The potential for ‘EP jealousy’ was recognised; EPS-A, EP2 reported good naturedly, that “they get to do some really fun stuff, I want to do that”. The assistant contributions enhanced the EP’s direct work, e.g. through developing resources and working collaboratively with EPs: “it’s valuable to have two of you there, you can bounce off one another” (EPS-B, EP2). It was also helpful for assistants to work collaboratively on tasks, therefore the assistant role was considered “to work better when there are two assistants” (EPS-A, SEP1). The benefit of having more than one assistant was also considered in relation to peer support (see below).

### ***The importance of support***

In both services, assistants received regular supervision from SEPs and additional task specific supervision from EPs. A consistent finding across both EPSs was that the assistants felt “really well supported in everything” (EPS-A, Assistant EP1) and supervision was found to be crucial to the success of the role and to developing the assistants’ practice:

EP2: and the supervisor has to have the time to be a good supervisor.

EP4: It is really important that supervision, because that reflection time increases capacity.

EP3: ...and that’s the thing that brings them on, to the next phase in their thinking. (EPS-B)

Peer support was beneficial, and this was attributed to “sometimes it’s easier to ask each other [assistant EPs] questions than it is to ask an EP a question, even if it’s just down to we don’t know what their work load is ... it can feel more comfortable

sometimes” (EPS-B, Assistant EP2). EPS-B, Assistant EP2 explained that supporting each other when undertaking new tasks was helpful as it “eases you in to things you haven’t done before”. It was also recognised by EPs that assistants have “done quite a lot of supporting alongside each other, they do peer supervision anyway on a regular basis and then they’ve trained each other up, it’s amazing” (EPS-B, EP4). The importance of the availability of support for the assistants was found to be particularly pertinent, given the unfamiliarity of a new role and being given a relative high level of autonomy compared to their previous employment, which is epitomised by EPS-A, Assistant EP1: “I think that’s [collaborative approach to supervision] really helpful in terms of feeling more confident that what you’re doing is the right thing”. The assistants also received and valued a wide range of training and the opportunity to shadow different EPs.

### ***Challenges and solutions to the deployment of assistant EPs***

An initial lack of clarity regarding the assistant’s remit was a common theme and from an assistant perspective, there was a sense of uncertainty regarding the role:

I remember when I first got this job, people said ‘what do you actually do?’ and for about two months I was like ‘I don’t really know’ ...I think when you first start and you’re a bit like ‘what am I actually supposed to be doing? What is my actual job?’ Because it’s not as clear as ...where there’s more set expectations. (EPS-B, Assistant EP1)

Similarly, it was found that a potential challenge was communicating the rationale and intentions to the service to avoid frustration from EPs e.g. “some of the

challenges were about not explaining well enough to people in the service that it was a strategy we devised ... and that caused frustration, because people were saying, ‘if we’ve got the money to appoint an assistant why didn’t we appoint an EP?’” (EPS-A, Service Manager). Likewise, uncertainty of work to suggest or knowing “what their [assistant] workload is” (EPS-A, EP2) impacted EPs approaching assistants in EPS-A which appeared to be exacerbated by the geography of the service. To improve clarity and ensure a smooth transition into the role for the assistants and the EPs working with them, the development of the induction process (collaboratively with the assistants and utilising exit interviews) was recognised as a next step for both services. The benefit of creating an effective induction was reinforced due to the expected high turnover of assistants.

In EPS-A potential barriers to EPs using assistant time effectively were raised. A minor theme highlighted a potential EP preference for TEPs to be employed, which was associated with the interrelationship of function, as assistants do not actively reduce EP workloads. Furthermore, there appeared to be a “perception that assistants are very time expensive” (EPS-A, SEP2) due to the level of supervision required. This appeared to be intertwined with the recruitment difficulties and subsequent EP workloads. EPs reflected upon the cost (EP time), benefit balance; “there are benefits, but sometimes when you’re pressured for time, you just kind of don’t want any additional pressures on your time, even if it is beneficial” (EPS-A, EP6).

There remained a difficulty in communicating and distinguishing the assistant role with minor implications for EPs and assistant EPs: “everyone calls me an EP” (EPS-B, Assistant EP1); “I get quite confused between people who are training and



people who are assistants” (EPS-A, EP1). The use of EPS literature to clarify “what it is that we [assistant] can do in schools and the different strands of work that they can expect from us” (EPS-B, Assistant EP3) was raised along with ensuring that the role is clearly explained at the beginning of any involvement to manage school expectations.

### ***Future directions***

A less frequent theme was the potential of new additional paraprofessional roles with two suggestions being raised. Firstly, “putting in another layer sort of graduate psychologists [pre assistant EP role]” (EPS-B, EP3), which appeared to be considered due to the perceived success of the assistant role and high numbers of applicants. Secondly, a role to contribute to statutory processes such as “a whole different job for just going to the writing the outcomes meetings and that would be a job itself” (EPS-A, SEP1).

### **Discussion**

The current study reveals current practice within EPSs with several findings reinforcing previous research (e.g. Collyer, 2012; Monsen et al., 2009) including that employing assistants (RQ1) continues to stem from difficulties recruiting fully qualified EPs. However, while the context for recruitment concerned staff shortages, the rationale was considered to be linked to “invest in the wider profession” (EPS-B, EP4) due to the national shortage of EPs and “long term tempting people back” (EPS-A, EP7).

### ***Professional progression***

The role was recognised to have ‘evolved’ in both services as the remit of each assistant was influenced by their previous experience and subsequent competence. This reinforces the link with progression onto professional training and suggests that the role may be viewed as a phase within a career path and the assistants were found to benefit from the opportunities that the role provided to expand their ‘growing edges’ (EPS-B, EP3). The findings suggest a current dominating model whereby the role is developmental and aims to facilitate progression onto training. This has implications for practice considering the NCTL & HEE, (2016) suggestions of the assistant psychologist role being developed as a post-graduate qualification; if the numbers of assistant EPs rise, the forum for competition for training places may shift to within EP services and potentially increase the competition if the assistant capacity reduces the workforce shortfall. Furthermore, the progression between assistant entry onto the doctorate, TEP and fully qualified EP has not been explored in relation to the graduated fulfilment of SoPs (HCPC, 2015). Future research may explore this to inform continual professional development practices.

### *Communities of practice*

Previous literature relating to the supervision of paraprofessional roles within educational psychology, including TEPs, have recognised the reciprocal learning process that comes with being exposed to ‘fresh ideas, perspective, challenges’ and ‘opportunities for reflection’ (Carrington, 2004). Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) recognised that organisations can benefit from communities of practice by the ‘deepening knowledge and expertise through on-going interactions’ (p. 4). The educational psychology professional context appears highly stable, therefore, the potential of the assistant role to ‘inject’ vitality into the EPSs and the various skill

sets that individuals bring to the workplace, may contribute to a varied anatomy of service and promote a balance of ‘new and experienced’ individuals which holds wider benefits for services and the profession.

### ***Impact of EPS geography***

There were notable differences across the EPSs within the current case study. The impact of geography was evident in relation to the inter-relationship of function in EPS-A. Frequent contact was recognised to stimulate assistant work and the EPS-A service geography (across three teams) resulted in a barrier to EPs utilising assistants due to a lack of awareness of the assistant workload or competence, therefore uncertainty of work to suggest. In relation to distributed communities of practice (Wenger, et al., 2002), findings reinforced that more intentional effort would be needed within distributed services to ensure that staff retain a sense of connectedness to facilitate effective working relationships.

### ***Limitations of this study***

The current study utilised discursive approaches to data collection which was recognised to be well-suited to the expertise of the participant groups and in line with EPs’ usual way of working. However, the current study was small scale, which limits the ability to generalise findings. A large-scale enquiry would map more comprehensively explore the wider use of assistant EPs within the UK.

Furthermore, while the impact of assistant contributions upon outcomes for children was raised, the current study did not gather information regarding service user perspectives. Future research therefore, may explore the effectiveness of assistant contributions on outcomes for C/YP including service user perspectives to

uncover enabling factors.

It is important to note that the first researcher was known to a number of the participants through their previous role as an assistant EP and current role as a TEP. While this may limit the trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher ensured that they remained mindful of their own perspectives throughout and a researcher diary was used to maintain a high level of researcher reflectivity as “familiarity with the local situation may sensitize the researcher to local ethico-political issues of the community, which need to be taken into account when interviewing and reporting the interviews.” (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 134-135).

### ***Implications for practice***

#### *Cost-benefit analysis*

Compared to other professions whereby there is a clear distinction between tasks that can be efficiently delegated to paraprofessionals (e.g. teaching assistants), much of the EP role is highly ‘contextualised’ and the functions of role inter-relate in a complex way, therefore it is difficult to disaggregate specific tasks. This was reinforced through the initial lack of clarity that assistants experienced; assistants gradually develop during their time in post, to be able to efficiently undertake increasingly specialised tasks. This has implications for practice regarding the cost-benefit analysis, as it requires a greater degree of co-working when allocating tasks to assistants. This may be further complicated by the high turnover of assistants. It may be beneficial therefore, for services to consider hiring assistants at times when EPs have greater capacity to facilitate assistants’ learning and build working relationships.

### *Clarification and construction of the assistant role*

A lack of more widely established clarity regarding the role was evident amongst EPs, other professionals and clients. The findings highlighted a number of ways to overcome this including: an established induction, ideally based upon the experience of previous assistants; sharing creative thinking across services; and creating EPS literature to communicate the role.

Notably, additional paraprofessional roles were indicative of two distinct conceptualisations: a static role to undertake a predetermined task allocation aimed to increase capacity; and a time-limited developmental role (pre-assistant) which may increase the range of services offered to clients.

While the potential challenges of developing the assistant remit was considered within the data set, there was a lack of explicit discussion in relation to the potential of co-constructing the role within EP services. There are a number of models of professional practice that EPs can draw upon to guide their involvement with service users such as the problem analysis framework (Monsen, Graham, Frederickson & Cameron, 1998). The application of the models of professional practice may be considered an effective framework as it ensures that sufficient attention is paid to crucial stages of casework, such as negotiating and contracting the EP (or assistant) role. Therefore, the application of such models may be ideal to provide clarity for not only the school, but also the EP and assistant. This has further implications for practice considering that research exploring the distinctive contribution of EPs within the context of traded services (Lee & Woods, 2017) has highlighted that “a central task for EPs in this new context of multiple commissioners is to jointly co-construct their distinctive contribution with each customer” (p. 122).

### *Within traded services*

Assistants were initially employed using surplus funding due to workforce deficits, however the value of the assistants' contributions were recognised, therefore EPS B, intended to continue to employ assistants as an extension to the EP involvement.

While the differing school budget thresholds for EP services will influence the scope for expansion of the role within a traded climate, the findings reinforce the potential to market the assistant contributions within a traded agreement.

### **Conclusion**

The current study explored an otherwise under researched role within (semi) traded EPSs and findings confirm that assistants continue to be an attractive option while services experience recruitment difficulties. The role however, does not necessarily result in a reduction of EP workload, but offers a distinctive contribution to service delivery by expanding and enhancing a portfolio of services to be offered to clients in conjunction with fully qualified EPs. The current study has highlighted future directions/considerations for services strategic utilisation of assistant EPs including the cost-benefit analysis of delegating specialised tasks. Future research could usefully explore more directly the effectiveness of assistant contributions to outcomes for children.

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## **Paper Three**

### **The Dissemination of Evidence to Professional Practice**

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## **Introduction**

This paper considers the significance of findings from both Papers One and Two and reflects upon the dissemination process. The discussion begins at a general level, considering the development of evidence-based practice (EBP), practice-based evidence (PBE) and the role of educational psychologists (EPs) as scientist practitioners, followed by a review of potential theoretical models for the effective dissemination of research findings. The implications for practice from Papers One and Two are considered at three levels, individual, organisational and professional. The paper concludes with a strategy for dissemination with consideration of ways in which to monitor the impact of the research.

### **Section One: Evidence-based Practice (EBP), Practice-based Evidence (PBE) and the role of Educational Psychologists as Scientist Practitioners**

#### **The development of evidenced-based medicine and EBP.**

EBP first emerged in the medical field and ‘evidenced-based medicine’ has been defined as “a systemic approach to analyse published research as the basis of clinical decision making” (Claridge & Fabian, 2005, p. 547). The history of its development has been well documented and Claridge and Fabian (2005) outline the evolution of evidenced-based concepts; it is suggested that evidenced-based principles date back to the seventeenth century and early experiments leading to developments in early medicine. Subsequently, the transitional era of evidenced-based medicine, which began in the late nineteenth century, saw the emergence of randomised controlled trials (RCT) leading to the modern era of EBP. Advocates of EBP have stated that the “most important reason for the extraordinary advances in medicine, agriculture,

and other fields is the acceptance by practitioners of evidence as the basis for practice” (Slavin, 2002, p. 16). EBP is now prevalent across a wide range of professions including psychology, driven by the principle of maximising positive outcomes for service users (Dunsmuir & Kratochwill, 2013).

### **Evidenced-based practice and practice-based evidence.**

Whilst the principles of EBP rely upon the ability to scientifically measure effectiveness via the use of controls, PBE recognises that often complex issues do not easily fit the constraints of “cause and effect” methodology. Therefore, topics may be better understood through measuring interventions in practice with emphasis upon the contextual factors which may be lost through large scale decontextualized trials but are arguably instrumental upon the process. There appears to be no single internationally accepted definition of PBE (Furlong & Oancea, 2005) and EBP and PBE often become intertwined due to the reciprocal nature of research and practice. PBE is ideally suited for the trialling of innovative approaches while continuing to build upon the existing research base (Barkham, Hardy & Mellor-Clark, 2010). PBE therefore, can be viewed as a complementary paradigm to that of EBP and Spring (2007) makes the analogy to a three-legged stool to conceptualise PBE. The three legs denote best available research (EBP), expert opinion (the scientist practitioner) and the consideration of practice, in the context of client preferences and context.

### **The role of educational psychologists (EPs) as scientific practitioners.**

EBP is an enduring and fundamental element of EP practice as recognised by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 1987: “the science and profession of educational psychology is the branch of psychology that is concerned with the

development, evaluation, and application of (a) theories and principles of human learning, teaching, and instruction and (b) theory-derived educational materials, programs, strategies, and techniques that can enhance lifelong educational activities and processes” (as cited in Wittrock & Farley, 1989, p. 196). Furthermore, the continuing emphasis that is placed upon utilising EBP is reinforced by the inclusion of EBP within many of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) standards of proficiency (2012) and EPs are frequently seen as scientist practitioners (Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010).

A fundamental element of the role of EP as a practitioner-researcher has remained prominent alongside the focus upon EBP. While EPs continue to apply research to practice, EPs are also active in making a distinctive contribution to the knowledge base (Birch, Frederickson & Miller, 2015). The growing recognition of EBP is now prominent within education and has resulted in initiatives that aim to reduce the gap between research, policy and practice (Biesta, 2007) and it is recognised that EPs are well placed to drive both EBP and PBE in their role as scientist practitioners (Dunsmuir & Kratochwill, 2013). Dunsmuir and Kratochwill (2013) state that the psychologist role, as evidence-based practitioners, consistently involves attempts to transfer knowledge by ‘disseminating and translating’ research and applying psychological theory to practice.

### **Implications of EBP for research and methodologies.**

The history of EBP stems from the work of epidemiologists such as Cochrane in the 1970s and was originally intended to promote scientific rigour in medical treatments, which led to the consideration of randomised control experiments as the ‘gold standard’ in research at the top of the research methodology hierarchy (Scott, Shaw

& Joughin, 2001). However, challenges have been raised regarding the favour for particular epistemologies and methodologies, that promote 'rigour' above meaning (Burden, 2015) as this approach is arguably less adequate when extrapolated for other forms of research and has been suggested to result in the marginalisation of qualitative research (Morse, 2006). A number of academics have stated that the movement of EBP has largely discredited qualitative research and continued to promote 'methodological and political conservatism' (Denzin & Giardina, 2006). Critics of EBP have suggested that "evidence-based education seems to limit severely the opportunities for educational practitioners to make judgments in a way that is sensitive to and relevant for their own contextualised settings" (Biesta, 2007, p. 5). Furthermore, the promotion of the evidence base without considering client preference and availability of resources conflicts with current definitions of EBP (e.g. APA, 2006). Therefore, Frederickson (2002) highlights that the purpose of research should determine subsequent methodology. RCT are ideally suited to the evaluation of the effectiveness of a particular intervention, however if this form of research is not applicable then researchers should consider alternative methods further down the evidence hierarchy. It is recognised that less well-controlled studies, while may not allow for generalisations, can offer valuable insights into otherwise under researched topics (Frederickson, 2002). Clarke (2004) proposed a model to consider the dilemma that scientist practitioners face regarding how to progress from descriptions of the particular, to the general; and from description to explanation (see Figure 3). Multiple cases such as conducted in Paper Two are offered as one route from the particular descriptions (A) to explanations (B).

Single Case	Multiple Cases
Description (a)	Description (A)
Explanation (b)	Explanation (B)
Intervention (c)	Intervention (C)

Figure 3. Clarke’s model demonstrating pathways from problem descriptions to generalised explanations and interventions (Clarke, 2004).

This is also in line with Salkovski’s (1995) framework for the systematic advancement of knowledge through research, beginning with the initial phase involving small scale research to develop theory and practice (utilising single case studies) prior to more rigorous standards of enquiry. Within psychology therefore, there have been attempts to broaden the perception of ‘best evidence’ with the aims for “the integration of the best available research with clinical expertise in the context of patient characteristics, culture and preferences” (APA, 2006, p. 273).

Interestingly, from a small scale exploratory study there appears on-going tensions regarding EPs as scientist practitioners and EP ambivalence regarding the scientific basis of their work (Burnham, 2012) which highlights a potential gap between evidence and practice. This scepticism regarding effective dissemination of research within education and the transfer of knowledge is a reoccurring theme in research as epitomised by Slavin (2008); “throughout the history of education, the adoption of instructional programmes and practices has been driven more by ideology, faddism, politics, and marketing than by evidence” (p.5). Yet the effective dissemination of research findings has been suggested to enable psychologists to reduce the gap between research and practice (Mayer & Davidson, 2000), therefore it is important to consider theoretical frameworks that the author can utilise to guide effective dissemination.



## **Section Two: Effective Dissemination of Research and Notions of Research**

### **Impact**

Along with the growing interest in EBP, a number of interrelated terms, relating to research dissemination, that are sometimes used interchangeably, have emerged including diffusion, knowledge transfer and research into practice (Wilson, Petticrew, Calnan & Nazareth, 2010). Owen, Glanz, Sallis and Kelder (2006) distinguish between dissemination and diffusion within the medical field.

Dissemination refers to the planned process of creating awareness of the research among the targeted population, informing stakeholders and persuading up take.

Diffusion concerns the outcomes of the dissemination attempts and involves three main stages, adoption, implementation and institutionalisation. Wilson et al. (2010) define dissemination as “a planned process that involves considerations of target audiences and the setting in which research findings are to be received... in ways that will facilitate research uptake in decision-making processes and practice” (2010, p. 2). This definition encompasses the broader concept of dissemination as the ultimate purpose is for the intended audience or target users to take up or adopt an innovation, information, or resources (Fincher, 2005) and reach beyond the academic research community.

To ensure effective dissemination, detailed attention must be given to “understanding how to prepare the context and to selecting the most appropriate facilitation method” (Kitson, Harvey & McCormac, 1998, p. 150). Wren (2015) reinforces the need to effectively integrate research evidence with practitioner expertise and service user perspectives, as without consideration for all three, EBP

alone may promote psychologists to abide by research that is not sensitive to the current context and clients. Therefore, to ensure the successful implementation of EBP it has been suggested that attention must be given to the nature of the evidence, the context of the site where change is intended and the ‘mechanisms’ by which the change will be facilitated (Kitson, Harvey, & McCormack, 1998).

Wilson et al., (2010) identify 33 frameworks to support the dissemination of research findings and advocate the use of conceptual frameworks when planning dissemination. Common theoretical foundations of the frameworks in Wilson et al.’s review (2010) include the Persuasive Communication Matrix (McGuire, 1969) and the Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 1962). Frameworks for dissemination are often linear including source-based and user-based models (Wandersman, Duffy, Flaspohler, Noonan, Lubell, Stillman, et al., 2008). Source-based models are generated by the researcher and user-based models stem from a gap in research identified from practice (Wandersman et al., 2008). However, while these provide potential routes from research to practice, both models neglect the infrastructure required to ensure effective implementation of research findings. Therefore, alternative models within health care have suggested that each element (evidence, context and facilitation) must be considered simultaneously, instead of a hierarchy or linearity of cause and effect (Kitson, Harvey & McCormac, 1998). Working towards similar aims, Harmsworth and Turpin (2000) suggest three stages of dissemination: awareness, understanding, and action. The first is suggested to inform target audiences of the presence of research without in-depth details. The second stage involves dissemination for understanding aimed at specific audiences that may benefit from a deeper understanding of the research. Finally, the third stage is dissemination for action, which aims to promote change at an organisational level,

therefore is targeted at audiences within the relevant field who are in a position to ‘influence change’ and equips them with the adequate knowledge required. This framework holds particular relevance for the current paper as Harmsworth and Turpin (2001) detail a 10-step process specific to education. This includes emphasis upon a multi-strand approach to promote successful dissemination and advice considering the most appropriate methods of communication for the target audience.

EPs as scientist practitioners has been debated and to some extent explored (e.g. Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010; Woods & Bond, 2014), and the majority of information regarding EP services’ uptake of research evidence appears anecdotal (e.g. Fox, 2003). Fox (2003) drew upon personal experience and named the appropriateness of the hierarchy of evidence and EPs epistemological position as barriers to EP services utilising research. However, the development of EBP has led the impetus for research findings to be more readily available and understandable and electronic databases have become the primary source for professionals, including EPs, to access high quality research. The focus upon research dissemination within the United Kingdom (UK), is evident by the drive for ‘open access publishing’ (Jubb, et al. 2017). The Universities UK Open Access Coordination Group (2017) found that in excess of a third of UK-authored articles in 2016 were accessible immediately (green or gold open access), compared to a fifth in 2014. This trend indicates that policies to promote open access (OA) in the UK are having the desired effect and on average OA articles are downloaded between twice and four times as much as non-OA articles (Jubb, et al. 2017). Furthermore, it has been suggested that electronic publication increases the potential readership of articles to over a billion individuals with internet access, therefore is a potentially effective tool to increase the spread of new research ideas (Laakso & Björk, 2012). The increasing influence

of technology and social media is also apparent within research dissemination and attention has been given as to how social media can be harnessed to increase the connection between research, policy and practice. Cooper (2014) found that 30% of research brokering organisations were using social media, however, many of the strategies implemented were passive and did not allow two-way communication. Furthermore, this was not pervasive and online networks were small, suggesting that additional mechanisms to engage with the research audience continue to be necessary and it is important to evaluate the effectiveness of research dissemination.

Models to evaluate the effectiveness of research dissemination are available such as The Diffusion of Innovations model (Rogers, 2003) to analyse how effectively research (programmes) can be transferred into practice. The Diffusion of Innovations model (Rogers, 2003) includes the following characteristics: relative advantage (innovation is viewed as better than the previous available ideas), compatibility (consistent with the values, experiences and needs of adopters), complexity (how difficult the innovation is to understand or how complex it is to use), trialability (can be experimented with) and observability (degree to which results of innovation are visible to others). Similarly, Glasgow, Vogt and Boles' (1999) RE-AIM model (reach, efficacy/effectiveness, adoption, implementation and maintenance) can also be used to evaluate dissemination. To be effective, research not only has to have a broad reach, but also be feasible to implement in 'real world' settings in order to make an impact.

### **Section Three: Policy, Practice and Research Implications of the Current Research**

The current research comprises two papers: a systematic literature review exploring the contribution of assistant psychologists within clinical and educational psychology and a multi-embedded case study exploring the assistant role across two local authority EPSs within England. Since this research's main aim was to explore current practice regarding the contribution of assistant psychologists, the aim of its dissemination was to raise awareness of current good practice, the potential utilisation of assistant psychologist capacity and to stimulate discussions and encourage further research within the area. Both papers have implications for the deployment of assistants within psychology services and more specifically within local authority EPSs. It is acknowledged that often all three levels of dissemination as outlined by Harmsworth and Turin (2001) will be undertaken in turn therefore, it is important to identify the content of what is intended to be disseminated in order to decide upon the target audience and timing for dissemination. Therefore, ways to ensure that Papers One and Two are effectively disseminated, the impacts of each paper are considered discretely at three levels; individual, organisational and professional.

#### **Implications from Paper One for clinical and educational psychology.**

Paper One utilises a configurative approach to synthesis within the systematic literature review and highlights an otherwise underexplored role of assistant psychologists within the UK and Republic of Ireland. The findings are based upon evidence of educational and clinical psychology practice. Therefore, it is important to consider the pertinent findings in relation to the respective fields.

The diversity of assistant psychologists' contributions may provide useful illustrative examples for commissioners and managers of clinical and educational psychology services. Service level tasks undertaken by assistants include research projects and undertaking administrative duties, and direct work with service users appeared to be in line with the respective role of educational psychologists (school-based interventions) and clinical psychologists (delivering therapies) under off-site supervision. This highlights the potential diverse remit for assistant psychologists to complete discrete tasks, or work in conjunction with fully qualified psychologists to extend psychological input to service users. Furthermore, Paper One highlights the potential of the role within a model of stepped care, which could be applied to services currently employing assistants to deliver services to clients such as a graduated approach to therapeutic interventions, with assistants delivering initial intervention based upon level of need.

### **Implications of research at a professional level.**

Despite Paper One including studies from educational and clinical psychology, implications may contribute to EBP across other professional fields also utilising paraprofessionals, including applied psychology more broadly. For example, within forensic psychology placement-based practitioner programmes are emerging with a similar structure to that of the clinical and educational psychology training, therefore findings are potentially applicable to similar fields also considering the deployment of assistants. Paper One suggests that the success of the assistant role is dependent upon the support and training offered to assistants including supervision. Supervision frameworks, focused upon competence and accountability may be one way to ensure

that assistants feel comfortable with their role/ responsibilities and to ensure adherence to the delivery of interventions etc.

The findings of Paper One outline the potential remit of assistant psychologists which other professions utilising paraprofessionals may draw upon. This includes assistant role diversification, such as the existence of additional distinct paraprofessional roles, e.g. research assistants to undertake discrete tasks. Examples of multi-professional working suggest that certain paraprofessional roles may be embedded within multi-professional contexts and the need for future research to explore the statutorily defined responsibilities and accountabilities of registered practitioners working in conjunction with paraprofessionals was raised. Similarly, the evidence of an uneven paraprofessional research base suggests the need for further research into the deployment of paraprofessionals within organisations across professions.

### **Paper Two implications of research at an individual level.**

The author's University training provider adopted a research commissioning process in order to allocate research topics to trainee EPs. Practising EPs and University lecturers were invited to present research proposals to the cohort of trainee EPs for consideration. In line with this, the initial impetus for the research was driven by the research commissioner, however the topic was conceptually changed to explore a 'typical' case due to the current research gap. It is intended that the research commissioner will be included within the dissemination process and gain an understanding of the empirical study.

The participants involved in Paper Two's research were qualified UK-based EPs, senior/ principal EPs and assistant EPs and the study involved exploring their experiences of the role using semi-structured, group interviews and focus groups. The author considers that the process of participation will have acted as a catalyst for reflection upon practice. It is hoped that the dissemination of the findings will encourage other EPSs which were not involved in the original research to consider the role of assistants within their services and the potential relevance to their own portfolio of services offered to clients. Furthermore, this may result in changes to their own practice which will then impact how the roles of assistant psychologists are realised. Implications of Paper Two to be disseminated include information relevant to the participants groups and other individuals working within educational psychology. While the author considers that it is helpful to consider the pertinent aspects of the research findings relevant to each target audience, it is intended that feedback at the research site will be combined to include all elements. Research findings that are considered to have specific interest to assistant EPs and those working in conjunction with assistants are discussed respectively.

Firstly, there are implications which are expected to hold interest for individuals currently working as assistant educational psychologists or considering applying for such a position. These include making use of supervision to further their own continual professional development by considering their current competence and areas for development. It is hoped that the research will raise awareness of the potential of the role to benefit their career path, including an opportunity to gain an insight into the EP role and relevant experience.

Secondly the empirical study includes specific findings and (practice) recommendations that are hoped to be beneficial to practising EPs, particularly those



in supervisory roles and senior and principal EPs as they are ideally placed to promote action based upon the research findings. This includes the importance and challenge of disaggregating tasks that are to be allocated to an assistant due to the highly contextualised and specialised nature of EP work. Therefore, attention to the cost-benefit analysis of delegating tasks to assistants is recommended, as they may require a greater level of co-working, particularly during the initial stages of their time in posts. Similarly, the importance of facilitating close working relationships between EPs and assistants to stimulate the workflow merits attention. Paper Two highlights benefits of communities of practice, therefore services that are geographically spread may wish to consider how this could be achieved through strategies such as sharing evidence of work completed at team meetings.

### **Implications of Paper Two at an organisational level.**

Findings from Paper Two have implications for organisational decisions and processes within educational psychology, specifically at a local authority EPS level. Paper Two reports that the initial rationale for employing assistants was found to stem from difficulties recruiting fully qualified EPs and it appears that this remains a challenge for the profession, due to an excess demand from service users alongside a workforce deficit (National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) & Health Education England (HEE), 2016). However, crucially Paper Two found that assistants do not reduce the current EP workload but offer a distinctive contribution to service delivery by expanding and enhancing a portfolio of services to be offered to clients in conjunction with fully qualified EPs. Paper Two includes specific details of the assistant contributions for organisational developmental tasks, which may be of interest to services considering the deployment of assistants. These include

assistants' contribution to research projects, to the evaluation of services, and to the creation of resources (specialised administrative tasks) alongside direct work with service users. This is likely to be helpful to consider when developing practices regarding the allocation of work to assistants such as the inclusion of time for both direct work with services users and service level contributions. Paper Two provides an example of how the role can be facilitated in practice, providing a useful reference point for EPSs. Considerations regarding assistants working with traded services are also raised, including evidence of two differing potential models: assistant time may be included within a service level agreement with service users or the assistant retained as a core resource to enhance and support EP practice.

### **Implications of Paper Two at a wider professional level.**

The implications of the research are also important to consider at a national and potentially international level. The research can be considered by a variety of professional organisations including: the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP), the National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists (NAPEP), the British Psychological Society (BPS) Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP), the National College for Teaching and Leadership – NCTL host organisation for the Initial Training for Educational Psychologists (ITEP). The AEP, which is the predominant trade union and professional association for practising EPs within the UK, has recently proposed a motion ‘to introduce a new category of membership for Assistant Educational Psychologists’ (AEP, 2017). The lack of professional membership for assistants is raised in both Papers One and Two, which perhaps highlights the timeliness of the present research. The main findings of Paper Two could be utilised to begin to inform policy development/guidance regarding the

role of assistants within EPSs in the UK. This may contain consideration of the statutory responsibilities of EPs and the interrelationship of function as highlighted in the research, including issues of responsibility and accountability.

The review of clinical and educational psychology training arrangements recommended that “the departments (Health Education England on behalf of Department of Health) will consider the development of a one year, post graduate qualification of Assistant Psychologist” (p. 5). The research findings outline two examples of current practice within local authority EPSs and the research provides an insight into the potential challenges which will be important to note if the role is to expand and evolve further, in order to avoid potential pitfalls. Paper Two also reinforces the association between the role of assistant and career progression onto doctorate level initial professional training which appears highly applicable. However, the research raises a question that may be addressed through future research about the graduated fulfilment of standards of proficiency (HCPC, 2015), through progression from an assistant, through TEP, to fully qualified EP.

#### **Section Four: Promoting and Evaluating the Dissemination and Impact of the Research**

Throughout the research process the author considered findings as they emerged that would potentially have implications for practice. Based upon Hamsworth and Turpin’s (2001) framework for dissemination the author devised a dissemination strategy to cover the three stages of effective research dissemination. This includes increasing awareness of the research to participants, professionals within the field of educational psychology and other professions who may also benefit from Paper One’s findings (awareness). Secondly to promote a greater understanding of the role

of assistant educational psychologists among EPSs that may consider/ are currently utilising the role (understanding) and finally considering the action stage of dissemination and how impact can be monitored. As discussed, Harmsworth and Turpin (2001) reinforce the importance of the methods of communication and the potential of existing infrastructure that may be ideally suited to aid the dissemination process, therefore these factors were considered, and an overview of the dissemination strategy are outlined in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Dissemination strategy

Aim (desired level of dissemination)	Target audience/ stakeholders	Content to be disseminated/ aim	Dissemination method/ vehicle	Timescales	Responsibilities	Costing	Success criteria
To increase awareness	Assistant EP participants EP participants SEPs/ PEP participants	All participants will be aware of the main study findings.	Summary of main findings circulated by email.	By January 2018	TEP	N/A	Participants will be able to describe the main findings of Paper Two.
To develop understanding and promote action.	Local authority EP teams (research site)	Two local authority EPS will demonstrate an understanding of Paper One and Two findings.	Presentation	By August 2018	TEP	Equipment, printing, materials, refreshments, travel costs.	Those working within an EPS will be able to describe some ways in which the research findings might influence their future practice.
To increase awareness and develop understanding	Professionals working with paraprofessionals including practitioner psychologists	Increase awareness of Paper One and Two findings.	Journal articles Word of mouth	By December 2018	TEP Co-author	N/A	Increased awareness of the research and professions utilising paraprofessional roles of the research findings evidenced by number of downloads and Altmetric data.

Aim (desired level of dissemination)	Target audience/ stakeholders	Content to be disseminated/ aim	Dissemination method/ vehicle	Timescales	Responsibilities	Costing	Success criteria
To increase awareness and develop understanding	Qualified EPs both nationally and internationally	EPs will demonstrate an awareness and understanding of Paper Two findings.	Journal article Conference presentations Internet communication including social media Newsletters	By December 2018	TEP Co-author Research commissioner	Equipment, printing, materials, refreshments, travel costs.	Positive reception, further interest from EPs such as requests for the circulation of a summary sheet/ further presentations.
Develop understanding and promote action	Principal educational psychologists (PEPs)	PEPs will demonstrate an understanding of Paper Two's findings.	Summary sheet	By September 2018	TEP Local authority PEPs	Equipment, printing, materials, refreshments, travel costs.	Positive reception and interest from PEPs such as requests from PEPs for presentations at EPSSs.  Development of small working groups e.g. to develop regional assistant job description.
To promote action and new research	Trainee educational psychologists (TEPs)	TEPs will use the recommendations in both papers to conduct further research.	Journal article Proposal submitted to Manchester University research commissioning	By September 2018	TEP Co-author	N/A	Further research proposal agreed.

It is estimated that there are over 3500 practicing EPs across England, Wales and Northern Ireland (A Mitford, AEP 2018, pers.comm., 13 April) and many more internationally. It is considered that the findings of Paper One may be beneficial for those within human resources more widely, as examples of practice within one field may be applied to other sectors working within similar contexts with similar aims. Therefore, the author considers that a multi-faceted approach to dissemination could most effectively raise awareness and promote understanding of both Papers' One and Two's findings to facilitate action and promote change.

### **Method of dissemination and success criteria.**

#### ***Individual.***

Firstly, while research was underway, the participants from the empirical paper were included within various stages of the research process, including member checking of main findings and a response from one senior EP stated "fascinating reading...we are just in the process of recruiting more Assistant EPs so this is very timely for us" ("Senior EP" 2018, pers.comm., 8 February). Therefore, it is considered that awareness of the research was established for that particular target audience and suggests that involvement in the study prompted further reflection in relation to the service needs and subsequent utilisation of the assistant role.

Furthermore, it is intended that the findings of both papers will be disseminated via the delivery of a presentation to both local authority EPSs individually at team meetings. The presentation will outline the findings of both Paper One and Two with an emphasis on the implications for practice and aims to extend the dissemination to develop an understanding of the research findings and begin to promote action. Due to the author's familiarity with the services it is hoped

that further information with regards to the success of the dissemination can be collected such as on-going communications to explore changes to practice in light of the research.

### ***Organisational/ Professional.***

Dissemination at the wider professional level for both awareness and understanding, will include publication of both papers in an OA journal. For maximum geographic distribution Paper One has been submitted to the European Journal of Training and Development, due to the transferability of findings. Paper Two has been submitted to Educational Psychology in Practice (EPIP) which is widely read by practicing EPs within the UK and the journal aims include “articles representing theory, research and practice which is of relevance to practising educational psychologists working primarily in UK contexts” (“EPIP Aims and Scope”, 2018, para. 1). The author considers that Paper Two is ideally suited to the chosen journal outlet due to the specific nature of the findings which outline current practice within two local authority EPSs in England. While it is acknowledged that the number of citations and downloads will not indicate the impact of the research, the monitoring of this may strongly suggest the raised awareness of the research. It is also intended that awareness of the research will be raised through ‘word of mouth’ including the author’s fellow TEPS, the research commissioner and colleagues at the local authority in which the author will work in from September 2018.

The author also intends to present the research findings at educational psychology conferences. The North West CPD Conference for EPs is an annual conference well attended by practicing EPs from the North West of England, therefore it is hoped that dissemination of the research via a short presentation will



extend the awareness of the research within the profession and provide an opportunity for those who are interested to contact the author for further information and encourage two-way communication which is an identified success criterion (see Table 4). Furthermore, circulation of a summary of the research via newsletters such as National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists and the International School Psychology Association (ISPA) (quarterly newsletter *World\*Go\*Round*) aims to promote awareness. Support from PEPs known to the author through links with The University of Manchester or employment will be enrolled to help promote awareness of the research by word of mouth and agreement to include the research summary on the agenda at the North West Principal EP conference.

The author considered research regarding the potential gains of utilising internet communication (e.g. Cooper, 2014) and intends to utilise a variety of communication channels to raise awareness of the research both nationally and potentially internationally. There are a number of secure email forums in regular use within the UK including EPNET which is a ‘A forum for the exchange of ideas and information among University research/teaching staff working in the field of Educational Psychology and Educational Psychologists throughout the UK and elsewhere’ (JISCMail, 2018) which can be used by the author to instigate debates regarding assistant psychologists and raise awareness of the research. Similarly, the NAPEP hosts an email forum which the author will request to gain access. The author will also take advantage of the numerous social media accounts representing relevant associations or individuals from the target audience e.g. the BPS Facebook page, Twitter to share links to the research with the aim of raising awareness of the research. Eysenbach (2011) found the number of tweets about a research article, within the first three days of an article’s publication, can predict which articles will

be highly cited. The use of Altmetric data aims to quantifiably measure of the quality and quantity of attention that a scholarly article has received through social media and will be monitored by the author to indicate the success of the dissemination amongst the research community.

### **Future research.**

Not only is it important to consider the dissemination of research, but also how the knowledge base can be built upon through future research. It is hoped that further research regarding the impact of the research would incrementally develop the knowledge base and increase the visibility of the topic to reach a larger audience.

The findings of both Papers One and Two raise the need for further research into the assistant roles within psychology including:

- Exploration of the hierarchical structures in place within the different fields of applied psychology and other paraprofessional roles working in conjunction with fully qualified psychologists.
- Exploration of the effectiveness of assistant contributions on outcomes for children/young people including service user perspectives to uncover enabling factors.
- A large-scale enquiry to comprehensively explore the wider use of assistant EPs within the UK.
- The graduated fulfilment of SoPs (HCPC, 2015) between assistant entry onto doctorate level initial professional training, TEP and fully qualified EP to inform continual professional development practices.

Therefore, the author will utilise their links with The University of Manchester to present further research proposals as part of their research commissioning process to current trainee EPs studying at initial training courses. Furthermore, the findings of both Papers One and Two may also be presented at UK EP conferences to provide opportunities for the author to facilitate discussions with trainee EPs nationally, such as conferences organised by the AEP or the DECP.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has discussed the concepts of EBP and PBE, and the effective dissemination of research. The current research base regarding the role of assistant psychologists is small, therefore the findings of Papers One and Two would benefit from wider and focused dissemination to those who are in a position to promote action. This would in turn hopefully promote further research to provide a greater understanding of the roles within applied psychology, specifically educational psychology.

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**Appendix A1:** Prisma (Moher et al., 2009) table

<b>Data base</b>	<b>Identification</b> (October 2016)	<b>Duplicates removed</b>	<b>Screening: excluded</b> (24/10/16- November)	<b>Eligibility: excluded</b> (December - Jan 17)	<b>Included</b> (Jan 2017)
Psyc Info total	81	N/A	73	6	2
ERIC	3	3	N/A	0	0
Medline	17	6	11	0	0
British education Index (EBSCO)	1	N/A	1	0	0
Google Scholar (terms searched individually in title)	11	1	5	2	3
Criminology: A Sage Full-Text Collection	2	2	0	0	0
Hand search	4	N/A	0	2	2
Total excluded:	N/A	12	90 excluded	10 excluded	N/A
<b>Total remain:</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7 final included papers</b>



## Appendix A2: Review frameworks

**MANCHESTER**  
1824

The University  
of Manchester

D.Ed.Ch.Psychol. 2017

### Review framework for qualitative evaluation/ investigation research

Author(s):

Title:

Journal Reference:

Criterion	Score	R1	R2	Agree %	R1	R2	Agree %	Comment
Appropriateness of the research design <i>e.g. rationale vis-à-vis aims, links to previous approaches, limitations</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Clear sampling rationale <i>e.g. description, justification; attrition evaluated</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Well executed data collection <i>e.g. clear details of who, what, how; effect of methods on data quality</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Analysis close to the data, <i>e.g. researcher can evaluate fit between categories/ themes and data.</i>	<b>2 1 0</b>							
Evidence of explicit reflexivity <i>e.g. impact of researcher, limitations, data validation (e.g. inter-coder validation), researcher philosophy/ stance evaluated.</i>	<b>2 1 0</b>							
Comprehensiveness of documentation <i>e.g. schedules, transcripts, thematic maps, paper trail for external audit</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Negative case analysis, <i>e.g. e.g. contrasts/ contradictions/ outliers within data; categories/ themes as dimensional; diversity of perspectives.</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Clarity and coherence of the reporting <i>e.g. clear structure, clear account linked to aims, key points highlighted</i>	<b>1 0</b>							

Evidence of researcher-participant negotiation of meanings, e.g. member checking, empower participants.	<b>1 0</b>							
Emergent theory related to the problem, e.g. abstraction from categories/ themes to model/ explanation.	<b>1 0</b>							
Valid and transferable conclusions e.g. contextualised findings; limitations of scope identified.	<b>1 0</b>							
Evidence of attention to ethical issues e.g. presentation, sensitivity, minimising harm, feedback	<b>1 0</b>							
<b>Total</b>	<i>Max 14</i>			Mean % agree			Mean % agree	

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**D.Ed.Ch.Psychol. 2017**

**Review framework for quantitative evaluation research**

Author(s):

Title:

Journal Reference:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>Agree %</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>Agree %</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Use of a randomised group design	<b>1 0</b>							
Focus on a specific, well-defined disorder or problem	<b>1 0</b>							
Comparison with treatment-as-usual, placebo, or less preferably, standard control	<b>1 0</b>							
Use of manuals/ protocol/ training	<b>1 0</b>							
Fidelity checking procedure/ supervision of intervention	<b>1 0</b>							
Sample large enough to detect effect (from Cohen, 1992)	<b>1 0</b>							
Use of outcome measure(s) that has demonstrably good reliability and validity <i>(2 points if more than one measure used).</i>	<b>2 1 0</b>							
<b>Total</b>	<i>Max 8</i>			Mean % agree			Mean % agree	

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**D.Ed.Ch.Psychol. 2017**

**Review framework for quantitative investigation research**

Author(s):

Title:

Journal Reference:

Criterion	Score	R1	R2	Agree %	R1	R2	Agree %	Comment
<b>Data gathering</b>								
Clear research question or hypothesis <i>e.g. well-defined, measurable constituent elements</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Appropriate participant sampling <i>e.g. fit to research question, representativeness.</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Appropriate measurement instrumentation. <i>e.g. sensitivity; specificity</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Comprehensive data gathering <i>e.g. multiple measures used; context of measurement recorded (e.g. when at school vs at home)</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Appropriate data gathering method used <i>e.g. soundness of administration</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Reduction of bias within participant recruitment/ instrumentation/ administration <i>e.g. harder-to-reach facilitation; accessibility of instrumentation</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Response rate/ completion maximised <i>e.g. response rate specified; piloting; access options</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Population subgroup data collected <i>e.g. participant gender; age; location</i>	<b>1 0</b>							

<b>Data analysis</b>								
Missing data analysis <i>e.g. Level and treatment specified</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Time trends identified <i>e.g. year on year changes</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Geographic considerations <i>e.g. regional or subgroup analyses</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Appropriate statistical analyses (descriptive or inferential) <i>e.g. coherent approach specified; sample size justification.</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Multi-level or inter-group analyses present <i>e.g. comparison between participant groups by <u>relevant</u> location or characteristics</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
<b>Data interpretation</b>								
Clear criteria for rating of findings <i>e.g. benchmarked/ justified evaluation of found quantitative facts</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Limitations of the research considered in relation to initial aims <i>e.g. critique of method; generalizability estimate</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
Implications of findings linked to rationale of research question <i>e.g. implications for theory, practice or future research</i>	<b>1 0</b>							
<b>Total</b>	<i>Max 16</i>			Mean % agree			Mean % agree	

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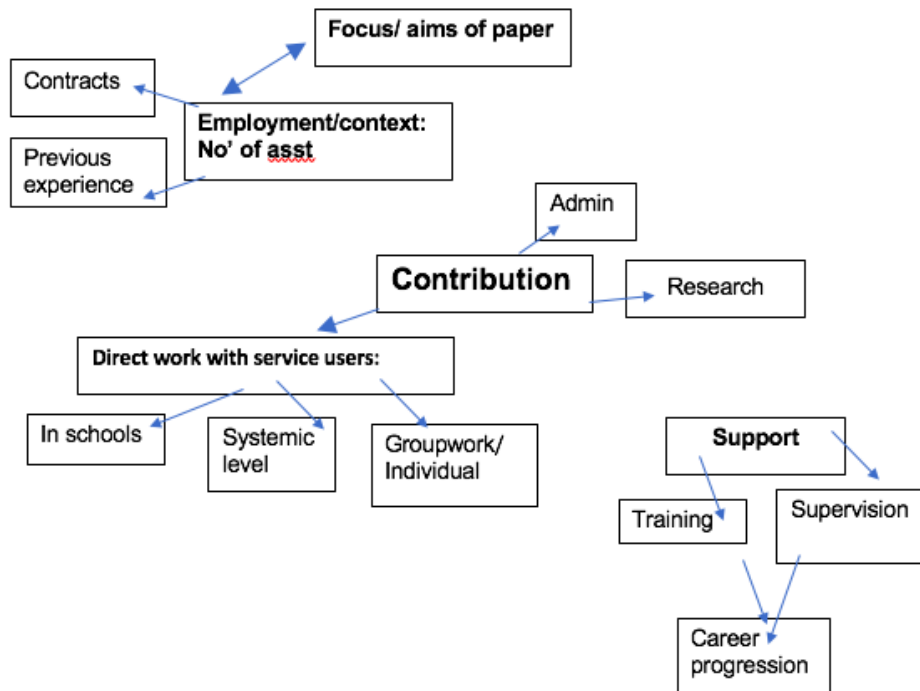
**Appendix A3:** Weight of Evidence (WoE) for included papers.

<b>Paper ref:</b>	<b>WoE A:</b>	<b>WoE B:</b>	<b>WoE C:</b>	<b>Overall WoE D (total / 3)</b>	<b>Design</b>
Collyer (2012) (HS)	Medium	Medium	High	<b>Medium</b>	Qualitative investigation (scored with academic supervisor)
Counsell & Court (2000). (GS)	Medium	Medium	High	<b>Medium</b>	Qualitative investigation - account
Hughes, Campbell, & Byrne, (2015). (GS)	High	Medium	High	<b>High</b>	Mixed methods – qualitative investigation
Lyons (2000) (HS)	Medium	High	High	<b>High</b>	Qualitative investigation
Maddern, Franey, McLaughlin and Cox. (2004) (PI)	Medium	High	Medium	<b>Medium</b>	Mixed methods- evaluation
Monsen, J. J., Brown, E., Akthar, Z., & Khan, S. Y. (2009). (GS)	Medium	High	High	<b>High</b>	Mixed methods (scored with academic supervisor)
Rose, J. (2013) (PI)	Medium	Medium	Medium	<b>Medium</b>	Quant investigation (scored with academic supervisor)

#### Appendix A4: Table of excluded papers

Author(s) and title	Reason(s) for exclusion
1. Grayer, Buszewicz, Orpwood, Cape and Leibowitz, (2008). Facilitating access to voluntary and community services for patients with psychosocial problems: a before-after evaluation. (GS)	Scored low on WoE A (quantitative evaluation), B (lack of a clear description process of work) and C (specifically clarity of paraprofessional contribution).
2. Farrand, Duncan and Byng. (2007). Impact of graduate mental health workers upon primary care mental health: A qualitative study. (PI)	Supervisors were from a variety of professional backgrounds (only 3 clinical psychologists).
3. Fletcher, Gavin, Harkness, and Gask, (2008). A collaborative approach to embedding graduate primary care mental health workers in the UK National Health Service. (PI)	GMHWs working within the medical field and supervised by GPs.
4. Marwood, and Hewitt (2013). Evaluating an anxiety group for people with learning disabilities using a mixed methodology. (HS)	Scored low on WoE B (outcomes not specific to paraprofessional contribution) and WoE C (lack of clarity regarding paraprofessional contribution and description of context within which the role functions).
5. McMahon, L., Foran, K. M., Forrest, S. D., Taylor, M. L., Ingram, G., Rajwal, M., & McAllister-Williams, R. H. (2007). Graduate mental health worker case management of depression in UK primary care: a pilot study. (GS)	Supervision and training delivered by psychiatrist not psychologist.
6. Saarela-Vening, & Saara, (2013). An exploratory study examining the impact of facilitator characteristics on substance abuse program participant outcomes. (PI)	Unclear if all facilitators had a psychology background and had differing expertise e.g. mental health.
7. Silvergleid, C.S., Mankowski, E.S. (2006). How Batterer Intervention Programs Work: Participant and Facilitator Accounts of Processes of Change. (PI)	Unclear if paraprofessionals work within forensic psychology.
8. Shahane, A. (2009). Batterer and facilitator talk in the context of a batterer intervention program for men. (PI)	Unclear if role exists within the field of psychology e.g. no mention of supervision.
9. Willner & Tomlinson (2007). Generalization of anger-coping skills from day-service to residential settings. (PI)	Scored low on WoE C (specifically clarity of paraprofessional contribution).
10. Woodruff and Wang (2005). Assistant Psychologists and their Supervisors: Role or Semantic Confusion? (HS)	Scored low on WoE A (on both quantitative investigation and qualitative checklists).

**Appendix A5:** Paper One configurative analysis map





## Appendix A6: Paper One author guidelines: European Journal of Training and Development

### Manuscript requirements

Please prepare your manuscript before submission, using the following guidelines:

<b>Format</b>	Article files should be provided in Microsoft Word format. LaTeX files can be used if an accompanying PDF document is provided. PDF as a sole file type is not accepted, a PDF must be accompanied by the source file. Acceptable figure file types are listed further below.
<b>Article Length</b>	Articles should be between 5000 and 7000 words in length. This includes all text including references and appendices. Please allow 280 words for each figure or table.
<b>Article Title</b>	A title of not more than eight words should be provided.
<b>Author details</b>	<p>All contributing authors' names should be added to the ScholarOne submission, and their names arranged in the correct order for publication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Correct email addresses should be supplied for each author in their separate author accounts</li><li>• The full name of each author must be present in their author account in the exact format they should appear for publication, including or excluding any middle names or initials as required</li><li>• The affiliation of each contributing author should be correct in their individual author account. The affiliation listed should be where they were based at the time that the research for the paper was conducted</li></ul>
<b>Biographies and acknowledgements</b>	Authors who wish to include these items should save them together in an MS Word file to be uploaded with the submission. If they are to be included, a brief professional biography of not more than 100 words should be supplied for each named author.
<b>Research funding</b>	Authors must declare all sources of external research funding in their article and a statement to this effect should appear in the Acknowledgements section. Authors should describe the role of the funder or financial sponsor in the entire research process, from study design to submission.
<b>Structured Abstract</b>	Authors must supply a structured abstract in their submission, set out under 4-7 sub-headings (see our " <a href="#">How</a>

[to... write an abstract](#)" guide for practical help and guidance):

- Purpose (mandatory)
- Design/methodology/approach (mandatory)
- Findings (mandatory)
- Research limitations/implications (if applicable)
- Practical implications (if applicable)
- Social implications (if applicable)
- Originality/value (mandatory)

Maximum is 250 words in total (including keywords and article classification, see below).

Authors should avoid the use of personal pronouns within the structured abstract and body of the paper (e.g. "this paper investigates..." is correct, "I investigate..." is incorrect).

### Keywords

Authors should provide appropriate and short keywords in the ScholarOne submission that encapsulate the principal topics of the paper (see the [How to... ensure your article is highly downloaded](#) guide for practical help and guidance on choosing search-engine friendly keywords). The maximum number of keywords is 12.

Whilst Emerald will endeavour to use submitted keywords in the published version, all keywords are subject to approval by Emerald's in house editorial team and may be replaced by a matching term to ensure consistency.

### Article Classification

Authors must categorize their paper as part of the ScholarOne submission process. The category which most closely describes their paper should be selected from the list below.

**Research paper.** This category covers papers which report on any type of research undertaken by the author(s). The research may involve the construction or testing of a model or framework, action research, testing of data, market research or surveys, empirical, scientific or clinical research.

**Viewpoint.** Any paper, where content is dependent on the author's opinion and interpretation, should be included in this category; this also includes journalistic pieces.

**Technical paper.** Describes and evaluates technical products, processes or services.

**Conceptual paper.** These papers will not be based on research but will develop hypotheses. The papers are likely to be discursive and will cover philosophical discussions and comparative studies of others' work and thinking.

**Case study.** Case studies describe actual interventions or experiences within organizations. They may well be subjective and will not generally report on research. A description of a legal case or a hypothetical case study used as a teaching exercise would also fit into this category.

**Literature review.** It is expected that all types of paper cite any relevant literature so this category should only be used if the main purpose of the paper is to annotate and/or critique the literature in a particular subject area. It may be a selective bibliography providing advice on information sources or it may be comprehensive in that the paper's aim is to cover the main contributors to the development of a topic and explore their different views.

**General review.** This category covers those papers which provide an overview or historical examination of some concept, technique or phenomenon. The papers are likely to be more descriptive or instructional ("how to" papers) than discursive.

## Headings

Headings must be concise, with a clear indication of the distinction between the hierarchy of headings.

The preferred format is for first level headings to be presented in bold format and subsequent sub-headings to be presented in medium italics.

## Notes/Endnotes

Notes or Endnotes should be used only if absolutely necessary and must be identified in the text by consecutive numbers, enclosed in square brackets and listed at the end of the article.

## Figures

All Figures (charts, diagrams, line drawings, web pages/screenshots, and photographic images) should be submitted in electronic form.

All Figures should be of high quality, legible and numbered consecutively with arabic numerals. Graphics may be supplied in colour to facilitate their appearance on the online database.

- Figures created in MS Word, MS PowerPoint, MS Excel, Illustrator should be supplied in their native formats. Electronic figures created in other applications should be copied from the origination software and pasted into a blank MS Word document or saved and imported into an MS Word document or alternatively create a .pdf file from the origination software.
- Figures which cannot be supplied as above are acceptable in the standard image formats which are: .pdf, .ai, and .eps. If you are unable to supply

graphics in these formats then please ensure they are .tif, .jpeg, or .bmp at a resolution of at least 300dpi and at least 10cm wide.

- To prepare web pages/screenshots simultaneously press the "Alt" and "Print screen" keys on the keyboard, open a blank Microsoft Word document and simultaneously press "Ctrl" and "V" to paste the image. (Capture all the contents/windows on the computer screen to paste into MS Word, by simultaneously pressing "Ctrl" and "Print screen".)
- Photographic images should be submitted electronically and of high quality. They should be saved as .tif or .jpeg files at a resolution of at least 300dpi and at least 10cm wide. Digital camera settings should be set at the highest resolution/quality possible.

<p><b>Tables</b></p>	<p>Tables should be typed and included in a separate file to the main body of the article. The position of each table should be clearly labelled in the body text of article with corresponding labels being clearly shown in the separate file.</p> <p>Ensure that any superscripts or asterisks are shown next to the relevant items and have corresponding explanations displayed as footnotes to the table, figure or plate.</p>
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>References to other publications must be in <b>Harvard</b> style and carefully checked for completeness, accuracy and consistency. This is very important in an electronic environment because it enables your readers to exploit the Reference Linking facility on the database and link back to the works you have cited through CrossRef.</p> <p>You should cite publications in the text: (Adams, 2006) using the first named author's name or (Adams and Brown, 2006) citing both names of two, or (Adams <i>et al.</i>, 2006), when there are three or more authors. At the end of the paper a reference list in alphabetical order should be supplied:</p>
<p><i>For books</i></p>	<p>Surname, Initials (year), <i>Title of Book</i>, Publisher, Place of publication.</p> <p>e.g. Harrow, R. (2005), <i>No Place to Hide</i>, Simon &amp; Schuster, New York, NY.</p>
<p><i>For book chapters</i></p>	<p>Surname, Initials (year), "Chapter title", Editor's Surname, Initials, <i>Title of Book</i>, Publisher, Place of publication, pages.</p> <p>e.g. Calabrese, F.A. (2005), "The early pathways: theory to practice – a continuum", in Stankosky, M. (Ed.), <i>Creating</i></p>

*the Discipline of Knowledge Management*, Elsevier, New York, NY, pp. 15-20.

<p><i>For journals</i></p>	<p>Surname, Initials (year), "Title of article", <i>Journal Name</i>, volume issue, pages.</p> <p>e.g. Capizzi, M.T. and Ferguson, R. (2005), "Loyalty trends for the twenty-first century", <i>Journal of Consumer Marketing</i>, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 72-80.</p>
<p><i>For published conference proceedings</i></p>	<p>Surname, Initials (year of publication), "Title of paper", in Surname, Initials (Ed.), <i>Title of published proceeding which may include place and date(s) held</i>, Publisher, Place of publication, Page numbers.</p> <p>e.g. Jakkilinki, R., Georgievski, M. and Sharda, N. (2007), "Connecting destinations with an ontology-based e-tourism planner", in <i>Information and communication technologies in tourism 2007 proceedings of the international conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2007</i>, Springer-Verlag, Vienna, pp. 12-32.</p>
<p><i>For unpublished conference proceedings</i></p>	<p>Surname, Initials (year), "Title of paper", paper presented at Name of Conference, date of conference, place of conference, available at: URL if freely available on the internet (accessed date).</p> <p>e.g. Aumueller, D. (2005), "Semantic authoring and retrieval within a wiki", paper presented at the European Semantic Web Conference (ESWC), 29 May-1 June, Heraklion, Crete, available at: <a href="http://dbs.uni-leipzig.de/file/aumueller05wiksar.pdf">http://dbs.uni-leipzig.de/file/aumueller05wiksar.pdf</a> (accessed 20 February 2007).</p>
<p><i>For working papers</i></p>	<p>Surname, Initials (year), "Title of article", working paper [number if available], Institution or organization, Place of organization, date.</p> <p>e.g. Moizer, P. (2003), "How published academic research can inform policy decisions: the case of mandatory rotation of audit appointments", working paper, Leeds University Business School, University of Leeds, Leeds, 28 March.</p>
<p><i>For encyclopedia entries (with no author or editor)</i></p>	<p><i>Title of Encyclopedia</i> (year) "Title of entry", volume, edition, Title of Encyclopedia, Publisher, Place of publication, pages.</p> <p>e.g. <i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i> (1926) "Psychology of culture contact", Vol. 1, 13th ed., Encyclopaedia Britannica, London and New York, NY, pp. 765-71.</p> <p>(For authored entries please refer to book chapter guidelines above)</p>

<i>For newspaper articles (authored)</i>	Surname, Initials (year), "Article title", <i>Newspaper</i> , date, pages.  e.g. Smith, A. (2008), "Money for old rope", <i>Daily News</i> , 21 January, pp. 1, 3-4.
<i>For newspaper articles (non-authored)</i>	<i>Newspaper</i> (year), "Article title", date, pages.  e.g. <i>Daily News</i> (2008), "Small change", 2 February, p. 7.
<i>For archival or other unpublished sources</i>	Surname, Initials, (year), "Title of document", Unpublished Manuscript, collection name, inventory record, name of archive, location of archive.  e.g. Litman, S. (1902), "Mechanism & Technique of Commerce", Unpublished Manuscript, Simon Litman Papers, Record series 9/5/29 Box 3, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana-Champaign, IL.
<i>For electronic sources</i>	If available online, the full URL should be supplied at the end of the reference, as well as a date that the resource was accessed.  e.g. Castle, B. (2005), "Introduction to web services for remote portlets", available at: <a href="http://www-128.ibm.com/developerworks/library/ws-wsrp/">http://www-128.ibm.com/developerworks/library/ws-wsrp/</a> (accessed 12 November 2007).  Standalone URLs, i.e. without an author or date, should be included either within parentheses within the main text, or preferably set as a note (roman numeral within square brackets within text followed by the full URL address at the end of the paper).
<i>For data</i>	Surname, Initials (year), <i>Title of Data Set</i> , Name of data repository, available at: Persistent URL  e.g. Campbell, A. and Kahn, R.L. (1999), <i>American National Election Study, 1948</i> , ICPSR07218-v3, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (distributor), Ann Arbor, MI, available at: <a href="http://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR07218.v3">http://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR07218.v3</a>

[http://emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author\\_guidelines.htm?id=eitd#10](http://emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author_guidelines.htm?id=eitd#10)

## **Appendix B1: Paper Two: Propositions**

- RQ 1: LA EPSs use assistant posts to increase service capacity; assistants decrease the demand upon fully qualified EPs by taking on existing tasks and increase the range of services available to schools.
- RQ 2: There is a lack of clarity surrounding the tasks that are within an assistants' remit, therefore it is common place for assistant EPs' time to be used in diverse ways, often depending upon the individuals' competencies.
- RQ 3: Assistant EPs benefit from the experience that the role facilitates, this provides an ideal foundation for applying for the educational psychology doctorate, however can be challenging for EPSs due to the additional strain upon resources. Due to the variety of ways in which assistants may be currently operating, there will not be a consistent finding from stakeholders (EPs) in regard to the perceived benefits of assistant EP work.

## Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England.

### EP Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of a student project – Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England, which will form part of the thesis for a Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. Before you decide if you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### Who will conduct the research?

*Tracey Woodley-Hume - Trainee Educational Psychologist*

#### What is the aim of the research?

*The present research aims to expand our understanding of the various ways in which assistant EPs are utilised in local authority educational psychology services in the UK.*

#### Why have I been chosen?

*Your service and another local authority have been approached to take part. Due to your role in the service and experience of working directly with the assistants, you have been invited to participate.*

#### What would I be asked to do if I took part?

*You will be asked to take part in a focus group with the researcher and other members of the EPS sometime between January and March 2017, at a time that is most convenient for yourself and others.*

#### What happens to the data collected?

*The focus group data will be collected using a digital audio-recorder, transcribed by the researcher and then analysed for themes which have emerged during the discussion. This data will contribute to a case study which will be written up into an academic paper.*

#### How is confidentiality maintained?



*All data that is recorded will only be listened to by the researcher for the purposes of transcription. The transcription will be anonymised and the digital audio recording will be deleted once the academic paper has been written. All information collected will be stored safely and securely, and will only be accessible by the researcher and any relevant members of university staff.*

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

*It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep, a few of the questions that may be asked to begin considering and you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.*

**Will I be paid for participating in the research?**

*No, there will be no compensation (monetary or otherwise) for participating in the research.*

**What is the duration of the research?**

*The research will consist of one focus group for up to an hour and a half.*

**Where will the research be conducted?**

*The interview will be conducted at your place of work if convenient, in a meeting room or similar location*

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

*There is a chance that the researcher might seek to get the research published. If it is published the researcher will get in touch to let you know. As the research project is acting as part of the researcher's doctoral thesis, which may be published after completion in 2018. The researcher will get in touch to let you know if the research is published.*

**Contact for further information**

*You can contact myself via email at the following address:*

*tracey.woodley@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk*

*Alternatively you may contact my supervisor, Professor Kevin Woods at the below address:*

*[kevin.woods@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:kevin.woods@manchester.ac.uk)*

**What if something goes wrong?**

*If there are any issues regarding the research you should contact my supervisor named above in the first instance.*

*If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to 'The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL', by emailing: [Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk), or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093*

## Appendix B3: Asst. EP participant information sheet



### Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England.

#### Assistant EP Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of a student project – Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England, which will form part of the thesis for a Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. Before you decide if you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### Who will conduct the research?

*Tracey Woodley-Hume - Trainee Educational Psychologist*

#### What is the aim of the research?

*The present research aims to expand our understanding of the various ways in which assistant EPs are utilised in local authority educational psychology services in the UK.*

#### Why have I been chosen?

*Your service and another local authority have been approached to take part. A number of EPs and assistants have been approached from each local authority to take part from your service. Due to your role as an assistant for a local authority service you have been invited to participate.*

#### What would I be asked to do if I took part?

*You will be asked to take part in a focus group with the researcher and other assistants from your EPS, sometime between January and May 2017, at a time that is convenient with yourself and others.*

#### What happens to the data collected?

*The focus group data will be collected using a digital audio-recorder, transcribed by the researcher and then analysed for themes which have emerged during the discussion. This data will contribute to a case study which will be written up into an academic paper.*

#### How is confidentiality maintained?

*All data that is recorded will only be listened to by the researcher for the purposes of transcription. The transcription will be anonymised and the digital audio recording will be deleted once the academic paper has been written. All information collected will be stored safely and securely, and will only be accessible by the researcher and any relevant members of university staff.*

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

*It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep, a few of the questions that may be asked to begin*

*considering and you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.*

**Will I be paid for participating in the research?**

*No, there will be no compensation (monetary or otherwise) for participating in the research.*

**What is the duration of the research?**

*The research will consist of one focus group for up to an hour and a half.*

**Where will the research be conducted?**

*The interview will be conducted at your place of work if convenient, in a meeting room or similar location.*

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

*There is a chance that the researcher might seek to get the research published. If it is published the researcher will get in touch to let you know. As the research project is acting as part of the researcher's doctoral thesis, which may be published after completion in 2018. The researcher will get in touch to let you know if the research is published.*

**Contact for further information**

*You can contact myself via email at the following address:*

*tracey.woodley@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk*

*Alternatively you may contact my supervisor, Professor Kevin Woods at the below address:*

*[kevin.woods@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:kevin.woods@manchester.ac.uk)*

**What if something goes wrong?**

*If there are any issues regarding the research you should contact my supervisor named above in the first instance.*

*If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to 'The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL', by emailing: [Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk), or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093*

## Appendix B4: Consent form



### Exploring the role of Assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England.

#### CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Please<br/>Initial Box</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily. | <input type="text"/>          |
| 2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.                                                               | <input type="text"/>          |
| 3. I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded                                                                                                                                        | <input type="text"/>          |
| 4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes                                                                                                                                                         | <input type="text"/>          |
| 5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers                                                                                                                             | <input type="text"/>          |
| 6. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.                                                                                              | <input type="text"/>          |

I agree to take part in the above project

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____

## Appendix B5: EP interview schedule

### Semi structured EP focus group schedule

*Introductions, thank participants for giving up their time.*

*Check that the participants have had time to read the consent form and offer an opportunity for any questions.*

*Explain that the discussion will be audio recorded for later transcription. The raw data will be kept by the researcher only and encrypted, the transcription will be anonymised and only seen by relevant University staff.*

*Reiterate the right to withdraw at any time, during or post interview.*

*Explain the aim of the interview and rationale for the research.*

*Firstly, to help establish the current context within which assistants are employed I'd like to ask you a couple of questions if that's ok? (questions asked as relevant)*

**Research Question 1:** Thank you for that, now I would like to explore why was the decision made to employ assistants...

**So how did the idea of using assistants first arise, how did you find the process surrounding that?**

(prompts) Were you aware of other organisations/ LA's using assistants?

Have any of you worked with assistants before?

**What were the major factors in making the decision to employ assistants?**

(prompts) How are the assistant posts funded?

What was the general consensus amongst the team regarding employing assistants?

Why were some people keen/hesitant?

**So how long have you had assistants for in this LA?**

(prompts) Do you think you will keep employing assistants in the future? Why so?

**What is the turnover of assistants / How long do assistants usually stay with you for?**

(prompts) Is it easy to employ assistants?

How have you found the quality of personnel applying for assistant posts?

**Research Question 2:** Okay, I am also interested in how you have found using assistants and some of the key ways in which they have been working...

**What is the majority of the assistant time used for?**

(prompts) is this independently or alongside EPs? Does this come under a traded agreement?

where does this take place? in schools/ the office etc.

**In what ways have you worked with assistants?**

**What other ideas for work have been considered?**

(prompts) school based, research based, assistants to EPs...

**Research Question 3:**

**What would you say are the most beneficial aspects of having assistants?**

(prompts) How so?

Would this be the same for: them? you? the team? the service users?

**What have been the biggest pitfalls/ challenges to having assistants?**

(prompts) Would this be the same for: them? you? the team? the service users?

How do you think services could overcome these?

Thank participants for their time today and check they have my contact details so that they can get in touch if they have any questions post interview.

## **Appendix B6:** Asst. EP interview schedule

### **Semi structured focus group schedule**

*Introductions, thank participants for giving up their time.*

*Check that the participants have had time to read the consent form and offer an opportunity for any questions.*

*Explain that the discussion will be audio recorded for later transcription. The raw data will be kept by the researcher only and encrypted, the transcription will be anonymised and seen by relevant University staff. – state about being anonymous, but team know involved so avoid any personal details.*

*Reiterate the right to withdraw at any time, during or post interview.*

*Explain the aim of the interview and rationale for the research.*

*Firstly, to help establish the current context within which you work, I'd like to ask you a couple of questions if that's ok? (questions asked as relevant)*

**How many assistants currently work with you in your service?**

**For how long have you all been employed?**

**What contract type are you on?**

*Permanent                  Fixed                  Temporary*

**Are there currently any other assistant vacancies?**

**Are there currently any Trainee EPs on placement in your service?**

*Year 1                  Year 2                  Year 3*

*Have you previously?*

**Research Question 1:** Thank you for that, now I would like to explore how you came to be working as assistants:

**Can you please tell me a little bit about your backgrounds, how did you come to be here as an assistant EP?**

*(prompts) Was it always the intention? What previous roles have you worked in? Are your experiences similar?*

**Why did you want to be assistants?**

**Why do you think the service choose to employ assistants? - perceptions**

**What is the turnover of assistants / How long do you think assistants usually stay in the posts for?**

Do you have intentions to leave in the near future? Apply for the doctorate?

**Research Question 2:** Okay, I am also interested in how you have found working as assistants and some of the key ways in which you have been working...

**What do you tend to find you spend the majority of your time doing?**

(prompts) is this independently or alongside EPs? Does this come under a traded agreement?

where does this take place? in schools/ the office etc.

if work with different EPs – have those experiences differed? In what way?

link back to perceptions of why employed/ job role...

**What other areas have work have you done?** e.g. school based, research based, assistants to EPs...

**How has the role developed over time – how long have you been in post?**

*At end of each section – summarize – check understanding.*

**Research Question 3:**

**What do you perceive to be the general benefits of the role?**

for the service, schools, C/YP

**How do you feel you have benefitted from being in this role?**

(prompts) experience? Academically?

**What have been the biggest challenges for yourselves?**

(prompts) Clarity of role? independence? expectations? supervision?

How do you think these could be overcome? If you did that ... again, what would you do differently?

*At end of each section – summarize – check understanding.*

Thank participants for their time today and check they have my contact details so that they can get in touch if they have any questions post interview.

Ask if they have any diary information etc. I could collect?



## Appendix B7: Paper Two stages of data analysis

Propositions created:

Name	Sources	Referen...
● AEP role is an additional strain on resources	0	0
● AEP work based upon competence	0	0
▼ ● AEPs benefit from role	0	0
● AEP role ideal foundation for doctorate	0	0
● AEPs increase range of services available to schs	0	0
● AEPs increase service capacity	0	0
▼ ● AEPs reduce demand on fully qualified EPs	0	0
● AEPs complete existing EP tasks	0	0
● Diversity of AEP role	0	0
● EP perceived benefits of AEPs	0	0
● Lack of clarity regarding AEP remit	0	0

Phase 2: generating initial codes

Name	Sources	Referen...	Created On
● EP prior experiences of working with AEPs	2	5	2 Dec 2017 at 21:53
● EPs are stressed and stretched	3	5	3 Dec 2017 at 13:11
● EPs supervise AEP work they request	2	5	9 Dec 2017 at 18:10
● Evidence of impact	4	5	3 Dec 2017 at 00:02
● Leave- AEPs being based together promotes joint working	2	5	3 Jan 2018 at 20:46
● Need to think creatively to us AEPs	3	5	2 Dec 2017 at 21:54
● Professional membership	2	5	3 Dec 2017 at 16:12
● Shadowing opportunities	3	5	3 Dec 2017 at 12:55
● AEPs highly skilled	2	4	2 Dec 2017 at 21:09
● Allocations - leave repeated	1	4	3 Jan 2018 at 20:34
● Awareness of other services using AEPs	4	4	3 Dec 2017 at 11:48
● Content of AEP training	2	4	2 Dec 2017 at 22:25
● Demand for EP services exceeds supply	2	4	3 Dec 2017 at 11:53
● EPs responsible for AEP work	2	4	2 Dec 2017 at 23:39
▶ ● Interviewing AEPs	3	4	2 Dec 2017 at 20:46
● Work based on needs	2	4	9 Dec 2017 at 15:12

Home Create Data Analyze Query Explore Layout View						
Project Document Items List						
Import Export						
<b>SOURCES</b>	Name	Nodes	Referen...	Created On	Created By	Modified
Internals	LAA asst.	92	274	1 Dec 2017 at 11:27	TWH	1 Dec 2017
Externals	LAA EP focus group 1	83	179	3 Dec 2017 at 13:58	TWH	3 Dec 2017
Memos	LAA EP2	73	154	Today, 17:57	TWH	Today, 17:57
	LAA management 2	76	163	Today, 19:28	TWH	Today, 19:28
<b>NODES</b>	LAA Management interview...	89	182	3 Dec 2017 at 11:37	TWH	3 Dec 2017
Nodes	LAB AEP interview	131	346	3 Dec 2017 at 20:38	TWH	3 Dec 2017
Cases	LAB EP focus group trans...	127	345	2 Dec 2017 at 20:40	TWH	2 Dec 2017
Node Matrices						
<b>CLASSIFICATIONS</b>						
Source Classifications						
Case Classifications						
<b>COLLECTIONS</b>						
Sets						
Memo Links						
Annotations						

### Phase 3: Searching for themes

Home Create Data Analyze Query Explore Layout View						
Open Get Info Paste Copy Cut Merge						
Item Clipboard Format Paragraph Styles Editing						
<b>SOURCES</b>	Name	Sources	Referen...	Created On	Created...	
Internals	▶ Work undertaken by AEPs	7	110	1 Dec 2017 at 14:46	TWH	
Externals	▶ How AEP work load arises and is allocated	7	106	1 Dec 2017 at 15:17	TWH	
Memos	▶ AEP role ideal foundation for doctorate	7	39	1 Dec 2017 at 11:38	TWH	
<b>NODES</b>	▶ Number of AEPs in post at the same time	5	33	2 Dec 2017 at 20:45	TWH	
Nodes	▶ AEP work compliment EP work	7	30	1 Dec 2017 at 12:02	TWH	
Cases	▶ Managing expectations and explaining AEP role	6	27	1 Dec 2017 at 16:25	TWH	
Node Matrices	▶ AEPs increase service capacity	7	24	1 Dec 2017 at 11:29	TWH	
<b>CLASSIFICATIONS</b>	▶ Feeling well supported	3	23	1 Dec 2017 at 15:59	TWH	
Source Classifications	▶ AEP work based upon competence	5	21	1 Dec 2017 at 11:36	TWH	
Case Classifications	▶ AEP induction	6	20	1 Dec 2017 at 13:59	TWH	
<b>COLLECTIONS</b>	▶ Services also using TEPs	6	18	2 Dec 2017 at 20:48	TWH	
Sets	▶ AEPs benefit from role	5	17	1 Dec 2017 at 11:38	TWH	
Memo Links	▶ Initial lack of clarity regarding role	4	16	1 Dec 2017 at 16:57	TWH	
Annotations	▶ AEP deciding to pursue a career in educational p...	4	14	1 Dec 2017 at 14:22	TWH	
<b>QUERIES</b>	▶ AEP previous experience employment	5	14	1 Dec 2017 at 14:39	TWH	
Queries	▶ Turnover of AEPs	5	13	2 Dec 2017 at 22:35	TWH	
Results	▶ Enhanced the service	4	12	2 Dec 2017 at 22:45	TWH	
<b>MAPS</b>	▶ EPs would like to do AEP work but lack capacity	6	12	1 Dec 2017 at 16:43	TWH	
Maps	▶ Feedback from service users	5	12	1 Dec 2017 at 16:15	TWH	
	▶ Role has evolved over time	5	12	2 Dec 2017 at 23:00	TWH	
	▶ Difficulties recruiting EPs - posts converted to AEP	5	11	2 Dec 2017 at 20:50	TWH	
	▶ number of people seeking psychology experience	4	11	2 Dec 2017 at 21:04	TWH	
	▶ AEP time free to schools	4	9	1 Dec 2017 at 15:32	TWH	
	▶ AEPs starting at diff times	2	9	1 Dec 2017 at 11:51	TWH	

## Phase 4: Reviewing themes

Name	Sources	Referen...
▼ RQ2 how is AEP capacity utilised	7	183
▶ How AEP work load arises and is allocated	7	90
▶ Direct work with children YP	6	44
▶ EP service level	7	39
▶ Diversity of the AEP work	3	10
▼ RQ3 benefits	7	32
▶ Benefits for the profession or service	7	28
▶ Benefits for the AEPs	3	4
▼ RQ2 inter-relationship of function between EPs and AEPs	7	30
▶ AEP work links with EP work	7	30
▼ RQ3 challenges	7	28
▶ Initial lack of clarity regarding role	5	24
▶ Balancing developing profession and gains for service	3	3
▶ Barriers to using AEPs	1	1
▼ RQ1 rationale for employing AEPs	5	10
▶ Difficulties recruiting EPs - posts converted to AEP	5	9
▶ Other key findings	0	0

## Triangulating with supporting documents

**SOURCES**

- Internals
- Externals
- Memos

**NODES**

- Nodes
- Cases
- Node Matrices

**CLASSIFICATIONS**

- Source Classifications
- Case Classifications

**COLLECTIONS**

- Sets
- Memo Links
- Annotations

**QUERIES**

- Queries
- Results

**MAPS**

- Maps

Name	Sources	Referen...	Created On
▼ Support	8	62	3 Jan 2018 at 20:43
▶ Maybe discard- AEPs not part of Professional body	2	5	Today, 13:37
▼ Feeling well supported	6	47	3 Jan 2018 at 21:06
▶ Peer support - helpful to have more than 1 AEP	3	12	3 Jan 2018 at 20:42
▼ importance of supervision to feel comfortable with work	6	30	3 Jan 2018 at 21:06
▶ Supervision from link EPs and managers	5	18	3 Jan 2018 at 21:06
▶ Seeking supervision from EPs with particular styles	1	2	3 Jan 2018 at 21:06
▶ EPs supervise AEP work they request	3	7	Today, 13:38
▶ Allocated supervisors	1	2	Today, 14:13
▶ increasing confidence	2	3	3 Jan 2018 at 21:06
▶ AEPs vulnerable without appropriate support and super...	1	3	3 Jan 2018 at 21:06
▶ Benefits of AEPs shadowing recognised but could be more of	4	6	Today, 13:42
▶ AEPs have access to lots of training	2	4	Today, 13:46
▶ High turnover of AEPs	7	28	Today, 11:02
▶ Future directions	4	12	Today, 14:40
▶ AEP role differs across authorities	4	7	Today, 12:13

**OCC Assistant EP Role**

by the EPs within the team from their patch of trading schools. When a piece of work is proposed the EP will email the SEP in the area detailing:

- The nature of the request
- The school
- The amount of direct time that will be needed to complete the task
- The support/supervision that the EP will offer the AEP
- The way in which the role of the AEP will either increase capacity/decrease workload within the EPS

The work requests will be considered by the AEP and SEP in management meetings and the EP will be informed of the outcome. The EP will retain responsibility for the case. They will offer supervision and quality assurance for the outcome.

The direct work provided in schools by AEPs will be charged at the usual EPS rate. No charge will be made for preparation, follow up, supervision, EP support etc.

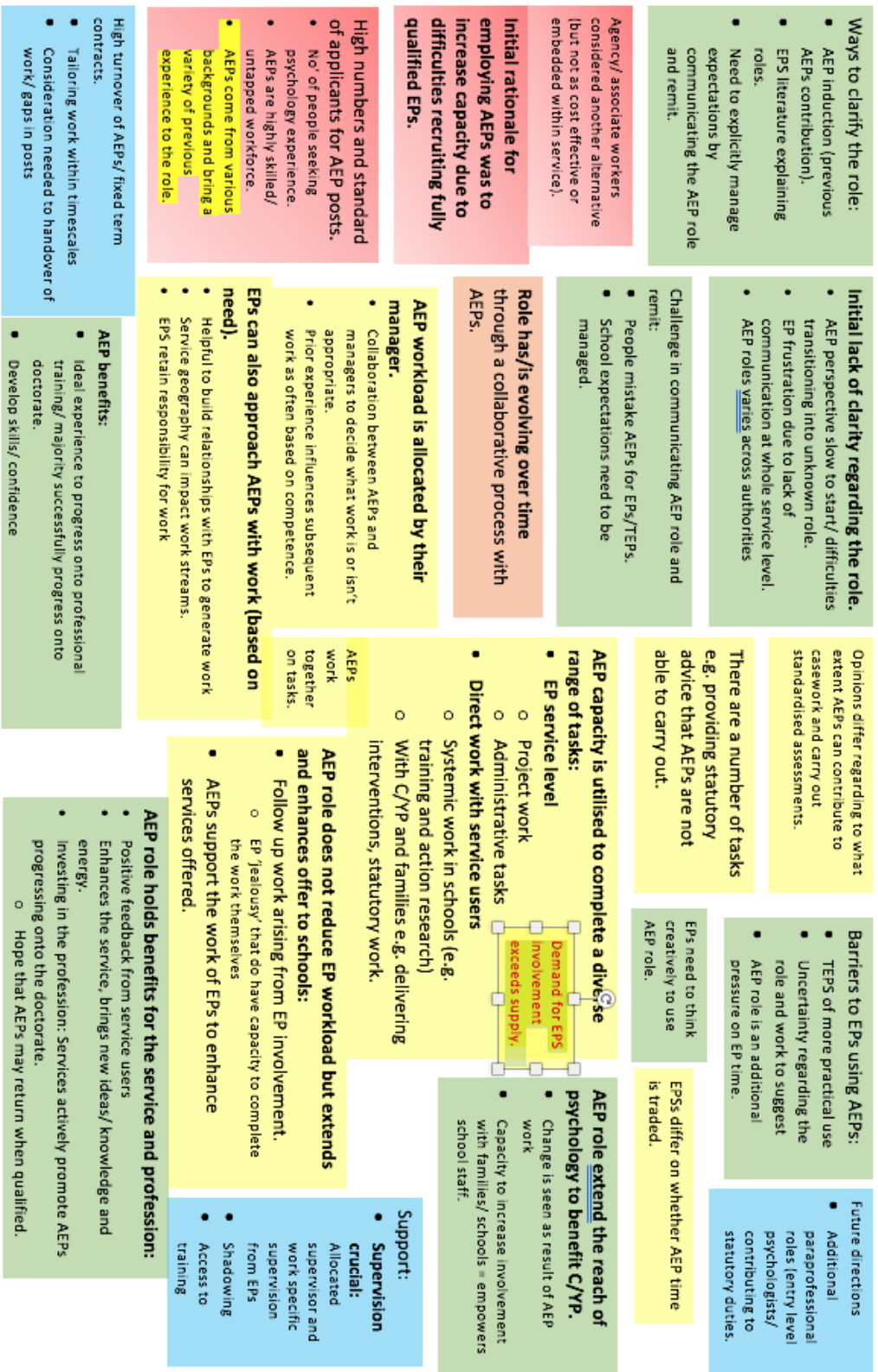
The nature of the tasks that AEPs could be involved in should be varied and responsive to need in local areas. However, it could include:

- Supporting/modelling Precision Teaching
- Supporting/Modelling Social Stories

## Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

Superordinate Themes	Main themes	Sub-themes
<b>1. AEP recruitment and rationale</b>	1.1 EP Recruitment difficulties	1.1.1 Demand for EPS involvement exceeds supply
	1.2 High numbers and standard of applicants	1.2.1 No' of people seeking psychology experience 1.2.2 AEPs are highly skilled and diverse in the experience that they bring to the role
	1.3 High turnover of AEPs	
	1.4 Agency/ associate workers as an alternative	
	1.5 Role has/is evolving over time	
<b>2. How AEP capacity is utilized.</b>	2.1 Contributions at a service level	2.1.1 Projects 2.1.2 (specialized) Administrative tasks
	2.2 Direct work with service users	2.2.1 Systemic work 2.2.2 Direct work with CYP and families
	2.3 Tasks outside of the AEP remit	2.3.1 Grey areas/ uncertainty
	2.4 Charging for AEP time	2.4.1 AEP time comes under a traded agreement 2.4.2 AEP time offered free to schools
<b>3. Inter-relationship of function within EPSs</b>	3.1 AEP allocations	3.1.1 AEP workload is allocated by their manager 3.1.2 EPs generate AEP work
	3.2 Helpful for AEPs to work together	
	3.3 AEP role extends and enhances, but work does not reduce EP workload	3.3.1 Follow up work arising from EP involvement 3.3.2 AEPs supporting EPs 3.3.3 EPs retain responsibility for work
<b>4. Benefits of the AEP role</b>	4.1 Benefits for the service and profession	4.1.1 Positive feedback from service users 4.1.2 Enhances the service, brings new ideas/ knowledge and energy. 4.1.3 Investing in the profession

Generating thematic maps:



## **Appendix B8: Member checking – email**

Hello all,

Thank you again to you and the service as a whole for taking the time to participate in my research.

I have compiled a summary of my findings for my thesis research (see attached). While the structure of the findings is likely to change within my final write up, I aim for it to be inclusive of the main themes highlighted.

Could you please review this and if you are happy to, circulate to the service. I welcome any comments from any participant and please indicate if you feel that there are any inaccuracies/ omissions. It is important to note that this is a configurative analysis of the data collected from your service (across all participant groups) and another EPS.

Please inform me of any considerations by the 31st January 2018 to ensure that I can reflect participant views within my final write up.

Any other queries or if you/anyone would like to discuss the findings please feel free to contact me directly, either by email or I can be available for a telephone conversation.

Many thanks,

Tracey Woodley-Hume

### **Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England – main findings for member checking.**

#### **1. Recruitment strategy:**

Under this theme which addressed research question 1, the excess demand for EP services and difficulties in recruiting fully qualified EPs was found. There was a consistent finding that there were a high number and quality of AEP applicants; this was considered in relation to the number of graduates wishing to gain psychological experience. Other findings included; the high turnover of AEPs, alternative strategies for capacity building, and how the role continues to evolve over time with each intake.

#### **2. How AEP capacity is utilised:**

The findings in relation to the contribution of AEPs was organised into distinct aspects: a) contributions at a service level, such as projects and specialized administrative tasks; b) direct work with service users, including systemic work in schools and work with C/YP and their families. Tasks not considered appropriate to be carried out by an AEP were found, including some 'grey areas'. The final finding

in relation to AEP capacity was charging for AEP time through part of a service level agreement (this differed across EPSs).

### **3. Interrelationship of function within the EPSs.**

A key finding was that a proportion of the AEP workload arises from and is allocated by management, furthermore individual EPs generate work for AEPs. Another significant finding in relation to the interrelationship of function was that the AEP role extends and enhances the offer to service users, often through follow up work from EP involvement (extend) or supporting the work of EPs (enhance). However, the AEP contribution does not reduce the EP workload; EPs retain responsibility for AEP work they generate (see link with challenges to EPs using AEPs). It was also found that it is helpful for AEPs to work collaboratively on tasks.

### **4. Benefits of the AEP role:**

The benefits of the AEP role were separated into:

- benefits for the service/profession;
- AEP benefits;
- benefits for service users (including C/YP, see theme 2 direct work with service users) as the role extends the reach of psychology.

Benefits for the service included how the AEP role enhances/revives the service through bringing new ideas/ knowledge and energy. The role was also noted to contribute to the development of the profession. The AEPs were recognized to directly benefit from the experience gained through the role and opportunities to develop their skills and confidence. Experience as an AEP was considered to be ideal to facilitate career progression onto the doctorate which was promoted by services.

### **5. Challenges and solutions to the deployment of AEPs**

An initial challenge was found to be a lack of clarity regarding the role and remit, differences across LA's were highlighted and potential frustration from EPs and/or AEPs was raised. The importance of developing the AEP induction (with input from AEPs) was found to ensure smooth transitions (link to high turnover of AEPs).

Potential barriers to EPs using AEPs effectively were found including: a potential preference for TEPs (associated with the interrelationship of function e.g. AEPs not actively reducing EP workloads); the perception that AEPs may create an additional pressure on time (link to supervision/accountability); finally, the potential uncertainty of work to suggest due to the new way of working (i.e. initial lack of clarity). A finding included the need for creative thinking to overcome some of the mentioned potential challenges and embed the AEP role into practice.

It was also found that there remained a difficulty in communicating and distinguishing the AEP role (e.g. from fully qualified EPs); the use of EPS literature to clarify this was raised.

### **Other findings:**

#### **Support:**

The importance of support for the AEPs was found; including effective supervision and peer support.

**Future Directions:**

The potential of new additional paraprofessional roles was raised.



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- Should be between 2000 and 6000 words.
- Should contain an unstructured abstract of 150 words.
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- Should be between 800 and 1000 words.
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- Should be between 1500 and 2000 words.
- Should contain an unstructured abstract of 150 words.
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## Style Guidelines

Please refer to these [quick style guidelines](#) when preparing your paper, rather than any published articles or a sample copy.

Please use British (-ise) spelling style consistently throughout your manuscript.

Please use double quotation marks, except where “a quotation is ‘within’ a quotation”. Please note that long quotations should be indented without quotation marks.

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## References

Please use this [reference guide](#) when preparing your paper.

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## Checklist: What to Include

1. **Author details.** Please include all authors' full names, affiliations, postal addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses on the cover page. Where available, please also include ORCiDs and social media handles (Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn). One author will need to be identified as the corresponding author, with their email address normally displayed in the article PDF (depending on the journal) and the online article. Authors' affiliations are the affiliations where the research was conducted. If any of the named co-authors moves affiliation during the peer-review process, the new affiliation can be given as a footnote. Please note that no changes to affiliation can be made after your paper is accepted. [Read more on authorship](#).
2. You can opt to include a **video abstract** with your article. [Find out how these can help your work reach a wider audience, and what to think about when filming](#).
3. **Funding details.** Please supply all details required by your funding and grant-awarding bodies as follows:  
*For single agency grants*  
This work was supported by the [Funding Agency] under Grant [number xxxx].  
*For multiple agency grants*  
This work was supported by the [Funding Agency #1] under Grant [number xxxx]; [Funding Agency #2] under Grant [number xxxx]; and [Funding Agency #3] under Grant [number xxxx].
4. **Disclosure statement.** This is to acknowledge any financial interest or benefit that has arisen from the direct applications of your research. [Further guidance on what is a conflict of interest and how to disclose it](#).

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6. **Supplemental online material.** Supplemental material can be a video, dataset, fileset, sound file or anything which supports (and is pertinent to) your paper. We publish supplemental material online via Figshare. Find out more about [supplemental material and how to submit it with your article](#).
7. **Figures.** Figures should be high quality (1200 dpi for line art, 600 dpi for grayscale and 300 dpi for colour, at the correct size). Figures should be supplied in one of our preferred file formats: EPS, PS, JPEG, GIF, or Microsoft Word (DOC or DOCX). For information relating to other file types, please consult our [Submission of electronic artwork](#) document.
8. **Tables.** Tables should present new information rather than duplicating what is in the text. Readers should be able to interpret the table without reference to the text. Please supply editable files.
9. **Equations.** If you are submitting your manuscript as a Word document, please ensure that equations are editable. More information about [mathematical symbols and equations](#).
10. **Units.** Please use [SI units](#) (non-italicized).

## Appendix C1: Ethical Approval

Dear Tracey,

Ref: PGR-7597252-RP

I am pleased to confirm that your ethical approval application for your project – ‘Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England’ has been submitted as Low Risk by your supervisor.

The approval for this is on condition you supply all supporting documentation relevant to your research i.e. consent and participation forms, interview schedules, questionnaires.

If you have submitted all forms mentioned above then please accept this email as confirmation that you are now able to carry out your research. If anything untoward happens during your research then please ensure you make your supervisor aware who can then raise it with the School Research Integrity Committee on your behalf.

This approval is only for the Ethical Approval application, you are still required, **if necessary**, to have received approval from the Fieldwork Risk Assessment before carrying out any research.

Regards

## Appendix C2: Ethics forms

<i>RIA reference</i>			
<i>Date received</i>		<i>Date approved</i>	

### Manchester Institute of Education Ethical Approval Application Form

This ethical approval application form has been revised to incorporate changes made to the new University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) Form. It has been designed to incorporate prompts for information needed to ascertain whether the proposed research matches MIE's research template pre-approved by UREC and to facilitate completion of the form to a standard that will allow speedier review, and approvals, by RIC members. Please follow all directions contained in this document.

SECTION 1: Student Details /Identification of the person responsible for the research	
<i>Name of Student:</i>	Tracey Woodley-Hume
<i>Student ID (quoted on library/ swipe card):</i>	7597252
<i>Email Address:</i>	<a href="mailto:traceywoodley@hotmail.com">traceywoodley@hotmail.com</a>
<i>Name of Supervisor:</i>	Professor Kevin Woods
<i>Supervisor email:</i>	kevin.a.woods@manchester.ac.uk
<i>Programme (PhD, Prof Doc, MEd, PGCE, MSc, BA etc):</i>	Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

Year of Study	1st
Full/Part-time	Full time
Title of Research Project:	Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England.
Recruitment and Data Collection	<b>Start Date:</b> <i>On receipt of confirmation of ethical approval</i> <b>End Date:</b> 28.02.2018
Location(s) where the project will be carried out:	Educational psychology services in England.
Student Signature:	T. Woodley-Hume
Supervisor Signature:** <b>Date:</b>	

\*\* Supervisor signature confirms that the student has the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to carry out the study in an appropriate manner

## SECTION 2: PROJECT DETAILS

(Please write your answers in the boxes provided. Boxes will expand to fit answers as necessary)

### 1. *Aims and Objectives of the Project*

#### 1.1 Research Question

State the principal research question(s).

1. What is the current rationale for employing assistant EPs within LA EPS in England?
2. What is the inter relationship of function between EPs and assistants and how do services utilise assistant capacity?
3. What have been the perceived benefits/ challenges to the use of assistant EPs in LA EPSs?

#### 1.2. Academic justification

Briefly describe the academic justification for the research. (Why is it an area of importance/ has any similar research been done?)

Despite the vast scrutiny of the Educational psychology profession (Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Cameron, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006; Gaskell & Leadbetter, 2009; Love, 2009), the clarification of the role and the statutory regulations surrounding EP work (HCPC, 2009), there has been little research to explore the role of Assistant EPs.

In this political and economic climate, the efficiency of innovative working practices are paramount to the survival of Educational Psychology services as many become 'traded' (AEP, 2011). The role of assistant EPs may be one way of widening the reach of EP services, as research has suggested that EPSs should consider how assistants can make a contribution that compliments the work of fully trained EPs (Farrell et.al. 2006). Collyer (2012) undertook an exploratory survey of assistants in Scotland and found that recruitment issues and improving EPS research capacity were drivers for employment. Despite similar challenges being highlighted in research (Truong & Ellam, 2014), how the role is being utilised in England is currently unknown. Therefore the present research aims to expand our understanding of the structure and ways in which assistant EPs are utilised in the UK.

### 2. *Methodology*

#### 2.1 Project Design:

Please briefly outline the design and methodological approach of the project, including the theoretical framework that informs it.

The research will be an exploratory multiple embedded case study design and follow Yin's (2014) guidance. It aims to explore the opinions of two EPSs, each serving all/ part of a local authority education provision regarding the role of assistants within their service.

#### 2.2 Data Collection Methods:

Describe the research procedures/activities as they affect the study participant and any other parties involved. Which of the following will your research involve and what will you be asking your participants to do.



2.2.1. Interviews

Yes  No

*If Yes, describe how these are to be conducted (Append your interview guide: Separate focus groups with assistants and supervising EPs will be used to gather data. Principal EPs will be given the option to participate in the EP focus group or be interviewed individually. The focus groups will be semi-structured (see appendices) to ensure that the research questions are adequately addressed. Each focus group/ interview will be recorded using an audio recording device to later be transcribed by the researcher into an anonymised written account.*

2.2.2. Questionnaires

Yes  No

*If Yes, how will these be delivered to and collected from participants? (Append your draft questionnaire(s)):*

2.2.3. Observations

Yes  No

*If Yes, describe the context for the observation and what participants will be engaged in. (Append copy of any observation framework or other data collection guide to be used):*

2.2.4. Diary

Yes  No

*If Yes, describe the context for use of the diary and what participants will be asked to do. (Append copy of the Diary instructions and format):  
The use of a research diary will allow the researcher to keep records of personal and methodological reflects throughout the research process.*

2.2.5. Intervention

Yes  No

*If Yes, describe the intervention and what participants will be asked to do. (Append a detailed description and any images necessary to support the description):*

2.2.6. Assessments

Yes  No

*If Yes, give full details of the assessment(s) and what participants will be asked to do. (Append a copy of the assessment schedules to be used):*

2.2.7. Other

Yes  No

*If Yes, give full details and what participants will be asked to do. (Append supporting documentation as appropriate):*

2.2.8. Does data collection use video or still image? Yes  No

**If Yes, complete the VASTRE documentation** - Available from:  
<http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/stillimageresearch/>

### 2.2.9 Research Experience

Please state your experience in conducting these research interventions or assessments (where applicable) and methodologies outlined above -provide supporting evidence (e.g. course unit code).

During my first year of study I completed a pilot study adhering to similar interview schedules the findings of this were used to guide the current research. Furthermore as part of my current studies I have attended all relevant seminars in relation to 'Research in educational and child psychology' module, which addressed a variety of research methodologies including Yin's (2014) guidance on case study research (04/11/15), gaining experience of conducting focus groups and thematic analysis (19/10/2015).

### 2.3 Sampling

What type of sampling method do you propose to use?

2.3.1. Statistical

Yes  No

*If Yes, describe the type, your justification for taking this approach and proposed sample size:*

2.3.2. Other

Yes  No

*If Yes, describe the type, your justification for taking this approach and proposed sample size:*

Two local authority services will be recruited via purposeful convenience sampling via links with the University of Manchester and services known to the researcher. LAs with an established role and high presence of assistants will be enrolled yet the contexts and arrangement of assistant within the two LAs will be contrasting. Once ethical approval has been gained the potential participants will be invited to participate and given participant information sheets (see appendices) and required to give informed written consent (see appendices).

### 2.4 Analysis method

What type of analyses do you propose to use to explore this data?

2.4.1. Quantitative analyses

Yes  No

*If Yes, please give details:*

2.4.2. Qualitative analyses

Yes  No

*If Yes, please give details:*

Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) can be applied across a range of epistemologies, therefore ideally suited to fit within the critical realism framework of the research and will be used to identify themes emerging from the data. Both a deductive and inductive approach will be taken to the analysis. The use of propositions will aid the researcher to organise the case study whilst defining alternative explanations to be examined.

### 2.5 Ethical Issues

**Briefly state the main ethical issues raised by the methodology outlined above.**

Potential sensitivities including; the job security and the restructuring of services; the perceived success of each participant. Therefore confidentiality to time and place will be reiterated prior to any discussions.

Semi structured interview to direct the interview if necessary away from personal judgements and remain objective. The researcher will ensure they are contactable (via email) following the data collection for any further debriefs and or follow up questions. The principal EPs will be given the choice of whether to join a EP focus group or be interviewed individually to minimize any potential sensitivities being evoked during discussions.

### 3. Participant Details

#### 3.1 Characteristics of participants

Please specify the characteristics of the participants you wish to recruit.

number	Est: 20
sex	Likely mixed gender participation
age group(s)	Likely age range 25-65
Location(s)	Two English local authority regions (e.g. Manchester, Oxford).

#### 3.2 Vulnerable groups

3.2.1. Will your project include participants from either of the following groups?  
(Tick as appropriate)

- Children under 16 in school, youth club or other accredited organisation.
- Adults with learning difficulties in familiar, supportive environments
- NONE OF THE ABOVE (go to item 4.)

3.2.2. Inclusion of vulnerable groups

*Please describe measures you will undertake to avoid coercion during the recruitment stage.*

3.2.3. Research in UK with vulnerable groups

Please confirm you have relevant clearance for working with vulnerable groups from DBS and/or other relevant sources.

DBS*	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If Other, please describe*

\*NB: You will need a DBS application through the University. Any work related DBS clearance is not valid for your University research.

3.2.4. Please confirm that you will notify the Administrator for Ethics and Fieldwork (AEF) immediately if your DBS status changes.

I will immediately notify the AEF if my DBS status changes  X  
 NA

**4. Recruitment**

**4.1 Permissions**

Do you have permission to collect data from an organisational fieldwork site from...

4.1.1. The organisation where the research will take place

(e.g. School head etc)?

Yes  NA  X

4.1.2. Sub-settings within the organisation (e.g. class teacher etc)?

Yes  NA

X

**If Yes, append letter/email confirming access to this application**

*If NA, please explain why permission is not applicable.*

**4.2 Participant recruitment**

4.2.1. How will your pool of potential participants be identified? (tick all that apply)

- X Letters/ emails and follow up phone calls to organisations
- Posters / Advertisements
- Website/Internet (including Facebook/other social media)
- Known or named client groups (students, etc).
- X Networks and recommendations
- Person in a position of authority in organisation
- Directory/database/register in public domain

Describe the nature of these routes to identify your pool of potential participants.  
 Upon ethical approval I will invite participants from EP services that have been identified through networking that meet the criteria for the proposed study. Email communication will be utilised to extend this invitation.

4.2.2. Who will the potential participants be?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Persons unknown to the researcher
<input type="checkbox"/>	Client groups (students, etc) within an organisation known by the researcher
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Persons accessed through networks and recommendations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Persons nominated by a position of authority
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (describe here) :

Indicate whether there is any existing relationship between yourself and the source/group of potential participants.

Not currently.

4.2.3. How will you approach potential participants? (tick all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Letter
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Email
<input type="checkbox"/>	Website/internet (including Facebook/other social media site)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Presentation at meeting or similar
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (describe here):

Indicate how information about your study will be delivered to potential participants and how they will (directly or indirectly) let you know they would like to take part in your research.

An email invitation will be sent to the principal EP of potential services to take part in the research including the participant information sheet. If services are interested in participating in the study, the principal EP will be asked to disseminate all relevant participant information, consent forms and the researchers email address to potential participants. Consent forms and tailored participant information will be sent to all potential participants. Prior to any data collection taking place all consent forms will need to be returned to the researcher directly.

**Append text of letters / emails/ posters / advertisements / presentation etc**

Information giving will be undertaken **by**:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	the researcher
<input type="checkbox"/>	someone in a position of authority
<input type="checkbox"/>	a neutral third party to known or named client groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (describe here):

Provide details on how you will fully inform potential participants about your study:  
All potential participants will be sent a tailored participant information sheet for their participant group and will be given the researchers email address if any further questions or queries arise.

4.2.5 Information accessibility

What arrangements have you made to ensure information is accessible to those unable to read standard English? (low literacy level, non-English speaker, persons with learning disabilities)

4.2.4 How will you ensure those interested in the research are fully informed about the study and what will be expected of them if they take part?

Information giving will be undertaken **through**:

- |                                     |                                                               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Letter                                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Email                                                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Website/internet (including Facebook/other social media site) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Telephone                                                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Information sheet (covering headings in University template)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Presentation at meeting or similar                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other (describe here):                                        |

**Append text of recruitment letters / emails / information sheet to this application**

Please confirm:

- |                                     |                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | I have supplied information relevant to each participating group                                                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The information provided follows the guidance provided in the University of Manchester Participant Information Sheet Template |

4.2.6 Decision period

How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the study? *If you are proposing a decision period of less than 2 weeks, full justification for this approach should be given.*  
Participants will be given a month window to confirm if they would like to participate in the proposed research and confirm this with the researcher via email .

State any payment or any other incentive that is being made to any study participant. *Specify and state the level of payment to be made and/or the source of the funds/gift/free service to be used and the justification for it.*  
N/A

4.2.8 Avoiding coercion

How will your recruitment methods avoid putting any overt or covert pressure on vulnerable individuals to consent (children, junior colleagues, adults with learning disabilities)?

Due to the research being interested in professional practices, none of the participant groups are predicted to be from vulnerable groups and participant is completely voluntary, with participants opting in via contacting the researcher directly.

#### **4.3. Consent**

4.3.1 How will participants' consent to take part be recorded?

- |                                     |                                                                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Implied consent - return/submission of completed questionnaire |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Written consent form matching University template              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Verbally (give details of how this will be recorded)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other method (give details here):                              |

**Append text of consent forms/consent taking procedure to this application.**

Please confirm:

- |                                     |                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | My consent taking procedures are relevant to each participating group                                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The consent taking procedures follow the guidance provided in the University of Manchester Consent Form Template |

4.3.2 Special arrangements

Please outline **any special consent taking arrangements** relevant to your research study.

### **5. Participation in the research**

#### **5.1 Duration**

How long will each participant be expected to take part in activities?

Each participant is only expecting to attend one focus group or interview, estimated to be no longer than 1 ½ hours.

#### **5.2 Benefits to participation**

Are there any benefits to participation for participants (beyond incentive noted above)?

Participation is expected to be a useful form of ongoing continuing professional development for individuals as well as an opportunity for service leaders to review service delivery strategy.

#### **5.3 Deficits to participation**

Will any benefit or service otherwise received by participants be withheld (e.g. pupil misses lesson, or part thereof) as a consequence of taking part in this study?

None

### **6. Risks and Safeguards**

Please outline **any adverse effects or risks** for participants in respect of the methods you have indicated in Section 2B [Interview; Questionnaire; Interventions; Assessments; Observation; Diary keeping; Other activity]

## 6.1 Physical risks

### 6.1.1 Potential

What is the **potential** for adverse effects of a physical nature; risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, **inconvenience, or change in lifestyle / normal routine** for participants?  
Due to the need for several participants to attend the focus groups, it may be that finding a suitable time to fit all participants is difficult and inconvenient for some.

### 6.1.2 Safeguards

What **precautions or measures** have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?  
The researcher will be flexible to reduce any inconvenience for participants and meet at a time and place best for the participants.

## 6.2 Psychological risks

### 6.2.1 Potential

Will any topics discussed (questionnaire, group discussion or individual interview) **potentially** be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or **is it possible** that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the project?  
Potential sensitivities, including job security, have been considered to potentially be highlighted within the discussions.

### 6.2.2 Safeguards

What **precautions or measures** have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?  
The researcher will give the principal EP the choice of whether it is best to participate in the EP focus groups or be interviewed individually as will have a better insight into potential sensitivities than the researcher. The researcher will reiterate confidentially to time and place and reinforce the objectives of the research, using the interview schedule to guide participants away from personal judgements where possible.

## 6.3 Risks for you as researcher

It is important that the **potential** for adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience, of a physical or psychological nature to **you** as the researcher have been assessed. **This is a requirement by law.** Risks to you **are identified as part of the RREA/FRA process.** Ensure this assessment has been completed by either:

- a. a completed and approved Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA), or
- b. a signed Low Risk Fieldwork Declaration in Section D of RREA form.

Briefly state here the conclusions of your assessment and append a copy of your approved FRA form (if required), in addition to your RREA, to this application:

I will abide by all safety guidelines and have arranged an emergency contact. See FRA.

## 6.4 Early termination of the research

### 6.4.1 Criteria

What are the criteria for electively stopping the research prematurely?  
I will contact my research supervisor immediately if any unforeseen risks arise.

6.4.2 **Please confirm**, by ticking here, that:



any **adverse event requiring radical change of method/design or abandonment** will be reported in the first instance to your research supervisor and then to the MIE RIC Chair

## 7. Data Protection and confidentiality

### 7.1 Data activities and storage of personal data

Will the study use any of the following activities at any stage?

- |                                     |                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Electronic transfer by email or computer networks                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Publication of direct quotations from respondents                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Use of audio/visual recording devices                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Sharing data with other organisations                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Export of data outside EU                                                 |

Will the study store **personal** data on any of the following?

- |                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Manual files                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Home or other personal computers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Laptop computers                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | University computers             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Private company computers        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | NHS computers                    |

### 7.2 Confidentiality of personal data

What measures have been put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data? *Give details of whether any encryption or other anonymisation procedures have been used and at what stage?*  
 Upon data collection the raw data will be stored on an encrypted USB provided by the university of Manchester. Upon transcription all names and personal details will be anonymised.

### 7.3 Research monitoring and auditing Please confirm:

The student researcher's supervisor(s) will monitor the research

*If other arrangements apply please specify:*

### 7.4 Data Protection

Please provide confirmation that you will employ measures that comply with the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy (UDPP)?

**Data Protection Act:** I confirm that all Data collected will be:

- |                                     |                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Fairly and lawfully processed                                                                                                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Processed for limited purposes as outlined in this application and only used in the way(s) for which consent has been given. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Adequate for the purpose, relevant and not excessive                                                                         |

- Accurate
- Not kept longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the participant's rights
- Secure – **on an encrypted storage device**
- Only transferred to other settings with appropriate protection.

**University Data Protection Policy (UDPP):** I confirm

- My data and its storage will comply with the UDPP
- Paper copies of data and encrypted storage devices will be stored in a locked draw or cupboard
- For UG research:* On completion of my research, the data will be kept until the study has been completed and will then be shredded/destroyed
- For PGT/PGR research:* On completion of my research, the data will be passed to my supervisor for archiving at the University for a period of 5 years after which it will be shredded/destroyed

**7.5 Privacy during data analysis** Please confirm:

- Analysis will be undertaken by the student researcher
- Analysis will take place in a private study area

*If other arrangements apply please describe:*

**7.6 Custody and control of the data** Please confirm:

- The student researcher's supervisor will have **custody** of the data
- The student researcher will have **control** of the data

*If other arrangements apply please describe:*

**7.7 Access to the data**

- The student researcher will have access to the data
- The student's supervisor(s) will have access to anonymised data

*If other/additional arrangements apply, please describe:*

**7.8 Use of data in future studies**

Will the data be stored for use in future studies? Yes  No

**If Yes, confirm** this is addressed in the information giving/consent taking process by ticking here.

## 8. Reporting Arrangements

### 8.1 Dissemination

How do you intend to report and disseminate the results of the study?

(Tick all that apply)

- |                                     |                                            |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Peer reviewed scientific journals          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Book / Chapter contribution                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Published review (ESRC, Cochrane)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Internal report                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Conference presentation                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Thesis/dissertation                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other e.g. Creative works (describe here): |

### 8.2 Participant and community feedback

How will the results of research be made available to research participants and communities from which they are drawn? (Tick all that apply)

- |                                     |                                                           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Written feedback to research participants                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Presentation to participants or relevant community groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other e.g. Video/Website (describe here):                 |

## 9. Research Sponsorship

### 9.1 External funding

Are you in receipt of any external funding for your study? (tick one)

- |                                     |                  |                          |                     |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | External Funding | <input type="checkbox"/> | No external funding |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|

If you have funding please provide details:

Organisation	National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL)
UK Contact	NCTL, Piccadilly, Manchester
Amount	Approx. £32,000
Duration	36 months

### 9.2 Sponsoring organisation

Who will be responsible for governance and insuring the study? (tick one)

- |                              |                                     |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| The University of Manchester | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Other organisation           | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

**If not UoM**, provide details of who will act as sponsor of the research and their insurance details

## 10. Conflict of Interest

Have any conflicts of interest been identified in relation to this project? (tick at least one option)

Payment for doing this research?

*If so, how much and on what basis?*

Direct personal involvement in the research of a spouse/funder?

*If so, please provide details:*

Does your department/the University receive payment (apart from costs)?

*If so, please provide details:*

**NONE of the ABOVE APPLY**

**Thank you  
This is the end of the form**

**Please use the checklist below to ensure that you append all necessary supporting documents**

### CHECKLIST

**Please tick to indicate whether the document is APPENDED OR NOT APPLICABLE for this application.**

Documents	Appended	
	Total Number	NA
<b>Data collection instruments</b>		
Draft copy of <b>each</b> data collection instrument named in Q2.2 (Questionnaire, Interview guide, etc)	3	
Video and Still Image Recording Declaration (VASTRE)		X
<b>Participant recruitment</b>		
Letter(s) of permission to conduct research within <b>each</b> organisation		X
Recruitment advertisement(s) specified in Q4.2.1 (poster/email/letter/ presentation)		X
Participant Information giving – one <b>for each</b> participant type specified in Q3.1 (Information sheet/letter/email/script)	2	
Consent taking – one <b>for each</b> participant type specified in Q3.1 (Consent form or alternative procedure)	1	
<b>Fieldwork risk assessment</b>		
Fieldwork Risk Assessment Form (approved)	1	
RREA form Low Risk Fieldwork Declaration (Section C) completed	1	

### SECTION 3: MINOR AMENDMENT TO RESEARCH PROJECT

#### Application for Approval of Minor Amendment<sup>1</sup> to a Research Study

*Details of proposed amendment (please give as much detail as possible)*

#### **Supervisor Declaration**

I agree that the amendment proposed does not change the character of this research or the participant groups.

I confirm that the research risk assessment for the study as MEDIUM remains.

***Supervisor's signature\****

***Date.***

Please send applications for amendment to ethical approval for MEDIUM risk research to the Manchester Institute Administrator for Ethics and Fieldwork at [ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk) who will pass on the request to the RIC member who authorised the original application wherever possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Minor amendments are those that do not alter the character of the research or the participant groups

## **FIELDWORK RISK ASSESSMENT**

**Manchester Institute of Education, University of Manchester**

**This form should be completed by anyone planning research which is to be conducted off campus or involves conducting interviews alone, and does not correspond to the RREA 'low risk' fieldwork criteria as detailed on the RREA form.**

---

The form has two main functions:

1. it provides guidance and asks questions that will encourage staff, students and supervisors to think systematically through a range of potential risks in ways that should help them to avoid difficulties.
2. it provides evidence that potential risks to personal safety are being appropriately managed.

**Students**, should:

1. complete the Fieldwork Risk Assessment in discussion with supervisors.
2. send the FRA (and RREA or MIE or UREC form for information) to the Authorised Fieldwork Risk Assessor (Alan Jervis [alan.jervis@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:alan.jervis@manchester.ac.uk)) for approval.
3. Once approval has been gained, this FRA should be submitted along with the RREA, and other research documents, for ethical review.

**Staff**, should:

1. complete the Fieldwork Risk Assessment in collaboration with co-researchers
2. send the FRA (and UREC form for information) to the Authorised Fieldwork Risk Assessor (Alan Jervis [alan.jervis@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:alan.jervis@manchester.ac.uk)) for approval.
3. Once approval has been gained, the FRA should be submitted along with the UREC documentation for in-house review and subsequent University Research Ethics Committee ethical approval.

**NB:** Your Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA) should be treated as a 'living document' and updated as necessary throughout your fieldwork period. When a FRA is updated, students should send a copy should to their supervisor who will take any further action necessary. Staff should send an updated copy of their FRA to the MIE Research Support Officer (Paul Rowbotham).

## YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT DETAILS

<b>Project title</b>	Exploring the role of assistant Educational Psychologists within local authority Educational Psychology services in England.
<b>Research type (circle one)</b>	Staff <u>PhD</u> Masters     Undergraduate
<b>Researcher(s) name(s)</b>	Tracey Woodley-Hume
<b>Supervisor(s) name(s)</b> (where relevant)	Professor Kevin Woods
<b>Date</b>	13.07.2016

This form is divided into three sections. Please indicate which of the Fieldwork risk sections, listed below, are relevant to your project.

Tick any that apply

<b>Section 1:</b>	Travel overseas (not to your home country)	
<b>Section 2:</b>	Off campus fieldwork visits (not vocational placement, or regular employment settings)	X
<b>Section 3:</b>	Conducting fieldwork alone	X

Please now complete the fieldwork risk assessment items for each section you have ticked. Finally, complete the Declaration Section.

**Section 1 - Travel overseas (not in your home country)**

- ➔ Complete all items below.
- ➔ Where you do not foresee any risks relating to a particular item, please state 'No risks identified', do not leave the item blank.

**1. Governmental Advice about the Proposed Destination**

What advice do the UK authorities (i.e. FCO) give regarding the proposed destination? Summarise the main points below and for each separate point indicate what implications their advice has for you and your study.

For example, do the FCO advise that you register with them during your visit to this location? If so, have you now done so? Do they advise that you avoid certain regions within the country concerned? If so, have you stated that your visit will indeed avoid such regions?

Overall, in the box below you need to provide the University with clear reassurance that you have attended to, and heeded, the advice which the UK authorities have given about your proposed destination. If you can identify other sources of similar advice, please do in this section also.

The following sections may pick up on issues already raised but you should nonetheless complete all sections below.

**2. University Advice about the Proposed Destination (this up-to-date advice may also be helpful for staff)**

What advice does the Study Abroad Unit give regarding the proposed destination? Summarise the main points below and for each separate point indicate what implications their advice have for you and your study.



### 3. Travelling to your destination

What potential risks can you identify regarding travel to and from the proposed destination? Use the box below to identify such risks and to indicate what measures you are taking to reduce these risks wherever possible.

For example, If you plan to extend your stay beyond the period of the fieldwork, perhaps for a holiday, have you taken out travel insurance to cover any periods not covered by the University's insurance? Are certain means of transport seen as being particularly risky? What documentation do you need? How will you safeguard these documents? Will anyone else have copies of them? Who will know of your travel arrangements?

### 4. Health Considerations

What potential risks to your health can you identify (given your particular medical circumstances) when you visit this particular country? Use the box below to identify such risks and to indicate what measures you are taking to reduce these risks wherever possible.

For example, what health advice is given for travellers such as yourself (i.e. outsiders to the context in question) for visits to this context? Have you followed this advice? Are there any aspects of your own medical history and condition which need to be considered with regard to the health risks associated with the proposed destination? If you have health issues, have you completed a medical 'fit to travel' form with Occupational Health? Have you had all the necessary vaccinations? What medication / first aid are you taking with you?

### 5. Dietary Considerations

What potential risks to your health can you identify (given your particular dietary needs and habits) when you visit this particular country with its particular dietary traditions and (lack of) possibilities? Use the box below to identify such risks and to indicate what measures you are taking to reduce these risks wherever possible.

For example, what risks might be associated with locally-prepared food and how will you minimise these risks? What risks are associated with local drinking water supplies and what can you do to minimise these risks?

## 6. Physical Hazards

What potential risks can you identify given the range of climates and type of terrains you will be spending some time in during your proposed visit? Use the box below to identify such risks and to indicate what measures you are taking to reduce these risks wherever possible.

For example, are there climate risks such as monsoons and flooding, severe wintry conditions, tornados and so on? Is the terrain particularly challenging, e.g. mountainous, heavily-forested, off the beaten track etc)?

## 8. Biological hazards overseas

What potential risks can you identify given the plant, insect and animal life of the country you are proposing to visit? The University's Occupational Health Service can provide relevant advice, vaccinations etc, so you are advised to make an appointment with them. Use the box below to identify any risks and to indicate what measures you are taking to reduce these risks wherever possible.

## 9. Potential stressors when travelling overseas

Given your own character strengths (and weaknesses), and given the type of context in which you are proposing to spend time for your research study, what kinds of stress might be at play? Use the box below to identify such stressors and to indicate your proposed strategy for addressing them.

For example, how likely is it that you will, in the proposed context, experience significant culture shock, time pressures, loneliness, isolation, language barriers, unfamiliar and uncongenial settings (e.g. very crowded cities and transport), and so on?

## Section 2: Off campus fieldwork locations

- ➔ Complete all sections below –
- ➔ Where you do not foresee any risks relating to a particular item, please state ‘No risks identified’, do not leave the item blank.

### 1. Belongings

While the number and value of personal belongings carried with you on fieldwork should be minimized to avoid unwanted attention or loss. You should have the following items with you when conducting fieldwork off campus:

1. your staff/ student card
2. enough money for expected and unexpected expenses, including the use of taxis.
3. a phone card in case you need to use a public telephone.
4. a personal alarm – carried in a place that it is easily accessible (e.g. pocket and not briefcase).
5. A comprehensive A-Z of the area (and a torch and spare batteries) can also be very useful in an emergency.

What personal belongings will you take with you on fieldwork visits and how will you minimize risks associated with carrying any of these belongings?

**I will only carry with me essential items in order to conduct the research. This will include an audio recorder which will be encrypted in line with ethics. I will be driving in my own car.**

### 2. Accommodation

What potential risks can you identify regarding all the places you are likely to stay during your visit? When staying in a hotel you should avoid letting others overhear your name and room number. Never let unknown people into your room unless it is clearly safe to do so. If you hear a disturbance, stay in your room and phone for help. Use the box below to identify these types of risk and indicate what measures you are taking to reduce them wherever possible.

For example, is suitable accommodation easily available to you? Have you organised this in advance? Is such accommodation fully secure? How will you safeguard your possession and valuables?

N/A

### 3. Fieldwork visits

Wherever possible, investigators should study a map of the area, or visit the location in advance to plan their journey. Do you know the location of **hubs of activity** such as shops, pubs, schools or the local police station which may provide you with a possible escape route should this be necessary?

If travelling by **car**, do you know the safest place to park, eg. a well-lit area after dark? Try and park as close as possible to the destination, to allow for a 'quick get-a-way' if necessary. If forced to stop, stay in your car and speak through a slightly open window. Plan for what you will do if your car breaks down.

Can you ensure **equipment and valuable items** are kept out of sight during fieldwork travel?

If using **public transport**, have you should checked its reliability? Do you have a telephone number for a reputable local taxi firm?

Whilst **taxis** can be hailed in the street, it is advisable to pre-book. **Do not under any circumstances get into a private hire vehicle that you have not pre-booked as you will not be insured and this can potentially be very dangerous.**

When **walking**, face oncoming traffic in areas where 'kerb crawling' is possible, and keep to busy, well lit roads if you can.

What do you know about the area where you will conduct your fieldwork? What are your travel arrangements? How will you minimise any risks you have identified?

**I will be travelling in my own car and carry a sat-nav with me to ensure I can find my way.**

### 4. Activities

What potential health risks can you identify in relation to all the activities you plan to be involved in whilst making fieldwork visits? Use the box below to identify such risks and to indicate what measures you are taking to reduce these risks wherever possible.

For example, what activities are involved in your research project? Are there any particular risks associated with them over and above what you have already covered in the RREA form? What other incidental activities might you be involved in? What risks can you identify for these activities and what steps are you taking to reduce the potential risks?

N/A

## 5. Equipment Considerations

What potential health risks can you identify regarding any equipment you intend to use during your proposed fieldwork visits? Use the box below to identify such risks and to indicate what measures you are taking to reduce these risks wherever possible.

For example, do you need to have any specialist skills for such equipment? Do you have these skills? Are there any maintenance and repair issues to be considered?

N/A

## 6. Personal safety during fieldwork visits

In addition to the areas already covered, what other risks might there be to your safety and well-being? Use the box below to identify such risks and to indicate what measures you are taking to reduce these risks wherever possible.

For example, what Accident and Emergency provision is in place? Are there any possible risks associated with social unrest? Or local crime?

As I will be meeting other professionals at their place at work it will be a safe environment with first aid and health and safety measures in place.

## 7. Intercultural Challenges

Spending time living in another society, or conducting research with cultural groups different from your own, brings with it the need to be prepared for possible intercultural challenges during your interactions. The Study Abroad Unit has relevant advice in this area, which may be helpful to those conducting research with different cultural groups both outside and within the UK. Use the box below to identify the possible cultural backgrounds you expect to encounter and to indicate what measures you are taking to become familiar with these cultural backgrounds wherever possible.

For example, are there particular religious practices that you need to be aware of and sensitive to? Are there taboo behaviours which you need to be aware of and abide by? How should you dress to appropriately take account of the cultural norms?

I will check this with participants whilst arranging meetings.

## Section 3: Conducting fieldwork alone

### NB: Personal Safety

Your personal safety working off-campus is paramount. It is considered more important than the successful completion of interviews.

You SHOULD NOT:

- Enter someone's home if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Enter a house if the person you have arranged to see is not there.
- Undertake an interview or assessment in a bedroom.
- Give a personal telephone number or address to an interviewee.

➔ **Complete all sections below –**

➔ **Where you do not foresee any risks relating to a particular item, please state 'No risks identified', do not leave the item blank.**

### 1. Understanding Interviewees

You should take time to investigate and understand the individual circumstances of interviewees before conducting an off-campus interview. If appropriate, you should be aware of the psychological/ behavioural history of interviewees. Being aware of potentially volatile individuals and/or circumstances in advance can help you to plan accordingly. Where you have concerns, 'vet' the potential interviewee by phone first, and cancel if you are uneasy.

Are there any notable personal circumstances, individual to your interviewees? What measures will you put in place to take account of these factors?

I will be in contact with participants prior to meeting for interviews/ focus groups and the participants will professionally known to myself or colleagues at the University of Manchester.

### 2. Maintaining Contact

It is essential that, when conducting off-campus interviews, you maintain contact with a nominated a member of University staff/ family member or friend.

Who will be your nominated contact? What is their relationship to you?

Contact's name	Isobel Woodley-Hume
Your relationship to contact	Spouse

**Checklist of details needed by your nominated contact**

Your itinerary and appointment times - name, address and telephone contact of interviewee(s) / destination.	X
Overnight accommodation details where applicable.	X
Your mobile telephone number.	X
Time you leave the University/ home.	X
How you intend to get to the interview location (car registration if appropriate).	X
Time of interviews and expected duration of the visit.	X
Contact information for the Head of Manchester Institute/Head of Manchester Institute Administration for cases of emergency.	X

NB: You must contact your nominated person when you arrive at the interview location. In the presence of the interviewee, you should inform them where you are, and who you are with.

**Please confirm that you will follow the guidelines above, OR provide information about how your plans will differ and what alternative safeguards you will put in place.**

I will ensure I follow the above procedure.
---------------------------------------------

**3. On Arrival**



There are a number of ways in which you can further enhance your personal safety when conducting interviews alone and off campus. These include:

- Asking a colleague to accompany you if you feel uncomfortable.
- Let interviewees know you have a schedule. Upon arrival, establish you have the correct person by asking "by what name do you prefer to be called?" Explain your research role and the conditions of confidentiality to the interviewee(s) and offer them the opportunity to ask questions.
- If you prefer to decline refreshments, avoid offence by carrying your own water bottle.
- Develop an appropriate exit strategy (what to say etc) should you wish to terminate an interview early.
- Take steps to leave a situation immediately if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Adopt a friendly and professional manner when conducting interviews but be careful not to be over-familiar. Avoid sitting on settees next to the interviewee and try to sit nearest to the exit.
- Ask for household pets to be shut in another room if their presence during the interview is a cause of concern.

**If at any point during the interview, you feel unsafe; you should excuse yourself, go to another room, and use your mobile to call for assistance. You may wish to consider introducing codes in case of a threatening situation. For example, phoning to ask the contact to check if you have left a ring-binder on the desk could be a code for "I do not feel safe; please send someone to the house."**

**Please confirm that you will follow the interview safety guidelines above, OR provide information about how your plans will differ and what alternative safeguards you will put in place.**

I will abide by the above safety guidelines and have my contact available in case of emergency.

#### **4. On Completing an Interview**

Once the interview has been completed, you should contact your nominated person to let them know you have left safely. If the interview goes on longer than anticipated, you should contact your nominated person to inform them.

The nominated person should be instructed to:

- ring you half an hour after the scheduled finish time.
- If there is no answer, they should ring again 30 minutes later.
- If there is still no reply, they should inform the Head of Manchester Institute/ Head of Manchester Institute Administration.

**Where the nominated contact has been unable to get in touch with you**, the Head of Manchester Institute/ Head of Manchester Institute Administration may then authorise two members of Manchester Institute staff to go to the interview location to check on your safety. If this is not practical, e.g. the fieldwork is taking place out of the Manchester area, or overseas, then the local police to the area will be informed.

**Please confirm that you will follow the guidelines above, OR provide information about how your plans will differ and what alternative safeguards you will put in place.**

I will follow the guidelines above and pre arrange this with my nominated contact.

## Declarations

### Researcher Declaration:

**By signing this completed document, I declare that the information in it is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I will complete the actions that I have indicated I will complete.**

Signature: T. Woodley-Hume

Date: 13/07/2016

Name (in capitals): TRACEY WOODLEY-HUME

Student ID: 7597252

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### Manchester Institute of Education (MIE) Emergency Contact Information Card:

All who conduct research off campus must carry a MIE Emergency Contact Information Card at all times. Please confirm that you will do so.

**I confirm I will carry a MIE Emergency Contact Information Card during all fieldwork visits.**

Signed T. Woodley-Hume

Date 13/07/2016

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Please also provide the following information, as appropriate:

### Travel details (to fieldwork destination)

1. Date of departure TBC

Details of itinerary:

2. Date of return: TBC

Details of itinerary:

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## Contact information

### 1. I can be contacted as follows during fieldwork:

Email address: traceywoodley@hotmail.com

Phone: 07914759881

### 2. Contact person at destination (overseas travel / accommodation):

Name N/A

Relationship to you

Email address:

Phone:

### 3. Contact person for fieldwork visits (as nominated in item 2):

Name Isobel Woodley-Hume

Email address: [hume.isobel@hotmail.com](mailto:hume.isobel@hotmail.com)

Phone: 07436111594

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## Supervisor sign off (where appropriate)

I/We have read the above and discussed it with the student applicant. I/We are satisfied that they are aware of and have taken reasonable steps to mitigate the risks associated with their planned fieldwork.

Supervisor signature

Date

Supervisor signature

Date

---

## On Behalf of the Manchester Institute of Education:

I agree that the above assessment satisfactorily addresses all relevant fieldwork risks identified in the named project.

### Authorised Fieldwork Risk Assessor

Authorised Signature

Date

Name (print)

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