

Institution: University of Portsmouth
Unit of Assessment (UoA): 18 Law
1 Unit context and structure, research, and impact strategy

This is the University of Portsmouth Law School's (PLS) inaugural submission to REF. It comprises 20 staff (19.6 FTE), a 200% increase from REF2014, in which 6.5 FTE staff contributed to Social Work & Social Policy and Area Studies UoAs. Of the 20 members, over one-third are Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and half are former practitioners. Our gender-balanced submission (51% f) underscores our commitment to inclusivity, as recognised by our 2020 Athena Swan Bronze Award.

1.1 Unit Context and Structure

Originally located within Accounting, PLS was established as a separate school in 2008. A small unit in 2014, it made the strategic decision to contribute to other UoAs for REF2014 and to target REF 2021 for an independent submission. Since 2014, PLS has rapidly expanded its research profile and mentoring capacities. Two newly recruited professors (CHOUKROUNE and DAM) (1 f, 1 m), one in post (MANIRUZZAMAN) (1 m), and three internally promoted Readers (CONNOLLY, HAND and STREVENS) (1 f, 2 m) have facilitated this transition. Together, they constitute the UoA's senior cadre of researchers and help deliver the crucial strategy to develop former practitioners into academic scholars.

In 2017, supported by a growing staff and student cohort, PLS paired with Portsmouth Business School (PBS) to establish the Faculty of Business and Law (BaL). This context frames the UoA's approach to vision, strategies and resources. In some respects, PLS shares a common agenda with PBS; in other respects, it charts its own course. The Head of PLS (STREVENS) and the Research Lead (RL, HAND) oversee research activities, and co-ordinate with BaL's Associate Dean Research (ADR, THORPE) on strategic planning, including workload allowance (WLA), internal funding, and mentoring policies. Together, they ensure the UoA's research objectives are aligned with BaL's strategic aims.

PLS research is distinct, collaborative, and interdisciplinary. Nurtured by its long association with PBS and shepherded by the University's five Thematic Areas (**Institutional Level Environment Template paragraph 9**: denoted **ILETpX** hereinafter), our scholarship has organically coalesced around three informal clusters. With scholars from business law, human rights and equality law, and public law, the **Accountability, Risk and Rights** (AR&R) cluster investigates ideas of accountability and risk in private and public contexts. Scholars in the **International and European Law** (IEL) cluster marry concepts in international law and European law to analyse the efficacy of supranational institutions including the European Union. The **Legal Education and Legal Profession** (LELP) cluster probes approaches to legal education and the structure and performance of the legal profession in the UK and elsewhere. The UoA has ambitions to systematise these clusters into research groups and to develop a Research Centre to better spotlight its scholarly activities (section 1.3 below).

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

1.2 Research Strategies: Current goals

Following REF2014, PLS unveiled a new long-term vision: to expand research activities, cement its culture of scholarship, and deliver a consolidated Law submission to REF2021. To accomplish this, we embarked on a “Build up, Bring in, Better together” strategy, with an approximately £360,000 University research investment.

- **Build up:** Our priority was to develop (existing) staff with practitioner backgrounds into established researchers. Staff participated in the University’s advanced research methods training programme (**ILETp29**), helping them enrol into doctoral programmes and pursue original research. Six lecturers (5 f, 1 m) adopted this path, generating publications, and two impact case studies (ICS) as well (BROOK, COX).
- **Bring in:** As our undergraduate and postgraduate community expanded, we focused on recruitment (**ILETp29**). In the census period, the UoA hired 19 staff: 17 ECRs and senior lecturers (SLs) (11 f, 6 m) and two professors. These appointments strengthened our clusters: AR&R (e.g. BEDFORD, PEARCE, WALSH K); IEL (e.g. CHOUKROUNE, GIOSA, HOOTON, KREBS, KUŞKONMAZ, XANTHOULIS); LELP (e.g. DAM). The professors led UoA research activities, and one became Director of the University’s Democratic Citizenship Thematic Area (CHOUKROUNE).
- **Better together:** Legal scholarship has classically been a solitary endeavour. PLS tried disrupting that model through pairing. Our senior researchers mentor ECRs, and the RL maintains an annual rota of pairs and activities feeding into the annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs). Staff also set up interdisciplinary collaborations, supported by internal funding. Successful examples include a study of the ivory trade (COX with economists and criminologists) and analysis of employability trends (HARRISON and PBS researchers). Key external pairings include econometric analysis of judicial decisions using Machine Learning (DAM with researchers from Columbia University and Singapore Management University) and work with HRM specialists (KAPOTAS with researchers from Birkbeck and KCL). Additionally, staff have initiated interdisciplinary partnerships through the University’s Themes (e.g. STREVENS, Health & Wellbeing Theme).

1.3 Future Strategic Aims: Consolidating Growth, Spotlighting Research

The University’s Vision 2030, Strategy 2020-25, and BaL’s Research & Innovation (R&I) Vision 2025 inform the UoA’s strategic aims for the next five years. The University has ambitions to produce “globally-recognised research and innovative solutions that improve society” (**ILETp1**). PLS has developed five strategic aims to achieve this:

- **Consolidate clusters into groups:** We will formalise our clusters into groups and link up with the University’s Themes. Additionally, we will develop an equality studies centre, with researchers from PLS, PBS, the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, and the Institute of Criminal Justice Studies, whose scholarship addresses interdisciplinary dimensions of anti-discrimination law.
- **Deepen collaborations:** Co-authored publications will constitute 25% of our outputs for the next REF, up from approximately 16% currently (internal and international collaborations).

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

PLS will continue to facilitate staff pairing to achieve this. In addition to the UoA's forthcoming Centre, BaL's Blue Governance Centre, Centre for Finance, and the University's Thematic Areas will provide ECRs collaboration opportunities with more established researchers.

- **Strengthen international networks:** We will invest in international partnerships to enhance the vitality of our research culture and provide opportunities for collaborative scholarship. We will host visiting professors and researchers by building on existing connections (e.g. European University Institute, Florence, Columbia Law School, University of California, Berkeley). BaL's International Exchange Programme (to visit collaborators) and the Brunel Fellowship (to host them) will support this aim (section 4.1, below).
- **Expand the graduate programme:** We will increase our postgraduate researcher numbers by 50% (currently 19 students). Partnering with neighbouring law schools, we will develop our internal PGR presentation series into a regional workshop. Increasing PGR involvement in staff research, we will measure success through joint publications and engagement with the newly-launched research blog (section 2.2.3, below).
- **Develop an Athena Swan Silver submission:** In April 2020, PLS and PBS were jointly awarded Athena Swan Bronze status. To demonstrate our continuing commitment to inclusivity, PLS will apply for Athena Swan Silver status by 2024.

1.4 Impact Strategy: 2014-2020

The UoA's approach to impact is grounded in the fact that legal scholarship is usually addressed to judges, lawmakers, bureaucrats or policy makers, and aims to reform institutions and practices. In 2014, PLS instituted a 3E Strategy, "Embed, Execute, Engage," to facilitate impact.

- **Embed:** The first element exhorts staff to consider impact in conceptualising new research ideas. The ADR and RL discuss the embed element with staff in their annual research meetings. The RL maintains a roster of potential ICS from these, which feeds into PDR discussions. Similarly, staff are encouraged to explore the impact possibilities while seeking BaL Research Project Funds (RPFs) or University Theme Funds (**ILETp11**).
- **Execute:** The University's dedicated Impact Team liaises with BaL's Impact Champion, encouraging staff to conduct research with the impact audience in mind. They offer general support, inviting in impact experts, identifying resource needs, developing networking opportunities, and providing customised mentoring as impact pathways develop. Financial support comes from BaL's Impact Acceleration Fund (**ILETp12**), and shortlisted staff working on ICS command a 100-hour WLA annually.
- **Engage:** This element of the strategy promotes engagement with the relevant audience. Impact staff tutor case-study authors on media engagement. BaL's Business Services & Research Office (BSRO) assists in disseminating research to external stakeholders. To celebrate exceptional external engagement by PLS and PBS staff, BaL awards an annual Dissemination Prize (section 2.1.4, below).

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

The project on the ivory trade (**REF3 UoA18 IVORY**) began with a sole-authored article. Mentoring led to pairing, an interdisciplinary team, more publications, and media attention. Institutional support followed: travel resources; networking with a local Member of Parliament; facilitating meetings in the House of Commons; a sabbatical; WLA allowance; assistance with media engagement; and a Dissemination Prize. These activities ultimately influenced the enactment of the Ivory Act 2019, which proscribes dealing in ivory in the UK.

The project on the law of wills (**REF3 UoA18 WILLS**) had a different arc. A research paper on succession law attracted the Law Commission's attention, and staff were invited to a pre-consultation meeting. PLS offered: resources for a joint University-Society of Legal Scholars conclave to develop a response to the Commission's Consultation Paper; an RPF for travel; a sabbatical; WLA allowance; and assistance with media engagement. The final impact included contributions to a Law Commission Consultation Paper, offering the possibility of future legislative changes.

The 3E Strategy is a sustainable model. It has already spotlighted other potential research impact, such as how to prevent transnational financial crime; the uses of human dignity in British law; and work on UK employment discrimination law (section 4.3, below). We will continue to provide staff with institutional support to enable them to generate impact from their scholarship.

1.5 Approach to Supporting Interdisciplinary Research

PLS embraces interdisciplinarity, adopting a facilitative, not prescriptive, approach. We facilitate such research in three ways.

- **Collaborations (ILETp5):** Staff explore collaborative possibilities in annual ADR and RL meetings. Some of the resulting pairs are interdisciplinary in the classic sense, fusing disciplines or methodologies. Others are interdisciplinary in a nominal sense: PLS staff offer legal expertise to the projects of other disciplines. Classic pairings in the UoA include the ivory trade project (COX with criminology, economics, and forensics) and an analysis of employability trends (HARRISON with researchers from PBS). Nominal pairings include a project identifying arsenic levels in the groundwaters of Bangladesh (DAM with computer scientists, environmental engineers, geologists, and oceanographers).
- **Engagement with the Thematic Areas (ILETp9):** The University's five Themes incubate interdisciplinary research. Key PLS projects include a study on wellbeing in education (STREVEENS, Health & Wellbeing Theme); investigation of children's risk from domestic abuse (WALSH K, Security & Risk Theme); and an analysis of the challenges of online disinformation (XANTHOULIS, Future & Emerging Technologies Theme). Engaging in research through the University's Themes allows us to examine how legal issues interrelate with other aspects of our political, economic, and social lives, thereby fostering a culture of interdisciplinarity.
- **Graduate Supervision (ILETp21):** PLS is committed to nurturing the next generation of interdisciplinary scholars through its PhD programme. Staff collaborate with colleagues from other schools/departments to supervise PhDs. Since 2014, 10 PhD teams (approximately 50% of all registrations) have had supervisors and reviewers from other

disciplines, including Area Studies, History, Politics and Literature, Economics, Education & Sociology, Health & Care Professions, and Psychology.

1.6 Open Access (OA) Environment

To further the University's OA policy (**ILETp24**), PLS has required that all published outputs since January 2016 are OA compliant. Colleagues are reminded at staff meetings, during PDRs and at annual research meetings to deposit outputs promptly to Pure, the University's central repository. Two specialist support staff assist PLS researchers to record (or update) content on Pure and render post-print versions freely accessible. Consequently, post-2015, reports show 100% compliance with the University's OA policy.

We share the key University mission to make scholarship available to end-users and the public, and our commitment to an open research environment goes beyond the REF mandate. The University has established special arrangements with journal publishers to secure Gold OA, including a standing agreement with Springer to make final print versions publicly available. PLS participates in these initiatives. Furthermore, publishing in reputable Diamond/Platinum OA journals is supported, with outputs in these making up over 8% of the submission.

PLS staff also use their datasets for knowledge exchange and civic engagement. One staff member (DAM) is exploring a collaboration with Justice Hub, an award-winning non-profit organisation in India, to convert a large dataset on the Supreme Court of India into an accessible, community-updated resource. Journalists, solicitors, barristers, and researchers can deploy the curated information for litigation and journalistic purposes. The updating process will offer citizens ("netizens") an opportunity to engage with legal research. Another staff member (COX) is turning a dataset on ivory products in the UK into a living resource that will engage the public in identifying new information about the sale and purchase of such products through online forums.

1.7 Research Integrity

To implement the University's commitments under the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (**ILETp22**), BaL's Ethics Committee (FEthC) ensures that all (funded and unfunded) research meets relevant ethical, legal, and professional standards. PLS has a dedicated Ethics Advisor on the FEthC who acts as the first point of contact for staff and students on ethics-related matters. Ethics applications are initially screened through an online tool and those that require more information are discussed in the FEthC. During the REF2021 period, 29 applications reached the FEthC: six were approved without amendments, and twenty with amendments. One application was referred to the Faculty of Science and Health's ethics committee and two others are currently under review.

2 People

2.1 Staffing Strategy and Staff Development

2.1.1 Staff development strategy

The University's People Strategy 2016-2020, the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, and central policies inform the UoA's staff development strategy. Excellent research requires a supportive environment, and PLS is committed to providing that through its appraisal, mentoring, funding, and training policies.

PLS employs a graded WLA model to identify staff research allowances. Depending on their published outputs, staff may command 40% (Research Excellent status), 30% (ECR status), 20% (Research Active status), or 10% (Research Start-up status) WLA. All outputs are peer-reviewed and awarded a "research quality" score, which is shared with the relevant staff. Staff need a designated score to retain or increase their research WLA. As some ambitious, interdisciplinary projects require more time, the WLA model has a rolling five-year window. Research allowance for a forthcoming year depends on outputs published or accepted for publication in the preceding five years. The model double-weights monographs and longer publications, three of which form part of our REF2021 output submission.

PLS has a mentoring system to supplement its WLA model (**ILETp37**). All Research Start-up, Active, or ECR staff have designated mentors who hold Research Excellent status. Mentors and mentees meet up at least on a termly basis. The RL uses mentee feedback during the annual research meetings to update the mentoring rota. With more staff gaining research experience, our mentor pool has increased 43% between 2016 and 2020. The proportion of female mentors also rose sharply from 14% to 40%.

PLS provides staff with three types of research funding:

- Appointees on the Teaching & Research track receive a £3,000 Foundation-in-Research Grant for scholarly activities for the first three years. Staff have used the funds to hire RAs, buy research materials or databases, or for travel purposes.
- Staff can apply to the Head of PLS for up to £2,500 per year to present at conferences and seminars. They must explain how their conference proposals support the UoA's strategy for developing high-quality outputs, dissemination, or networking. Since 2014, staff have presented at over 100 national and international conferences, including the Annual Law & Society Meetings, the International Society of Public Law Meetings, the Society of Legal Scholars Conference, and the Socio-Legal Studies Conference.
- BaL runs an annual Research Project Fund (RPF) offering up to £5,000 per project. Since 2014, PLS staff have had 21 RPF-funded research projects, generating international relationships (e.g. Bond University), co-authored publications (e.g. COX), and external grant applications (e.g. XANTHOULIS) (section 3.1, below).

In 2018, the University inaugurated a revised PDR process (**ILETp53**). At PLS, PDRs include annual one-to-one meetings with the Head or designated staff, at which staff are encouraged to

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

highlight their achievements and identify their mid-term and long-term research needs and career goals. This also offers a forum to discuss research or leadership training needs. Since 2014, 23 staff have completed 91 training sessions organised by the University's Research & Innovation Services (RIS).

2.1.2 Effectiveness of staffing and recruitment policy

The University's commitment to world-leading, impactful research (**ILETp13**) guides the UoA's approach to staffing and recruitment policy. We have significantly expanded since 2014 by applying our "Build up" and "Bring in" research strategies (section 1.2 above).

During the REF2021 period, we have appointed 19 new teaching and research staff, all on permanent contracts, enhancing our research capacity. Our research active staff members have increased from 45% in 2013-14 to 70% in 2019-20, and this has also radically improved the gender-balance. 51% of research active staff are now female, compared to 19% in 2013-14. The proportion of staff with doctorates has grown from 33% in 2013-14 to 60%, increasing the percentage of female doctoral degree-holders from 25% to 40%. Currently, six staff are undertaking doctoral studies, five of whom are female.

The effectiveness of our "Build up" and "Bring in" recruitment policy is evident in four ways:

- We have a 200% increase in research active staff from REF2014 to REF2021.
- Our commitment to a gender-balanced work environment is reflected in the increase in female research staff submitted to REF2021 (51% compared to 16% in REF2014).
- PLS has a more calibrated mix of experienced, mid-career, and emerging scholars compared to REF2014, with three professors, three readers, six SLs, and seven ECRs.
- Our professorial appointees are from Hong Kong and India/France, and eight ECRs and SLs hold degrees from two or more jurisdictions. Consequently, we have a growing number of international research links, including Bond University (Australia), Columbia Law School, Drexel University (USA), EUI (Italy), and Singapore Management University (Singapore).

2.1.3 ECRs and research culture

Ten staff, approximately 50% of those submitted, were ECRs in this REF period (section 1.2, above). Assisting them to develop and execute internationally-recognised research is a key strategic aim, and is delivered through four modes of support:

- **Workload Allowance:** ECRs automatically command 30% research WLA for their first three years, and may qualify for 40%, with exceptional outputs. Since 2014, eight ECRs (4 f, 4 m) have enjoyed this higher allocation.
- **Resources:** ECRs also receive a £3,000 start-up research grant for the first three years. They are eligible for research opportunities on identical terms to established researchers (e.g. Writers' Retreat, a dedicated writing workshop, and conference funding). However, ECRs are prioritised for internal RPF applications, which help staff, especially ECRs, commence new projects or prepare external bids.

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

- **Mentoring:** All ECRs have designated professorial mentors or co-mentors. This supplements other support, including BaL's ECR Support Group and the University's Researchers Network for ECRs and mid-career scholars. Established to implement the Concordat (**ILETp22**), these forums also offer pathways to leadership. The Support Group, for example, elects a chair who sits on BaL's Research and Innovation Committee. Since 2014, three PLS staff (COX, LOVEJOY, and XANTHOULIS) have represented BaL ECRs on this key committee.
- **Teaching:** We have a research-led approach to teaching, especially for ECRs. Upon recruitment, ECRs are encouraged to develop optional modules linked to their emerging expertise. Since 2014, these have included Commercial Law (KREBS), White Collar Crime (LOVEJOY), International Law (MARDIKIAN), and Family & Child Law (WALSH K). This approach helps ECRs build strategic synergies between their research agendas and teaching portfolios. The approach has engendered external links, too. In 2020, having taught International Human Rights Law at PLS, one staff member (KAPOTAS) joined an international team delivering an online course on Anti-discrimination Law, developed by the University of California, Berkeley. The team now plans to convert its teaching collaboration into a research partnership.

2.1.4 Sabbatical leave, impact support, and recognition

The University has a decentralised approach to sabbatical leave for staff with at least three years' service (**ILETp36**). Since 2014, seven staff (3 f, 4 m) secured semester-long sabbatical leave to, for example, deepen impact (COX), undertake archival research (WALSH K), or pursue empirical analysis and international collaboration (ATKINSON).

Our 3E Strategy for Impact (section 1.4) provides support for achieving impact. All staff, including ECRs, are encouraged to consider impact when developing new research, and once evidence of impact appears, PLS, BaL, and the University pool resources to deliver targeted assistance. PLS offers staff a 40-hour allowance to build on emerging impact. Those with advanced claims to impact command a 100-hour annual WLA allowance to draft ICS. BaL's Impact Champion offers personalised mentoring, and the Acceleration Fund offers grants for impact-related activities (**ILETp57**).

We recognise and reward staff for conducting research and for achieving impact in three ways :

- Research and impact activities inform the WLA model and decisions regarding promotion.
- Staff participate in BaL's Annual Research and Innovation Conference, celebrating exceptional research and engagement. Each year, three prizes are awarded: Best Output (£5,000), Best ECR Output (£5,000), and Best Research Dissemination (£5,000). Since 2014, six PLS staff have won these awards: Best Output (CONNOLLY, HAND); Best ECR Output (GARROD, XANTHOULIS); and Best Dissemination (COX, WALSH E).
- Staff benefit from a BaL reward scheme for externally-funded research. Besides supplementing their research WLA (for large grants), staff are also rewarded via a Research Incentive Scheme (3% of bid value, up to a maximum of £1,500).

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

2.2 Training and supervision of PGR students

2.2.1 Recruitment

PLS is committed to training the next generation of legal scholars. In 2013, we had 12 PGR students, which expanded by more than 50% to 19 students in 2020, with students coming from Africa, Asia and Europe.

Admission to the PhD programme is highly selective. In 2019-20, less than 5% of applicants gained admission. Initially, the Department Research Degrees Coordinator reviews all applications and invites feedback from relevant staff. Candidates with proposals that merit closer scrutiny are interviewed by a panel of at least two staff. Before sitting on admission panels or acting as supervisors, staff must complete mandatory training, including modules on Unconscious Bias, ensuring consistency and fairness (ILETp30).

In 2016, a staff member (KAPOTAS) led on a partnership with Scholars at Risk and Amnesty International to fund doctoral studies for persons who face grave threats and are otherwise denied the “freedom to think, question, and share ideas”. Currently, three PGR students from the Maldives, Turkey and Uganda are completing their PhDs under this programme. Two are former journalists, and one of them was a researcher. Overall, 33% of the current PhD cohort benefit from competitively won BaL and University bursaries.

2.2.2 PGR Progress: Monitoring and Support

We are committed to ensuring that all research students successfully complete their doctoral studies while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. PGRs begin with an Induction Programme; supervisory teams then meet monthly as students develop a first year reading and writing plan. Progress is formally monitored annually, with reviews at the end of Years 1 and 2 (adjusted for part-time students).

This structured approach to monitoring and feedback has helped the PhD programme run smoothly. Since 2014, 10 students have successfully completed their PhDs. In the 2019 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (the latest one available), 91% of PGR respondents expressed satisfaction about the quality of our supervision (5% above the national average). 87% of respondents expressed satisfaction regarding our progress and assessment methods (7% above the national average). And 85% of the cohort are satisfied with their overall PGR experience (4% above the national average).

PLS provides further resources for PGRs such as laptops for all new PhD students, access to dedicated study and social spaces, and access to a £550 grant for research-related activities.

2.2.3 Skills development and career enhancement

Equipping PGR students with research, writing, presentation and organisational skills is a key strategic aim. Our students access research training and development as follows:

- The centralised Graduate School Development Programme (GDSP) delivers over 200 training events annually, many of which are also available online (ILETp38). Since 2014, PLS students have completed 291 GDSP sessions.

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

- Our students complete at least 10 methodology courses (“mini cafes”), some of which are delivered at BaL, providing methodological breadth and interdisciplinary research skills.
- PLS has begun curating an INSPIRE (External Speaker) Series for PGRs. It exposes PGRs to the latest research in law being conducted in the UK and elsewhere. PGRs are also encouraged to attend the Staff Research Seminar Series, which regularly features both PLS and external presenters.

Our students are encouraged to acquire core pedagogic skills and complete the Graduate Students Professional Development (GPROF) accreditation. A six-month programme, the accreditation process provides students with opportunities to lecture or tutor at PLS and offers a pathway to attaining HEA Associate Fellow status. Since 2014, nine PGR students have completed the GPROF.

PLS also provides its PGRs with opportunities to develop their organisational skills. In 2015, three PGRs (ACHESON, NDZI, UMAR) co-organised an international Southern Law PhD conference. The highly successful event had participants from the Universities of Brussels, KwaZulu-Natal, Leeds, Glasgow, London, and East Anglia. The UoA’s PGR representatives also help organise the annual Research Conference & Poster Event at BaL every summer.

Furthermore, we encourage students to publish academic articles and blogs/op-eds to develop their research identities. Since 2014, PGRs have produced sole or co-authored outputs, and written for online forums including *The Conversation* (SHAMS, KIRABIRA), *International Journal of Constitutional Law Blog*, and *Verfassungsblog* (NAZEER).

2.3 Promoting equality and diversity

We strive to ensure that equality and diversity considerations permeate all facets of our decision-making. In April 2020, under the direction of a PLS staff member (DAM), BaL secured Athena Swan Bronze status.

The UoA has a young cohort. Almost 75% of submitted staff are under 45, including 42% under 35. Our profile is also gender-balanced, with 51% female staff in the submission, a radical improvement from 16% in REF2014. Staff with professional backgrounds similarly increased from 16% with previous law practice careers in REF2014, to 50% currently. Our submission also reflects geographic diversity: staff from the UK produced 49% of outputs, staff from the EU 36%, and international staff 15%. These improvements demonstrate the success of the “Build up” element of our research strategy and our commitment to nurturing an international research environment (section 1.2, above).

Our commitment to gender equality is exemplified in our pay equality and committee diversity. The UoA’s median pay gap favours female staff by 8%. The six-member REF committee is gender-balanced and comprises a mix of academic backgrounds, ages, and nationalities. Internal and external reviewers assess outputs for WLA and REF, with the overall total number of reviews undertaken divided equally between female and male reviewers (49% f, 51% m). Similarly, our regular Staff and PGR Seminar speakers over the REF2021 period have also been gender-balanced (53% f, 47% m).

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Our Athena Award confirmed that male and female staff apply for RPFs, sabbaticals, conference attendances, and training in gender-equal proportions. Crucially, all appointment/interview panels at PLS are gender-balanced.

Building on the University's commitment to the Race Equality Charter, LGBTQ+ staff, and those with disability or caring responsibilities (**ILETp43-48**), PLS has implemented six policies for a collegial work environment:

- The Head of PLS reviews applications for flexible (or remote) working. Since 2014, except in exceptional cases, the Head has approved all requests for flexible working.
- In 2018, a Restart Policy was introduced for those who have had an extended interruption to their research due to maternity, ill-health, or caring responsibilities. The policy assists staff to resume their research careers through an additional 10% research WLA and the option to co-author a publication with a professor.
- In 2019, we introduced a Conference and Caring Policy to make conference attendance accessible. The policy offers staff up to £300 p.a. for caring costs associated with attending conferences.
- The University runs an Employee Assistance Programme to discuss wellbeing, confidentially, and the Head of PLS regularly reminds staff to use it. Research students can similarly seek professional help from our Student Wellbeing Service (**ILETp39**).
- In 2020, BaL launched a bespoke development programme to improve female promotion prospects, especially to Professor and Reader. PLS staff participate both as mentors and mentees.
- We take care to schedule meetings and events sufficiently in advance. Most events are organised on Wednesday afternoons, which are purposefully kept clear of teaching and administrative commitments. Meetings have also been rearranged to account for staff caring and parental responsibilities.

3 Income, infrastructure, and facilities

3.1 Funding and strategies for research income

Funding agencies assessing grant applications in law prize research experience, especially publications. Because 60% of submitted staff held ECR status over the REF2021 period, we focused on building that experience base as a prelude to generating external research income. The UoA's internal research grant process has been central to this, encouraging ECRs to engage in bid writing, providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants, and boosting the confidence of successful applicants.

Since 2014, PLS staff have competed for internal funds at BaL (RPFs) and centrally (the Research Development Fund, Research Themes and Innovation Fund, and the Global Challenges Research

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Fund), securing £198,655 (**ILETp63**). At BaL, PLS staff successfully applied for 21 RPFs for £70,050 in total, and separately secured a £50,000 grant for a five-year research partnership with EUI, Florence (section 4.1 below). At the University level, PLS staff secured £78,605 for five Theme or GCRF-related projects as Principal or Co- Investigators.

These internal activities inspired our staff to bid for grants from a range of external bodies including the British Academy, the Leverhulme Trust, ESRC, and UKRI. The UoA deployed a three-step strategy for this:

- Building from our experience hosting smaller (regional) events, we bid for two major national conferences. We won proposals worth £152,000 to host the 2017 Association of Law Teaching Conference and the 2020 Socio-Legal Studies Association Conference (section 4.1, below).
- Staff collaborated with more seasoned researchers to apply for large grants. One of our notable successes is the £259,000 Innovate UK Knowledge Transfer Partnership (SEKHON, contributing to an interdisciplinary business and management team).
- Staff used their RPF experiences to lead on small external bids. One success is the £10,000 ESRC grant developing a UK-Ireland Research Forum on data protection, post-Brexit (XANTHOULIS). This began with an RPF on data protection law, which provided networking opportunities with Irish scholars, and led to the successful proposal (award announced post-July 2020).

BaL's BSRO and the University's Research and Innovation Services department (RIS) constitute a key part of our infrastructure for developing external funding bids (**ILETp33-34**). PLS staff go first to the BSRO, a nine-member project management support team, which advises on bid costing and internal review deadlines. Once a draft application is ready, one of seven RIS officers provides staff with detailed comments, directs them to successful past awardees, and co-ordinates with the University's Peer Review College (PRC). The University is committed to submitting only high - quality applications, so the PRC redirects applications back to BSRO and RIS, as necessary. BSRO, RIS, and PRC, therefore, interact to help PLS staff develop competitive external grant applications.

3.2 Operational and scholarly infrastructure supporting research and impact

Operational infrastructure

The University's Pure system is a key part of our operational infrastructure, recording scholarly outputs and research-related activities (**ILETp24**). 100% of submitted staff have ORCID IDs linked to Pure. At PLS, Pure helps monitor performance against strategic objectives, particularly co-authorships and collaborations. Since 2014, the RL has integrated Pure data with additional qualitative information to produce Annual Research and Innovation Reports. The reports highlight successes in five areas: (1) quality and quantity of outputs, (2) number, value, and success rates of external funding bids, (3) external collaborations and impact-related activities, (4) PGR admissions, completions, and satisfaction levels, and (5) research culture and environment. We have used these reports to measure our progress towards successful delivery of our strategic aims.

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Scholarly infrastructure

The University Law Library houses the UoA's main scholarly infrastructure for research. Our collections include over 12,000 print titles and a similar number of eBooks. A dedicated Law and Criminology librarian oversees acquisitions, adhering to the standards set by the Libraries Sub-Committee of the Society of Legal Scholars (with regard to necessary books, journal subscriptions, database access, etc.). The library has a separate serials budget of approximately £160,000, subscribing to nearly 50 law journal titles and law databases including *HeinOnline*, *Lexis*, and *Westlaw*. A recent addition, *JustisOne*, provides greater international case coverage, supporting the University's research strategy of investigating global issues through international partnerships.

Impact infrastructure

PLS has delivered its 3E Strategy in conjunction with BaL's Impact Lead and the University's Impact Officers (**ILETp57**) (section 1.4, above). Staff explore possibilities for impact in their annual research meetings with the ADR and RL. BaL's Impact Lead offers additional general support and mentoring for individual staff, including identifying impact audiences, networking opportunities, and gathering evidence. Further support comes from the University's dedicated three-member team. Anticipating an increase in ICS for REF2028, BaL has appointed two PBS academics (FOROUGH, McBRIDE) to support PLS staff. The UoA has already identified potential future ICS in areas including preventing transnational financial crime, the uses of the concept of human dignity in British law, and changes to UK employment discrimination laws.

3.3 Equality impact assessment and research funding

The University is working to improve inclusivity, opportunity and experience for all staff and students through its Strategy 2015-2020 and Vision 2030 documents (**ILETp43-49**). Its Equality & Diversity Unit conducts Equality Impact Assessments of all new researcher mechanisms. If potential biases are flagged, policies are amended appropriately before being implemented. We also periodically audit our PLS policies, including those relating to research environment and funding, to ensure that they remain inclusive. Two new policies, the Restart Policy (2019) and the Conference and Caring Policy (2020) (section 2.3, above), further demonstrate this commitment.

4 Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy, and society**4.1 National and international collaborations, networks, and partnerships**

The University's 2015-20 Strategy underscored the importance of interrogating urgent global challenges through national and international partnerships. In 2015, PLS activated "Building to 2020: Internationalisation with Impact," a three-point programme to achieve this:

- **Partnership with EUI, Florence:** We instituted a five-year joint research programme with EUI, Florence. Informed by our strategic commitment to develop tomorrow's research leaders, ECRs were encouraged to lead this. Starting in 2016, five ECRs (2 f, 3 m) co-convened conferences in Florence on key themes regarding the political future of the European Union: "European Consensus" (KAPOTAS, 2016); "Human Dignity and the

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Constitutional Crisis in Europe” (BEDFORD, 2017); “Economic Constitutionalism in European and Global Governance” (MARDIKIAN, 2018); “Corruption, Democracy and Human Rights” (LOVEJOY, 2019); and “The rule of law and the European Union” (XANTHOULIS, 2020: postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19). Each has led, or will lead, to a co-edited volume featuring innovative scholarship on the respective themes. One of our future strategic aims is to develop the programme into a sustainable, long-term partnership (section 1.3).

- **Exchange Programmes:** PLS participated in BaL’s outbound and inbound exchange schemes to create, support, and deepen research partnerships. The International Exchange Scheme (IES) lets staff spend up to six months at an international institution on a joint project. Since 2015, four staff (2 f, 2 m) have visited collaborators in Australia (COX, STREVENs), Brazil (KAPOTAS), and Singapore (DAM), producing four co-authored outputs. They explored critical themes including rising levels of mental health challenges among law students in the UK and Australia, collapsing levels of judicial independence in India, and the criminalisation of wildlife trade globally. Similarly, PLS participated in BaL’s inbound programme, the Brunel Fellowship Scheme, which fully funds a collaborator’s month-long visit to the University. Since 2015, two staff (2 f) (CHOUKROUNE, STREVENs) have hosted visitors from India and Australia respectively to collaborate on projects, including the politics of international trade in developing countries. Our increasing co-authored publications demonstrate the effectiveness of our collaborations on issues of global importance. Of the submitted outputs, 8% involve international co-authors and 8% involve internal (University) ones. One of our strategic aims for the next five years is to increase the volume of co-authored publications to approximately 25% (section 1.3).
- **Engagement with Learned Societies:** We developed partnerships with national learned societies to host key conferences and highlight our emerging research excellence. In 2017, PLS successfully hosted the Association of Law Teachers Conference 2017 on Foundations and Futures (of Legal Education). The conference attracted over 150 delegates from 60 institutions in seven countries. In 2018, PLS won the bid to host the April 2020 Socio-Legal Scholars Association (SLSA) Annual Conference (although this was sadly cancelled due to COVID-19). Individual staff have co-organised conferences with research or professional bodies, including the Higher Education Academy and the Legal Education Research Network on research methodology (STREVENs) and an SLSA-funded event on Law and Compassion hosted at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (BEDFORD).

4.2 Relationship with key research users and beneficiaries to develop impact

The 3E Strategy guides impact activities at PLS (section 1.4). PLS, BaL, and the University offer dedicated support to staff working on impact to engage with end users and beneficiaries of research (ILETp56-59).

The project on the ivory trade (REF3 UoA18 IVORY) influenced the enactment of the Ivory Act 2019, which bans trading in ivory products in the UK. Working with BaL’s Impact Champion and the University’s impact officers, the impact team liaised with a local MP, Caroline Nokes, who assisted with a launch event at the House of Commons. More presentations and workshops followed, which ultimately contributed to the passage of the law. The enactment of the legislation

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

has also engendered new relationships. The ICS team is working with the Metropolitan Police Service to train officers on ways to identify wildlife crime offenders. This success has generated international consultancies including with research communities in Botswana and Malawi.

The project on wills (**REF3 UoA18 WILLS**) began with a journal article which produced interactions with members of the Law Commission and property law researchers. It has engendered new relationships, including with the Law Society's Wills and Equity Committee, to which the author (BROOK) has been appointed for a three-year term.

Both ICS, and the profile of staff who produced them, have enriched our research environment. PLS commands several interdisciplinary research partnerships as a direct result of the project on the ivory trade. The two projects have also inspired ECRs to engage with the 3E Strategy and achieve impact.

4.3 Wider contributions to economy and society: impact beyond the two ICS

PLS scholarship has critically informed legal debates within judiciaries, legislatures, and executive branches in the UK and elsewhere. These contributions both recognise our world-leading research and demonstrate the "Engage" element of the 3E Impact Strategy.

- **Judiciaries:** The Supreme Court of India summoned scholarship of a staff member (DAM) on three occasions to develop new constitutional doctrines or declare parliamentary legislation unconstitutional. In 2018, the court cited his research to invalidate a colonial-era provision of law that criminalised same-sex conduct between consenting gay men. In 2017, the court invoked his scholarship to restrict the power of governments in India to unilaterally govern through decrees. Nationally, the English and Welsh Court of Appeal has acknowledged research by other PLS staff (COX, HAND).
- **Legislatures:** PLS staff have provided written and oral submissions to Commons Select Committees, including the Women and Equalities Select Committee's enquiries into Brexit (HAND, KAPOTAS), Age Discrimination (CONNOLLY), and Harassment (HAND, KAPOTAS). Staff have also been acknowledged in British legislative debate documents including a 2015 Law Commission Report (No. 361, WEAIT) and in the House of Commons Library Notes (HAND). Internationally, in 2015, a proposal on "blank votes" by a staff member (DAM) for resolving the impasse over the selection of the chief executive in Hong Kong was discussed in the city state's Legislative Council (e.g. *South China Morning Post*, 13 January 2015). In 2018, the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law, Germany, invited DAM to deliver a series of workshops on comparative constitutional law to parliamentarians of the Sudanese National Assembly involved in drafting a new Constitution.
- **Legal Practice:** One staff member (BROOK) sits on the Law Society's Wills and Equity Committee and has helped shape regulatory practices surrounding the video recording of wills. Another (STREVEN) is a member of Law Care's research committee, which has designed a survey instrument and will analyse data on wellbeing currently being collected across the legal profession (Life in the Law). Internationally, a staff member (DAM) has lent expertise to barristers in South Asia (India, Pakistan, Nepal) on constitutional litigation involving challenges to executive actions including the use of decree powers (e.g. *Saira*

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Nasir v President of Pakistan, W.P. No. 3800/2019) and another (KAPOTAS) is a regular speaker at The Academy of European Law, Trier (an international centre for training and debate for lawyers).

4.4 Engagement with the public through research

PLS prizes research in all forms, and particularly encourages dissemination, especially to non-specialist audiences, as part of our Impact Strategy (“Engage” section 1.4) (ILETp25). Our staff disseminate research to the public in three main ways:

- We shape public debates on law through op-eds and long-form essays in national and international media outlets. Since 2014, staff have written for influential international publications including *Le Monde*, *Newsweek*, *The Economic Times*, and *The Hindu*.
- We contribute to non-specialist academic forums and blogs to explain research findings or comment on legal developments. Since 2014, 12 staff including ECRs (e.g. BEDFORD, COX), mid-career researchers (e.g. WALSH E, PEARCE), professors (e.g. CHOUKROUNE) and PhD students (e.g. KIRABIRA, SHAMS) have contributed 24 commentaries to *The Conversation*, attracting more than 175,000 views. Staff have written for *Ideas4India* (an LSE and Oxford collaboration), the *SAS Refugee Law Initiative* blog, *Oxford University’s Property Law Blog*, *WonkHE* and for blogs associated with academic journals and organisations (e.g. *ICON blog*, *UK Constitutional Law Association Blog*, *SLSA blog*).
- International media have interviewed staff on their research, including *BBC Radio 4*, *BBC World Service*, *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), *The Telegraph* (India), and *The New York Times*. Work on ‘Brand me’ (HARRSION) attracted media attention from *Psychology Today*, *Science Daily*, *Economic Times/India Times* and *Brigham Young University Radio*. In December 2017, empirical research by a staff member (DAM) was used in evidence in a trial involving the Indian government at the Westminster Magistrates’ Court in London. Media outlets widely reported on the research, and it provoked a debate in India on the state of judicial independence in that country (e.g. *The Hindu BusinessLine*, 12 March 2018).

4.5 Contributions to the research base, economy, and society

Consistent with our emerging international profile, PLS encourages staff to engage with the discipline’s research community. All staff enjoy a 110-hour (6%) WLA annually in part to undertake activities that contribute to the discipline’s sustainability.

PLS staff are beginning to contribute to editorial boards of national and international journals. Currently, editorial memberships include *Computer Law & Security Review* (PEARCE), *Manchester Journal of International Economic Law* (CHOUKROUNE), *Australian Journal of Clinical Education* (STREVEENS), *The Law Teacher* (STREVEENS), and *China Perspectives/Perspectives Chinoises* (CHOUKROUNE). Staff are also on the editorial panel of *Goode’s Consumer Credit Law and Practice* (ATKINSON).

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Our researchers act as reviewers for a range of prestigious generalist academic outlets (e.g. *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, *American Journal of Comparative Law*, *PLoS One*, *Commonwealth Law Bulletin*), and specialist ones (e.g. *American Business Law Journal*, *Industrial Law Journal*, *The European Convention on Human Rights Law Review*, *McGill International Journal of Sustainable Development Law and Policy*, *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law*). Staff have also reviewed monographs for publishers, including Cambridge University Press and Oñati Socio-Legal Series, and others act as series editors for Springer and Routledge.

Our staff also hold executive positions in several research organisations and professional bodies. The Head of PLS (STREVEENS) chairs the Association of Law Teachers and has also been Convenor of the Society of Legal Scholars' Legal Education Section (for the annual conference). Another staff member (CHOUKROUNE) co-chairs the New Delhi-based South Asia International Economic Law Network. Two staff (BEDFORD, WALSH E) sat on the SLSA's Executive Committee in the lead up to the proposed annual conference in March 2020, with one (BEDFORD) subsequently remaining on the Board as webmaster. The SLS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee includes PLS representation (CONNOLLY), and another staff member (HARRISON) has acted as the Honorary Secretary of the Association of Law Teachers.