ICEBE

Education Media Centre

Business Plan, 2011 - 2015

Coalition for Evidence-based Education

Initial sponsors:

Contents

1   Executive Summary

The Education Media Centre (EMC) is a new initiative that aims to make education research more accessible to the media and policy makers and so improve policy development, practice and public understanding of education. It will provide journalists and other users with authoritative, independent and accessible insights from education research in response to current research, news and policy developments.

The EMC will:

- **Save time** by providing a single point of access to a wide range of research expertise.
- **Promote well-informed education news** by offering timely, impartial and authoritative access to experts and evidence.
- **Make research findings more accessible and media-friendly**.
- **Raise the quality and availability of evidence** that decision makers, teachers and the general public receive through the media.
- **Deepen public understanding of education issues** and help shape the best possible systems of learning, training and education.

In its first year, the EMC will launch three core services: a matchmaking service between journalists and education researchers, rapid responses to key stories and signposting to new research evidence. As increased resources allow, services will expand to include live briefing events, overview summaries on key topics and training workshops.

High profile figures from the media and business are amongst a prestigious and diverse group of patrons, all committed to the vision and values of the Education Media Centre:

- Andrew Adonis – Labour Peer
- Mike Baker – Columnist, The Education Guardian and BBC News Online.
- John Dunford – Chair, Whole Education.
- Greg Dyke – Former Director-General, BBC. Chancellor, University of York
- James Fothergill – Head of Education and Skills, CBI
- Sue Littlemore – Former Education Correspondent, BBC
- Estelle Morris – Labour Peer
- David Puttnam – Labour Peer
- Nick Pearce – Director, IPPR
- Graham Stuart MP – Conservative MP. Chair, Commons Education Select Committee
- Gillian Shephard – Conservative Peer
- Phil Willis – Liberal Democrat Peer

Key to the EMC's success will be its independence and objectivity, with a commitment to supporting high standards of research and journalism with no specific political or research agenda. The EMC is also unique in that although a highly successful Science Media Centre already exists, the EMC represents the first national media centre dedicated to education.

The governance arrangements of the Education Media Centre include key roles for:

- Patrons
- Board (full operational responsibility)
- Advisory Network (specialist advisers with no operational responsibility)
- Academic Advisory Panel (help liaise with the academic community)

The proposals for EMC staff at the outset are as follows:

- Director
- Supporting member of staff
- Flexible freelancing (IT, PR, fundraising, academic support)

The development strategy for the EMC involves two distinct phases: an initial operational model and long-term operational model. In its initial phase, the EMC will draw on a relatively small consortium of funding sources (10-20) and rely on external organisations for operational support.

In the longer term, the EMC will be a fully independent venture, drawing on a larger number of funders (20-40), none of which contribute more than 10% of the annual running costs. This model, similar to that adopted by the Science Media Centre, retains full independence and impartiality.

Estimates of costs are £195,000 for start-up and the first year's operation, leading in gradual increments to £240,000 for year five. Sponsorship has already been secured for office facilities and overhead costs through City & Guilds (estimated value, £15,000/annum), with logistical and business support from the University of York.

2   Rationale

As we enter a period of more local responsibility in education, decision makers more than ever require accurate, useful and accessible information on 'what works' - and doesn't work - in education. The media play a key role in linking research evidence to the real education world of teachers, trainers, parents and learners, but this link is not currently working to best effect.

Editors, journalists and policy makers report that academic research is not always media friendly. The subject matter is not always in tune with topical issues or presented at the right time. It can be dense and rely too much on jargon or technical language. In the absence of an impartial and authoritative perspective on the state of the evidence base, education research can often be 'cherry picked' to support a particular policy or political agenda.

In our fast-changing media environment it is now not unusual for news organisations to rely less on specialist education correspondents, and more on general reporters or freelancers to cover education issues. This move makes easy access to clear evidence on controversial and complex education matters all the more valuable.

The value of organisations which are a source of objective, impartial and clearly communicated research evidence for important social and economic issues has been demonstrated time and again - the Institute of Fiscal Studies and the Kings Fund are two good examples. The Education Media Centre is inspired by another successful model, the Science Media Centre, which has earned a high reputation amongst journalists and the science community for making complex and controversial research accessible to journalists who want to report science news accurately, clearly and at speed. No such equivalent body currently exists to link education research into the complexities of policy and practice at a national level; the Education Media Centre, an independent and impartial venture, will be a first.

In February 2011, the idea of the EMC was tested with prospective users of the service as as part of an independent feasibility study. The research team spoke to all relevant stakeholders - national press, policy makers and researchers - to test the proposals, find out how they currently access research and get their input to shape what the centre should look like. The main findings were:

- There was a high level of support for an EMC (more than 95% of respondents would use the service).
- A clear need was identified for a service forging more effective links between education research and the media, which could enhance, rather than replace, existing capacity.
- Respondents felt that no equivalent organisation already existed in education.
- A high value was placed on that service being impartial, authoritative and high quality.
- The most popular proposed services were matchmaking, rapid responses on key education issues and signposting to new research.
- The best communication channels for the EMC were thought to be phone, press releases via email and the EMC website.
- To assure EMC independence, there was strong support for a capped funding model where no single funder provides more than 10% of annual running costs.

3   EMC services

The EMC will provide a service to the media and policy makers that identifies the best education research and communicates that in a way that is accessible, useful and valued. As well as reacting to topical education issues, an important aim is to stimulate new areas of debate, as fresh research, which might previously have gone unnoticed, is given media attention.

To achieve these goals, the EMC will initially launch with three core services, which were identified as most needed by journalists interviewed as part of the feasibility research:

- **Matchmaking** – Journalists wanting insights into a specific area will be matched with experts/evidence from a directory of research specialists compiled by the EMC.

- **Rapid responses** – Press releases summarising relevant research will be published in response to recurring topics (e.g. controversy around A level grade rises), running stories (e.g. free schools) or one-off issues (such as a ministerial announcement).

- **Signposting** – Journalists will be alerted to topical new research findings, presenting them clearly and with a focus on their impact in the "real world".

As the EMC grows it intends to offer additional services, including:

- **Live briefing events,** which bring together panels of experts to discuss high profile topics.
- **Overview summaries** on the state of the evidence on popular running issues (e.g. widening participation in higher education).
- **Training workshops** for education researchers wishing to work effectively with the media and for journalists wishing to gain insights into research.

Across all these services the goal is to represent the current state of the evidence base, by representing a range of perspectives that are backed up by robust research evidence (see Appendix 3. EMC Operating Principles).

What *won't* the EMC do?

- The Centre will not push any particular political, institutional or ideological agenda – the EMC's core commitment to impartiality, objectivity and having no specific research or political agenda sets it apart from other organisations.

- The EMC will not seek to replace existing press offices or organisations currently disseminating research - the aim is to enhance, rather than replace, the reach and impact from existing press office functions.

- The EMC will not itself be a depository of research evidence and information – the aim is to improve the flow of information between the press/media/policy makers and researchers.

Impact and Reach

Based on the experiences of the Science Media Centre, we anticipate the EMC will be used by many different parts of the press and media, including the national newspapers, broadcast/online media, newswires, local press and specialist education press. We also expect that the outputs of the EMC will be relevant to a wide range of policy audiences, including civil servants, parliamentarians, think tanks and political commentators.

In the first year we expect to handle approximately 100 media enquiries, issue 30-40 rapid responses, signpost to 20 new pieces of research and organise 10-20 press briefings. We expect around 75% of all EMC outputs to receive media coverage.

4   Two Development Phases

The development strategy for the EMC involves two distinct phases: an initial operational model and long-term operational model.

The long-term aim for the EMC is to become a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, with full operational responsibility. Nevertheless, to reach this point we are proposing an initial phase where some of the operational responsibility is shared by other organisations, with interim governance and funding arrangements. A summary of the two developmental phases is provided in Table 1. Details are provided below.

Table 4.1 Summary of two development phases for EMC

Aspect	Initial Model	Long-term Model
Status and funding model	Independent body associated with the University of York (charitable status), supported by a consortium of funders each contributing a minimum of £2,000 (no maximum) in money or in kind.	Registered charity and company limited by guarantee, supported by 20-40 sponsors across the sector each contributing no more than 10% of total funds.
Business service support	The University of York provides logistical, HR and legal support; City & Guilds gives the EMC a physical home; other organisations donate business services as offered/required.	The EMC acts entirely independently with in-house business service support, and has full operational responsibility. An external organisation(s) can act as a host/hub if its/their involvement is not felt to compromise EMC independence.
Services	1. Matchmaking service, matching journalists with experts in their field for a summary of research evidence or for comment on a story. 2. Rapid responses to key media stories through press releases which draw together research perspectives. 3. Alerts to new research findings, presented in media-friendly language.	As per interim model, plus: 1. Live briefings with a panel of experts which supports the core 'rapid responses' service. 2. Reactive service to key media stories involving swift research summaries (state of the available evidence rather than position papers). 3. Media workshops and training programmes for education researchers.
Staffing	One full-time Director one full-time supporting staff and freelance experts (research, media and PR expertise).	One full-time Director and four full-time members of staff covering the full range of media and research expertise, as well as administrative support.

Aspect	Initial Model	Long-term Model
Governance/ Accountability	Initially decisions are made by the EMC Development Group, answerable to the Board (appointed Apr 2012). Once the EMC Director is appointed, the Director and EMC team will be answerable to the Board. The Advisory Network and Patrons have no operational responsibility. Sponsorship or pledges are held by the University of York (IEE) in a ring-fenced fund until the EMC exists as a separate legal entity and are released only with approval of the majority of Board members.	The EMC Director and team are answerable to the EMC Board. The Advisory Network and Patrons have no operational responsibility.
Running costs	The start-up and first year's running costs are expected to be £195,000 (see Section 4.3).	Annual running costs by year five are expected to be £280,000 (see Section 4.3).

4.1   Initial operational model

For the first 18 months, the EMC will be hosted by City & Guilds, in central London, who will provide office space, IT and administrative support (estimated value, £15,000). Sponsorship funds and pledges will be held by the University of York (a registered charity) in a ring-fenced budget until the EMC exists as a separate legal entity, and are released only with approval of the majority of Board members. The University of York will also provide logistical, financial, HR and legal support.

£195,000 is being sought to enable the start-up of the EMC (pre-launch, 4 months) and one year's initial service. In this initial phase, the EMC will need to be flexible in its approach to funding, allowing for a smaller number of initial sponsors (approx. 10-20), but of varying size (minimum of £2,000; no maximum). Foundation sponsors will ideally commit to two years of support. Pledges for funding will be held until enough funding is secured to launch the EMC, with a deadline of 31 Dec 2012.

4.2   Long-term operational model

Once the EMC is operationally stable it will become a fully independent venture, registered as a charity and company limited by guarantee. It will have full operational and financial responsibility and will support its own administrative, logistical and legal needs.

Long-term funding for the EMC will involve multiple sponsors (approx. 20-40) contributing no more than 10% of the annual running costs, drawn from a range of user organisations, private backers and funding/charitable bodies. This model, similar to that adopted by the Science Media Centre, has the advantage of retaining full independence.

4.3   Five Year Funding Forecast

COSTS	Start-up	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Company set up						
Business registration, contracts	£0	£0	£2,880	£0	£0	£0
Company insurance	£500	£525	£551	£579	£608	£638
Marketing						
Marketing & PR	£3,000	£5,200	£5,460	£5,733	£6,020	£6,321
Website design	£1,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Website & email hosting	£150	£300	£315	£331	£347	£365

|						
Launch event	£2,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Entertainment	£0	£1,560	£1,638	£1,720	£1,806	£1,896
Office set up						
Room hire for briefing events	£0	£3,000	£3,150	£3,308	£3,473	£3,647
Office space & equipment	£0	£0	£0	£0	£20,000	£21,000
Computers	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Software and licenses	£800	£840	£882	£926	£972	£1,021
Journal subscriptions	£0	£0	£3,150	£3,308	£3,473	£3,647
EMC staffing						
Director with NIC	£20,000	£62,000	£63,000	£66,150	£69,458	£72,930
Support staff with NIC	£0	£37,000	£35,700	£37,485	£39,359	£41,327
Freelancers/external support	£8,000	£13,000	£13,650	£14,333	£15,049	£15,802
Admin support with NIC	£0	£3,000	£29,000	£30,450	£31,973	£33,571
New staff with NIC	£0	£0	£0	£35,000	£36,750	£38,588
Other costs						
Accountancy	£2,000	£2,100	£2,205	£2,315	£2,431	£2,553
Advisory Board expenses	£0	£5,000	£5,250	£5,513	£5,788	£6,078
Travel	£500	£2,600	£2,730	£2,867	£3,010	£3,160
Legal	£0	£3,000	£3,150	£3,308	£3,473	£3,647
Contingency	£3,845	£13,415	£17,270	£21,330	£24,400	£25,620
Total cost	**£42,295**	**£152,540**	**£189,981**	**£234,656**	**£268,390**	**£281,811**
Foundation sponsors		£120,000	£40,000	£0	£0	£0
Recurrent sponsors		£80,000	£140,000	£240,000	£270,000	£285,000
Total income		**£200,000**	**£180,000**	**£240,000**	**£270,000**	**£285,000**
Annual Surplus/Deficit		£5,165	-£9,981	£5,344	£1,610	£3,189

5   Governance and Accountability

To date, the EMC has been proposed and piloted by the Coalition for Evidence Based Education (CEBE), under the guidance of a **Development Group** whose membership comprises researchers, journalists, policy analysts and educationalist. This development work has been supported by a grant from City & Guilds (£10,000) and extensive *pro bono* contributions from the IEE, C&G, The Research Base and independent collaborators (estimated value, £40,000).

The Development Group will carry forward responsibility for the development of the EMC until the Director is appointed. Key tasks in this period include fundraising, building the profile of the EMC and appointing the governance bodies.

Upon appointment of the Director, all operational responsibility for start-up of the EMC will pass to that person (accountable to the board) and the Development Group will cease to exist. Figure 5.1 shows the EMC governance structure.

Figure 5.1 EMC Governance Structure
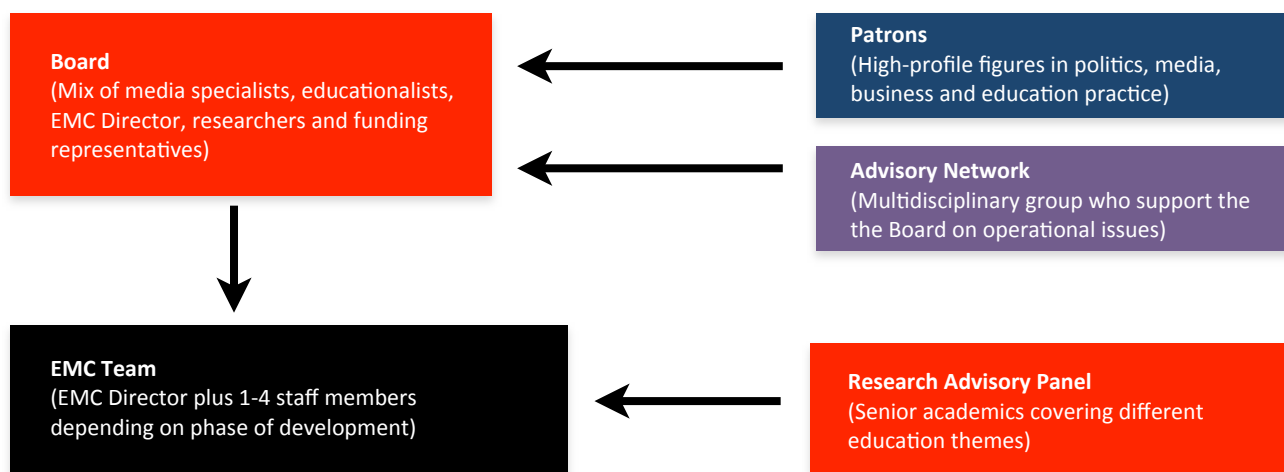
The Board will have governance responsibility for the EMC and will guide strategic direction and outputs. In the EMC's initial phase, it will have ownership of finances and recruitment, working closely with the EMC Director once appointed. It will operate according to PRINCE2 principles and will have full responsibility for outcomes.

Patrons provide high-level support to the EMC, through their expertise in politics, the media, business and educational practice. Their role is as champions for the EMC, with no operational decision-making responsibility. See Appendix 1. for current EMC patrons.

The Advisory Network is a multi-disciplinary group that provides specialist assistance to the Board and EMC staff across a range of developmental and operational issues (e.g. media relations, research engagement). Its added value lies in enabling the Board to remain small and focused, whilst allowing an avenue for specialist support. Many of the Advisory Network members will be drawn from the existing Development Group and Advisory Network. The network has no governance responsibilities.

The **Research Advisory Panel** is a group of research specialists who collectively have broad knowledge of the education research field. They will support the EMC team by providing initial leads to experts within different education domains (see Appendix 3. EMC Operating Principles).

6   Staffing

The estimated weekly time to run the EMC following the launch is 75 hours, corresponding to two full-time members of staff – a Director and supporting role. These roles will need a unique and complementary set of skills that enable them to understand and meet the needs of *all* stakeholders who contribute or use the service (researchers, press officers, journalists and policy makers). Therefore, staff with both research and media experience will be recruited.

Given the very broad range of skills and experience required to run the EMC, flexible staffing will be used to supplement the full time work of the EMC team in its initial operational phase, supporting tasks such as identifying researchers/evidence, PR and media strategy, fundraising, IT and ad-hoc writing (approx. 30 days/year). Over time, additional staff will be recruited to enable the expansion of services and provision offered by the EMC.

The Director will be recruited four months prior to the launch of the EMC (total contract 16 months), so they may set up the necessary databases and administrative support, as well as publicise the centre (see 7. Schedule below).

7   Schedule

7.1   2012

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EMC Working Group meetings	■		■		■		■		■		■	
Fundraising activity	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Stakeholder engagement	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
EMC Board appointed				■(R)								
50% of pledges achieved (£95,000)						■(R)						
Brand, logo and website designed							■					
Set up of legal entity							■					
Set up of procedures, QA etc								■				
Design of marketing material									■			
Deadline for raising pledges: £195,000												■(R)

7.2   2013

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cash conversion of pledges	■											
Recruit Director	■											
Appoint Director		■(R)										
Recruit support staff		■										
Appoint support staff			■(R)									
Continued fundraising	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Freelancers onto books			■	■	■	■						
Develop network of expert researchers			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Detailed services planning			■	■	■	■						
Soft launch of website				■(R)								
Launch planning				■	■							
EMC launch					■(R)							
Provision of EMC services to media					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Fundraising target: £170,000							■(R)					

Key:

Black: Task
Red: Milestone

Appendix 1. Education Media Centre patrons

Andrew Adonis – Labour peer

Mike Baker – Columnist, The Education Guardian and BBC News Online (Education); Former BBC Education Correspondent

John Dunford – Chair, Whole Education. Former General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)

Greg Dyke – Former Director-General, BBC. Chancellor, University of York

James Fothergill – Head of Education and Skills, CBI

Sue Littlemore – Former Education Correspondent, BBC

Estelle Morris – Labour peer. Chair, Institute for Effective Education (IEE) Strategy Board

David Puttnam – Labour peer. Chancellor, Open University

Nick Pearce – Director, Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)

Gillian Shephard – Conservative peer

Graham Stuart MP – Conservative MP. Chair, Commons Education Select Committee

Phil Willis – Liberal Democrat peer. Former Chair, Science and Technology Select Committee.

Appendix 2. Risk Register

Key: I = impact; L = likelihood; H = high; M = medium; L = low.

A2.1 **Strategic Risks**

Risk	I	L	Countermeasure	Contingency
Independence is compromised by funding agency/sponsoring bodies.	H	L	• EMC structure does not allow a single organisation to influence decisions inappropriately. • Variety of funders and independence from funders.	• None; if this occurs after the structure has been set, it will be very difficult to change.
Researchers dismiss media-friendly presentation as oversimplification.	M	M	• Ensure that as much detail as possible is given in footnotes to press releases. • Direct users of EMC to the research expert to gain more detailed information	• Acceptance; it is inevitable that media-friendly presentation of research will not suit all users.
Journalists ignore or distort EMC briefings.	M	M	• Make outputs as accessible as possible (language, timeliness and format). • Represent the balanced state of the evidence-base • Gain buy-in and advice from key research and media stakeholders to ensure relevance.	• Acceptance; it is likely that a certain group of journalists will always search for evidence which supports their editorial line.
Model is too slow to develop and stakeholders lose interest.	H	L	• Ensure that all necessary consultation and planning has occurred prior to launch, so the EMC is 'fit for purpose' • Ensure that there is a 'critical mass' of interest at launch • Identify services which will add value to users without need for significant resources.	• Focus EMC services/secure extra resources and relaunch. • Possible project closure.

A2.2 **Financial Risks**

Risk	I	L	Countermeasure	Contingency
EMC does not receive sufficient funding at outset to be able to launch.	H	M	• Ensure EMC proposition is credible and backed by high profile patrons. • Sustained funding drive to a diverse range of organisations.	• Apply for CAF Venturesome loan • Project closure or delay.
Funding is unsustainable.	H	M	• EMC Director to have a key, ongoing fundraising role. • Patrons and advisers encouraged to help with fundraising.	• Diversify funding streams; revisit idea of paid-for services such as consultancy. • Remove funding cap.

A2.3 **Operational Risks**

Risk	I	L	Countermeasure	Contingency
Volume of work is too high, leading to staff not being able to keep up with latest research developments.	M	M	• Freelance journalists available on call-off contracts to be able to support other activities, leaving EMC staff free to be able to keep up with relevant developments. • Strong resource planning to help ensure that no member of staff is overburdened by work.	• Seek funding for an additional member of staff.
Outputs are not sufficiently targeted towards a media audience.	M	L	• Users are consulted to identify the form in which they need information. • Staff employed who are able to present complex information clearly and accessibly.	• Key journalists to train EMC staff in making their work more accessible.
Research quality is not appropriately assured.	H	L	• Effective use of Research Advisory Panel • At least one EMC staff member to have excellent understanding of research.	• Rethink quality assurance, perhaps filtering use of research for outputs through panel before each selection (although this would reduce responsiveness time).

A2.4 **Political Risks**

Risk	I	L	Countermeasure	Contingency
EMC is suspected of political bias.	H	L	• Transparent structure. • Variety of funders. • Balance of political representation on Board & Advisory Network.	• Ramped up activity to support independence, e.g. ensuring breadth of stories chosen where the evidence conflicts with lines supported by the main parties. • Comms strategy employed, e.g. interviews with EMC Director in friendly publications.
Users do not know who sits behind the EMC and it is not perceived as transparent.	M	L	• All information about structure, funding and staffing sits on EMC website and is given freely to anyone who requests it. • An advice leaflet on how stories are chosen and how evidence is selected is developed to give to interested parties.	• EMC works to raise its own profile, including structure, funding and processes, rather than just focusing on the profile of the selected research/ specialists.
It finds itself at odds with Government, which could be polarising.	L	H	• None – it is anticipated that the EMC will present research that is at odds with all major parties at various points. This is also potentially an opportunity – building the EMC brand and credibility through political neutrality and fearlessness. Relationships need to be developed with policy makers, however, so that any criticism is perceived in a constructive light.	• None (acceptance).

Appendix 3. EMC Operating Principles

To deliver its services the EMC must provide a filtering function to decide which evidence/experts to put forward in representing the research to its users. The centre, therefore, needs a clear strategic plan on how it will engage with the education research community and identify high-quality and relevant evidence, drawn from a diverse and extensive pool of researchers.

In line with the principles of the Coalition for Evidence-based Education (CEBE), a central aim of the EMC is to encourage more appropriate use of research in informing policy and practice, whilst recognising the relevance and interest of *all* types of research to non-academic audiences. The challenge in signposting for the EMC, therefore, is to be progressive rather than exclusive and offer relevant research evidence that is 'fit for purpose'. The following operating principles set out a process by which this can work:

1. **Evidence-based perspectives** - Experts should be identified that are able to provide an authoritative perspective on a particular issue that is based upon research evidence. They should be encouraged not to report on policy, practice or personal knowledge where it cannot be coupled to reliable research evidence. If experts *do* express their personal views then it must be made clear that this is personal view and not research evidence that is being reported.

2. **Relevance to the issue** – Researchers should be selected who can offer evidence-based perspectives that are relevant to the issue being considered. Limits on the relevance of the research to the specific context should be made clear (e.g. research is on the same topic but with a different age group).

3. **Represent diversity** – The aim of the EMC should be to fairly represent the current *state* of the evidence base on any particular issue, thus ambiguity should be embraced rather than concealed. It is acceptable to provide a specific perspective of research as long as it is contextualised amongst other divergent views.

4. **Generalists and specialists** – Both research generalists – with a broad overview of a topic – and research specialists – with a narrower focus – should be considered that can collectively provide comprehensive coverage of a topic.

5. **Links to real-world practice** – Wherever possible, experts should be selected who can enrich their research perspectives by linking to applications of research in real-world practice.

6. **Communication** – Experts should be selected who can represent the research evidence clearly and articulately, in a manner that is accessible to a non-technical audience.

7. **Evidence is 'fit for purpose'** – Research evidence (and researchers who represent that evidence) should be highlighted that is 'fit for purpose'. Considerations should be made on a) the theoretical or ideological perspective generating the research evidence b) the appropriateness of the method in relation to the question being addressed c) the quality of the study d) the scope and context of the research.

8. **Nature of the reporting** – Consideration should be given to the thoroughness of the report of the research evidence in terms of whether the evidence is a) a single study b) synthesised by a systematic review c) a narrative review d) the judgement of the specialist of the research evidence.

EMC staff and Research Advisory Panel have operational responsibility for signposting at the EMC, with the following roles:

EMC Staff - The day-to-day work of identifying and highlighting research evidence and experts will lie with the permanent staff of the media centre. This mirrors the arrangements at the SMC where the press officers are continuously speaking to academics, university press offices and colleagues, and making decisions about who may be suitable to represent the research on a particular subject.

Research Advisory Panel - The EMC staff will be supported by a Research Advisory Panel, who collectively have broad knowledge of the education research field and are able to provide initial leads to experts within different education domains. The panel would also monitor the identification of EMC specialists, the process of offering specialists to the media and the advice given by them.