

Institution: Royal Holloway University of London
Unit of Assessment: 26: Modern Languages and Linguistics
<p>1. Unit Context and Structure; Research and Impact strategy</p> <p>1a. Research Context and Structure</p> <p>As a Unit of Assessment, the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at Royal Holloway has an international reputation for research in four language areas (French, German, Italian and Spanish) as well as Comparative Literature and Culture. From 2020 our range has expanded to include World Literatures. The Department's research staff comprises seven Professors, four Readers, four Senior Lecturers, one Lecturer and one Leverhulme post-doctoral Fellow.</p> <p>Our research culture emerges from our language-specific research interests and shared strengths across a range of research specialisms: literature from the Early Modern to the present; film, television and digital media studies; visual cultures; critical and cultural studies; philosophy and critical theory; gender and sexuality studies; colonial and postcolonial studies; historical and political studies. In both our teaching and research cultures we aim to foster interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary work, creativity, and co-operation.</p> <p>We refreshed our research strategy in 2015, taking an innovative approach to a challenging period for Modern Languages in the UK. We have championed the College's international aspirations, and in response to Royal Holloway's strategic research priorities, we aim to cultivate research that is responsive to the contemporary world, in Britain and beyond. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a commitment to engaging with and enhancing social, economic and political agendas; • encouraging a culture of social responsibility; • developing digital and other innovative approaches to democratising cultural participation. <p>Our ambitious research objectives identified the following as growth areas and as strategic priorities for our research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facilitation of co-operative and participatory research in visual cultures; • The continued development of comparative literature and world literatures; • Facilitating regional impact through the encouragement of collaborative and outward-facing projects involving research-led practice and curation; • Facilitating international impact through partnerships and projects that attend to global challenges such as sustainable development and disability; • The cultivation of interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research. <p>To implement this strategy, we have played a leading role in the Humanities and Arts Research Institute, which provides a platform for interdisciplinary initiatives and cross-institutional collaboration. In 2016 we strengthened our research by establishing a cross-disciplinary Centre for Visual Cultures, which reflects our research expertise in art, photography and film. The Centre provides an intellectual focus for staff and PGR students in the Department. The activities of the Centre have been central to fostering an emerging</p>

specialism in **research-led practice and curation** and a commitment to public engagement with the visual arts, as demonstrated in our two Impact Case Studies.

In August 2019, as part of Royal Holloway's transition into a six-School structure, we were integrated into the new **School of Humanities**. The School is facilitating closer interdisciplinary collaborations with the Departments of English, History and Classics. Structurally, the Department now benefits from **overarching structures and strategies** to support research. These include cross-departmental directors of Research and Postgraduate Studies, and a School Research Committee that co-ordinates and maintains oversight over grant applications, sabbaticals, and matters such as applications to the Leverhulme Early Career Fellowships scheme.

1b. Review of Research Objectives 2014-20

Our research aims for the assessment period, as outlined in REF2014, have been met. As planned, we have consolidated research excellence in the fields of comparative literature and the visual arts.

Objective 1: Supporting Individual Researchers

Until the establishment of the School of Humanities, structural support for individual researchers was maintained via the work of the Departmental Research and Postgraduate Committee. The functions of this committee have now been taken over by the **School Research Committee**, which has preserved and developed our best practice in research matters. Full details of the work of the Committee are provided in Section 2 below.

Objective 2: Supporting Interdisciplinary research

Multi- and interdisciplinary research remains a priority of the Department. This is especially supported by the **Humanities and Arts Research Institute** and the **Centre for Visual Cultures**. The Institute is central to Royal Holloway's vibrant interdisciplinary research culture. Its two most recent Directors (Thompson 2018-20 and Hemus 2021-) and Associate Director (Kent 2018-20) are included in the current REF submission. It stimulates and supports research of the highest quality beyond disciplinary and institutional boundaries and promotes the exchange of knowledge and expertise with diverse public organisations, the creative industries, the performing arts and festivals. Its collaborations and established partnerships with visual culture organisations, including the British Film Institute and Tate Exchange, support our intellectual engagement with visual cultures whilst also enabling the public dissemination of our research. Holders of Fellowship and Project grants from the Institute included in the current submission are Robertson, Pieri, Williams, Harris, Sands, Jossa and De Donno.

Our commitment to the promotion of interdisciplinarity, visual cultures, curation and public engagement is most clearly demonstrated by the Centre for Visual Cultures, a major platform for exploring interdisciplinary manifestations of visual art and digital culture, as well as redefining and contesting accepted notions of visibility. It draws on the full range of research expertise in visual cultures within the Department and provides a forum for scholars, students, practitioners, media and arts historians and curators (including the College's own) to share ideas and collaborate. The Steering Committee of the Centre consists of members of Departmental staff. The Centre's director (currently Williams) co-ordinates regular meetings to plan research projects, colloquia, public events and research seminars, training workshops, exhibitions, as well

as informal dialogues and knowledge exchange, notably with Tate Modern (several members are actively involved with its learning centre, Tate Exchange.) Many events are recorded and made available through the Centre's web pages that also feature research articles and commissioned blogs. Members of the Centre for Visual Cultures have a strong track record in collaborative research and grant capture (e.g. Pieri; Wright). The Centre bid successfully in 2016 and 2017 for funding from the Humanities and Arts Research Institute for the 'Making Space for Art' research project, and in 2018 and 2019 for Humanities and Arts Research Institute Research Centre funding.

Objective 3: Encouraging Applications for Research Funding from External Sources

During the assessment period, we have improved the quality of funding and grant applications and diversified the range of funding bodies to which applications are made. The mechanisms through which we have done this include:

- the establishment of a clear structure, via the School's Director of Research, for the dissemination of information about funding calls and deadlines;
- peer advice and mentoring, facilitated by the Departmental (now School) research committee and the Research and Innovation Department;
- departmental peer review of all applications at the planning stage;
- workshops and support programmes tailored for the needs of Early Career Researchers, arranged at Departmental level, via the Humanities and Arts Research Institute, and at Institutional level - in 2018-19 Kent and Sands participated in a series of grant-writing events organised by the Humanities and Arts Research Institute, and Thompson and Pieri provided mentorship and peer review support to the ECRs on the programme;
- a series of Departmental seminars and away days designed to showcase successful funding applications and to share knowledge and best practice via input from experienced colleagues.

1c. Approaches for Enabling Impact

The Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures actively supports the creation of research impact. REF3 gives details of our two headline impact case studies that reflect strengths in visual cultures, curatorial work and knowledge exchange that are mirrored in many of the other activities of researchers in the Department. During the assessment period we have implemented a strategy with the following ambitions:

- to create diverse and consistent impact through expanding the body of staff engaged in it;
- to capitalise on our track record of educational and cultural impact through growing our collaborations and partnerships with museums and galleries;
- in line with the College's strategic goals, to encourage research relevant to under-represented or disadvantaged communities, and to foster social impact with global reach;
- to put in place resources and long-term planning mechanisms to identify and allow the full development of major impact-generating activities;
- to encourage the development of pathways to impact via public engagement activities.

In 2016 we appointed a Director of Impact (currently Hemus), who works with Research and Innovation to support colleagues within the Department. We have sought to deliver our strategy for impact in the following ways:

Training and professional development. The Department works closely with Research and Innovation to publicise relevant opportunities, and to share best practice. For example, at

Departmental Research Away Days (held annually from 2015), the experience of developing impact case studies for REF 2014 has been reflected on, and colleagues developing work with museums, galleries and other public institutions have shared experiences. The College's programme of Impact training events is well attended by members of staff.

Financial and workload support for impact development. The Department, and now the School of Humanities, seek to recognize the demands of impact development by offering financial support and workload relief wherever possible. Our two Impact Case Studies (Hemus and Robertson) have been supported through teaching relief and/or additional sabbaticals, so that they have had the time to capitalise upon impact opportunities and to continue to produce excellent research.

Identifying and communicating opportunities for partnerships with other sectors. The establishment of a dedicated Director of Impact has embedded impact management in workload, and allowed for a channel of communication about both internal events and impact development training, and opportunities to liaise with the non-academic sector. Since 2017, Departmental researchers (Pieri, Hemus, Thompson) have made practical use of research in a series of annual educational workshops held at the Tate Exchange London and initiated by Royal Holloway's Faculty of Arts. A photograph of Hemus' 2017 workshop 'Dada's Women' was commended in the annual photography competition held by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement.

Recognising and publicising impact. The Department's Research and Impact Leads work alongside Research and Innovation to facilitate opportunities that engage with a wider audience, and to advise on planning and pathways for impact (including as part of grant applications). Departmental researchers have collectively engaged in a wider range of public engagement activities than ever before, including:

- the curation of public exhibitions;
- advising on policy making and widening access to sport;
- participating in radio and television interviews in the UK and internationally;
- participating in and/or creating educational podcasts and videos;
- conducting educational workshops, participating in panel discussions and delivering lectures at public institutions such as the British Film Institute;
- judging international translation prizes;
- communicating research findings accessibly in the national press and via online platforms such as *The Conversation*.

The Department seeks to promote the effective dissemination of our research findings, to help colleagues to develop a public profile, and to maximise the impact potential of the events organised by colleagues. It does this by using both Departmental and College web pages and social media platforms including Twitter, YouTube and Instagram.

Producing research that benefits under-represented or disadvantaged communities, or that has the potential to reach beyond academia. By providing sabbatical leave, funding conferences, organising research seminars and making online platforms available, the Department has supported research into representations of disability that has led to action on accessibility (Thompson), into documentary photography in post-Castro Cuba (Kent), and into the history of sport and media (Hughes).

Encouraging collaboration and interdisciplinary work through involvement in Research Centres. The Department can point to an environment that facilitates interdisciplinary and collaborative research with strong impact potential. It has made this approach to research a

strategic priority, particularly through the work of the Centre for Visual Cultures. The Centre ran a series of collaborative research events under the banner 'Making Space for Art', co-funded by the Department and the Humanities and Arts Research Institute, which facilitated fruitful partnerships with arts practitioners and curators. The Centre has also supported educational and other public events that realise the impact potential of scholarship – these have included, as well as academic events and lectures, artist-led workshops co-ordinated by Hemus and Robertson, and the creation of research-led public exhibitions.

1d. Research Objectives 2021-26

The **Department's research and impact strategy** for the next five years (and beyond) has been refined in tandem with the College's Future Directions for Research. With the support of the School of Humanities, the Department will remain committed to cross-disciplinary, individual and collaborative research, in particular through the **Centre for Visual Cultures**, and through staff collaboration with the other Centres and Institutes at Royal Holloway: **Humanities and Arts Research Institute**, the **Holocaust Research Institute**, the **Centre for GeoHumanities** (of which Cruickshank, De Donno, Kent, Pieri, Sands and Wright are members), and the **Gender Institute**, founded in 2020 (of which Hemus and Pieri are members).

We will continue to value and support individual research and impact across our core research areas in languages and comparative literature, but will also encourage conversations across disciplinary boundaries through key areas of shared interest in the Department. We have identified the following intersecting themes that speak to institutional priorities and key challenges for society:

- **Visual Cultures (including film studies, the history of art and the avant garde, digital humanities, curation and practice, popular culture);**
- **Gender, Sexuality and the Body;**
- **Literature from the Middle Ages to the Present, Critical Theory and Ethical Challenges in the 21st-Century;**
- **Transnationalism, Migration and the Postcolonial;**
- **Theory and Practice of Translation.**

The conversations and collaborations around these themes will respond, in different ways, to two of Royal Holloway's four new institution-wide Research Catalysts (2021-24): [1] '**Digital futures in the Creative and Cultural industries**'; and [2] '**Living Sustainably**', building on our emerging strengths in areas such as practice-based research and in areas such as environmental and medical humanities. The continued engagement of our researchers with the College's facilities and infrastructure will likewise form an essential part of our planning, for example through collaboration in the organisation of public exhibitions.

1e. Sustaining an Open Research Environment and Reproducibility of Research

The Department's strong commitment to the principles of **Open Access** has been encouraged through staff membership of executive committees of learned societies, through which we have been engaged in discussion and wider consultation of how to progress towards a full Open Access environment. We are fully compliant with the Open Access requirements of REF2021 and aim to go further in making research freely available. To this end, Thompson chose to edit special editions of *Disability Studies Quarterly* (2018) and *Revue Canadienne des études sur le handicap* (2020) specifically because both are peer-reviewed, free open access, online journals.

The most recent monographs of Davis and Sands are freely available through Knowledge Unlatched.

2. People

2a. Staffing Strategy and Staff Development

Staffing and Recruitment Policies

Departmental recruitment policies have been shaped by the inter-related needs of our core undergraduate programmes in Modern Languages and Comparative Literature and Culture, and areas of growing research strength. We have strengthened our research in **Visual Cultures, Comparative and World Literature, Postcolonial Studies** and **Critical Theory** with recent permanent appointments of ECR lecturers (Kent and Sands, 2015; Scott, 2020). Although the staffing demographic is presently weighted towards mid-career and senior research staff, our strategy is to ensure appropriate succession and sustainability across our subject areas by making new appointments at ECR level. Our recruitment policy is also informed by the strongest support for equality and diversity (see 2c). The Department does not make use of short-term contracts for Category A-eligible staff, apart from in the case of staff whose positions are funded by external bodies (this applies to Phillips and Duffy).

The appointment of Sands was the first dedicated appointment we have made in comparative literature. Other existing staff (including Cruickshank, De Donno, Hughes, Jeremiah, Davis, Williams) have played a major role in defining new agendas in this area, which forms an increasingly vital part of our teaching, research, and PGR recruitment. The appointment of Scott in World Literatures reflects our commitment to the strategic expansion of our literary and cultural coverage.

Staff Development Strategy / Supporting Early Career Researchers

Structured support for researchers is delivered via the **School Research Committee**, which conducts an Annual Review of Research, in which staff report on research achievements and reflect on future plans for outputs, impact and funding applications. The Annual Review informs arrangements for research mentoring, available to all staff regardless of career stage. The School Research Committee also oversees a sabbatical leave rota, ensuring that all research staff have equal opportunities for research. It also oversees the allocation of internal research funding on an equitable basis, while probationary staff benefit from reduced administrative and teaching duties during their probationary period.

Staff have benefited from Equal Opportunities initiatives, including the Women's Enhancement Programme designed to support female colleagues in their career progression. Seven members of staff (Cruickshank, Haddu, Hemus, Jeremiah, Pieri, Thompson, Wright) have participated in this programme, which was recognised by the THES for its excellence, with four promoted to Professor during the assessment period. Participation in the Springboard Women's Development Programme and Aurora, the leadership programme offered by Advance HE, is also encouraged, with the costs shared by the Department and Human Resources.

Three ECR appointments were made: one in Hispanic Studies, which also served to strengthen our research excellence in visual cultures (Kent); in the strategically important area of Comparative Literature and Culture (Sands, a specialist in Contemporary Literature and Critical Theory); and the third in World Literatures (Scott), who took up post in June 2020.

In line with policy across Royal Holloway, the Department has well-established and robust practices to **support the development of staff at all stages of their careers**. ECRs serve a three-year probationary period during which they have a reduced teaching load and are not expected to undertake major administrative roles. During this period, they are assigned a Probation Adviser with whom they meet at least four times a year. They also undertake the Certificate in Academic Practice in Teaching and Learning (CAPITAL), which is available to all academic staff. CAPITAL is accredited by the Higher Education Academy, and is supplemented by a scheme (TALENT) designed to support staff in their continued professional development, and through which they can eventually apply for a Senior Fellowship of the HEA (Kent is a successful example of this). Other staff who become SFHEA via the TALENT scheme during the assessment period include Harris, Hughes, Jeremiah, Jossa, Mayo, Pieri, Thompson, and Wright.

In addition, the College runs an established research development programme ('Advance') for staff. This comprises a scheme whereby ECRs are mentored by a senior researcher in another Department, and a series of 15 workshops open to researchers at any stage in their careers. Workshops are led by both external facilitators and internal experts, and are often tailored specifically to Humanities scholars, offering useful networking opportunities. Since 2014, all staff on probation have been required to complete modules which develop their research and professional skills.

The Department's Leverhulme Early Research Fellow (Philipps) was recruited after an internal competition through which he gained institutional support for his application. Staff (Davis and Cruickshank) advised on the development of his research project, and he has a mentor (Cruickshank) with whom he meets regularly to discuss research and career development issues. He undertakes a small amount of research-based teaching and benefits from the same training and research resources as permanent staff. He participates in all departmental activities, especially its research events.

All non-probationary, non-professorial staff are ordinarily considered annually for promotion, with the process now within the full remit of the School of Humanities. Promotion is not quota-based, but rather it is awarded entirely and solely on merit. In the assessment period, 11 colleagues benefitted from our promotion policy. For professorial staff, a system of professorial banding ensures fairness and equality. Professors' research, teaching, impact and leadership are now assessed every two years to ensure that they are at an appropriate point on the banding scale.

Policies for Departmental Funding / Sabbatical Leave

All research staff and PGRs can apply for **departmental funding** for research-related activities or for impact projects. In addition, departmental funding has been used to support a number of major conferences, such as the annual conference of the Society for French Studies that was hosted by Royal Holloway in 2019. Since the establishment of the School of Humanities, research staff can automatically claim up to £600 a year for suitable activities, and they can apply to the School Research Committee for further funding up to £1000.

Until 2019, the Department maintained a scheme for **sabbatical leave** (normally one term in nine), allocated on a transparent and equitable basis. The School of Humanities has now introduced, through a more effective distribution of teaching and administrative roles, a scheme

that allows for staff to apply for leave of **two terms in twelve**, so that major research projects, funding applications and impact activities can be given the maximum chance of success. Allocation of leave is subject to satisfactory research plans, which are reviewed by the School Research Committee. Plans for funding bids are a requirement for sabbatical leave, so that a planned, foreseeable programme of applications is maintained. Outcomes are reviewed through reports submitted within three months of the end of the sabbatical. Over the assessment period, all staff have been allocated periods of research leave. Staff returning from maternity leave are entitled to apply for supplementary sabbatical leave, and in some cases (Hemus, Mayo) extra periods of leave covered by departmental resources have been granted to facilitate the completion of major outputs. Some staff have also been given reduced examining roles to support specific research during the Summer term.

2b. Supporting PGR Students

Recruiting Doctoral Students

Our recruitment of Doctoral Students (PGRs) is in large part driven by the annual cycle of advertising and competition for studentships provided by the Technē AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership. The process is overseen by the School Director of Graduate Studies (currently Sands). Applicants are given the chance to consult potential supervisors who offer feedback and advice prior to the deadline for applications in January. Applications undergo a round of internal selection, and are given further targeted feedback before submission to the inter-institutional Technē selection process. Royal Holloway is the lead member of the Technē Partnership, which has twice been successful in funding bids, in 2014 and 2018, to support PGR research and training in the Arts and Humanities. The Partnership competitively awards around 45 studentships per year, and between 2014 and 2020 ten awards were made to students supervised by Departmental staff, involving funding of over £250k. This is supplemented by further funding from institutional and departmental sources.

Support and Monitoring

We value excellence not only in scholarly **supervision but also in the support and training offered to PGRs** so that they are prepared for an increasingly competitive job market, both within and outside academia. Partly due to our growing focus on interdisciplinary projects, especially in comparative literature and visual cultures, we have had **more doctoral completions** during the assessment period than last time around: there were 27 completions in REF2014, compared with **39** between 2014 and 2020.

Within the Department, all students have a supervisory team, usually consisting of a primary and secondary supervisor and an advisor, whose work is overseen by the School Director of Graduate Studies. Potential PhD students are initially admitted with MPhil status, upgraded within two years of study, and progress is monitored both through regular supervisory meetings and a formal annual review. After every meeting with their supervisors, students complete and submit a form briefly outlining matters that have been discussed and future work to be undertaken. Support for supervisors is offered in the form of regular **PGR progress meetings** in which colleagues discuss supervisory strategies and challenges, and through a newly launched institutional supervisory support scheme.

Provision for support and monitoring at institutional level has also been reviewed and improved. The Royal Holloway **Doctoral School** was established in 2014 with the explicit aim of

integrating more than 1000 research students into the College's research community, and providing funding, support and training. Its wide range of activities and facilities, including funding opportunities, mentoring and an annual conference, are detailed on its website. The School additionally allows PGRs apply for up to £300 annually to help with the costs of training and conference participation.

We have taken steps **to integrate PGRs into the Department's research culture**. We run 6 events per term designed to involve PGR students in the research community, including: *Glossa*, a student-led open reading group; research forum sessions taking the format of 'A Conversation on....', with invited speakers; and work-in-progress sessions, in which PGRs present in a friendly environment. The topics for these sessions address the range of research interests within the Department and they are frequently chaired by PGRs.

A committee made up of PGRs organises the annual **Departmental Postgraduate Colloquium**, a one-day event in which all PGRs are encouraged to give presentations (including shorter, 'flash presentations' by MA by Research students) before an evening keynote lecture. Speakers over the assessment period have included distinguished scholars such as Laura Mulvey, Griselda Pollock, and Sofia Psarra.

Skills Development and Careers

Professional training is fully integrated into the PhD programme, with all research students required to participate in at least five days of training each year, this being monitored at the annual review. The Department co-runs **'Ways of Working'**, a cross-School training programme that enables PGRs to engage with their wider cohort and to participate in a series of skill-specific training sessions. These are focused on developing the skills necessary within the PhD (such as 'Preparing for Upgrade' and 'Working with your Supervisor'), in academia more broadly ('Sharing Research: Public Engagement' and 'Publishing a Journal Article'), and preparing for careers both inside and outside academia ('The Job Market: Thinking Internationally'). Recent destinations and careers for doctoral graduates have included postdoctoral positions in Finland and Germany, a Lectureship in French Film at Bristol, and a Lectureship in Spanish, also at Bristol.

Increased awareness of the mental health challenges faced by students has resulted in the addition of a session on 'Taking Care of Self in the PhD Process' and the Department is participating in the Doctoral School's PGR Mental Health Working Group to develop ways of offering further support to PGRs. The Department's commitment to excellence in both research and teaching has seen us develop a stepped programme for PGR students, established in 2016, which sees them gain practical experience and complete the College's postgraduate teaching certificate (INSTIL), and also benefit from shadowing staff in the Department.

These initiatives complement the Researcher Development Programme, an initiative led by the Doctoral School consisting of both online training sessions and events run at both Royal Holloway campuses. Each year our PGR students also participate in the long-running Postgraduate Research Training Programme run by the IMLR in central London.

2c. Equality and Diversity

Supporting Career Pathways

Royal Holloway actively endorses the seven principles outlined in the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* and has policies and practices at both institutional and departmental level designed to facilitate full implementation of these principles. These include: mandatory equal opportunities training for all members of selection panels, equitable treatment for part-time and fixed-term staff, and an equitable promotions process. Extensive staff development opportunities are offered to all research staff and there is a comprehensive annual equality and diversity data-monitoring and review exercise. The College Equality and Diversity Committee reports to Council and has two sub-groups; an Equal Opportunities Adviser is responsible for coordinating the development of EO matters. Moreover, Royal Holloway publishes a bi-annual equality monitoring report that analyses employment patterns in terms of gender, disability, ethnicity, nationality and age. Additional evidence of our commitment to EDI and supporting staff professionally and in their career development:

- We have thriving staff diversity networks in which Departmental colleagues play an active role - LGBT+ Network; Women's Network; Staff Disability Forum; Cultural Diversity Network.
- The School steering group's meetings are attended by the central E&D team who support the networks in terms of action planning and implementation.
- A range of further EDI training opportunities including Active Bystander Training, Bullying and Harassment training for Managers, Disability Awareness, Introduction to Trans Awareness, Safe Zone training.
- The aforementioned Women's Enhancement Programme has seen tangible benefits for the gender balance among the numbers of professors in the Department (there are four female and four male professors in the REF2021 submission).
- Colleagues on part-time contracts have full access to the promotions pathway, with appropriately adjusted expectations and criteria.

The Department is committed to providing a flexible, supportive structure and atmosphere, allowing full parity and ensuring that staff work productively regardless of circumstances or characteristics. Royal Holloway offers all staff the option of applying for **flexible working arrangements** – for example for colleagues with childcare or other caring responsibilities; health issues or disabilities; educational or training commitments. The Head of Department (currently Wright) oversees this process in close consultation with Human Resources, and there are currently 6 members of Category A staff with such arrangements in place. Likewise, staff who choose or are forced to take periods of leave, for example parental or sick leave, are not required to return to a full work load – through a process of consultation such colleagues usually return with an agreed, reduced load and only gradually resume full duties.

Enabling Equal Opportunities for Promotion and Enhancement

Equality and diversity are also embedded into internal processes relevant to Research: applications for both promotion and sabbatical leave are submitted anonymously and considered impartially by appropriate, balanced panels (Promotions Committee / School Research Committee); Staff with disabilities or other protected criteria may apply for appropriate support for research, including but not limited to software packages and IT hardware, and financial support for research and conference travel and/or accommodation above the usual maximum guaranteed to all staff.

Recruitment to senior research-leadership roles takes place via an open process and is conducted with the above principles of equality and diversity in mind. Many of these roles are, for example, currently held by female staff members (including Head of School, Head of

Department, School Research Lead, School Director of Graduate Studies, Departmental Impact Lead) at various career stages (from Senior Lecturer to Professor). Colleagues occupying senior roles are diverse in terms of their national and linguistic backgrounds, working arrangements and personal characteristics.

Our commitment to equality and diversity extends to all aspects of teaching and research. We actively encourage and help develop research projects involving diversity and related ethical and political questions. Race, gender, sexuality, disability, animal rights, environmental catastrophe and colonial and postcolonial issues figure in the research of staff and research students. For example, current PGR Renee Landell's work examining racist stereotypes and responses to them in Caribbean literature is complemented by her activism and a public profile that has seen her emerge as a distinctive commentator on the Black Lives Matter movement.

Equality and Diversity in our REF2021 submission

We have followed Royal Holloway's REF2021 code of practice and worked with staff to identify relevant special circumstances. Our processes have ensured that EDI imperatives have been met in the REF outputs selection process, which has involved blind reading by an external reviewer and a gender-balanced internal selection panel. All staff involved in the REF2021 documentation and decision-making have taken mandatory training on unconscious bias.

3. Income, Infrastructure and Facilities

3a. Strategies for Generating Research Income and Funding

Our policy is to encourage innovative and ambitious research grant applications of all types and sizes, from staff at all career stages. We have seen this approach secure funding for groundbreaking projects that are redefining research agendas in areas such as world cinema, contemporary art and photography, and critical theory. Our **strategy** to achieve this includes the following stages:

- Staff use the annual review of research to plan and reflect on plans for funding applications;
- They take advantage in the planning stage of a process of peer-review and feedback, with all applications submitted in draft to Research Committee;
- They receive structured support from Research and Innovation, including at the pre-Award stage, who co-ordinate further relevant training and knowledge-sharing.

This approach has led to success in a very competitive environment, with awards from funders including the AHRC, British Academy and the Leverhulme Trust made to both senior colleagues and ECRs. Many of these projects received support in the planning stages from the College's **Research Strategy Fund**, which awards funding of up to £5k, a quarter of which is paid by the Department, as start-up funding for research and impact projects. Over the assessment period Department awards totalling more than £14k from this source have been made to staff including Thompson (successful in her application for an AHRC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Fellowship starting in 2021), Hemus, Robertson, and Pieri.

During the assessment period significant grants, both large and small, have been awarded. Pieri is PI on the major international project, '**Interdisciplinary Italy 1900-2020: Interart/Intermedia**',

for which the total award is £700,000 (£250k to Royal Holloway when Pieri took over as PI in September 2017). Wright was PI on the Leverhulme-funded international network project **‘Childhood and Nation in World Cinema: Borders and Encounters since 1980’**, which was awarded over £100k and ran from 2014 and 2017. Wright’s co-edited volume, *Childhood and Nation in Contemporary World Cinema: Borders and Encounters* (Bloomsbury 2018), was one output of the project.

A particular feature of the period has been the success of ECRs in gaining external funding. Kent successfully applied to the funding stream made available through the interdisciplinary research project ‘Multilingualism: Empowering Individuals, Transforming Societies’ (led by the University of Cambridge as part of the AHRC’s flagship Open World Research Initiative) to support his work on ‘“¡Yo soy Fidel!”: Post-Castro Cuba and the Cult of Personality’. Sands received a British Academy Rising Star award for ‘Posthumanities: Redefining Humanities for the Fourth Industrial Age’, and from 2020-22 Sands is Co-Investigator for the AHRC network ‘The Philosophical Life of Plants’. Phillips’s Leverhulme ECR Fellowship covers 50% (approximately £50k) of his full-time salary over three years. Among our individual, researcher-led projects, Wilson received a Small Research Grant from the British Academy/Leverhulme Foundation (worth over £4k) to cover the cost of archival research for his book on the history of the Goethe Society (Goethe-Gesellschaft in Weimar) in the Weimar Republic and ‘Third Reich’, which was published by the trade press DTV (Munich) in August 2018.

The research is also supported by sources not reported in HESA returns. In 2019 Thompson and Kent led a photography and Creative Audio Description workshop in Havana, Cuba internally funded by Royal Holloway’s Global Challenges Research Fund scheme. The workshop was part of an ongoing project which addresses United Nations sustainable development goals. Wilson was awarded the Reimar Lust Award of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation for International Scholarly and Cultural Exchange, worth €60,000. Davis was part of the ‘Narrative and Memory: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics’ study circle, funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers (2016-2019); and he is a member of two other research networks funded respectively by the Academy of Finland, and the research councils of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. He was Visiting Professor at the University of Turku, Finland (2018-2019). Cruickshank was PI for a project (‘Food with Feeling’) which received £2k seed funding from Royal Holloway’s allocation from the Higher Education Innovation Fund; and Thompson was PI on a project, ‘Multisensory Museums’, which was awarded £5k from the same fund. Robertson was awarded an Arp International Research Fellowship to the value of €3,600 for archival research in Berlin. In 2019-20, Harris was the recipient of a Marie Curie/ Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies award worth €40,000. Jossa has held visiting positions at the ETH (Polytechnic of Zurich, 2017), the University of Parma (2017) and the University of Roma Tre (2018).

3b. Organisational, Operational and Scholarly Infrastructure / Impact activities

As detailed in REF 5a, Royal Holloway has invested heavily in infrastructure and services during the current assessment period, with ambitious new buildings and facilities and a recently restructured Research and Innovation Department. The new library, housed in the Emily Wilding Davison Building, opened in 2017 and is designed to support research at all levels. The Building is also home to Royal Holloway’s Exhibition Space and the College’s archives. The former has hosted two exhibitions co-curated by departmental staff to date (Mayo, 2017; Kent, 2019), while in 2020 Jossa was awarded a British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant to study

Royal Holloway's Ridolfi Collection, held in the archives and one of the most important collections of letters from the Italian Renaissance owned by a British university library.

4. Collaboration and Contribution to the Research Base, Economy and Society

4a. Research Collaborations

Networking and collaboration, both nationally and internationally, play an increasingly important role in our research practice. These partnerships are to responding to ethical challenges, redefining traditional boundaries between the arts and sciences, and enabling conversations that speak to global agendas and break down some of the perceived differences between 'Eastern' and 'Western' perspectives.

The AHRC network 'The Philosophical Life of Plants', for which Sands is Co-I, takes inspiration from Goethe's *Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen* and is making a strikingly original contribution to the research agenda in the environmental humanities. The network involves a groundbreaking, original collaboration between academic investigators, the Goethe-Archiv and the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. Phillips was postdoctoral collaborator on 'Affective Dynamics and Aesthetic Emotions' at the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences, Geneva. Thompson was a member of the CNRS-funded research consortium TETMOST (Toucher et Êre Touché. Musées, Oeuvres et Sensibilité Tactile) with partners in Lyon, Paris and Rouen (2017-19) and is currently associate researcher on a French National Research Agency project 'Inclusive Museum Guide'. Wright's Leverhulme-funded international network involved Co-Is in Australia and China. Pieri's AHRC project also involves broad international collaboration, with individuals and institutions in Ireland, Italy, USA.

Our research culture is further enhanced by formal connections with international researchers who have visited and presented in the Department, and with whom we have co-published, co-organised and collaborated in a range of activities: Dr Harriet O'Neil, currently Assistant Director at the British School at Rome, is an Honorary Research Associate; Dr Helena Duffy was a Marie Curie Research Fellow attached to the Holocaust Research Institute, working on French Holocaust fiction (August 2016-July 2018); Dr Federico Di Santo, a Marie Curie Research Fellow at the Freie Universität in Berlin, was a Visiting Scholar in 2018; Professor Hanna Meretoja, from the University of Turku, became a Visiting Research Fellow. Professor Emanuela Piga Bruni (University of Bologna) was a Visiting Research Professor in Comparative Literature, delivering the inaugural research seminar in the School of Humanities in October 2019.

4b. Research Beneficiaries and Contributions to the Sustainability of the Discipline

Many of our research collaborations have integral elements of **public engagement and knowledge exchange**, and aim to **benefit society beyond the academic framework of the projects**. Pieri's AHRC-funded project emerged from a smaller AHRC networking grant ('Interdisciplinary Italy 1900-2015: art, music, text') which ran from 2012 to 2014. The ambitious project has reassessed 20th-century Italian cultural history through an inter-artistic and interdisciplinary lens. It has had an educational impact through collaboration with a cluster of UK schools and secondary school teachers, leading to the production of new teaching resources and a range of cross-curricular activities. As part of the project, Pieri curated an exhibition at the

Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, London: 'The Making of Modern Italy: Art and Design in the Early 1960s' (Jan-April 2019). This is a further example, alongside the comparable work of Hemus and Robertson (see REF 3), of our interdisciplinary research facilitating engagement with a wider, non-academic audience and creating an impact on cultural life.

Thompson's expertise in Critical Disability Studies has led to the 'Describing Diversity' project (April 2019-June 2020) which produced open-access guidelines for the audio description of human characteristics such as age, gender, disability, race and ethnicity. The work, sponsored by VocalEyes and Shakespeare's Globe, and further supported by an institutional Research Strategy Fund award, has generated tangible impacts – it has been cited as a key influence in the development of ITV's Audio-Description policy. It was a direct result of the conference Thompson organised, 'Blind Creations' (2015) (funded by Royal Holloway, the Wellcome Trust and the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) which enabled a series of dialogues between blind and non-blind participants, including audio describers, access professionals, allies, artists and advocates as well as academics. She has developed this interest further in her activism-centred research which led to the creation of a pioneering project to enhance accessibility to the College's art collection through 'crowdsourced' audio-descriptions, as well as significant consultancies to public institutions, including the Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE) and the Donmar Warehouse Theatre, which produced an accessible and socially distanced audio installation of Saramago's *Blindness* in August 2020.

Kent's co-curated 2019 exhibition at Royal Holloway, 'This is Cuba: Documentary Photography after Fidel' showcased work by world-renowned photographers such as Raúl Cañibano and Michael Christopher Brown. It was accompanied by a series of talks and workshops including: masterclasses with Cañibano, curator's talks, and workshops with other academics, practitioners and specialists. It led to a follow-up exhibition at the Photographers' Gallery London, one of the most important forums for photography in the UK. 'Raúl Cañibano: Chronicles of an Island', for which Kent acted as Exhibition Liaison, ran September-November 2019.

Jossa's book, *La più bella del mondo* (Turin: Einaudi 2018), was written for a general audience to celebrate the Italian language. The book has been widely reviewed in press and media, and presented across Europe at a remarkable range of public, academic and other institutions (for example, the Italian Cultural Institute in London, Brussels and Dublin, the Casa delle letterature in Rome, the Festival of Italian Language in Siena). The book also reached a very different audience via a presentation at one of Italy's major prisons, the Istituto Penitenziario di Secondigliano (Naples).

Wilson's work on Goethe and the Goethe Society has reached a broad audience and been instrumental in challenging and changing public understanding of Germany's most celebrated author. His most recent book on the Goethe Society in the Nazi years, *Der faustische Pakt: Goethe und die Goethe-Gesellschaft im Dritten Reich* (2018), was widely and positively reviewed in major German national newspapers such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, where Christoph Perels remarked that the book 'forces' the Goethe Society to face its past (28 September 2018). In response to Wilson's work, the Goethe Society revised the account of its own history published on its website with explicit reference to the book.

In the summer of 2020, in an initiative supported by the Centre for Visual Cultures as part of its response to the challenge posed by the global pandemic, Haddu collaborated with the Mexican

academic and photographer Francisco Mata Rosas (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico) to create 'Covida', an expansive, interactive online exhibition responding to the global impact of COVID-19. A launch event for the exhibition was held on 31 July 2020 and the exhibition continues to attract widespread, global attention and responses.

These major interventions go together with a wide range of smaller but no less important public engagement and impact activities, many of which have a particular focus on **the promotion of the study of Modern Languages** in UK schools and sixth-form colleges. This is true, for example, of the Wright's co-ordination of annual series of study days focused on Spanish cinema at the BFI Southbank, an initiative to be followed by Hughes with an equivalent day for German cinema in 2021. In 2019 Wright was a panellist for BBC Radio 4's 'In Our Time', a popular programme with reach into school curricula. Likewise Cruickshank's work as judge for the Scott Moncrieff Prize for Translation (2019-2020) and plenary lectures at the Prince's Teaching Institute Newly-Qualified Teachers Day (2014, 2015); De Donno's co-organisation of a screening of the documentary film *Io sto con la sposa* (Gabriele Del Grande, 2014) at the Bertha Doehring (Curzon Bloomsbury, London), followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker (2016), and Haddu's organisation of a Mexican Film Evening at the National Museum of Mexican Visual Culture (2014) have all given diverse audiences access to our research. Harris's research on the transgender spy the Chevalier d'Eon has inspired a play, *Chevalier d'Eon*, by a Sony-Award-winning playwright that has been performed in Cambridge and Oxford, whilst Hughes' interdisciplinary work on sport and culture has seen him interviewed for a podcast, and he has disseminated his work via articles in online publications such as *The Conversation* and *Playing Pasts*. Jeremiah's works as translator and co-translator, one of which was long-listed for the Man Booker International Prize 2016, have attracted attention in the press and public media; in 2017 Mayo co-curated a public exhibition of the work of the Spanish photographer Manuel G. Vicente, 'Hospitality on the Pilgrim Road to Santiago de Compostela', in Royal Holloway's Exhibition Space, part-funded by the Xacobeo Foundation (Spain); Sands' contribution to the Nuffield Council on Bioethics consultation on genome editing, as well as her organisation of ten public engagements annually for the Forum of Philosophy at the LSE, demonstrate how our public-engagement work crosses disciplinary boundaries. This is by no means a comprehensive list but is intended to give a sense of the extent and range of outward-facing activities in which our staff are playing a leading role.

4c. Contributions to the Research Base

We have contributed to the research base by engaging in dialogue with researchers across the world who share our interests in, for example, visual cultures, comparative literature, world literature and film, and critical disability studies. Our research has strengthened understanding of the relationship between language and visual cultures, and of comparative literature and world cinema, leading to invitations to give keynote and plenary papers at international conferences in Glasgow (Robertson, 2014), London (Pieri 2014), Nancy (Robertson, 2014), Dublin (Jossa, 2015), Copenhagen (Jossa, 2016), Liverpool (Hemus, 2016), Dallas (2018), Lisbon (Wright, 2019). Thompson's groundbreaking work in critical disability studies has seen her give keynotes in Belfast (2014), Paris-Sorbonne (2015), Winnipeg (2015) and St Andrews (2019).

Our staff have examined doctorates around the UK and in the US, France, Belgium, Norway, Finland, Italy, and Australia; they have played leading roles in the organisation of conferences, panels and seminars, and have assessed for numerous journals, publishers and funding bodies,

with several member of staff serving, for example, on the AHRC peer review college (Davis, Harris, Pieri, Robertson, Williams, Wright).

Journal editorship and involvement with learned societies have featured strongly in our activities. Cruickshank was Honorary Treasurer of the Society for French Studies (2015-2018) and is on the editorial board of *French Cultural Studies*. Davis was Chair of Legenda until 2016; and he is on the advisory board of *French Studies*. Harris is Co-editor of *French Studies*. Jeremiah serves on the advisory board of *Women: A Cultural Review*, the editorial Board of *Studies in Contemporary Women's Writing*, and the Advisory Committee of *Avain*. Jossa is on the editorial board of the *Journal for Romance Studies* and *Studi giralidani*. Leesix is on the editorial board of the *Journal for Romance Studies* and the advisory board of *Hispanic Research Journal*. Pieri is senior co-editor of *Italian Studies* and is commissioning editor for two series published by University of Wales Press (*Studies in Visual Culture* and *International Crime Fictions*). She has served on the UCML executive committee (2016-2019), on the executive committee of the Association for the Study of Modern Italy (2016-2019) and the Society of Italian Studies (2013-2021). Robertson is a member of the international advisory board of *The Wenshan Review of Literature and Culture* and a member of the editorial board of *Helvetica*, and was a member of the executive committee of the Society for French Studies (2014-2017). Sands is on the editorial board of *New Comparative Criticism* and the executive committee of the Society for European Philosophy. Thompson has edited issues of *Disability Studies Quarterly* and *Revue Canadienne des études sur le handicap*. Williams is General Editor of *Studies in French Cinema* and contributing editor to *Film Quarterly*. Wilson is editor of *Publications of the English Goethe Society* and Honorary Secretary of the English Goethe Society. Wright is Associate Editor of *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* and *Bulletin of Spanish Visual Studies*, and is on the editorial board of *Journal of Gender Studies*. Wright was also Association Secretary of the Association of Hispanists of Great Britain and Ireland from 2012-2017. This collective commitment to scholarship demonstrates how we work to sustain and develop our discipline.