Knowledge, Policy and Practice in Education and the Struggle for Social Justice

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Preface

This publication was first conceived in 2017 by Professor David Guile, then head of the department in which Geoff Whitty was based as Director Emeritus of the UCL Institute of Education (IOE). As fellow long-standing colleagues of Geoff we were asked to take the project forward. We are both sociologists of education – Andrew had been faculty and a member of the leadership team at the IOE (at that stage the Institute of Education, University of London) during Geoff’s time as director there, while Emma had served as a researcher and policy advisor to Geoff while he was director and had continued to publish with him subsequently. We were honoured to edit this collection. In the early stages we were able to involve Geoff in helping to shape the book. But his health was already beginning to fail and, sadly, he would not survive to see the final publication.

Geoff was a major figure in educational research. He had a long and close association with the IOE as by far the largest school of education in the UK and one of the foremost internationally, a standing that his own time as director had done much to advance. He would also take on leadership roles within the wider educational research community. His esteemed career as an academic and his wide networks meant that we had many potential contributing authors to choose from. We settled on those who had perhaps the closest and most enduring links to Geoff, whether as his former tutor or as a research collaborator, as a peer or as a younger colleague whose career had developed within the institution Geoff led. The contributing authors also speak to the main themes in Geoff’s scholarship, as reflected in the title of the book as well as the education systems with which Geoff was most acquainted, those of the US, Australia and China. It was no surprise that those we approached to
contribute to the publication responded so enthusiastically. We were also heartened by the warm reception news of the project received from the educational research community more widely. We were only sorry that we could not include more colleagues from across Geoff’s career.