

<b>Institution: Oxford Brookes University</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 18</b>
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><u>1.1 Unit Context and Strategic Goals.</u></p> <p>Since its first entry into the RAE/REF in 2001, research has become increasingly mainstream in the life of the School of Law, rising from 6 FTE (31%) in 2001 to 15.3 FTE (76%) in 2021. We have developed a strong and sustainable research environment that has ensured the achievement of a number of goals building on the strategic thinking set out in REF2014. We have achieved this in the context of remaining a relatively small group of researchers (our 15.3 FTE, our largest ever, comparing with the Law average in REF2014 of 23.2), supporting a full range of teaching programmes. We have achieved this through sustained focus on achieving five strategic goals.</p> <p>Firstly, generating synergies between researchers. We actively encourage, through both internal networking and targeted funding around events and support for joint grant applications, projects which collaboratively deliver high quality outcomes (2014 goal 2). As a result, we have developed five research groups within the School: Fundamental Rights and Equality (led by <b>Morano-Foadi</b>), Criminal Law and Criminal Justice (<b>Lloyd</b>), Critical Approaches to Law (<b>Kotsakis</b>), International Law (<b>Huang</b>) and Small Jurisdictions (<b>Edge</b>). Our topic focus brings together colleagues using a range of research methodologies including doctrinal, socio-legal, and critical legal approaches. It has also led to links, evidenced by joint research grants, publications and events, with disciplines elsewhere in Brookes: particularly with the Global Politics, Economy and Society Research Centre in the Department of Social Sciences (e.g. <b>Edge's</b> work on small democracies entered as an Impact Case Study (ICS) in UoA 19), the Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice (CDPRP) in the Business School (e.g. <b>Vickers</b> and <b>Morano-Foadi</b> separate joint work with Manfredi, entered in UoA17) and the cross-university Ethical AI Institute (led by <b>Bakalis</b>) (see further 1.2.1). We also encourage, and support, links outside the University (see further 4).</p> <p>Secondly, supporting effective research leadership. Our development of research leaders has emphasised transferrable expertise, without discouraging research leaders working on joint projects with other colleagues (for instance <b>Edge</b> and <b>John-Hopkins</b> work for the China Tribunal). This is reflected in our approach to mentoring, which recognises methodological fit as well as shared subject expertise (1.2.2); our division of senior leadership roles by generic functions such as proposal writing (<b>Edge</b>, see 3), open access and open data (<b>Edge</b>, 1.4), ethics review (<b>Morano-Foadi</b>, 1.5) and doctoral supervision (<b>Cooper</b> then <b>Morano-Foadi</b>, 1.2.3); and flexibility across the research leadership team (with the role of Research Lead for instance having been exercised at different times by <b>Vickers</b>, <b>Edge</b>, and <b>Cooper</b>).</p> <p>Thirdly, ensuring the sustainability of our research culture by enabling colleagues to reach their potential as researchers. This manifested in two related priorities. Firstly, targeted support for research by staff at every point in their research career (1.2.2), including staff development (2.2) (2014 goals 1 and 3). This has led to improved retention of research staff – while only 35% of our 2008 submission were entered in 2014, 77% of our 2014 entry are entered here. Secondly, a commitment to equality and diversity in appointments, support, promotion, and driving change of university policy around equality and research (2.4).</p> <p>Fourthly, developing our research culture by the integration of impact on our work. Ensuring our significant research achieves the optimal reach is an individual and collective goal recognised in</p>

discussion of individual research plans, allocation of research time, provision of research leave, support for stakeholder events and bespoke training (1.3).

Finally, developing our research culture by the transformation of our doctoral community. We redoubled our commitment to PhD level work, resulting in a 600% increase in completions from 2014 to now (2014 goal 5; see 2.3), in a context where University completions have largely remained static (IES section 3). This not only contributes to our research culture, and capacity to contribute to the discipline, but also provides crucial ways for our researchers to develop through gaining experience of supervision, and working closely with a scholar working directly in their field (1.2.3).

The School is supported in achieving these goals by being part of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, which provides central support in relation to research planning, proposal writing and research student administration and training; provides targeted strategic funding; and actively encourages collaboration across the Faculty through supporting interdisciplinary work and regularly showcasing projects with the potential to draw in other researchers.

### 1.2 Mechanisms for implementation.

Sustained university investment in this UoA, as per the Institutional Environmental Statement (IES sections 3 and 4), has allowed us to implement specific mechanisms to achieve these strategic goals. Our mechanisms for supporting research impact are discussed fully at 1.3 below.

#### 1.2.1. Facilitating joint work.

In accordance with our 2014 strategy, we have continued to develop strong collaborations within School research groups. For example, from the Fundamental Rights and Equality Group, **Edge** and **Vickers** worked together on the EHRC funded project detailed below; and in the Criminal Law and Criminal Justice group **Lloyd** and **Bakalis** co-edited a special issue on 'Dangerous Speech and Images' published in *Information and Communications Technology Law*.

We recognise the value of interdisciplinary work, giving it parity in all competitive processes for research support and in personal research planning, drawing on expertise across the university to give feedback on interdisciplinary outputs, and providing dedicated training on interdisciplinarity and cross-disciplinary working. Our supportive environment for developing interdisciplinary research has led to good connections across our Faculty, particularly with colleagues in Politics (as shown by collaborations by **Edge**, **John-Hopkins**, **Ganesh**, **Kotsakis** and **Lloyd**). Colleagues also carry out sole authored interdisciplinary work, for instance **Morrison's** work combining Middle East and Islamic studies with commercial and banking law, and **Ganesh's** work across law and political theory.

An example of collaborative work beyond our Faculty can be seen in our work with the CDPRP in the Business School. **Morano-Foadi** participated in an interdisciplinary project on Human Trafficking (the EC Directorate of Home Affairs funded COMBAT project); as well as an ongoing project, LAMINER, working with Lugosi (entered in UoA 17) on refugee integration into labour markets. **Vickers** has contributed to a number of interdisciplinary projects with CDPRP including the Advance HE commissioned study on Increasing the Diversity of Senior Leaders in Higher Education: The Role of Executive Search Firms.

As well as engaging with established expertise in the University, we have contributed to university development of new specialisms, notably the Ethical AI Institute, involving **Bakalis** and **John-Hopkins** working with colleagues from computing (UoA11). Other such University Research Networks in which law plays a key part are Migration and Refugees (**Morano-Foadi**), Children and Families (**Gordon-Bouvier**), Healthy Ageing & Care (**Vickers**), and Diversity, Inclusion & Gender (**Edge**). The School is also developing closer working with colleagues in Criminology, with **Alexandrescu** returned in this

UoA, and West (entered in UOA 28) planning interdisciplinary doctoral supervision with **Bakalis**. This new relationship will continue to be developed through joint delivery of new courses in Law and Criminology, underpinned by shared staff and a shared research culture.

We aimed to increase external research income (2014 goal 4), and we have secured external resources to support our research from a range of sources. Our research income strategy stressed joint applications with other UoAs, and other universities; and seeking funding as teams from research users such as the EHRC. This has led to seeking and securing research income becoming mainstream in the school, with substantially more colleagues being involved, joining an established core of senior research staff who regularly submit grant proposals (see 3 below).

#### 1.2.2 Targeted support across career stages.

Staff at all career stages benefit from generous time for research. Three year research plans are reviewed by experienced researchers, and made possible by substantial allocation of time for research activity. A tiered system of committing workload to research allows some flexibility in the pace of research, with the majority of researchers receiving 30%. The planning process allows staff to plan for longer projects which can be spread over a number of years (e.g. monographs by **John-Hopkins** and **D. O'Brien**) as well as to allow for grant applications (e.g. **Huang** and **Kotsakis**) and impact activity (e.g. events organised by **Bakalis**, **Edge** and **Vickers**) being an organic part of the research process.

The majority of staff projects have been possible using this allocated research time; additional time is available via QR funded University Central Research Funds (CRF), with **Cooper**, and **Vickers** benefiting from this competitive programme of support during the period, and **Huang** doing so in early 2021 (see IES). Additionally, as stated in our 2014 strategy, the School has introduced a system of research leave. Research leave has been awarded to 7 of our 16 research active staff during this REF cycle (**Bakalis**, **Edge**, **Vickers**, **John-Hopkins**, **Kotsakis**, **P. O'Brien** and **Morano-Foadi**). This leave has been used to develop original research, complete monograph scale projects, and maximise impact from original research. For example, after having published extensively from his PhD research, **John-Hopkins** used the additional time to take his research into new areas (e.g. cultural property within international criminal law). Taking his leave on return from paternity leave has also been of particular benefit in terms of compensating for time lost to research. **Edge** used research leave to undertake significant interdisciplinary impact activity in the Isle of Man, leading to his playing a key role in shaping the Manx constitutional debate (resulting in an ICS submitted to UoA19). **Bakalis** used sabbatical leave to reinvigorate her research in a rapidly moving area following a substantial administrative role (see 2.1). **Morano-Foadi** and **Kotsakis** used leave to complete monograph manuscripts.

Early career researchers (ECRs) are appointed a research mentor and receive individual financial support from Faculty QR in the first three years of their research careers (averaging £1,200 per year), typically spent on conference attendance, specialist training, research assistance or teaching relief. Our research planning processes recognise that ECRs need to be given time to develop their work in this period, regardless of short term progress. Our ECR community has also been the subject of specific investment. The University prioritised use of QR funds (per IES section 3) to appoint an ECR through the Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellow scheme (**Ganesh**), enhancing our International Law Group.

Mid-career staff are supported to develop more ambitious research plans through our Personal Research Planning (PRP) process, and in developing bids for Faculty and University funding and external funding proposals. Mid-career staff also join PhD research teams led by a senior researcher to gain experience of that aspect of research leadership. Our annual Performance and Development Review process, which integrates consideration of the PRP, is used to guide colleagues' strategic

thinking as they develop their profile into one of research leadership (e.g. recognition of **Bakalis'** research leadership in her appointment to her university-wide role in the Ethical AI Institute).

Senior staff benefit from peer mentoring in relation to their own research work, and the Faculty's wide experience in developing larger grant and consultancy projects. They have also benefited from continuing university investment in research areas in which they take a lead – for instance Fundamental Rights and Equality which has received a CRF Research Excellence Award (REA), and targeted doctoral studentship support.

### 1.2.3 Building our doctoral community.

The 2014 aim to increase the number of research students has been achieved, with a 600% increase in completions, and supervision now being undertaken by a majority of researchers (75%). The extensive support provided to research students is described under 'People' below. Our transformative growth in this area has been achieved by (i) investment of significant QR funds from the University and Faculty to provide fully-funded studentships (*Allen, Clayton-Hathway, Briescova, Hayes*); (ii) changes to our LLM in International Law programme, to facilitate smooth progression of LLM students on to our doctoral programme (e.g. *Romero-Moreno, Fullah*); (iii) subsequent teaching funded recruitment allowing us to appoint research active staff at all levels, including **P. O'Brien (2017)**, **Morrison (2018)**, and **Ganesh (2019)** to complement our existing research strength in international law (**Kotsakis, John-Hopkins, Huang**).

Our doctoral students have gone on to a wide range of careers. As well as moving into research active academic posts (e.g. *Clayton-Hathway*, entered with UoA17; *Romero-Moreno* entered with Hertfordshire UoA17), former students have moved into policy roles relevant to their projects (e.g. *Hayes*), careers such as financial compliance (*Borg Haviaras*), and the legal professions (e.g. *Brieskova, Alyseen*).

We do not award professional doctorates.

### 1.3 Facilitating impact

Our emphasis has been on supporting active researchers to capitalise on their research using Gauntlett's Stairway to Impact model, which emphasises the researcher's targeted dissemination of usable research findings to stakeholders. Our focus has been on shaping public policy by working with policy makers and NGOs, as detailed below and in the two ICS submitted. Support to maximise the impact of our research is available at School, Faculty and University level.

At School level, planning for impact occurs as part of the annual research planning process with the provision of time for impact related activity. For example, both **Bakalis** and **Cooper** were supported with time to coordinate the SLS submissions to the Law Commission consultations on Hate Crime, Land Registration, and Wills.

Faculty funding has also supported events aimed at key policy makers such as the conference hosted by **Morano-Foadi** in 2014 at the Council of Europe to disseminate her findings on European integration. Faculty support has made possible funding for individual impact enhancing events, such as seminars including **Morano-Foadi's** two symposia on migration in Europe, including participation from Christos Stylianides, EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management; and **Alexandrescu's** 2018 event on regulation of new psychoactive substances, aimed at health care professionals and policy makers. In addition, two Faculty wide Think Human Festivals (2018 and 2020) have promoted public engagement with the research of the Faculty (see 4).

At university level, impact has been facilitated through CRF Impact awards to support the organisation and hosting of events aimed at policy makers and other stakeholders, as well as support for research activity directed at non-academic audiences, such as **Morrison's** lectures at the Bar Association for Commerce, Finance and Industry, and Serle Court Chambers (Lincoln's Inn, London); **Gordon-Bouvier's** work with the Law Society's Family Law Committee (impact detailed below); **Shipman's** meetings with Equinet; **Edge's** series of workshops for the Manx Tynwald; and **Huang's** presentation on China's strategies in trade/investment negotiations at a British Academy roundtable.

From the wide range of impactful activity in the School, two ICSs have been selected. They illustrate the success of our approach to achieving impact: both draw on research by researchers who have developed their careers from early career onwards at Oxford Brookes; and in both cases the research and external activity has been supported through provision of time and funding to the researchers involved. Both ICSs demonstrate the benefits of collaboration in the generation of research ideas with others in the School and Faculty.

The early stages of **Vickers'** work on religion and belief equality were supported through the provision of research time to develop a new area of research, following the completion of an earlier research project in a different legal area. She was then provided with the support of the Faculty Grants Officers in securing AHRC research leave, which allowed a sabbatical year for the writing of her monograph *Religious Freedom, Religious Discrimination and the Workplace*. Her body of work on law and religion has also involved collaboration and co-authoring with **Edge**, who also has a research specialism in law and religion. This work led the EHRC to select, through competitive tender, **Vickers** and **Edge** to undertake a Review of equality and human rights law relating to religion or belief in 2015, which then fed into the EHRC policy on religion and belief equality, detailed in the impact case study. In addition, **Vickers** has also participated in a range of activities advising the EHRC, the European Commission and other stakeholders such as Humanists UK and the National Secular Society, as detailed in the case study. This project was supported by the award of additional research time from the University CRF as well as with financial support from the REA scheme to hold a seminar in the summer of 2019 for stakeholders and policy makers to consider reform of the law on discrimination against teachers in faith schools; follow up work planned for 2020 was delayed by the pandemic.

**Bakalis'** work on hate crime has also been developed with the support of research time, supplemented by research leave in 2014 to reinvigorate her research after a period in a significant administrative role. This enabled her to extend the scope of her research into on-line hate. **Bakalis's** early career work on hate speech was produced as part of an interdisciplinary project with Nash (History Professor, entered with UoA 28), and developed with input from mentoring support from within the school particularly with regard to equality law aspects of her project (**Vickers**), and external grant submissions (**Edge**). Her later work includes collaborations with colleagues at Sussex and QMUL and De Montfort. Her work has been used nationally by the Law Commission in its work on law reform for hate speech and online communications, and by NGOs such as the Suzy Lamplugh Trust. It has been taken up internationally by Europe's Racism and Intolerance Commission (ECRI), including a recent report written by her for the Council of Europe making recommendations to the Armenian government on changes to their legislation on hate speech. This international profile contributed to her 2020 selection as national reporter for the International Academy of Comparative Law on Topic XVII (hate speech). Financial support from the University's REA scheme has been provided for events such as the conference on hate crime held jointly by the NGO Equally Ours through which **Bakalis'** research has informed the development of their policy on hate crime.

#### 1.4 Open access and open data.

The School shares the University's commitment to open research, drawing on University expertise and facilities to contribute to our discipline. It has extended its range of publications provided through our open access repository (RADAR) to include book chapters and monographs as well as journal articles



as required by REF open access policy. In addition, data generated by **Edge** is available as an open data set on RADAR: Manx Customary Laws and Parr's Abstract. Law colleagues have attended bespoke training (delivered by **Edge**) in how to approach the emerging open data agenda.

### 1.5 Ethics procedures

The University, Faculty and School have well established research ethics procedures, through which research integrity is maintained. This process also considers legal obligations related to data protection and privacy issues. Within the School a lead is taken on research ethics by **Morano-Foadi**. All research projects, including PhD research, involving human participants receive consideration by the Ethics Committee and can only proceed with approval.

### 1.6 Future Strategy.

Our fundamental priorities remain those which have shaped our practices since 2014, informed by the strategic planning process around REF 2021.

Firstly, we will continue to support collaborative research projects which build on our distinctive research base (see IES section 2). As well as collaboration within our School, we will continue to develop links with colleagues in our Faculty (particularly in the fields of criminology and comparative constitutionalism), and the School of Business (particularly the CDPRP). The good fit between law expertise and a number of the university priority research themes (particularly Migration, Children and Families, Healthy Ageing, AI, and Diversity) will allow us to secure strategic support for this sort of collaboration. We will continue to support projects which draw on expertise outside of Oxford Brookes and internationally, through targeted use of event and travel funds.

Secondly, we will continue to expect our research leaders to bring their broader academic and leadership skills to bear on supporting the work of colleagues across the School. During the next REF period, a number of our current leaders – like **D O'Brien** this period – plan rebalancing between work and retirement. As discussed below, as senior staff have retired or moved on they have been replaced by excellent early career colleagues (see 2.1). Consistently replacing senior staff with ECRs, however, risks thinning our research leadership capacity. A priority will be to ensure strong succession, both by development of mid-career colleagues (see 1.2.2), and by ensuring that future recruitment includes senior staff.

Thirdly, we will continue to support colleagues across their career path. We will continue to provide targeted support in terms of time, including the successful sabbatical scheme established in the last cycle. Our ECRs will continue to benefit from University level training and development support through the new EXPLORE@Brookes programme (see IES section 3). We will continue to take a long term approach to ECRs, with our norm during the next REF period remaining that of permanent appointment to mixed teaching and research posts.

Fourthly, we will continue to develop PhD supervision as the norm for our active researchers, and our goal is to use strategic investment to increase the percentage of research active staff involved in supervision to 100%. Drawing on expertise elsewhere in Brookes, we will seek to increase the amount of collaborative research undertaken by academic staff and their doctoral students, both to allow us to develop new work, and as career development for doctoral students facing challenging recruitment environments.

Fifthly, we will maximise the impact and research benefit from resources available within the School and University. Recognising that the norm for our researchers will be mixed teaching/research roles, we will continue to maximise synergies between teaching and research; and use new posts made possible by increased teaching revenue to reinforce our research culture. We will seek Faculty and

University support for teaching programmes that enhance interdisciplinary aspects of our research culture, for instance our growing work with criminologists based in the Faculty.

Finally, we will bring more external resources into the School to support excellent research. The majority of our researchers' work falls within the remit of the AHRC, and we will continue to draw on success across the Faculty to support colleagues applying to that funder. Recognising, however, the range of stakeholders with an interest in our work, we will focus more tightly on individual applications to third sector and international funders; collaborative proposals led by one of our experienced grant holders utilising strong links with colleagues in other disciplines (particularly in the university priority areas noted above) and stakeholders involved in our existing impact work; and collaborative proposals within our developed research groups. Although the latter is happening informally, we will work as a community to identify suitable projects for development, and provide additional resources in terms of RA and other support to develop strong proposals.

## Section 2. People

### 2.1 Staffing strategy.

We have ensured continued appointment of research active staff, making appointments at various levels of seniority, including **Morrison** (Reader); **Gordon-Bouvier** and **Huang** (Senior Lecturers); **P. O'Brien** (appointed as Lecturer, and promoted to Senior Lecturer in the period); and **Ganesh** (Research Fellow). These very significant appointments have allowed us to gather strong researchers able to build on synergies with existing colleagues. This strategy has led to a sustained increase in major research publications, grant activity, and engagement with users of our research.

As a comparatively small law school, we have appointed staff to posts which combine research, teaching, and administration. This has contributed to the sustainability of our research culture – we continue to appoint to these posts on a permanent, rather than fixed term, basis, including ECR appointments. The mechanisms outlined above (1.2.2) have allowed colleagues to produce excellent research alongside their other commitments. This is demonstrated by the success of research active staff in developing their research careers while also holding significant administrative roles (e.g. **Edge** and **Vickers** as interim Heads of School; **Bakalis**, **Shipman** and **D. O'Brien** as Programme Leads, with leadership for the Law teaching programmes; and **Lloyd**, **Kotsakis**, **Huang** and **Morrison** as course coordinators for LLB, LLM, and GDL).

As our critical mass of active researchers in international law developed, however, we benefited from the commitment of £138,000 of CRF funding, allowing the appointment of a three-year Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellowship to the School (**Ganesh**). His focus on research has made an important contribution to this Group, through developing research ideas, collaborating with others through joint seminars with visiting speakers, and engaging in dialogue with researchers in other Departments within the Faculty

### 2.2 Staff-development

As noted above, as a School we have continued to invest substantially to support research staff at all career stages (1.2.2). Additionally, the University provides significant institutional level support and development for research careers (see further IES section 3). Three colleagues who have benefited from this process before 2014 have proceeded to develop successful research profiles at Oxford Brookes (**Kotsakis**, **Lloyd** and **John-Hopkins**); while a fourth is currently part-way through the programme (**Ganesh**). This University support is supplemented by significant Faculty-level support and investment through the provision of financial and mentoring support for early career colleagues. This includes training in research project management, provision of a research mentor, and access to

additional funding to support research expenses. Aspects of this training – for instance grant bidding, research student supervision, and project management – are open to all research active staff.

As noted above, we have worked to develop stronger support for staff beyond the early career stage. The School's Research Committee is chaired by the Research Lead (currently **Edge**, formerly **Vickers**), and is made up of our Professors and Readers. It provides mentoring, reviews research outputs and annual research plans, and develops and delivers the School research strategy. Research staff all have research mentors drawn from our research committee. Mentors provide advice and guidance in the early stages of developing a project, as well as acting as readers for outputs in advance of submission for publication. The Committee as a whole gives feedback on rolling three year plans, creating opportunities to discuss plans for developing research outputs, achieving impact and making grant applications.

As part of our implementation of the research strategy proposed in REF 2014, we introduced a QR funded system of research leave. A semester's research leave is awarded to up to two members of staff each year. Research leave has been awarded to ECRs as well as those more established in their careers, and in some cases has been used to help those who have discharged significant administrative roles to reinvigorate their research (see 2.2.2).

Our research support mechanisms are available equally to those undertaking impact related work, as well as research – with impact activities, for instance, being given parity with academic outputs in allocating research time. Additional central university funding is made available for impact related work, such as University REAs to support **Bakalis** to host a workshop on hate crime for the Law Commission, **Edge** to carry out a series of impact events in the Isle of Man, and **Vickers** to host a seminar on Religion and Faith Schools with stakeholders including teaching unions and faith groups. The university continues to commit resources to this area, for instance through **Edge's** follow-up REA to continue to work with the Manx legislature in 2021; and **Huang's** similar award to work with business actors in 2021.

Staff also have access to financial support for conference attendance and other research expenses. Funding for conference attendance of around £500 per head annually has allowed all researchers to attend conferences both nationally and internationally. Examples are numerous and include for **Kotsakis** to attend the Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences Annual Conference, 2016; **Lloyd** to attend the Study of Law, Culture and the Humanities at Stanford, 2017; and **Morrison** to attend the World Congress of Middle East Studies, 2018. Faculty funding for research activity is also available through a competitive bidding process, with many staff making successful bids during the period for funds for research related travel (e.g. **Edge**) and for research assistance to assist with research and grant applications (e.g. **Morano-Foadi**). During the Coronavirus pandemic we continued to support conference attendance and networking by conference fees for virtual conferences such as SLS 2020.

The School holds regular staff seminars, at which staff present on-going research, with seminars continuing online during the pandemic. This helps early career staff integrate into our research culture as well providing a supportive forum for other relatively inexperienced staff to develop their research ideas. An annual Faculty Research Conference creates further opportunities for staff to integrate into the Faculty, and explore opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborations.

The success of our policy of supporting research at all career stages can be seen in the promotion of **D. O'Brien** to Reader in 2014, **Morano-Foadi** to Professor in 2020, and the appointment of our doctoral student *Clayton-Hathway* as a permanent Research Fellow in Brookes' CDRP. Success in creating a more sustainable and nurturing research culture can also be seen in the significant reduction in the turnover of staff during the period of assessment (see 1.1). Moreover the limited turnover which has occurred (e.g. **Cooper's** appointment to a chair at Aston) has led to the appointment of new staff with



strong research profiles (e.g. **Gordon-Bouvier**, **P. O'Brien**) who have enabled us to sustain our research culture. Almost all research active staff work under permanent contracts, (with the exception of our centrally funded Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellow) and this provides a high level of stability.

### 2.3 Research students

The unit now has a strong doctoral student culture. This aspect of our research culture has seen a very strong upwards trajectory since the previous two assessment cycles, with no PhD completions in 2008, two in 2014, rising to 12 completions this period, with 13 continuing research students (see 1.2.3).

The University has invested extensively in research student training and skill development (IES section 3). Complementing this, the Faculty has developed a supportive strategy for research students, and provides extensive support and training for doctoral students. All PhD students are supervised by research active staff who have received tailored supervisor training, led by an experienced supervisor. Students have the opportunity to attend a suite of university research training events, and are provided with funding for conference attendance (typically £450 per student). A Faculty level Doctoral Training Programme, consisting of year round events, covers issues such as starting and sustaining a research project, research methods and critical approaches, and preparing for a viva, as well as a session dedicated to equality diversity and inclusion in research careers. In addition, an annual research student conference is held at which students present their research. Students are supported in international conference attendance by matched funding with external bodies (for example, *Hayes* in Brazil (Santander), *Allen* in the US (ICLRS)).

Support is also provided at School level by the Postgraduate Research Tutor (PGRT), **Morano-Foadi**, who runs the School induction and coordinates PhD students' progress. At transfer stage, research students give a presentation as part of the weekly staff seminar series at which they receive detailed feedback from academic staff on their work. At the end of each year, research students meet with the PGRT and another member of academic staff from outside of the supervision team to monitor and review progress.

We have a strategy of creating opportunities for our PhD students to develop the necessary experience to equip themselves for future academic careers. For instance, *Allen* has taken up teaching opportunities at undergraduate and master's level; *Clayton-Hathway* has co-authored with **Vickers** an article in the *Industrial Law Journal*; *Brieskova* has collaborated with **Morano-Foadi** on a range of activities around migration; *Haviaras* has helped to organize a major conference hosted by Brookes, and *Hayes* undertook a research visit to develop our ongoing research association between colleagues at Brookes working on law and religion and colleagues working on similar issues in Brazil.

### 2.4 Equality and Diversity

Advancing equality of opportunity for all researchers, and a concern for equality and diversity, is embedded into our University systems and structures as detailed in our Code of Practice, and the IES (section 3). The School has been assiduous in operationalising these values, but also in ensuring that we reflect on the outcomes of these systems – for instance reviewing our award of study leave to confirm that it was awarded equally between men and women; and ensuring our allocation of research time does not create inequalities in terms of protected characteristics.

Research career pathways are provided on an equal basis for part-time staff, with pro-rata research allowances provided to those on fractional appointments (e.g. **P. O'Brien**); and **D. O'Brien** has remained on the research committee whilst on a fractional post. Flexible retirement options have also been used to enable staff to continue with their research activity by combining partial retirement with

fractional appointments (**D. O'Brien, Shipman**). Support for early career staff is provided through our extensive support provision for ECRs detailed above (2.2.2).

Staff returning from maternity leave are able to work flexibly to enable phased return to work, helping to ensure research career continuity. Flexible working options are routinely taken up by staff with caring responsibilities. The university 'teaching constraints' scheme enables staff to organise their teaching week to fit around caring responsibilities, including elderly dependents. This is supplemented at School level by a willingness to accommodate working patterns, and switches to fractional appointments, to support colleagues. As a result, staff have been able to combine a high level of research activity with primary caregiving for children, and disabled child and elder care. The effectiveness of our supportive research environment is illustrated by both our Impact Case Studies being led by researchers who have had periods of maternity leave (seven periods in total) during previous REF cycles; and the inclusion in our entry of colleagues who have taken periods of leave linked to long term illness, as well as shorter periods of leave for three colleagues linked to becoming a parent.

Our preparations for the REF continued this emphasis on EDI. Of the 21 (by headcount) Law School staff, 76% (16) have significant responsibility for research; 78% of women, 75% of men. There were no significant differences for any of the other protected characteristics. The research committee that advised on the choice of outputs for submission comprised 50% women; 50% non-UK nationals, 25% non-EU/former EU nationals; and 25% British minority ethnic groups. During preparatory audits, equality impact assessments (EIA) have been undertaken, and action taken to ensure equal distribution in the distribution of outputs across this submission. For example, in deciding which outputs to submit, we have undertaken a review to ensure a spread of work from early career and more established researchers, to ensure a spread across genders, and to ensure that the impact of any disability is properly understood by the panel creating the entry.

Two particular initiatives demonstrate the commitment to these issues in the School research leadership. First, **Vickers** has drawn on her research on equality in research careers, to develop and deliver university-wide training on equality issues relating to the REF. Second, **Edge** has led a university wide initiative to develop the Oxford Brookes Protocol for Inclusive Conferences (<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/inclusive-conferences/protocol/>). This Protocol seeks to support academics in Brookes and elsewhere in developing conferences which are inclusive not only in relation to protected characteristics, but in relation to other issues impacting on inclusion such as class. It has been taken up beyond Brookes, for instance with the SLS Disability Statement of 2020 referring those organising events to the Protocol.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### 3.1 Income.

We have created a more sustainable research culture in terms of improved investment and infrastructure for research and impact, improved research facilities and an increase in research income. In addition to the support processes and financial investment outlined above for carrying out research and achieving impact, additional infrastructure and structures exist to support the generation of research income. This has been the subject of significant investment from the Faculty with funding provided for two Research Grant Officers (RGOs) to support the income generating work of the Departments. Equivalent support in terms of administrative support and mentoring is also available for those seeking research-informed knowledge exchange funding.

Our Faculty Grants Panel (FGP, chaired by **Edge**) pairs experienced grant writers as mentors for those writing bids from the very beginning of the grant writing process. Mentors read and provide advice on early drafts of bids, and final versions are commented on by an additional member of the FGP. ECRs are provided with intensive mentoring as part of this process. In addition to facilitating mentoring

support, the FGP and RGOs provide training opportunities within the Faculty, such as research grant writing training for PhD students and ECRs; workshops on seeking external fellowships; and workshops on planning proposals and managing resubmissions. The FGP have also organised visits from research funders such as Leverhulme and AHRC. Within the School, support for grant writing is provided through the workload planning process, as well as regular meetings for staff in the School who are planning to submit grants to share ideas and provide initial peer mentoring at the early stages of developing grant applications. In addition we have encouraged staff to develop experience by working as Co-I on grants external to Oxford Brookes, such as **Shipman's** Nuffield funded project with Essex.

The success of these mechanisms can be seen in the increase in our bidding rates. We have secured substantially more funding to support our research culture - drawing on research projects through internal and external collaboration, consultancy synergetic with our research expertise, and contract research. Examples include funding awarded by Nuffield (**Shipman**, £9,000), the European Commission (**Vickers** €10,000, and **Morano-Foadi** share in EC commission funded COMBAT project on human trafficking), the EHRC (**Edge and Vickers** £31,000), the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (**Vickers**, £3,000), the Royal Society (**Kotsakis** (£2,000); and the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange (**Huang** €15,000).

During this assessment period, a greater number of staff have been supported through our established infrastructure for generating research income, with a 50% increase in the number of colleagues submitting proposals for external funding. This has led to a 75% increase in the number of colleagues whose work has been supported by external funding (from 4 to 7), an important contribution to the sustainability of our research culture. We will build upon this success in the next cycle, as outlined in 1.6.

The University has begun to invest in the development of areas of cross university interdisciplinary strength in areas such as Gender and Diversity; Migration & Refugees; Children and Families; and Ethical AI (see IES section 2). As detailed in section 4 below, a substantial number of staff from the School are involved in research in these areas. An early success of this initiative can be seen in the creation of the Ethical AI Institute, which has successfully gained external funding from Research England of over £1,300,000, which has funded a quarter of **Bakalis's** time to focus on developing the work of the Institute across the Faculty.

Research funding awarded from JISC in the 2014 REF period for a project on "Embedding impact analysis" (£13,000) has been further developed into a university wide 'impact tracker' that has helped staff plan for, and track, the impact of their research among a wide range of research users, both academic and non-academic.

### 3.2 Infrastructure and facilities.

In contrast to the last REF period, as a result of sustained university infrastructure development (see IES section 4), all law researchers are now located in a single building. This includes dedicated office space for visiting scholars and PhD students. For small colloquia and research events we benefit from meeting spaces dedicated to the School. For larger events, the opening of the new John Henry Brookes Building in 2014 has created a significantly enhanced physical environment for research events such as the Faculty's Think Human festival, and School events such as **Morano-Foadi's** two conferences on migration, as well as for events designed to develop the impact of our research.

Brookes has substantial library holdings, and electronic subscriptions, relevant to our research. Research staff, including PhD students and academic visitors, further benefit from access to the Bodleian Libraries, which provide world-class library resources as well as substantial unique holdings. As scholars based in Oxford, we further benefit from involvement in research networks and

events held at Oxford University – **Vickers** for instance is a member of the Oxford Human Rights Hub, while **Morano-Foadi** is a Research Associate at the International Migration Institute.

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

##### 4.1. Collaboration.

As noted above, encouraging collaboration with specialists in other institutions, and strong engagement with users of research has been key to our strategy. We have supported this by targeted School funding, and supporting colleagues in securing competitive Faculty and University funding.

The School has encouraged collaborative projects with academic colleagues in other institutions. This is supported by the University's International Collaborative Research and Travel Awards Scheme. Support from this scheme has been given to **Kotsakis**, **Edge**, **Gordon-Bouvier**, and **Huang**. The effectiveness of this support can be seen in the award to **Huang** of funding from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation following the funding of her visit to Dr Nan Hsun Chang, at Soochow University, Taiwan to develop a joint research project. Funding from this scheme enabled **Edge** and **Gordon-Bouvier** to take up Visiting Fellowships (at Trinity College Dublin and Emory University USA); and **Kotsakis** to co-host a research conference jointly with Vito De Lucia from University of Tromso, Norway.

Our emphasis on encouraging collaborative work has resulted in a range of effective research collaborations. Examples include: **Edge's** involvement in a joint research report for a member of the Manx legislature with Jersey Law Commissioners and Queensland University published in October 2019, and his project with Pauline Ridge (ANU, Australia) on Challenges of Regulating Income Generation by Religions (CRIG-R), begun in 2020; **Gordon-Bouvier's** convening of workshops and symposia with colleagues at Manchester and Canterbury Christ Church University; and **Shipman's** joint research project, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, on *The Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Providing Access to Justice* with McGregor (Essex) and Murray (Bristol).

##### 4.2 Contribution to the economy and society.

The vitality and diversity of our research culture is demonstrated by the wide range of colleagues involved in developing impactful relationships with research users. In addition to the substantial impact detailed in our Unit's two ICS, and **Edge's** ICS for UoA 19, colleagues are involved in numerous other collaborations beyond academia. For example, as a member of the Law Society's Family Law Committee **Gordon-Bouvier** co-authored responses to proposed legislation (e.g. Divorce Dissolution and Separation Bill 2017-2019, Domestic Abuse Bill 2017-2019). She also contributed to the Society's response to the Law Commission's Surrogacy Law consultation. As part of her Nuffield Foundation project on National Human Rights Institutes, **Shipman** has hosted meetings with NHRIs, as well as with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, UNOCHR, and the Asia Pacific Forum Secretariat. **Morano-Foadi** has acted as an expert to the European Parliament's Committee on Constitutional Affairs. **Morano-Foadi** was also the legal expert on Oxford Brookes University's COMBAT project funded by the EC Directorate of Home Affairs under the Internal Security Fund targeting human trafficking, which involved the development of a preventive and remedial training toolkit for the hospitality and tourism industry. The project has had wide reaching impact through change of industry policy including the endorsement of the toolkit by the Institute of Hospitality in June 2017, and through its use by the Shiva Foundation which has based its *Stop Slavery Blueprint* for the hospitality industry on resources created as part of the COMBAT project. Both **Morano-Foadi** and **Vickers** have been speakers at the Academy of European Law, founded by the EU and which runs courses attended by judges, prosecutors, and lawyers from across Europe.

We are committed to public engagement activity to promote a greater public understanding of law in the context of the humanities and social sciences. To this end we have fully participated in the Faculty

festival Think Human, held in 2018 and 2020, facilitating and promoting our engagement with external communities. In 2018, **Bakalis** and **Lloyd** ran workshops for schools on cyberhate and sexting, aimed to engage students with intellectual questions about how the law can engage with the issues society faces on the internet. In 2020, **Lloyd** co-hosted with West (UoA 28) an event on consent and media depictions of consent aimed at secondary school pupils, **Alexandrescu** collaborated with charity Turning Point on an event around recovery from addiction; while **Edge** co-hosted with Munro (UoA 27) a public reading by poets from Scotland, Wales and the Isle of Man presenting their work in a range of languages, along with academic discussion of the broader connections between language, law, and constitutional structures.

Our responsiveness to national and international priorities is seen particularly in research and impact related work undertaken on migration, human trafficking, environmental law, ageing, and interdisciplinary work being developed on artificial intelligence.

#### 4.3 Contribution to the research base.

Staff contribute strongly to the process of research dissemination through journal editorship (e.g. **Nadj**, Queen Mary Human Rights Law Journal; **Kotsakis**, Assistant Editor of the Transnational Environmental Law Journal 2014-2018), editorial board membership (e.g. **Vickers**, Oxford Journal of Law and Religion; **Alexandrescu**, Drugs and Alcohol Today), and reviewing. Staff undertake reviewing for a wide range of journals including Legal Studies, Modern Law Review, Oxford Journal of Legal Studies, Industrial Law Journal, Public Law, Civil Justice Quarterly, Journal of African Law and the European Journal of Current Legal Issues; and reviewing for publishers such as Palgrave, Hart Publishing, Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press.

Associations with the wider academy include **Huang** as visiting professor at Soochow University, Taiwan and National Chengchi University Taiwan; **Morrison's** Erskine Fellowship at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand and 2020-2021 Academic Visitorship at the University of Cambridge; and **Morano-Foadi's** Research Associateship at the International Migration Institute, University of Oxford. Staff are regular contributors at conferences, and have frequently been invited as keynote speakers, for instance: **Edge** "An Anglo-American perspective on religion and the workplace", Observatoire Social International, Paris, October 2015.

The School makes a contribution to the sustainability of the discipline through engaging in the activities of learned societies such as the SLS with **Vickers** serving as Hon. Treasurer, **Morano-Foadi** (and previously **Cooper**) as subject section convenors, and **Bakalis** as author of the SLS response to the Law Commission on their consultation on hate crime. Other members of the school are active participants in the SLSA. **Edge**, **Vickers**, and **Bakalis** are members of the AHRC Peer Review College; and **Morano-Foadi** of the ESRC PRC. Staff have also been engaged as expert reviewers of funding bids such as **Edge** for the Nuffield Trust, and European Union MSCA Fellowships; **Morano-Foadi** for the European Science Foundation and British Academy; and **Shipman**, as reviewer for the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research.

In addition, the Law School has contributed to the development of the next generation of researchers by hosting, annually since 2010, the Law and Religion Scholars Network annual PhD student conference. This provides PhD students the opportunity to meet, present papers and receive feedback on their work from established scholars. In addition, the Faculty Doctoral Training programme, and our individualised support for PhD students to develop essential skills such as publication and teaching, as well as our creation of a nurturing environment for ECRs, are all evidence of our commitment to developing future academics.