

<b>Institution: The Open University</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: A04 Psychology, Psychiatry, Neuroscience</b>
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Context and structure</b></p> <p>Research in Psychology at the OU (Psychology@OU) has an established reputation within the discipline and long tradition of discipline-defining empirical, methodological and theoretical innovation. We excel at developing theory and methodology, and applying psychology in a variety of settings with substantial societal impact. We work across disciplines and beyond traditional academic boundaries. Our long-established research in social/cultural and applied cognitive psychology, and emerging focus on the psychology of health and well-being, are distinctive for being: theoretically informed but also rooted in everyday life; multi-perspectival and methodologically open; participatory and engaged with multiple publics. We seek to understand, transform and enrich the lives of individuals and communities through our commitment to social justice within our research.</p> <p>This is the first return to a research assessment exercise for this unit since 2001, with staff more recently having been returned to other REF units including Sociology, Computing, and History. Two staff members are being returned to other units on this occasion (Byford to D28; Taylor to C20). The creation of a School of Psychology and Counselling in 2016 - allied to the implementation of the Stern review of research - provided new impetus around the organisation and development of research in psychology. This has led to rapid and continuing investment and growth. Further, in 2019 a decision was made to invest significantly in research, postgraduate teaching and knowledge-exchange capacity in the School (£1.6M over 3 years) with the creation of a new research centre and recruitment of additional academic and administrative staff (see 2.1).</p> <p>The School of Psychology and Counselling is located within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Our research is currently organised through three research groups within the School: Culture and Social Psychology Group (CuSP); Forensic Cognition Research Group (FCRG), and Psychology of Health and Well-being (PHeW). At Faculty and Institution level, psychology staff also play a central role in a number of interdisciplinary groupings including the Faculty Harm and Evidence Research Collaborative, and the Gender, Intimacies and Sexuality and Justice, Borders &amp; Rights streams of the University Citizenship and Governance Strategic Research Area, as well as the University Centre for Policing Research and Learning. The boundaries within and between groupings are somewhat flexible and some staff are members of more than one group. The School and wider Faculty/Institution groupings provide an intellectual home for staff within Psychology@OU and provide considerable resource for their research. Further, at the point of submission, School research is being brought together and realigned within a new Psychology and Counselling Research Centre that will further support the development of our interdisciplinary, open and engaged research in the future.</p> <p><b>1.1.1 Culture and Social Psychology Group (CuSP)</b></p> <p><b>Members:</b> Andreouli; Byford; Capdevila; Clarke; Crafter; Dixon; Jones; Kaposi; Langdrige; Lazard; Mahendran; Motzkau; Stenner; Taylor</p> <p>The Culture and Social Psychology Research Group (CuSP) is founded on the notion that social psychology is itself 'on the cusp' of emergence rather than a settled discipline, with a particular substantive focus on occasions of social transition, personal transformation and emergent and contested cultural and political issues. Researchers engage with and develop social psychology beyond the classic experimental model, grappling with dialogical (<b>Mahendran</b>), discursive and narrative psychology (<b>Andreouli</b>, Byford, <b>Dixon</b>, <b>Kaposi</b>, Taylor), critical psychology (<b>Clarke</b>,</p>

**Jones, Motzkau**), feminist psychology (**Capdevila, Lazard**), social identities and representations (**Andreouli, Dixon**), socio-cultural (**Crafter, Stenner**) and hermeneutic-phenomenological psychology (**Langdridge**), each of which gives a new centrality to the concept of *culture* as core to human experience and development. CuSP research provides new empirical insight into real-world issues in a changing society, including changing developmental (**Crafter**), gendered (**Capdevila, Lazard**), religious (**Dixon**), sexual (**Langdridge**), professional (**Motzkau, Taylor**) and political (**Andreouli, Kaposi, Mahendran, Stenner**) subjectivities in concrete contexts.

CuSP meets monthly to discuss work in progress and grant applications and to develop the group's research agenda. It also organises an active programme of public events, including a regular annual lecture series in London (featuring e.g. Prof Zittoun as keynote last year). CuSP is also a collaborator with the Cultural Psychology Network (CuPsyNet), designed to support PhD students undertaking research in sociocultural psychology in Europe.

CuSP research is spearheading a distinctive and innovative approach to the psychological as materially embodied, culturally mediated, and embedded in social practices. CuSP research is providing new empirical insight into processes of gendered and political subjectivity, the navigation of boundaries (e.g. identities of place, gender, sexuality), emotional dynamics and affective relationships (including group conflicts), contemporary governance through self (work, media, migration) and the power dynamics and phenomenology of health concerns, including real-world applications and impacts. See, for instance, the special issue on Brexit in *J. of Community and Applied Psychology* (**Andreouli, Kaposi, Stenner**, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2390> and <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2375>). A number of members are also internationally recognised for their methodological expertise and innovation (**Langdridge; Stenner; Taylor**) and for their contributions to psychosocial theory (**Dixon; Jones; Stenner**).

### 1.1.2 Forensic Cognition Research Group (FCRG)

**Members:** Briggs; Curley; Frumkin; Harrison; Havard; Pike; Strathie; Turner; Walkington

The Forensic Cognition Research Group (FCRG) brings together psychological researchers interested in all aspects of forensic and cognitive psychology, but with a particular focus on addressing applied issues in collaboration with practitioners from a range of backgrounds. The group collaborates with psychologists from other universities and Open University researchers from many disciplines (from computer science to creative writing). Rather than seeing translation to practice as the end point of the research process, the group places collaboration with practitioners (such as policing personnel, legal professionals and representatives from transport agencies and charities) at the heart of all activity and at all stages of the research process. This approach leads not only to innovative and exciting questions and methods, but also to projects that impact technological development, practice and government policy. See, for example, **Briggs'** impact case study on distraction and driver behaviour.

Psychology@OU staff from the Forensic Cognition Research Group also play a central role in the University-wide *Centre for Policing Research and Learning* (CPRL), with the involvement of 9 unit members (**Briggs; Curley; Frumkin; Harrison; Havard; Pike; Strathie; Turner, Walkington**), including **Pike** serving as Director of Research for the Centre. This involves staff leading a large number of successful and impactful research projects, including on:

- Policing practice, citizen enquiry and solving crime with social media (**Havard and Pike**), conducted in collaboration with Greater Manchester Police and Gwent Police.
- Fear of terrorism in the UK (**Frumkin**) conducted in collaboration with Greater Manchester Police.
- Improving investigations through utilising technology, community and psychology (**Harrison; Havard; Pike; Walkington**) with the National Crime Agency.

- Tactics for handling Covert Human Intelligence Sources (**Pike**), using external funding for a Senior Practitioner Fellow from the National Crime Agency.

### 1.1.3 Psychology of Health and Well-being (PHeW)

**Members:** Clarke; Di Malta; Frumkin; Harrison; Jones; Kaposi; Langdridge; McGrath; Moller; Pike; Vossler

The Psychology of Health and Wellbeing group emerged following recent expansion (notably, the recruitment of **Clarke**, **Di Malta**, **Jones** and **McGrath** since 2018) and builds on existing expertise in psychotherapeutic outcome and process research (**Moller**; **Vossler**) and critical mental health (**Langdridge**, and previously also Barker). This represents a deliberate strategy of intellectual development within the School of Psychology and Counselling involving a synergy between a growing teaching area and a substantive research focus. It addresses three distinct yet interlinked themes:

- Counselling and psychotherapy, with particular interest in therapy outcomes as well as processes within the therapy room (**Di Malta**; **Moller**; **Vossler**);
- Critical approaches to mental health and health psychology, with a focus on the dynamics of individual and social-political forces in the formation of (mental) health (**Clarke**; **Jones**; **Kaposi**; **Langdridge**; **McGrath**);
- Wellbeing in contexts, concerned with the psychology of health arising from different working environments, communities and life events (**Frumkin**; **Harrison**; **Langdridge**; **Moller**; **Pike**).

The Group has a strong professional grounding as well as theoretical interest in practice and practices. Members, several of whom are qualified practitioners (**Clarke**; **Jones**; **Kaposi**; **Langdridge**; **Moller**; **Vossler**), are exploring alternative ways of engaging with individual, community and political practices related to health and wellbeing. The clinical-academic interface is therefore central to the work of this group.

### 1.2 Interdisciplinary, open and engaged research

Interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary, research is a strong thread throughout the unit. Researchers work with colleagues across a wide range of disciplines including notably: computing, history, sociology, business, social work and social policy. This is supported by Faculty and Institution research structures, with long-standing relationships between the three School research groups and academics and practitioners from other disciplines. Open and engaged research is central to the OU more generally and actively embraced within the unit (see 3.2). All publications are made available through ORO, the OU publication repository, and all data are deposited in line with UKRI standards. Furthermore, our research is disseminated through our very large-scale teaching and extensive public engagement activity (see 4.5). The co-production of research with research users (e.g. practitioners, NGOs, activists, public) through citizen science is also central to much of our work.

The *Centre for Policing Research and Learning* (CPRL) is an excellent – and not singular – example of our strategic approach to interdisciplinary, open and engaged research. It was formed in 2014, using funding from the College of Policing, by **Pike** and Hartley (Prof. of Public Leadership, OU Business School) to establish a partnership between the OU and 5 UK Police forces/agencies. Since then it has expanded to include formal partnerships with 20 police agencies, which provide financial support to the Centre through direct funding, and it works with more than 60 academics from every faculty/institute at the OU. Since 2014, it has generated more than £6.3M in external income. The Centre's signature approach is described as "research into practice and practice into research", with it focused on the co-production of research and impact in order to fulfil a mission to create and use knowledge to improve policing for the good of society. It is based on an approach to research, learning and knowledge into practice which

values the contributions which can be made by both academics and practitioners, but particularly by teams comprised of both.

### 1.3 Research ethics and integrity

Ethical research with integrity is supported through required scrutiny of all research by the University Human Research Ethics Committee, which is Chaired by a member of the Psychology@OU unit (**Hewson**). **Hewson** also conducts regular sessions on ethics and research integrity within the School, including most recently multiple sessions on conducting ethical research online, her particular specialism having led the working group producing the guidelines on online research for the BPS. Our focus on co-production of knowledge further supports an ethical approach to knowledge generation with the involvement of users, NGOs etc. central to many programmes of work (e.g. **Crafter's** work with child migrants; **Dixon's** work with religious communities in Belfast; **Langdridge's** work on sexuality). Legal and professional standards are also assured through the way we engage in the co-production of knowledge with professional bodies (e.g. British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy). The reproducibility crisis within psychology has also been widely discussed within the unit and continues to be addressed through both critical engagement with the nature of how knowledge is being produced (and methodological limits therein), along with a focused approach to engaged research with communities beyond the traditional undergraduate student body. To this end, Psychology@OU staff have made a significant contribution to debates through publication output addressing the history and philosophy of the discipline.

### 1.4 Research and impact strategy

Our strategy is to build on our established history in psychological research whilst also investing heavily in Psychology@OU research capacity. That is, we are submitting our innovative, internationally excellent, and highly interdisciplinary work for review in REF2021 whilst seeking to build substantial further capacity in the three sub-disciplinary areas outlined above for future REF exercises.

We have developed an ongoing **research strategy** which involves:

- Building on the established strengths in social psychology and applied cognitive psychology with expansion in the psychology of health and wellbeing. We aim to sustain research communities within each area that are internationally recognised for their distinctive contribution to the discipline.
- Expanding and promoting existing theoretical and methodological expertise to ensure Psychology@OU is recognised globally as a world-leading centre for innovation and development.
- Improving the sustainability of research through increased (high quality) bidding activity, and therefore income generation, as well as diversification of income sources. We aim for all research active staff to be bidding regularly, and for a substantial body of research to be supported by external funding, by the next REF exercise.
- Increasing quantity and quality of publication output through enhanced mentoring and strategic support activity to ensure that all staff with research in their contract produce internationally excellent REF outputs, proportionate to career stage. Quality is defined using REF criteria, mindful of the OU commitment to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).
- Ongoing development of our PG Research Student culture, supporting student integration, building capacity, and improving student diversity, support and completion.

Our **impact strategy** is focused on:

- Supporting open and engaged research focused on the co-production of knowledge in theory, practice, and public engagement through mentoring and targeted investment.

- Investing and growing further our REF impact activity, ensuring research projects are planned with impact activity early in the process and that potential impact cases are identified for support and investment early in the next REF cycle.
- Continuing to invest in the large-scale opportunities for public engagement with our research through links with the BBC, use of OpenLearn, FutureLearn and other OU massive open online platforms.
- Continuing to support the close synergy of research and teaching. Teaching at the OU has the capacity to reach vast numbers of people: this includes the very large body of students (see 4.5) and also other academics through our co-published course materials, providing a valuable opportunity to communicate research to a variety of publics.
- Working closely with users through the co-production of knowledge to inform policy and practice in health and wellbeing, policing and wider societal issues (e.g. prejudice and inequalities). Our aim is to act as a leading provider of expertise for policy and practice nationally and internationally on the research topics we cover.

In order to achieve these strategic objectives, we put in place the following **action plan**, beginning 2018/19:

High-level structure and staffing:

- Establishment of a Psychology and Counselling Research Centre to facilitate and support all psychology research related activities within the School and University, and increase the visibility of research to both internal and external stakeholders. This involves an initial substantial Faculty investment of £1.6M (over 3 years) in research, postgraduate teaching and knowledge-exchange for Psychology@OU. The Centre will be publicly launched July 2021.
- Development of a financial and workload support plan to enhance research activity and build research impact cases, including specific support for impact cases that may be submitted for REF exercises beyond REF2021.
- Additional recruitment of research active staff. To date, we have recruited an additional professor with research interests complementary to existing expertise (Hegarty, formerly at Surrey), and three further lecturers all of whom have research interests aligned to the three research groupings. We have also recruited additional staff to support research as detailed in 2.1. There is also resource for recruitment of a further lecturer/senior lecturer in 2021/22 and two postdocs/research fellows.
- Recruitment of all new research active staff includes key REF criteria.
- Production of an accurate and transparent database of all research and scholarship within the School, including publications, bidding activity, impact activity and postgraduate student information.

Culture and practice:

- Continuing to run a regular cycle of research days to support the research culture, formulate strategy, and engage in the interchange of knowledge and ideas.
- Provision of targeted sessions with external speakers in support of REF research activity (e.g. on bidding, publication, impact strategy).
- Dedicated research mentoring (by senior researcher) for each staff member and associated strategy for individual research development that links with the annual Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA) process and is monitored by the School Management Team.
- Further development and promotion of the School External Engagement and Social Media Strategy to improve awareness of OU research to a wide variety of stakeholders.
- Further support for key REF research activities, notably publication output and bidding activity, through the strategic provision of dedicated blocks of sabbatical leave, with financial support as necessary.



Postgraduate student support:

- Continuing to further embed the psychology pathway in the Grand Union Doctoral Training Programme (in conjunction with Oxford University), within Psychology@OU research more broadly.
- Further integration of PhD students into Psychology@OU research culture to ensure their equal involvement in all activities, mindful of the need to attend closely to issues of diversity and how that may impact such involvement.
- Further promotion of PhD student research to the wider undergraduate student body and also wider society via our extensive media and social media channels.
- Enhanced support for PhD student impact activity through targeted training and support early within the PhD process.

Action plan for impact:

The impact cases we are returning for review in this REF exercise emerge from research within each of the Psychology@OU research groupings. **Briggs'** longstanding research on the dangers of hands-free phone use when driving has been supported by the Forensic Cognition Research Group. **Harrison's** work on the health effects of long-term, low-level exposure to organophosphates forms part of the wider interest in the psychology of health and well-being, which is now formally part of the PHeW group. And, finally, **Dixon's** work on intergroup contact and segregation in Belfast demonstrates the bringing together of sophisticated theory and innovative methods with an important practical concern that is a focus of the CuSP grouping.

The development of Impact Case Studies for REF2021 has been underpinned in a number of more specific ways: (1) Case Study leads have been given access to OU funding to support case development activity; (2) Case Study leads have also been given work-loaded time to devote to the development of their Case Studies; (3) **Langdridge** and **Dixon** have had regular individual and collective meetings with Case Study leads, mainly focused on closing the gap between impact-related activity and the securing of evidence; (4) Feedback and support at Faculty level for impact activity through expert surgeries and individual advice. This activity will continue post-REF2021 with the implementation of the longer-term REF strategy, including specific support and investment (from the School, Faculty and University) for ongoing impact activity and case study development. In particular, future impact activity will be enhanced by ensuring pathways to impact are well-planned within research bids, and then supported in their execution by drawing upon the extensive School, Faculty and Institution level support for open and engaged research.

## 2. People

### 2.1 Staffing strategy and staff development

Psychology@OU has a longstanding record of supporting the careers of research active staff, with particular efforts made to encourage growth in capacity since REF2014. Twenty-six staff are being returned in this exercise to this unit. There has been substantial investment in new staff within the School of Psychology and Counselling since the last REF exercise, with the appointment of 3 lecturers early in the REF cycle (**Andreouli; Kaposi; Lazard**) and 5 new lecturers (**Clarke; Curley; Di Malta; McGrath; Strathie**: 3 ECR) and 3 senior lecturers (**Crafter; Frumkin; Jones**) within the last 2 years. In addition, in 2019/20 we recruited a new professor, 3 new lecturers, a research centre manager, research centre administrator, and research technician, as part of a strategic plan to build further research capacity within the School of Psychology. A PDRA has also been appointed (3 years) to support grant bidding and impact activity during this REF period. Only 3 research active academics have left the School (**Barker; Brace; Thirkettle**), Barker to pursue a career as a writer, Brace retired, and Thirkettle being the

only member of staff moving to another institution, a sign of the very positive environment for research provided within Psychology@OU.

Career progression is highly valued within Psychology@OU, with 9 lecturers promoted to senior lecturer (**Andreouli; Briggs; Harrison; Havard, Hewson; Kaposi; Lazard, Mahendran; Turner**) and two senior lecturers promoted to professor (**Crafter; Langdrige**) since 2014. The unit includes a high proportion of women academics (N=16, 62%), at all career stages from lecturer to professor. The OU provides a supportive and productive environment for enhancing staff capacity. All staff are provided with a research mentor on appointment (a senior researcher), and another staff member who supports them through their probationary period. Staff members produce a research and scholarship plan that includes both short-term and longer-term goals, in liaison with their research mentor. Mentoring meetings are held a minimum of once per term, where research strategy is discussed and any obstacles or challenges addressed. In the annual career development and staff appraisal process, staff members are encouraged to review and plan both their immediate (next year) and longer-term goals, including discussion of their research and scholarship plan. Junior staff act as co-supervisors in PhD supervision teams - supported by an OU training scheme - to help prepare them and ensure they provide the best experience for our PhD students.

Research active staff are allocated one research day per week plus two months annual sabbatical leave (known as 'study leave') that is usually taken in blocks but may also be used throughout the year. This equates to approximately a third of their workload being dedicated to research. In addition, where necessary, individual arrangements are made with line managers to carry over research leave into a following year to ensure that staff are compensated for exceptional teaching or administrative demands. Staff are also supported on a case-by-case manner with additional support (e.g. teaching cover). This has been used, for instance, to support staff leading major grant projects. Clinical staff are further supported through the provision of time within their workload to engage in practice and supervision, along with support for their continuing professional development. There is a transparent workload model in operation throughout the School and all staff engage in a pre-Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA) discussion of research, teaching and administrative aims and ambitions with respect to planning workload. The substantial growth in staff within the School of Psychology, including the recruitment of 13 new permanent Staff Tutors (most on a teaching and scholarship career pathway) in this REF period to support teaching (now 25 in total), has enabled the Head of School to maximise opportunities for staff research aims and objectives to be met.

### 2.1.1 Equality and diversity

Through the active drive to create a supportive academic community that recognises how equality and diversity enhance research activity and outcomes, equality and diversity issues are attended to within all formal processes. The School supports flexible working arrangements for all staff, including those who return from sick or parental leave, with many staff able to work the majority of time from home. This is particularly helpful for people with disabilities and caring responsibilities. Meetings are also scheduled to avoid times that may clash with parental responsibilities and video conferencing was in widespread use before the pandemic. Career pathways - including promotion opportunities - are equivalent for full and part-time staff, with all promotion panels comprised of a diverse body of staff, that have undergone diversity training, and who conduct regular audits to ensure there is no systematic bias in favour or against staff with particular protected characteristics. Management of research assistants is similarly focused on providing a supportive working environment and facilitating successful career development opportunities. All School and Faculty funding decisions are undertaken by panels who attend to both panel composition and recipient with respect to protected characteristics to ensure there is no bias, with all such decisions conducted to published criteria. Additionally, all formal administrative and leadership roles (e.g. Director of Research) are allocated on the basis of explicit appointment procedures to ensure equality of opportunity. More junior staff are also mentored and encouraged to apply for such opportunities in line with their career plans and

aspirations. The consistent focus at the OU on providing a supportive academic environment that enhances staff well-being has been particularly appreciated during the pandemic.

Our REF submission has been chaired by **Langdridge** supported by a panel of 3 members (**Capdevila/Andreouli, Dixon, Havard**), whose appointment has been ratified by both the Faculty and University (2 female, 2 male). All panel members completed Equality and Diversity training required as per the OU CoP and attended numerous workshops and briefing events. There is a workload allowance for panel members and all formal meetings are officially minuted. All decisions about outputs have been determined by formal meetings of the panel with input from an external assessor and represent work from early career and professorial staff in similar volumes. Impact case study assessment (and support) has been conducted both by the panel and with the assistance of external assessors, Faculty and Institutional assessment. In line with the OU CoP all requests for reductions in output on the basis of special circumstances were considered independently of the unit REF panel by the University Equality and Diversity Panel.

### 2.1.2 Future staffing strategy

Our future strategy on staffing is to continue to enhance research support through: (i) continued investment in the new Research Centre; (ii) replacement of staff at an equivalent level, mindful of the need to increase diversity; (iii) managing staff workload, particularly sabbatical leave, to ensure maximum opportunity for research and impact activity; (iv) greater focus on auditing outcomes from investment in time and resource to ensure any blocks to effective working are identified early; (v) development of a support network, facilitated by senior researchers, for early career and new staff – through a virtual networking facility – to support their research activity and plans. At Faculty level, there has also been the further development of research support including employment of additional senior administrative staff (including specialists in external engagement, impact and business relationships), and provision of bid writing, impact development, knowledge exchange, and public engagement sessions, and an enhanced peer review system for research bidding.

### 2.2 Research students

Our postgraduate research community is a very important part of our research environment, currently comprising 29 doctoral students, 4 of whom are full-time and 25 part-time. In the census period, 15 students have completed PhDs. Part-time students outnumber full-time students, reflecting the University's mission to reach those who find campus-based, full-time study challenging. This tends to result in longer time periods for completion, especially as many are mature students, have jobs, health concerns/disabilities and/or caring responsibilities. Staff and structures provide support for students needing to take breaks from their studies, ensuring this very diverse student body have the maximum opportunity to complete their awards.

Students have been funded through a variety of means including grant income, employer funding, research centre and faculty bursaries, in addition to self-funded students. We have also secured support through charitable donations. Recently, for instance, **Mahendran** received a Rachel Webb Political Psychology PhD studentship to fund a student, supported by the International Society of Political Psychology (from 2018-22). We also attract visiting PhD students within Psychology@OU. In 2019-20, for instance, we had two visiting PhD students from ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon and one from the Department of Education at Bogazici University (both visiting to work with CuSP members). In 2019 Psychology@OU successfully secured a joint ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership pathway with the University of Oxford. Psychology@OU hosts the applied and critical social psychology element of the pathway because of its outstanding international leadership in developing, drawing attention to, and challenging, social injustices in areas such as gender, race, immigration, poverty and sexuality.

PhD applicants are recruited through open application and interviews by small panels of diversity-trained staff to ensure fair selection. We are distinctive in taking into account an



applicant's professional and life experience rather than necessarily insisting on an MSc or first-class BSc as a prerequisite, and we encourage part-time students. This inclusive approach benefits students with protected characteristics and those from non-traditional educational backgrounds. PhD students' work and support is overseen at the Faculty level by the Director of Research Degrees and within the School by the PG Convenor (**Clarke**). The role includes the organisation of admissions, student support, and development of a research culture within Psychology@OU that centrally involves PhD students.

OU research students benefit from excellent facilities and development tools. Our research library has extensive online facilities to support psychological research and is particularly adept at supporting students studying at a distance, including 24-hour support from librarians, while also offering physical access to its print collection (see also 3.2). Our PhD students receive generous financial support; £1000 p.a. for full-time students, £500 part-time, and may bid for further Faculty funding. OU postgraduate students can also bid for up to £1250 p.a from the international Santander Universities Network to facilitate exchange and interaction with national and international universities. Full-time students are allocated workspace and a networked laptop.

All research students are expected to acquire skills appropriate for PhD graduates, including high-level skills in methodology for psychology students. These are delivered via a rigorous induction process, regular training sessions and sophisticated online facilities. A comprehensive and systematic Research Career Development Programme is provided for all research students from induction to viva preparation, complemented by research methods training at generic and personal level. Face-to-face and online careers services provide personalised advice. Teaching opportunities are offered to those interested in a career in higher education (including lecturing via Adobe Connect). A web portal provides access to a virtual environment built to the OU's world-leading standards, providing access to skills development opportunities, news, careers services, supervision, library, social media and administrative resources, and ensuring parity of experience to part-time and full-time research students regardless of their physical location. Because of the quality and flexibility of our existing online provision, it has proved feasible to adapt our research support very effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our infrastructure for PhD research meets or exceeds the requirements of all research councils and Quality Assurance Agency standards. Each student has at least two supervisors. Progress and training are monitored through six-monthly formal progress reports, with initial MPhil registration upgraded to PhD following satisfactory performance in a presentation and upgrade viva assessed independently of the supervision team by two internal examiners. Progress and probationary reports are scrutinised and approved by the Faculty Director of Research Degrees. The University's strict quality assurance standards prohibit the final examination of a student by staff who have been involved at any stage of a candidate's supervision. An Exam Panel Chair with extensive supervisory and examination experience is appointed and examination teams need to have collectively examined at least five PhDs.

The further expansion of support for research students is also foregrounded in the rationale of the Psychology and Counselling Research Centre. PhD students continue to be an integral part of Psychology@OU research culture and are additionally supported through active involvement in Research Groups. PhD students in the CuSP research group are involved in the Europe-wide CuPsyNet framework of cultural psychology, which has yearly conferences across Europe. An OU PhD student was a CuSP delegate at the most recent conference in Neuchatel and the next CuPsyNet meeting is being organised by the OU. We run regular data analysis workshops for all students and also a one-day PhD conference, which includes talks from Psychology@OU staff and panels of PhD presentations and discussion.

Our training programme equips our students for a successful career beyond the PhD. Many graduates now pursue academic and professional practice careers in the UK and abroad. This includes, for instance, a recent PhD now undertaking a research fellowship at the University of

Alberta, Canada, and another being employed within the School in the PDRA role supporting grant bidding and impact activity.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### 3.1 Income

Whilst income within Psychology@OU has been modest in comparison with discipline norms, income figures for the unit have been consistently improving, with some significant recent success. Psychology@OU staff have also made substantial contributions as Co-Is to several major interdisciplinary projects for which the income has been reported to other UOAs. It is worth noting that the proportionate share of these grants that relate to the Psychology Co-Is amounts to approximately as much again as the income formally attributed to Psychology@OU in this REF, and reflects the strong commitment of the UOA to interdisciplinary research, and its integral role within wider Open University research.

Internal funding to support research is available from multiple sources. All staff are provided with an automatic annual allowance of £500 for research expenses. In addition, staff can apply for an additional £1000 per annum from the School of Psychology research budget (totalling £36,000 per annum). This is mainly used for conference attendance, supporting events (e.g. research days, visiting speakers), and other incidental research expenses. Staff also have access to funds from the Faculty Strategic Research Investment Fund (totalling approx. £85,000 per annum) in support of grant bidding activity, impact activity and production of high-quality outputs. Staff from Psychology@OU have received £51,439 from this fund since 2016 plus a further £26,000 in 2019/20 to purchase a mobile eye tracker. Additionally, separate central university support has been provided for REF preparations since 2018, with a total of £95,000 allocated to the A4 unit. Finally, staff may also be linked to a university strategic or priority research area, which provide further financial investment in research and access HE impact funding. Psychology@OU staff have benefitted from substantial support from all these bodies during this REF period.

In the past four years in particular, Psychology@OU has been focussed on increasing our external grant income. This has necessarily been a staged process, which will take some time to come to full fruition but meanwhile a very strong body of world-leading work (e.g. in theory and methodology) has been conducted with relatively modest external financial support. We began our strategy for improved income by building networks and support systems for bidding, and this was followed by a notable increase in bidding spread across the staff group. We are also increasing the diversity of funders being targeted, with recent bidding success from UKRI, NiHR, EU, ISRF and BA. At present, all funding bids must be reviewed by two senior researchers before being submitted. Building funding applications forms a central part in the annual staff appraisal process, with experienced mentors supporting junior colleagues in bidding. We have invited speakers to our research days to build expertise in bidding, including RCUK grant panel members. In addition, bids are discussed within research groups and other institutional research structures as a standard activity to improve quality in advance of submission. Investment in the new Research Centre, with associated dedicated staffing, will also serve to support our ambition to substantially grow external income.

Notable funded projects across all three research groupings in this REF cycle include:

Within the CUSP group:

- **Crafter** is PI on a large £812,417 ESRC funded project 'Between protection and exclusion: Separated child migrants' care relationships and caring practices (CCoM)',
- **Dixon** was PI on the £392,138 ESRC funded project (2015-18) 'The Belfast Mobility Project: Intergroup contact, segregation and the time-geography of sectarian relations in Belfast', and PI on a UKIERI funded project (£29,000) on 'Intergroup contact and collective action in educational settings in India' (2014 - 2016).

- **Andreouli, Stenner and Kaposi**, in association with the LSE, ran a BPS funded seminar series (£2,994) on 'Post-Brexit politics: a social psychological interrogation of community and citizenship'.

Within the FCRG group:

- **Pike** is Co-I (with additional input from **Frumkin** and **Walkington**) on a £1,093,594 interdisciplinary EPSRC grant (with STEM and business studies disciplines) exploring 'Citizen Forensics', particularly how adaptive software architectures can support the contextual information flow required to deliver community-police collaborations whilst preserving key properties such as privacy and forensic-soundness.

Within the PHeW group:

- **Jones** is the lead researcher on the ESRC seminar series 'Cross Disciplinary Thinking about 'Antisocial Personality Disorder''. The series aims to stimulate debate and thought, and to create a network that can investigate and promote cross disciplinary understanding of 'Antisocial Personality Disorder' (value: £10,004).
- **Moller** is Co-I on the £722,897 NiHR funded study 'Before, During and After Adult Gender Identity Specialist Services: Improving the integration of care for trans adults' and also PI on the BPS funded seminar series 'New Frontiers of Family: The psychological implications of emerging family forms.'
- **Langdridge** was Co-I on a £235,561 Health Protection Scotland funded project investigating public health interventions for anti-microbial stewardship (2017-2018). He led on the development of an innovative method for the analysis of the affective content of public health intervention materials.
- **Harrison** and **Pike** have led a project investigating the wellbeing of first responders funded by The Royal Foundation (2019), value £30,000.

Further funding success, following the strategy for improved bidding support and capacity building within the unit, includes in the 2020 period alone:

- **Kaposi** has secured an ISRF mid-career fellowship (value £48,157) on 'Milgram and Beyond: Towards a Psychosocial Theory of Violence'.
- **Curley, Havard and Pike** have secured a British Academy Small Grant on super-recognisers (value £8,670).
- **Crafter** is Co-I on 'NEW-ABC: Networking the educational world: Across boundaries for community-building', EU Horizon 2020, (Total €3,036,657; value to OU €399,570).
- **Frumkin** is Co-I on EPSRC/SPRITE+ funded 'Digital Technologies, Power and Control' (value to OU £39,688).
- Hegarty (started at OU Sept 2020) is Co-I on 'G-Versity: Achieving Gender Diversity', Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovation Training Network. European Union: Horizon 2020 (Total €4,108,233; value to OU €303,172).

### 3.2 Infrastructure and facilities

The OU operates a sophisticated research infrastructure, combining on-site laboratory facilities with a rich virtual research infrastructure. As detailed in the OU Institutional Environment Statement, the OU library is world-class, providing staff and students with access to over 275,000 subscribed academic journals, 540 online databases, 590,000 eBooks and a vast selection of newspapers, images, video and sound.

The OU also invests in and operates one of the UK's largest open access research repositories. Open Research Online attracts an average of 500,000 online visitors a year from 200 countries. There is also a substantial volume of content, including a large amount of material from Psychology@OU in both the OU iTunesU site - one of the largest and most popular in the world

- and also OpenLearn, a public-facing open access site for (research-led and informed) learning materials.

Specific infrastructure and facilities match the needs of the respective research groupings, with them having different needs with respect to laboratory facilities. Psychology@OU staff have full access to a sophisticated set of laboratory facilities, including the Jennie Lee Labs - operated by the Institute for Educational Technology. This offers a suite of laboratory rooms as follows:

- Eight bookable rooms including: accessibility lab; ambient technology lab; gaming and future technologies lab; human-computer interaction labs 1 and 2; observation room; podcast suite and reception room. Tobii eye tracker and galvanic skin response equipment is available to be installed in all labs.

Every lab includes:

- Flood wiring with Cat 6 Networking, WiFi and power, audio and video links that go directly to the control room from every lab, where it can be recorded by computers into the Matroska (.mkv) file format. As some labs have more than one camera and one may wish to capture the computer screen as well, we use this format as it can bundle together multiple video and audio streams. We have software which can split these files so that we can produce video of the appropriate camera angle, audio track etc.
- At least one Ceiling Dome camera which can pan, tilt and zoom, a microphone and a computer.
- Multiple computers which each have specialist software and hardware that allows us to capture the computer's screen and record it; this can be recorded as an individual video stream or mixed with the room's video camera to create a picture in picture video and recorded to DVD.
- A DVD recorder linked to a monitor with touch panel controller allowing for ease of setup and use.

In addition, Psychology@OU also have:

- A dedicated lab for computer testing with experimental software (E-Prime 3), which includes additional facilities for eye tracking (Tracksys Ltd system) and facial composite construction (EFIT 6).
- Mobile eye-tracking equipment: Tobii Pro 2 glasses with associated tablet, laptop and Tobii pro lab analyser software.
- An unlimited Qualtrics license enabling all Psychology@OU staff to use this web-based survey tool with an unlimited number of respondents.
- Access to Science and Technology Faculty facilities for measurement of ECG and galvanic skin response.

Furthermore, as part of the capacity building that is underway to develop the Research Centre for Psychology@OU, development is underway for a Virtual Participant Pool to provide access to a very large nationally representative participant population accessed through our virtual systems, along with the recruitment of further specialist technical and administrative research support staff.

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

##### **4.1 National and international collaborations**

Researchers within this UOA are partners in a wide range of national and international collaborations, involving research relationships with 42 UK universities and 37 international universities across 19 countries. This includes active collaborations with many leading institutions in the UK (e.g. Glasgow; Kings, London; LSE; Manchester; Oxford; Queens, Belfast;

Strathclyde; Sussex; UCL) and internationally (e.g. Aalborg, Copenhagen, Denmark; Bologna, Turin and Università Ca' Foscari, Italy; Cape Town, Kwa-Zulu-Natal, Free State, South Africa; Lausanne, Switzerland; Monash, Australia; Oslo, Norway; Tokyo, Japan). Collaborations include work with other psychologists and also an extensive array of academics from other disciplines. This work is facilitated through funding for national and international conference attendance and academic exchange activity and programmes, including support for visiting PG research students.

Open and engaged research is central to the mission of Psychology@OU. This is supported through a wide variety of Faculty and Institution support, including dedicated staff at both Faculty and Institution level providing extensive business and third sector expertise. Selected additional collaborations with non-academic bodies facilitating research impact include:

- **Pike** (and team) work with 20 UK police forces through their activity (**Pike**, Director of Research) through the OU Centre for Policing Research and Learning (following an initial £1.4M HEFCE and Home Office investment). This collaboration has facilitated impact activity evidenced in the **Briggs** Impact Case Study, as well as extensive knowledge exchange opportunities for other Psychology@OU staff.
- **Harrison** works with a range of professional organisations relating to her work on mental health and the effects of organophosphate exposure including British Airline Pilots Association; Mind; National Farmers Union; UNITE. This is evidenced in the **Harrison** Impact Case Study.
- **Capdevila** is an international collaborator on the EU and Spanish Government funded project 'Visibilizing and measuring the scale and scope of sexual and gender-related violence in universities (SeGReVUni)'.
- **McGrath** is engaged in multiple evaluation projects with NHS and community partners including: Creativity Enablement and Wellbeing (CREW) project with BEHMT Mental Health Trust and the Outsider Gallery London; RESET Drug and Alcohol service at Mile End Hospital; Shoreditch Trust; Sparkle and Dark Theatre Company; 'Street Art' project at Chase Farm forensic psychiatric unit.
- **Langdridge** and **Moller** are involved with a variety of leading charitable bodies concerned with LGBTQ issues including LGBT Foundation; Pink Therapy; Yorkshire MESMAC.

#### 4.2 Journal editing and membership of editorial boards

Psychology@OU staff contribute to the discipline through considerable editorial work.

**Langdridge** founded and was co-editor in chief of the journal *Psychology & Sexuality* (until 2017), published by Taylor & Francis (ranked 20<sup>th</sup> Interdisciplinary Soc Sci). He is currently a consulting editor for *The Humanistic Psychologist*, published by the APA. **Capdevila** is editor of the journal *Feminism & Psychology* (since 2013), published by Sage. **Jones** is co-editor of the *Journal of Psychosocial Studies*, published by Policy Press. **Andreouli** and **Dixon** are both Associate Editors of the *European Journal of Social Psychology*, published by Wiley.

Editorial Board Membership includes: **Andreouli** – Journal of Community & Applied Psychology, Papers on Social Representations; **Capdevila** – Annual Review of Critical Psychology; Crafter – European Journal of Psychology of Education; **Dixon** – British Journal of Social Psychology, European Journal of Social Psychology, Social Issues and Policy Review, Frontiers in Psychology, Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour; **Langdridge** – Existential Analysis, Harrington Park Press, Psychology & Sexuality; **Mahendran** – Journal of Social and Political Psychology; **Moller** – Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, Counselling Psychology Quarterly; **Stenner** – Review of General Psychology, Theory & Psychology, Qualitative Research in Psychology, History and Philosophy of Psychology, Philosophical and Theoretical Psychology, Human Affairs; **Vossler** – Counselling Psychology Quarterly, Forum Community Psychology.



#### 4.3 Contributions to professional associations and grant awarding bodies

Staff are also active in a variety of professional bodies, making significant contributions to the discipline. **Stenner** was elected President of the International Society for Theoretical Psychology 2015-17, and President of the Association for Process Thought. **Capdevila** is on the Research Board of the BPS and is Chair of the Psychology of Women and Equalities Section of the BPS (2020-). She also served as co-chair (with Rhoda Unger, Brandeis University, USA) for an American Psychological Association (APA) Division 35 Task force on Feminist and Political Psychology. **Hewson** is working party convener and editor of BPS group producing '[Internet-mediated research guidelines](#)' (latest edition May 2017; 2020 edition in progress). **Moller** and **Vossler** work with the leading UK counselling body, BACP, as well as Relate and the Tavistock Institute. **Moller** was seconded as Joint Research Lead (2016-18) with BACP and Vossler sits on the BACP Research Committee. **Moller** also collaborates with a network of UK university counselling centres (Sheffield, Oxford, Cambridge, Keele, Birkbeck, Kings) pooling counselling data and setting up a nationwide datashare for research and service improvement and **Vossler** is an invited member of Relate's Family Counselling Working Group. **Moller** is also UK Chapter President for the Society for Psychotherapy Research (since 2020). **Jones** is a founding member, Executive Committee Member, and Treasurer of the Association for Psychosocial Studies.

Contributions to the research base are also made as grant panel members and reviewers. **Jones** was a member of the ESRC peer review college (2016-19) and has also reviewed for the British Academy and National Research Foundation of South Africa; **Andreouli**, **Dixon**, **Harrison**, **Stenner**, and **Havard** have all reviewed for the ESRC. **Dixon** has also reviewed for the British Academy, **Andreouli** the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation, **Langdrige** the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. **Langdrige** was also an invited subject matter expert in 2019/20 for the National Institute of Health Research Programme (NIHR PRP) commissioning committee (Implementation and effectiveness of educational interventions in improving behaviour on antimicrobial stewardship).

#### 4.4 Other indicators of wider influence (keynotes etc)

Staff have held key roles within learned societies and delivered keynotes in multiple countries. **Stenner** is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, Lifelong Alexander von Humboldt fellow, and gave the Annual Innovations in Psychology Lecture (formerly the Niels Bohr Lecture in Cultural Psychology), University of Aalborg, in 2019, as well as keynote addresses in the UK (e.g. at BPS Social Psychology Section Annual Conference, 2016), Colombia, Germany, and Italy during this REF period. **Langdrige** was keynote at the International Society for Theoretical Psychology Conference in 2019 in Tokyo, Japan, and gave a public lecture to the Institute for Civilisation Studies, Tokyo, Japan in 2015, as well as delivering other keynotes in the UK. He was also Honorary Professor of Psychology at Aalborg University, Denmark (until 2018) and Visiting Professor of Psychology at Seattle University, USA in 2014. **Crafter** has been a keynote at the Centre for Migration and Integration, Aarhus University, Denmark in 2019 and at the 'Non-professional Interpreting Conference', University of Amsterdam in 2020. **Dixon** gave keynotes at the annual conference of the Psychological Association of Australasian Social Psychologists, 2015, and to a UKIERI funded event at Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi, March 2015. **Vossler** was keynote at the 40th anniversary event of the 'Family Counselling Services' in Vienna, Austria in 2014, and keynote at the 40th anniversary event of 'Child Guidance Centre', Osterode, Germany in 2019.

#### 4.5 Contributions to economy and society

Psychology@OU has world-leading strength in engagement with society and the wider economy through very large-scale public engagement activity allied to significant impact on professional practice and policy (across a number of areas). This activity provides the opportunity for knowledge exchange and wider engagement through national television programming and associated OpenLearn links, which provide more detailed information about Psychology@OU

research. This is in addition to the considerable reach of Psychology@OU research directly through our research-led OU teaching to just under 20,000 (19,319 registrations in 2020/21) highly diverse undergraduate students from across the four nations of the UK.

Television and electronic media dissemination examples:

- **Walkington** was the academic consultant for BBC/OU productions: 'The Detectives: murder on the streets', Series 2 (2017) and Series 3 (Spring, 2020) (Avg. viewers: 8.2M, OpenLearn visits 24,921); 'Catching Britain's Killers: the crimes that changed us' (October 2019) (Avg. viewers: 5.06M, OpenLearn visits 9,059).
- **Turner** was the academic consultant for BBC/OU production 'In Cold Blood: The Forensic Investigators' (2018/19) (Avg. viewers: 11.9M, OpenLearn visits 56,881)
- **Langdridge** was academic consultant on the BBC/OU co-production – 'Prejudice and pride: the people's history of LGBTQ life in Britain' (2 one-hour episodes). Broadcast BBC4 in 2017 (repeated in 2019 for Stonewall Anniversary) (Avg. viewers: 1.19M, OpenLearn visits 1,728).
- **Havard** was the academic consultant on a BBC4 TV production 'The Parole Board' (being broadcast 2020/21).
- **Walkington** led the development of a suite of six films on applied cognition for the BBC Ideas Platform receiving 772.9K views (as at Dec 2020). **Stenner** was academic advisor on the BBC Ideas Platform short 'Wake up! Foucault's warning on fake news' (85.1k views). Lazard and Capdevila were academic advisors on the BBC Ideas Platform short 'Are you sharing too much online?' (45.3K views). All were Public Service and Activism Webby award winners.
- **Langdridge** and **Pike** (with Thirkettle, SHU) developed the OU Brainwave app in a partnership with Reed Global, engaging just under 14k users with research in Psychology@OU (OpenLearn visits 10,590).

Practitioner and public event examples:

- **Pike** organised the academic/practitioner conferences: Annual conference of the Society for Evidence Based Policing (2018); Health and Wellbeing in Policing (2018); Social media and policing (2018), and with **Havard** the Therapy in Forensic Settings: Practices and Challenges event in 2014.
- **Pike** has given keynotes at the annual conference of the National Working Group for User Insight in Policing and the annual conference of the South West Society for Evidence Based Policing, Exeter (both 2018). He also delivered a public lecture at the Bloody Scotland Crime Writing Festival (in 2016), along with more than 10 public lectures to sixth form students through the Crimcon and Crimiknowledge initiatives – averaging about 500 students per lecture.
- **Walkington** delivers regular training to the police force including: Advanced Suspect Interviewing course (delivered 3 times a year since 2014); Tier 3 National Counter Terrorism Course (2019); Counter Terrorism interviewing 'top up' course (2017); National Crime Agency interviewing training (2016); National Counter Terrorism Course ALCYONE (2015).
- **Briggs** was an invited speaker at the National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS) annual conference in 2019. She has also been an invited speaker at the Parcel Carriers Association (2019), the Road Safety Wales annual conference (involving all 22 Welsh local authorities) (2019), the National Roads Police Intelligence Forum (2019), and The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents RoSPA) annual conference in 2017. **Curley** was an invited speaker at The Centre for Police Research and Learning (2019); Faculty of Advocates (2018); The University of Edinburgh (2018); Edinburgh Sceptics Society, the Edinburgh Science Festival (2018). **Dixon** was a speaker at the ESRC Festival of Social Science (2015) on the psychology of prejudice. **Moller** has been an invited speaker at the Health and Wellbeing at Work event in 2019 on the NICE guidelines for depression, and at the Donor Conception Network conference in 2017.

- **McGrath** was co-author on an article 'Electroconvulsive Therapy for Depression: A Review of the Quality of ECT versus Sham ECT Trials and Meta-Analyses' in 2020, which has received considerable national media attention and has now led to a review of ECT use by the *National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE)*.

Policy engagement activity examples:

- **Andreouli** was invited to present on group cohesion at an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Counter-Extremism, 2018.
- **Briggs** has given evidence to a Transport Select Committee consultation on driver distraction, 2019.
- **Harrison** presented her work on organophosphates at the Houses of Parliament (2014), and presented at a knowledge-exchange event on 'super-recognisers' attended by academics and senior police officers.
- **Lazard** spoke on 'Effecting positive change in climates of uncertainty' in the House of Commons, Westminster in 2018, and has been undertaking action research projects and advising the House of Commons since that date on issues relating to sexual harassment and positive working relationships.
- **Walkington** produced an invited report which evaluates the National Training for Counter Terrorism Interviewers (2020). The report makes recommendations of how to improve the current training provision for the National Cadre of interviewers employed in Policing as well as individuals from DoD, FBI and CIA and some military personnel, and will therefore impact on CTU training both nationally and in the USA.