

Institution: Brunel University London
Unit of Assessment: 18 – Law
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>In this REF cycle, our Department (Brunel Law School, BLS) has reflected upon and re-defined its research strengths and focus. Our vision is to produce research, doctrinal, socio-legal and theoretical, that addresses the major challenges facing our society. And we do address such challenges full-on: from the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, our researchers focused on achieving the introduction of new emergency measures to protect vulnerable women from domestic violence (Barnett), exploring increased hate crime (Collard), increased cyber-attacks (Bosher), scams of products marketed as COVID-19 fake cures and their impact on credulous consumers (Kaprou, Riefa), and the effects of the pandemic on migrants and refugees (Xanthaki). We are committed to wide-ranging scholarly research and to ensuring that all our staff are producing consistently excellent research outputs. While the department encourages and supports research in the specialisms of all its academics, in this REF cycle we prioritised our research growth in three broad and interlinked areas: social justice; innovation; and global governance. This focus is consistent with the University's aim to foster research that tackles the pressing concerns of the day.</p> <p>The conclusion of the previous REF cycle saw the emergence of a new research strategy for Brunel Law School. After an in-depth review of the Law unit in 2014, we re-established our research priorities. Our research strategy is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * to attract, retain and nurture world-class researchers, including early career scholars; * to continue to ensure the high research intensity of Brunel Law School; * through our research, to question the law, influence its understanding, policy and culture- and ultimately change its practice; * to deliver the environment and support that enables world-leading research; * to provide a solid basis to exploit multi-disciplinary research opportunities; * to deliver research-enhanced education. <p>To enable us to implement our strategy, the University restored the department's autonomous status, recruited a new external Head and invested in many new appointments. After a period of substantial growth, we now have 39 academics on Research and Teaching contracts; and we will continue to expand. In 2013 our research activities were considerably enhanced by the move of the Department to its own £7M building, which accommodates all staff, PhD students and Research Fellows and has many facilities, including a £216k Moot Court, a computer laboratory, and expanded social spaces for students and staff.</p> <p>We are immensely proud of our investment in new researchers. 41% of our staff are early career researchers (ECRs), the highest percentage of any department in the University. This radical change in the composition of our staff has contributed to re-invigorating our research culture. ECRs' enthusiasm for new ways of conducting and communicating research and their commitment to new methodologies and movements have blended well with the existing research capital of the department. Brunel Law School is a lively research hub where diversity serves as both a platform and catalyst for motivation, self-development and collaborative work.</p>

Of the three areas on which we have chosen to grow, Social Justice has been a long and well-established research focus of the department. Our work on the rights of vulnerable groups such as children (Kaganas), minorities (Rehman) and indigenous peoples (Xanthaki) continues to be recognised world-wide. The THE University Impact Rankings ranked Brunel 16th globally in 'Reduced Inequalities', an area in which Brunel Law School has been leading the University's research. In this REF cycle, we have intensified our research on women and gender issues, particularly in the field of domestic abuse (Barnett, Kaganas) and women in the Global South (Natile). We are really proud that Barnett's work recently led to the redrafting of the *Family Procedure Rules 2010 Practice Direction 12J – Child Arrangements & Contact Order: Domestic Violence and Harm* (PD12J on domestic abuse). We have also been working on the rights of prisoners (Easton), protection of consumers (Riefa) and whistle-blowers (Andreidakis). Our research expanded to social rights in an international context (Mardikian), in the EU (Alexandris Polomarkakis) and in relation to social security in the UK (Larkin). We have also become a hub for research on migration and refugee rights (Hamenstaedt, Natile, Xanthaki, Xanthopoulou), which is expected to develop even further in the next few years through our Horizon 2020 award on managing migration flows.

The second stream of our research focus has been Global Governance. Brunel University London was ranked in the 2020 THE University Impact Rankings 29th globally in 'Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions'. Within this stream, we have deepened on our work regarding the International Criminal Court (Hobbs and British Academy award), on the universal and regional global human rights governance (African system of human rights protection by Ssenyonjo, anti-torture bodies by Renzulli), and on judges and the justice system (Olowofoyeku). Rehman's appointment as the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran influences international governance. Ssenyonjo's work has fed into the International Criminal Law Section of the African Court of Justice and Human and Peoples' Rights. Xanthaki's commissioned work on the World Bank had a bearing on the latter's commitment towards indigenous peoples. Also, Andreidakis, De Pascalis, Nika and Zaccaria, all new appointments, have been tackling different aspects of financial governance; and Reisberg's work has filtered into the Financial Markets Law Committee at the Bank of England through his membership of the Brexit Advisory Group.

The third stream of the Department's research focus is Innovation and the Law. The legal responses to artificial intelligence is a new area of study that is developing mainly through the work of new appointments, such as Gikay, appointed lecturer on AI, Disruptive Innovation and Law, and Paskalev, and our collaborative work in the University Centre for Artificial Intelligence. Natile's work on digital platforms and new financial practices crosses the boundaries of social justice and innovation. New impending appointments such as Pin Lean Lau, delayed by COVID, will continue to strengthen this area. Intellectual property rights, a long-standing interest in the Department, has been re-shaped by new appointments who focus on IP rights and social media (Bosher), drug development and access to medicine (Gurgula) and street art and graffiti (Westenberger).

Our research in these broad streams has built on our existing strengths and is influenced by our global outlook, as almost 70% of our staff are international experts. The three streams address socially relevant and challenging new questions and through them, interdisciplinarity has blossomed organically in the Brunel Law School and led to significant engagement with national and international stakeholders which, in turn, has translated into impact of our work on scholarship (including collective legal spaces) and society in areas as varied as domestic violence (Barnett); music copyright (Bosher); legal guarantees for new products (Malinauskaite); consumer protection policy (Riefa); human

rights in Pakistan (Rehman); indigenous rights (Xanthaki); and on different audiences from judges, domestic and national civil servants, civil society organisations and financial regulators.

We are committed to facilitating the further development of these three streams of legal research in an organic way. Through a very vibrant research culture, we want to continue to explore both blue sky ideas and the practical implications of our work.

Research structure across the unit

The 2014 Strategic Review of Brunel Law School led to the streamlining of our research structures to maintain their effectiveness in view of our medium size; and a renewed emphasis on collaborations and funding as a way of enhancing our research capacity.

Currently, the Director of Research (DoR) oversees the research policies of Brunel Law School. The DoR is in continuous dialog with the College Research team on improving practice and policies. They are an active member of the College Research Strategy group, the members of which work as a team to capture, facilitate and implement the vision and strategy of the research across the College. The DoR is also a member of the Department Management Board (DMB), an important forum to bounce ideas and take collective action on research structures, processes and policies within the department. A dedicated slot on research in all departmental meetings enables members of staff to widely discuss issues on research. A common research direction is also ensured through bi-annual meetings of the Research Mentors Committee, established in 2014 and comprising senior members of staff (Readers and Professors). Participants communicate and take action on issues relating to research that need to be emphasised and addressed in each mentoring cycle.

We also have an Assistant Director of Research, who focuses on supporting staff in their funding applications. In the last few years, Brunel Law School has placed a lot of emphasis on funding opportunities as a way to enable collaborative research of high quality and impact. This has paid off as we have more than doubled the funding won in the last REF period. In 2017, Natile was appointed as the Assistant Director of Research specifically because of her wide experience in securing funding. Two strategic awards for our department have been the Leverhulme Trust that attracted Bowsher, a sociologist, who helps us develop further our multi-disciplinarity; and the H2020 award on managing migration inflows in Europe which consolidates our reputation as a migration hub.

The department also has in place a Research Seminar Series, normally overseen by a team of early career staff. These seminars represent an opportunity for further peer review and act as our gateway to our external research partners. The team organising such research activities changes every couple of years so that the research series remains inclusive, relevant and affirming to all of our staff and areas. Several such events have led to very successful collaborations (H2020; BA awards). We also engage with the research activities of the college, often forming short term, inter-disciplinary, informal research groupings that work together on a specific project. These arise organically from the convergences of our individual research interests and lend support and development opportunities for their members. Again, these have been precursors of close collaborations at Brunel that led to impact on issues surrounding migration, financial regulation and consumer protection.

We review the effectiveness of our departmental structures to achieve our research strategy regularly. Two years after its establishment in 2014, we decided to discontinue the Research (REF) Committee because it was seen as limiting to the atmosphere of

collegiality and open exchange on research outputs in the School. Similarly, we discontinued a number of semi-formal research groupings within the School. Some centres had major successes: for example, the Centre for the Study of Arbitration and Cross-Border Investment (Bantekas, Cole, Ferretti, Riefa) was selected by the European Parliament to conduct a report on the EU aspects of arbitration in 2014 (£232k). Yet, such groupings had become too formal and hindered our renewed commitment to inter-disciplinarity across and within Brunel Law School. Between 2014-2017, we hosted 'Britain in Europe', an inter-disciplinary Research Network which addressed Britain's relationship with Europe, a very topical and important topic at the time. More recently, and in line with our innovation theme, colleagues are particularly active in the creation and running of the new University Centre for Artificial Intelligence.

Research objectives during the assessment period

We have taken the following steps to achieve our research strategy elements:

We ensure that we attract, retain and nurture world-class researchers, including early career scholars. We expect top quality research from our staff and we facilitate this through the support we provide them. The interaction of early career researchers with our existing researchers has had transformative results for both the researchers and the culture of Brunel Law School. Many of the early career-researchers chose this particular department on the basis of its reputation in their fields and since joining they have pushed our work forward within our areas of strength using new methodologies, exciting sub-areas of research and new tools of research. We facilitate their development through intense but collegial mentoring and peer review and provide them with clear opportunities for further development.

All our staff go through a Performance Development Review every year, where they are assessed on targets set by themselves and situated within the University expectations regarding research. They also set clear targets on research outputs, dissemination and impact for the following year. We also have clear promotion criteria and mechanisms. We allow individual space suitable for research and have a research allowance set as a minimum for every academic member of staff upon request. This can be increased, by discretion, for activities related to high quality research. The diversity of our staff has contributed to the global outlook and impact of our research on topics such as human rights, migration, financial inclusivity in the post-colonial world, consumer protection, and global IP rights.

We continue to have a high research intensity. We have done this first by reflecting on our previous research achievements: we have always been committed to submitting all members of staff to all research exercises. In the 2001 RAE, we submitted 100% of our staff members (19), in 2008 also 100% of our staff (29), and 97% in REF2014 (33 out of 34). We are committed to transparency and inclusivity and we seek to learn from the previous REF.

All staff on research and teaching contracts have the same research time and are given the same level of opportunities and comparable teaching; and administrative roles relevant to their experience. We produce open and transparent teaching and marking allocations that include all tasks, are in similar levels for all, and which are shared with all. We encourage staff to apply for research leave; and we take advantage of the University schemes for BRIEF awards (e.g. Corsi, Riefa). Our mentoring system ensures that all

members of staff on teaching-research contracts meet with their mentor of choice in a collegial and supportive environment at least twice a year to discuss their research plans. Sensitive to our staff well-being, we implemented all research policies with flexibility and sensitivity during the COVID pandemic putting our staff's well-being at the top of the agenda. We also engage in rigorous peer review in a collegiate atmosphere.

We have reshaped our structures to facilitate the broad impact of our work. The department has an Impact Champion who puts in place seminars on pathways to impact and discusses ways to intensify the impact of our work. The department funds such pathways in all research fields. Funds have also been secured at College and University level to promote the impact of our research. This strategy has been successful as our research has made an impact on scholarship (outputs that are considered reference work; leading positions in law research bodies; in-house production of law journals; membership in editorial boards) and also in society on different audiences from judges, domestic and international civil servants, civil society organisations and financial regulators.

The impact of our work is facilitated by the open research environment. We go beyond the requirements of Research England and insist that all substantial outputs of our staff, including monographs where possible, are available open access. Following the University's lead on this, we expect all our publications to be uploaded in the Brunel University Research Archive, our depositary collective system, and we all have ORCID accounts. We insist on new original research and discourage the reproduction of research in several platforms.

We deliver the environment and support that enables world-leading research by maintaining a vibrant and inclusive research culture in Brunel Law School. We have an extensive programme of conferences, public lectures, panel discussions and workshops to develop and disseminate research. We have regular staff research seminars and workshops focussing on detailed discussion of work in progress.

Since 2014, the department has in place a wide and rigorous peer review policy. Our aim is to help researchers to fulfil our expectation by maintaining a collegial, non-hierarchical atmosphere of respect and academic rigour. Peer review of outputs, albeit extensive, takes place on a voluntary basis, is unpressured and is respectful of the researcher. This approach ensures the best results and maintains a collegial research atmosphere. Work at different stages is discussed in seminars, during mentoring, or simply in informal discussions with colleagues. The Research Seminar series acts not only as a hub for exchange of research knowledge, but also as a platform for discussion on new developments in research. Around £5k is secured for the organising of the series every year. Peer review for all funding applications is built in the process of submission as a means to ensure multi-disciplinarity and clarity in the applications. All funding applications go through two reviews, one internal to Brunel Law School and one external.

We ensure that we provide the means to take advantage of multi-disciplinary research opportunities by having dedicated professional and very active research services support for all members of staff; an internal grant review process for all proposals that goes beyond both our college and our University requirements; and full use of Brunel expertise, including the centralised Research Support and Development Office (RSDO) which offers funding knowledge and support in sourcing and managing external income.

Multi-disciplinarity was boosted by our mixing with History and Politics colleagues as members of the same department between 2014-2016. Since re-gaining our autonomy as

an independent department within a more intra-connected College, our collaborations with the units of Social Sciences, Humanities and Business have strengthened the theoretical basis of our work and the critical approach we take towards law. Since 2016, we have benefitted from the funding that the College offers competitively for cross-discipline 'clusters', i.e. short-term interdisciplinary hubs that focus on specific research. For example, a College funded team on climate change was formed by several ECRs (Alvarez-Armas, Hamenstaedt, Kaprou, Xanthopoulou) in a collaboration with computer science, marketing experts and civil society organisations. Our focus in migration started with a 2016 inter-disciplinary funded cluster that organised an inter-disciplinary workshop on migration (Xanthaki, Giannouloupoulos) and involved in 2019 another such cluster to develop an online game for refugee children (Law, Media and external partners).

Similar funding has worked well with strengthening our collaboration with external teams: Riefa's 2017 funding for 'Global Consumer Lives' led to an international cross-disciplinary conference on the problem of access to justice for vulnerable consumers. In 2020, Barnett was awarded a Brunel Public Engagement Fund for closer collaboration with a film maker on domestic abuse; and Petkoff's funding helped the formation of a multidisciplinary hub to advise the Argentinian G20 delegation.

Our staff also make full use of other inter-disciplinary opportunities in the University. Malinauskaite has developed strong links with the Engineering department which are consolidated by her participation in several funded projects as CI and recently as PI. The department is visible in the University Centre for Artificial Intelligence that includes Andreadakis, Boshier, Gilkay, Nika and Reisberg. And we have benefitted enormously from hosting Bowsher as an Early Career Leverhulme Fellowship, whose background in sociology pushed both staff and students to deepen further our understanding of multidisciplinary critical methodologies.

We ensure that we are delivering research-enhanced education.

A thriving suite of Master's programmes on human rights, intellectual property rights, financial regulation and corporate law and commercial law has allowed our staff to have a high proportion of their teaching within their research areas. We recognise the importance of infusing our students with passion on different areas of law and use our research in teaching to do so. Equally, we take stock of our students' views and experiences to reflect on our own research. Through them, our collaborations and our work, we remain proactive on important movements of our times and we feed our research into our own pedagogy and the university's pedagogical and societal role. Hence, we have been working within the University structures to contextualise our quest for 'Diversity, Equality and the end of Racism' within our University. Several members of staff organised, led and participated in events throughout 2019 on the decolonisation of the curriculum. With the active participation of students, the department strengthened the University's policy on bullying and harassment (Natile, 2018-19). Initiatives such as the Athena SWAN (Malinauskaite), the Athens Refugee Project (Xanthaki, Xanthopoulou), and the new 2020 policy on gender equality within the University (Natile) are fed by and feedback into our research.

Research Integrity

Responsible research conduct is a core value for the Brunel Law School. In accordance with the Code of Research Ethics produced by the University and the Department, any research conducted in the name of Brunel University London involving human participants, their tissue and/or their data, and research involving live animals is the subject of an appropriate research ethics review and approval procedure. We have in

place a dedicated member of staff who acts as the first call of reference in the Department on all issues related to research integrity. They inform members of staff regularly on the requirements, any changes or good practice. They act as the first point of reference in cases where research has to be approved by the College Ethics Committee, who has the overall responsibility for the ethical approval of all research involving human participants conducted in the Department. The University provides training in research integrity and associated activities. All research-related staff and doctoral researchers are obliged to complete our Research Integrity online module.

2. People

Staffing development strategy for all staff

We are proud that all our full-time members of staff who have a research-teaching contract are indeed active researchers and are given equal opportunities and space to develop their research potential. We monitor the research performance of our staff and have clear formal and informal structures to support them, should they face difficulties and challenges.

We have avoided structural divisions between researchers and teachers and only recruit teachers to fill real teaching needs or deliver innovative teaching. Even in these very few cases of teaching-only contracts (5 such contracts in addition to our 39 research-teaching contracts), our staff engage in research on innovative ways of teaching and we are fully committed to their full research development, if they so wish. They are free to join the research mentoring system, benefit from funding to attend relevant conferences, and feedback their research to the other members of staff. Some years we may rely on very few short-term contracts, no more than two per year. Our efforts to offer mainly permanent contracts is part of our strategy to create a collegial environment where staff develop a long-term bond and a sense of community within the Department.

We strive to maintain a collegial atmosphere in the department, a necessary component for constructive, fulfilling and ever-evolving research culture. In order to prepare staff for this REF cycle, we conducted in 2016 a wide research calibration exercise, graded outputs, communicated to all colleagues in 2016 the results of the grading and held a series of meetings where we discussed the REF criteria. In the quest for freedom of research from bureaucratic constraints, we later uncoupled the specific REF preparations from the research discussions within the department.

No member of the department's academic staff is expected to have an average teaching load of more than 6 contact hours per week over two 12-week teaching terms. Also, ECRs have discounts in their first 3 years. It is our expectation that at least one of the modules each person teaches will be squarely located in their main area of research interest.

Brunel Law School is committed to teaching that coincides with the research interests of our staff. We continue to offer specialised optional courses for final year LL.B. students together with a compulsory supervised 10k word independent research dissertation. In addition to our long-established Masters programmes, we now offer inter-disciplinary Master's in Migration Law and Policy; and in Financial Law, Ethics and Compliance. Innovative teaching activities often coincide with dissemination of our research. Giannouloupoulos worked with school children on educating them on the European Convention of Human Rights. Chigara disseminated his research into human rights during a funded two-week course 'Digital Human Rights Ambassador', training students on the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Xanthaki and Xanthopoulou gain new insights into the migration realities by leading the Athens Refugee Project every year since 2015.

Our strategy of providing equal opportunities to all our staff on a research-teaching contract is also reflected in the allocation of administrative duties. Those new to academic life are not expected to undertake a substantial administrative role during the first three years of their employment. When on a few occasions we have had to ask ECRs to complete important administrative roles, we have given these individuals additional credit for their extra work.

Selection process

We have a robust selection process in which all academic appointments are approved by the College or the University. All shortlisted candidates have to demonstrate clear evidence of a strong up-to-date research record, and/or strong potential to fulfil the University's research mission. All Professorial shortlists are vetted by the University leadership, for the same reason. As part of the selection process, all candidates at all levels are required to present on an aspect of their research to a diverse group of students and staff and are subject to questions. Even unsuccessful candidates comment on the open and engaging atmosphere. We require new staff to have completed or be close to completing a PhD (or equivalent), as we believe that successful completion of a programme of doctoral research is a valuable benchmark for academic researchers.

Staff are subject to Annual Performance Development Review which includes an evaluation of their research performance against targets set in the previous year. This provides Brunel Law School with the opportunity to monitor the quality of on-going and future research of each staff member and, importantly, to offer support as required. If the member of staff consistently fails to respond to the tasks set at the previous year, Human Resources set specific tasks during the year and support is ensured by the department in a discreet and sensitive manner.

All staff on a research-teaching contract take part in the **mentoring process**. They choose their mentor and discuss with them at least twice a year their plans and their successes and challenges. Mentoring enables self-reflection on one's plans in a friendly and constructive environment and has been widely seen as a positive measure. As mentioned earlier, we also engage in rigorous peer review in a collegial atmosphere.

The College also rewards members of staff for aspects of research. For example, Barnett won in 2018 the award for best Early Career Researcher; Rehman received an award for his work on education quotas for minorities in Pakistan; and Xanthaki received a commendation in 2020 for the impact of her project developing an online game that teaches migrant children their rights.

Research and other leave schemes

The University's rolling programme for paid research leave ensures dedicated time for staff to focus on and pursue their research, with the aim of producing specific outputs. University research leave is normally awarded upon production of a research agenda for the period of leave being sought, and can vary in time. The administrative load of a member of staff is taken into account for the decision. Brunel Law School has had a steady stream of academics of all career ranges post-probation benefitting from leave. During his leave in 2019, Andreadakis completed his book (with Morano-Foadi) on the *Protection of Fundamental Rights in Europe: The Challenge of Integration*. In her 2015 leave, Riefa had a Max Planck scholarship which enabled her to complete five research outputs. Riefa also

used her Athena SWAN leave in 2018 to expand her research into issues of law and economics, an important component for her scholarship and her work with UNCTAD. Brunel Law School also encourages a dissemination or impact element in any application for leave. Zaccaria was ready to use her research leave to apply for another British Academy grant during her research leave in 2020.

Early career researchers have also taken advantage of the University's BRIEF scheme, which awards grants of up to £15k to pursue a specific research project (e.g. Corsi). The University also operates a Knowledge Transfer scheme which enables staff to spend a period of time within industry, in order to develop further their own skills and also to disseminate their own research outside of academia. Two members of staff benefitted from this scheme during this REF cycle (Ferretti, Petkoff).

Junior staff

Brunel Law School has invested a lot in early career researchers as a way to integrate them within the department. Many of the ECRs chose this department on the basis of its reputation in their research fields. Since joining they have pushed our work forward within our areas of strength using new methodologies, exciting sub-areas of research and new tools of research.

We facilitate their development through continuous mentoring and rigorous peer review of their outputs. We also provide them with opportunities such as their active involvement in collective funding applications (3 ECRs involved in the recent H2020 successful bid; several ECRs have led successful internally funded clusters); and exposure to research events (4 ECRs organised the 2020 Brunel conference on climate change, same in 2019).

ECRs also benefit from opportunities designed by the College and the University. Close communication structures among the department, the College (CBASS) and the University help the careful planning of these activities to complement each other and to enhance development both in subject-specific and in inter-disciplinary discourses. Most of these structures are also open to our more experienced staff: we strive to allow them to keep abreast. Hence, we have several workshops on funding opportunities as well as other aspects of research.

Staff who have not completed **probation** in a UK University are normally given a two-year probationary period, during which they will have targets relating to their teaching and research performance. Research targets for probationary staff would typically include publication of two refereed journal articles and a submission of a funding application. There are normally a minimum of two interim probationary reviews each year, which are designed to identify areas in which colleagues may require further support from Brunel Law School to achieve their probationary targets. Where the need for support is identified, such support may take the form of reduced workload in other areas and/or closer assistance from mentors. All new staff are given significantly reduced teaching loads in their first year of teaching. All probationary staff have a probationary mentor in addition to a research mentor.

Probationary staff cannot supervise doctoral research as first supervisors. They are, however, able to be second supervisors. This gives them the opportunity to partner with more experienced colleagues in the supervision process, and to develop their own skills and confidence in a safe and supportive environment. Typically, ECRs would have acted as second supervisor to a handful of doctoral students by the time they complete their probationary requirements.

Mid-career staff

All staff are included in the mentoring system. Staff at the mid-career stage are subject to annual appraisals that assist the department in identifying excellent performance and taking appropriate action to recognise and reward it. There is an annual call for applications for internal promotion, and research excellence is rewarded by accelerated increments. For this purpose, there is no minimum “waiting period”, and those who are high achievers are encouraged to apply for internal promotion as soon as it is clear that they have met the relevant threshold requirements.

Senior staff

Readers and Professors have annual performance targets. The targets typically cover research output, research leadership, research funding, teaching and management/administration. High performance leads to pay increments and/or performance bonuses. This scheme allows the University to identify and reward excellence, and to satisfy itself that senior staff performance matches the expectations of the University.

All members of staff are encouraged to apply for external roles and the Brunel Law School enables them to fulfil their visions. A notable example is Javaid Rehman, who is currently the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran. Brunel Law School has granted him permission to be away during important dates in order to fulfil his responsibilities as the UN Rapporteur, and we have maintained his workload at manageable levels. His work has been affected by COVID-19, as his post requires personal meetings all over the world. Rehman has been conducting his work through online platforms.

Research students

We have maintained high numbers of research students while ensuring that they are trained to become competent independent researchers. We currently have 35 PhD students. We continue to have a high success rate in PhD completions: In 2013-14 we had 14 successful vivas; in 2014-15 we had 15 successful vivas; 6 in 2015-16, 10; in 2016-17; and 15 in 2017-18. Over 70% of our research students are international students. The University offers several prizes for best PhDs, including for a 3-minute thesis presentation. Several of our PhD students have won such awards for their research.

The department invests on the academic excellence of our emerging researchers and PhD students. In addition to their work, they have the opportunity to shadow experienced researchers in some activities (e.g. Rehman in collaborative networks; and Natile in diversity initiatives within the University). Several of our PhD candidates have, upon completion, taken up full-time academic positions at Brunel, East Anglia, Leicester, Reading, Sussex; and in India, Pakistan, Thailand, and the UAE, to mention a few.

Recruitment of students- Competitive studentships

We are very committed to building a large PhD community, as our future researchers. We accept PhD students in areas where we have expertise, irrespective of where they are coming from or whether they have particular additional needs. We also offer studentships; in 2019, we became members of the *Techne* programme of PhD funded studentships. So far, 2 PhD prospective students have applied for the *Techne* scheme of studentships out of the 12 applications from Brunel. In addition, many of our PhD students have secured studentships from their home countries. We are delighted to see that several of them continue their academic paths with full-time positions either in the UK or in other countries around the world.

Support

The Brunel Law School provides other support to research students. All research students have dedicated office space, a computer, and printing facilities paid for by Brunel Law School. All are encouraged to attend conferences in their respective fields and to present papers where appropriate, and we provide financial support upon request. This financial assistance can be supplemented by additional conference scholarships provided by the University. For example, in 2019, the department spent £4.3k to assist research students attend conferences of their respective interests. However, support goes far beyond funding. The start of the COVID-19 intensified our efforts to be in touch with our PhD students and keep them motivated and engaged through online meetings with supervisors and peers.

Each research student is supported by a principal supervisor, the main point of contact and supervision, alongside a second supervisor and a research development advisor. Together they form a core team around the PhD student and ensure his or her progress and personal development. Effectively, this means that most of our academic staff (including early career researchers, who can only be second supervisors) are actively involved in the mentoring and supervision of research students. The Research Development Advisor advises students specifically on research methodology and offers support. Progress of research students is monitored (inter alia) by a review process, which requires students to provide a detailed report of their activities, progress and accomplishments. The reviews take place 1 month after joining Brunel, at 9 months, 18 months and every academic year thereafter until the end of studies. Records are also kept on the PhD meetings and their frequency. We also run a focused Brunel Researcher Development Programme which includes methodology discussions (including on good research and good writing), time-management and other important topics. These series are open to our members of staff and they often take part.

Every year, a selection of PhD students has an opportunity to present their research in our annual **PhD Students Conference**, which is attended by their peers and academic staff. The panels are chaired by members of the academic staff. These events afford the students the opportunity to practise their presentation skills, and, more importantly, to receive feedback on their research from academic staff and other PhD students. Brunel Law School awards a number of prizes for the best abstracts and best presentations.

At University level, the **Graduate School** acts as a central hub for research students, providing advice and support, weekly coffee mornings, monthly researcher teas, on-request inductions as well as a range of facilities (e.g. a large postgraduate study centre with IT provision, quiet study room, common room, etc.) that can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Graduate School runs a **Researcher Development Programme** consisting of workshops and seminars to help research students develop personal and professional skills, following a nationally recognised Researcher Development Framework. The University Library also provides a training programme to help postgraduate students develop their scholarship skills.

Equality and diversity

We value inclusiveness and are fully committed to the principles of equality and diversity in all areas of operation. As a unit, we have been very active in discussions, events and research agendas that highlight the structural nature of racism and discrimination in all its expressions. We have reacted to the recent #BlackLivesMatter campaigns by leading in 2019 with colleagues from Social Sciences a series of workshops on 'Decolonising

Curriculum' examining the extent to which our own work is decolonised. Influenced by the #metoo movement, we were part of the college working group that decided in 2020 against panels related to research sabbatical solely composed of male colleagues. And we have been leading in re-drafting and updating the new University bullying and harassment policy.

Diversity is one of our greatest strengths. Currently, 54% of our research-teaching staff self-identify as female. Recent years have seen the promotion of female staff to senior roles (Kaganas, Malinauskaite, Rab, Riefa, Xanthaki). Our 39 members of staff are of 13 different nationalities: 39% come from the UK; 58% come from the EU; and 8% from overseas. 8.7% of our staff self-identify as Black, much higher than the 2.1% average of the University. 20% of our staff have a declared disability; we are supportive and accommodating. As mentioned, 41% of our staff are between 30-39 years old, 8% between 60 and 69 and 3% above 70. Only 3% of our staff are in fixed contract. In our REF submission, we made sure that we were aware of the breakdown of publications in terms of gender, race, and level of career. We have followed very closely the University's Code of Practice.

As a unit we have been working relentlessly to improve further our inclusiveness. In 2019, Brunel Law School was awarded the Bronze award of Athena SWAN. The Panel specifically noted that 'staff demographics are good' and commended the department for 'some recent progress seen in female hourly paid contract staff moving to permanent roles, improved female representation at professors, and reduction of women on fixed term contracts.' On research, they commended the department for the Research Mentoring system and the Research Award for returners.

Wider University strategies and initiatives to promote and enhance equality and diversity include the Athena SWAN Research Awards, made to staff returning from maternity, adoption or paternity leave (e.g. Riefa) and BRIEF awards for early career researchers (e.g. Corsi).

Brunel Law School has a dedicated Director of Equality and Diversity (DED) whose role is to ensure that diversity is celebrated and equality is secured in Brunel Law School and the University. The Director assesses continuously the extent to which our strategy, policies and everyday work maintains structural or indirect discrimination on any ground. They are also a member of the College Sub-Committee for Equality and Diversity. During COVID-19, the DED together with the line managers in the department continuously engage with staff on hurdles that impact on their work and their overall well-being. There are ongoing discussions on ways to accommodate staff and maintain their morale and engagement, be it working flexible hours, changing deadlines for submission of grades, having weekly online 'coffee breaks' and online collective writing workshops. As a response to #BlackLivesMatter, the University created the University's Anti-Racism Working Group where our DED reflects on strategies and policies regarding racism and inclusion and feeds back to the department current dilemmas and good practice.

We remain open and sensitive to staff constraints, such as ill-health and family responsibilities. Through our mentoring system, we identify these issues and try to help our staff overcome them or minimise their impact with short term or long-term realistic solutions. When staff come back from such periods, we start discussing their research plans in a staged and gentle manner; and we allow them space to fully recover before we integrate them fully in the research policies of the Brunel Law School.

We do not require members of staff to be in the department every day of the week. We support to the extent possible requests for flexibility and remote working. We appreciate that research needs space which is not usually possible in a busy Brunel Law School building. Staff can work away from the University for two days per week during term time and three days outside term time. Our staff well-being is paramount to us and we are leading the well-being mandate of the University that includes research time and space. The Head of Brunel Law School is the chairperson of the University's group on well-being and academic workload. Our commitment to this has been visible in the COVID-19 crisis, where we often communicated to staff that we understood the anxiety resulting from the situation and the impact this would have on their research plans. We have been sensitive to staff not able to complete their funding applications, have completed peer reviews in much shorter times so that our staff were able to submit their work, and have been in touch with staff to ensure that their research plans did not increase their stress levels.

With regard to research degree students, we provide equal opportunities to all applicants. Our research student community comes from around the world, and we have part-time and full-time modes for our research degree. We are proactive in seeking to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by research students.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Financial support:

One of the most tangible ways in which Brunel Law School promotes research is through direct financial support for research activity on an individual level. There is no ceiling to the conference allowance available to staff and the original requirement of delivering a paper has been eased in favour of a more intellectually open policy. In 2016, around £8k was dedicated to staff's participation in conferences; this investment rose to £13k by 2019. Funding also comes from the College and the University. Staff are encouraged to apply for such internal funding, which at times has been important for further development of a funding application to an external body or to conduct a pilot study. Also, all staff can apply for funding through the two College Research Centres. We have had several successes in such small grants, including the work of experienced researchers (e.g. Barnett, Kaganas, Riefa, Xanthaki) but also ECRs (e.g. Kaprou). Finally, funds have been allocated to activities linked to impact. For example, both the Brunel Law School and the College have released funds for Rehman to take parliamentarians to Pakistan to review and lobby for the improvement of religious minority rights. In early 2020 and following Rehman's suggestion during their visit, Pakistan agreed to a new and impactful quota system for minorities in the higher education system. Funds were also secured for an international symposium that Barnett and Kaganas have co-organised with academics from QMW on child contact and domestic abuse and an international workshop on so-called parental alienation held at Brunel, both of which had tangible results in the change of policy and practice.

Strategies for generating income

Strategies for generating research income have included a renewed interest in and visibility of research opportunities as well as an emphasis on deepening our links with our international collaborators. These strategies have been successful since our research funding has more than doubled since the last REF, being awarded £865k in this REF cycle. Grant applications are included in the annual targets for probationary staff and the targets for senior staff (Readers and Professors), as well as the promotions criteria. Appointing a colleague, the Assistant to the Research Director, to focus specifically on assisting with funding applications has really helped improving the number of applicants

and the quality of applications. We also sought the abundant expertise of the College and the University and organised tailored-made seminars and writing workshops that included intense peer review and discussions.

External Funding

In this REF, we have more than doubled our awarded funding reaching £865k. We have worked closely with the University's RSDO and other parts of the University to increase staff awareness of the various funding opportunities that are relevant to law, their own fields and to help them with their applications. In the department, we often organise seminars with successful law award holders and also 'writing workshops'. In some cases, we target specific staff for funding opportunities. The College has funded the attendance of staff at external workshops on funding (e.g. Boshier; Hobbs; Xanthaki). Brunel Law School also secured a YERUN fellowship that the University facilitated (Blasi Cazargan from the Autonomous University for Barcelona, the collaboration with whom led to the successful H2020 award). We encourage staff to take part in training sessions run by RSDO and we make full use of their extensive support with the funding applications, including administrative and accounting tasks.

After taking advantage of the University's support to participate in external workshops and host Blasi, Xanthaki leads Brunel in the successful H2020 £4.78M project on managing migration. Being one of the 13 partners in the consortium, Brunel Law School was awarded £509k and 3 research fellows to work together with Brunel Computing Sciences on the project. The inclusion of early career researchers in the project (Hamenstaedt, Natile, Xanthopoulou) has acted as a great enhancement of their knowledge of research funds and their challenges. They, in turn, have really enhanced the quality of the project with new and fresh ideas and methodologies. The COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the start of the project and the appointment of the fellows beyond this REF cycle and has had considerable impact on its planned activities.

Other successes in funding have come from the British Academy (Hobbs, 2016 £5k; Corsi, 2017 £2k; Zaccaria 2020 £8.5k); from commissioned consultancies (Xanthaki 2015, DfID £6k); and for projects focussed on research dissemination and impact (Giannouloupoulos 2016 on teaching school children on the European Convention on Human Rights, Open Society Foundation £76k). Bantekas has been successful in his Leverhulme Fellowship (2018), which saw Boshier coming to the department as a Postdoctoral Early Career Fellow for 3 years. Malinauskaite has been a Co-Investigator in several collaborative EU funded projects led by the Brunel Engineering department: the ETEKINA project (2017-2020), where her contribution is around £12k; the InmComEss project (2020-2023), where her contribution is costed for £10.3k; and the iWAYS project that will start in 2021 with similar contribution. In all 3, she offered her expertise on life cycle assessment and EU legislation on emissions and energy efficiency in process industries. She is also the PI in a current project on developing cost-effective sanitary pads for women in Pakistan (£12k, Innovate UK), a project with great potential impact which starts in November 2020.

Each one of these awards came because of our recognised work in the relevant field and the high quality of our research. In many of these research activities, we have prioritised the inclusion of early career staff and have been working with them closely through our well-established structures.

We are confident that as our knowledge capital on funding increases, so will our funding; and we continue to make it a priority in our research objectives.

Infrastructure and facilities

Our research activities have been considerably enhanced by the move of the Department in 2013 to a £7M building, the Elliott Jaques Building, which has many facilities, including a £216k Moot Court that hosts research events and workshops, a computer laboratory, social spaces for students, and dedicated space for research students. This new space allows both for social interactions among staff which encourage further discussion of their research and the hosting of research events. Normally, staff and research students have 24-hour access to the building.

All academic staff members have their own offices, a desktop computer linked to the Internet, and a laser printer. All staff and students have both on-campus and off-campus access to online legal materials such as Westlaw, Lexis/Nexis, and HeinOnline. The University also has a self-contained Law Library, with quiet spaces for academic staff and students. We also have excellent administrative support, and a designated Subject Liaison Librarian for Law within the University's library services. Brunel's location on the outskirts of London is strategic for access to the British Library, the Library of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies in London and the Bodleian Library in Oxford, each of which is less than an hour away. This gives our staff and research students easy access to the resources and facilities of these libraries.

4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

As Brunel Law School became more outward-looking in research in the last years, so have our collaborations strengthened and increased. They have been crucial to achieving our strategic aims in terms of world class research.

Several staff have links with domestic state bodies. Barnett, Kaganas, Petkoff and Rehman are members of All Party Parliamentary Group. Barnett has been instrumental in the legal protection of women from domestic violence during COVID-19 and has been working with civil society on domestic violence for some time. Rehman has managed through his visits with UK Parliamentarians to Pakistan to convince Pakistan to introduce a quota system for minorities in education. Rehman's visit to Pakistan in 2020 to continue his work was cancelled because of COVID-19. Reisberg is a member of the Financial Markets Law Committee (FMLC) at the Bank of England.

As truly global experts, we also enjoy strong links with state bodies in other states beyond the UK. Gurgula's work on patent law reform in Ukraine has contributed to the establishment of a new Court of IP Rights. The department has facilitated this by funding her visit to Ukraine. In 2016, Bantekas acted as a Senior Advisor to the Greek Parliamentary Committee and has been one of the main drafters of the Report of the Truth Committee on Public Debt. Heitsch continues to act as an Advisor to the German legal firm Baumann Rechtsanwälte. Olowofoyeku has repeatedly been cited by Courts worldwide including Australia (*Ferdinands v The State of South Australia*, 2016), New Zealand (*Zhao v Otago Standards Committee no.1*, 2016); and the Court of Appeal in Malaysia (*Wong Kie Chie v Kathryn Ma Wai Fong*, 2017). Alexandris Polomarkakis' research on drug law enforcement has been cited in the work of the Special Commission of Enquiry into the Drug 'Ice' in NSW, Australia (2019).

We also enjoy very strong collaborations with international organisations. As the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, Rehman is in close contact with states and civil society. Riefa has influenced the work of UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) by

being an invited member of the UNCTAD working group in e-commerce and has presented to States her work on vulnerable consumers and consumer theories, projects she developed further through her research leave and later her Athena SWAN leave. Petkoff has been working since 2018 with Team 20, a think tank behind the G20 leaders, on the role of faith-based actors in the realisation of Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations. His research plans had to be cancelled in 2020 but the University has awarded him a Grant Generating award to continue his work after the end of the pandemic. Petkoff also acts as an expert of the OSCE. Ferretti was in 2014 appointed as a member of Financial Services Users Group of the European Commission (DG FISMA) to advise the Commission on policy and legislative matters affecting the users of financial services, and was given Knowledge Transfer leave to strengthen his links with the EU machinery.

And of course, we have close links with civil society bodies. At the domestic level, Boshier has worked closely with the media and music industry, partnering in 2020 with the Featured Artists Coalition and the Music Managers Forum to advise on copyright and artists' remuneration. This comes at the back of Boshier's articles on *The Conversation* which have attracted more than 112k readers. The department also encouraged Natile's work with grassroots organisations in Kenya on digital finance, as well as Westenberger's work with the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil. Xanthaki worked closely with the Network for Children's Rights to develop the online video game 'The Rights Hero' teaching migrant children of their rights (2019). She is also still involved with human rights NGOs on indigenous rights and cultural rights. During the discussions on BREXIT, Giannouloupoulos collaborated with civil society organisations, including the Open Society and Liberty on events and work on the human rights implications of BREXIT.

Strong networks have been formed and maintained by invitations to our partners to visit our department (e.g. Greek Ombudsman, 2018; Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil 2019). We also sponsored visits of our staff to our partners (e.g. Boshier's keynote speech on copyright and social media in Saskatoon, Canada and the US, 2019; Mardikian's Max Planck Visiting Fellowship, 2020; Natile visiting fellowship in Canada, 2020; Petkoff's visit to Buenos Aires, Argentina).

We have further developed our networks through co-organising symposia and workshops with them. A notable example has been the 2019 inter-disciplinary conference on 'Disruptive Innovation and Law... Evolution towards a Tech-Law World' (Boshier, de Pascalis, Nika) that has put us at the frontline of research, strengthened our research networks in this area, and was the precursor of the new University Centre for Artificial Intelligence. Also, Kaganas and Barnett organised, with academics from QMW an international symposium on contact disputes and allegations of domestic violence (2017). They also organised (2020) another international workshop on so called 'parental alienation'. Both events were attended by academics, practitioners, judicial officers and stakeholders such as charities. Other large conferences include events on data protection (Ferretti, 2014), and corporate law (Andreadakis, De Pascalis, Nika, Reisberg, 2018). Brunel Law School has strongly supported these activities by allowing space, funding and offering help, advice and recognition to its members of staff.

These collaborations have already borne results in terms of funded applications (Early Career Leverhulme 2018; H2020 award), projects (Petkoff's work with the G20 Argentinian delegation, 2020; Xanthaki's work on 'The Rights Hero' serious game for migrant children, 2019), new academic scholarship (collective report on implications of BREXIT 2016; Riefa's report for UNCTAD, 2019; Petkoff's report on interfaith actors and

Sustainable Development Goals, 2020) and changes in the domestic law (Barnett's work on the PD12J on domestic abuse; Rehman's contribution to Pakistan's new quota measures for minorities, 2020; Reisberg's FMLC membership which as a body pushed for changes to the Withdrawal Agreement draft Bill, 2019).

Our strong presence in facilitation and dissemination of knowledge is also evident in other initiatives: Boshier, Giannouloupoulos, Kaganas and Reisberg have published articles in *The Conversation*. De la Rasilla became, while at Brunel, the Founder and Co-Chair of the Interest Group on the History of International Law of the European Society of International Law. The *International Human Rights Law Review* (IHRLR) and the *State Practice and International Law Journal* (SPILJ) are produced by Brunel academics. Members of staff are editors of the *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion* (Petkoff), *European Trade Mark Reports* (Bowsher). Alexandris Polomarkakis is in the Editorial Committee of *EuropeNow*, an online journal of the Council for European Studies. Boshier is the editor of the *European Trade Mark Reports*. Conway is a member of the editorial board of *New Journal of European Criminal Law* and Associate Editor of the *Asian Yearbook of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law*. Natile is the assistant editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Law in Context*. Reisberg sits on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Corporate Ownership and Control* and *International Corporate Rescue*. Solomon is on the editorial board of the *Military Law and the Law of War Review*, and has been on the board of the *Journal of Philosophy of International Law*. Westenberger is the Assistant Editor of the *European Copyright and Design Reports*; and Xanthaki in the editorial team of the *International Group and Minority Rights Journal*.

We are also very proud that we have attracted ECRs who have received awards for their work, such as Berkes who received the 2016-17 Geza Herczegh Medal and Prize in International Law; and Solomon who has been awarded in 2018 the Humboldt University Law Visiting Scholar Grant. Also, some of our ECRs receive such recognition using our support and structures: Boshier was awarded the Best IP Law Academic in the Legal Awards in 2020 and has been a finalist in the British Law Awards for the Women in Law Award (Wider Industry) in 2019; and has been awarded the best IP Gender Equality Platform for World IP Women in the 2018 IP Excellence Awards. Mardikian received a Max Planck Visiting Fellowship grant in 2020. Xanthopoulou's article was awarded the Common Market Law Review Award for the best article by a young academic that year.