

# EEF's Data Collection Panel

## Expression of interest from Qa Research



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Qa Research is delighted to be accepted onto EEF's Data Collection Panel to provide support to organisations conducting evaluations on behalf of EEF. Qa is aware that EEF already has a panel of independent evaluators, some of whom, we already work with. However, our role is purely as an expert data collection partner – not an evaluator. We support organisations to gather robust data for their evaluations and advise on survey design and methodological approach rather than designing or using our own standard tests or measures.

We are currently supporting with the following services:

- Telephone (CATI) interviews with Senior Leaders/Staff and students of Primary & Secondary schools
- On-line surveys with teaching staff, pupils & parents
- Recruitment of teaching staff and students to take part in focus groups/depth interviews
- Moderation of focus groups in schools with teaching staff/pupils/parents
- One to one assessments in primary schools across England
- Class assessments in Secondary Schools in England (KS3)
- Invigilation
- Coding of open and other responses for large-scale data sets

We have provided specific examples of each of these services in the table below, but we are happy to discuss any evaluation on an individual basis.

Our innovative approach means we have the capabilities to organise large scale data collection, including administration of one to one pupil assessments, over short fieldwork periods. However we can provide support purely for one small element of the evaluation or full primary data collection – our role is to offer you support where and when you need it within your budget constraints.

## Experience of collecting data within education

Qa has a strong track record in consulting with a range of audiences across all education stages and we have summarised our experience and provided examples for each stage.

### Early Years

Our experience includes conducting large-scale quantitative surveys of teachers (including members of the SLT) as part of national studies for the Government (DFE) and other public bodies, through to smaller-scale qualitative studies with teachers for third sector clients, including Teach First and Booktrust. Qa also undertook an extensive range of Childcare Sufficiency Assessments as well as research and evaluations for Children's Centres, assessing demand for services and identifying gaps in provision.

### Primary & Secondary Schools/pupils

We have undertaken research with schools for over 20 years and developed specific strategies for engagement and retention in research. We have conducted fieldwork with schools (national CATI surveys with teachers and one-to-one pupil assessments) for clients including IES; NIESR; UCL; DFE; National College; Wellcome Trust and the Welsh Government, these often involve tight-deadlines and high-volumes of up to 3,000 surveys a time. Many projects are longitudinal, for example, for Wellcome Trust Qa has completed a 4-year programme of fieldwork with science teachers. We have also carried out baseline and follow-up surveys with pupils for evaluations of classroom interventions. Qa also uses a telephone approach to recruit schools to disseminate on-line surveys to pupils and colleagues.

### Post-16 colleges/students

Qa has carried out numerous studies with FE and HE providers and their students. Subject matter has been varied, from consulting international students on the provision of catering within UK universities (for The University Caterers Organisation) through to consulting with college providers of English to Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) and cognitive testing of student surveys, in addition to more general learner surveys for the DFE. Qa is adept at making the necessary links to access students – often making cold-contact with education providers, making it as straightforward as possible for them to engage with us (by providing clear background information; FAQs and incentives when appropriate etc.).

## Administration of One-to-One and Class assessments

We have a track record of delivering large volumes of robust assessment data within a short timeframe. We are able to do this as we recruit our assessors from both academic institutions (targeting departments encompassing relevant qualifications), as well as individuals with previous experience teaching or working with young people. This combined approach and mix of assessors enables us to schedule numerous assessments on a daily basis, covered by a large team of fully trained assessors, supported and managed by our in-house Education Team.

Qa has many years of experience managing fieldwork research across the country, through this we have developed streamlined processes to allow us to efficiently manage large-scale one to one assessment administration:

- Our dedicated team means we are able to continually liaise with and properly manage large teams of assessors, supporting them throughout the research
- We have a wealth of experience communicating with teachers and gatekeepers in schools, which enables us to effectively schedule assessments whilst reducing any burden placed on schools
- We work with academic trainers to ensure a highly trained team and carefully recruit our assessors based on strict criteria, to ensure they will be a valuable addition (all our assessors have an enhanced DBS for example)
- We continually monitor standards and provide thorough quality assurance of assessment data
- In the unlikely event an error arises we have systems in place to provide feedback and rectify these
- Our user friendly policy documentation , provides clear guidance for both schools and assessors as to what testing involves, acting as a reference point throughout the fieldwork period

This tried and tested approach was used very successfully, even during the pandemic on the following recent projects:

- Evaluation of the Flexible Phonics intervention:
  - Client: IES
  - Baseline – c. **2900** assessments (YARC) across **124** primary schools in London, conducted over **6 weeks** in November and December 2020
  - Endline – c. **4500** assessments (YARC & MCT) to be conducted over **7 weeks** in June and July 2021
- Evaluation of the Tips by Text programme:
  - Client: IES & NIESR
  - Baseline – c. **2392** YARC assessments over a **5 week** period in September and October 2019
  - Endline – c. 792 YARC assessments in Autumn/Winter 2020. *NB: Post-stage assessments were cancelled due to school Covid-19 related school closures in January 2021*

Delivery of these projects during the pandemic led to Qa refining this approach to allow assessment administration to continue, at a time when face-to-face data collection was not always possible due to schools limiting external visitors. We worked with our client and schools to pilot and successfully transfer data collection to remote methods.

This approach is also highly cost-effective for our clients, and means we offer competitive prices that can be flexed to meet budget constraints.

## Quality Assurance and GDPR

Qa is committed to GDPR compliance and as a member of the data collection panel, Qa would be a data processor for the evaluating organisation. We have an in-house Data Protection Officer who is responsible for ensuring we are compliant with the regulations and provides guidance on data security.

Any research will be carried out in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and in compliance with ISO 20252. Data provided by participants, as well as their identity, shall be treated in the strictest confidence and all assurances given to participants shall be fulfilled. All reasonable precautions shall be taken to ensure that participants are not harmed or adversely affected as a result of participating in the research.

Data security is critical, and Qa has implemented a radical upgrade of our data security protocols, to meet exacting standards for data security and have attained Cyber Essentials Assurance. Paper assessment data are stored in a locked archive located on our premises.

## Our Team

Projects commissioned by the data collection panel will be coordinated by Qa's Education Team led by Helen Hardcastle, Research Director (Field). Helen will be supported on a day to day basis by Amy Price, Senior Education Research Executive and Claire Bevan, Educational Research Co-ordinator; as well as two of Qa's Research Managers Kay Silversides and Becky Gulc who have extensive experience of conducting research in education.

### **Helen Hardcastle, Research Director (Field)**

- 20 years' experience in market and social research data collection operations
- Oversees all of Qa's studies that require data collection only
- Extensive experience of delivering education based data collection studies
- Regularly surveying teachers and head teachers in primary and secondary schools
- Successfully delivered large-scale one-to-one pupil assessments for EEF evaluators
- Works with universities, Government departments/bodies and specialist consultancies
- Academic background in Applied Social Science and Psychology

### **Amy Price, Senior Education Research Executive**

- 3 years' working in social research
- Extensive experience managing large scale data collection programmes for our work on educational evaluations
- Skilled at complex strategic planning leading to delivery of data collection on a large scale within short timeframes
- Recruited from University of York following her Masters in Psychology, specialising in the assessment and treatment of Developmental Disorders such as Autism and Dyslexia
- Experience using the diagnostic tools and assessment measures commonly used in educational research; including the YARC, WIAT, ERRNI, MCT and SDQ amongst others

### **Claire Bevan, Educational Research Co-ordinator**

- 2 years' working in social research
- Highly experienced at co-ordinating and scheduling large data collection operations
- Skilled recruiter working on complex projects, including recruitment for face to face interviews and focus groups.
- Before joining Qa's education team, she worked as an interviewer within the company regularly consulting teachers and students
- She has a degree in Applied Social Science and Social Policy, with a specialism in children and young people

### **Kay Silversides, Research Manager**

- 20 years' experience in social research
- BA (Hons) in Sociology from the University of York
- Experienced in project evaluation, perception studies, and developing insightful conclusions and recommendations
- Wealth of experience managing research studies and evaluations related to services for children and families
- Qa's designated safeguarding lead

### **Becky Gulc, Research Manager**

- 20 years' experience in social research
- MA in Qualitative Research Methods
- Highly experienced in delivering qualitative and quantitative projects in education
- Education research experience includes early years, primary and secondary schools
- Experienced in all qualitative and quantitative data collection methodologies

## How costing works

Each data collection exercise is costed on an individual basis as the costs are highly dependent on key aspects within your requirements, such as the length of survey/assessment, total sample size, the scale and variety of quotas within the sample, geographical locations being covered, and timescales.

For any requirement you have we would review your brief and then come back to you with any questions that help us to provide a bespoke costing to meet your objectives. We would prove this cost and then look to discuss it with you. For each quotation we include a detailed costs table providing a breakdown of the services and unit prices.

We offer flexibility and, if required, will refine our costs to help meet your budget; to aid this we would also provide suggestions on how your brief could be adapted in order to still meet your objectives and budget. All prices are subject to VAT.

## Why work with Qa?

- Wealth of experience collecting data across the education spectrum, from early years to post-16
- Services available in addition to data collection such as inputting, verbatim data coding or qual recruitment
- Competitive prices that can be flexed to meet budget constraints
- An approachable, friendly but professional and highly experienced team that works with you as a partner
- Proven ability to deliver large volumes of robust assessment data (including one-to-one pupil assessments) within tight timescales
- An MRS Award winning agency known for providing high quality and creative solutions

## References

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## Case studies

Project Name	Organisation	Target audience	Methodology	Sample
<b>Early Years Project examples</b>				
Children's Centres Proposals Consultation	Wakefield Council	Parents of early years children and children centre staff	Focus group with parents Moderating feedback sessions at council led engagement events	6 focus groups 3 staff events 8 public events
<b>Primary Project Examples</b>				
Tips by Text Evaluation	NIESR & IES	Reception pupils (baseline) and Year One pupils (post-test) across the North East of England	1:1 pupil assessments using the YARC literacy measure	Baseline: <b>2392</b> pupil assessments over a <b>5 week</b> period in Autumn 2019 Post-stage: 792 at post stage in Autumn/Winter 2020 <i>NB: Post-stage assessments were cancelled due the school Covid-19 related school closures in January 2021</i>
Flexible Phonics Evaluation	IES	Reception pupils across London	1:1 pupil assessments using the YARC literacy measure and Mispronunciation Correction test	Baseline: <b>2919</b> assessments over a <b>6 week</b> period in November-December 2020 Post-stage to be conducted in June and July 2021
Evaluation of the Primary Science Campaign	Wellcome Trust	Teaching staff and senior leaders in Primary schools across the UK (both those involved in the campaign and comparators)	Longitudinal telephone (CATI) survey 2016-21	Wave 1: 900 surveys Wave 2: 700 surveys Wave 3: 400 surveys (plus 300 online) Wave 4: 500 surveys
Evaluation of Schools Partnership Program	University College London	Head Teachers/ Senior Leaders in Primary Schools	Longitudinal telephone (CATI) survey 2018-20	Wave 1: 437 surveys Wave 2: 437 surveys
Evaluation of Roots of Empathy Program	Action for Children	5-8 year olds across primary schools in Scotland	One to one assessments using KEDS (Kids Empathetic Development Scale) Online survey of teachers monitoring changes in pupil behaviour and empathy	144 pupils at baseline & 112 at follow-up 31 teachers at baseline monitoring 695 pupils then 29 teachers at follow up monitoring 661 pupils
Evaluation of Schools Challenge Cymru	Welsh Government	Year 6 and Year 7 pupils	Longitudinal telephone (CATI) survey.	800 telephone surveys per year over 5 years
<b>Secondary Project Examples</b>				
Triple Science Evaluation	DfE/National Science Learning Centre (working with SQW)	Heads of Science & Science Teachers	3 year telephone survey	2100 telephone surveys

Evaluation of Schools Challenge Cymru	Welsh Government	Year 6-10 pupils	On-line survey	60 schools – 800 primary & 3,200 secondary pupils
Secondary Science Focus Groups	STEM Learning	Key Stage 3 Science Teachers working in various local authorities with differing proportions of students eligible for free school meals	Focus groups and qualitative telephone depth interviews – Qa both recruited for and conducted these groups and depths	12 telephone depths 5 focus groups, each with 6 attendees
<b>Post-16 Project examples</b>				
Cognitive Testing of Student Surveys	Advance HE	Higher Education students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) at a variety of institutions across the UK	Cognitive interviews via Zoom	18 depth interviews
Post-16 User Insight Survey	DfE	16 –19 yr old learners (school 6 <sup>th</sup> forms; UTCs; FE Colleges; Apprenticeships traineeships; HE)	Telephone (CATI) survey	350 surveys with 16-19 year old learners
<b>Other examples</b>				
Evaluation of the Inspire & Accelerate Strands of Teach First Innovation Unit	Teach First	Teachers, Teach First Ambassadors & CEO's of Social Enterprises	Multi-method including on-line surveys; depth telephone interviews & case studies	43 online surveys with participants 18 depth telephone interviews with participants & stakeholders 8 case studies of social enterprises
Evaluation of the Ant Club	Booktrust	Primary teachers	On-line & telephone top-up survey & case studies	210 surveys with teachers 10 case studies of separate schools