Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Institution: University of Sheffield
Unit of Assessment: C-18 Law
1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

1.1 Overview

Located in the Faculty of Social Sciences, the School of Law comprises a thriving, diverse and inclusive community of legal and criminological researchers. The School's vision is to advance the interdisciplinary understanding of law, socio-legal studies, and criminology globally, combining outstanding academic research with research-led teaching and pursuing societal impact to the greatest possible extent. We encourage and support a wide range of research activity, from individual theoretical and doctrinal scholarship to large-scale collaborative empirical studies. Our research is fostered through three research centres: the Centre for International and European Law (SCIEL); the Centre for Corporate and Commercial Law (SICCL) and the Centre for Criminological Research (CCR), and through the collective activities of our research leadership and support teams.

Interdisciplinarity is a central pillar of our identity. Researchers employed within the School since 2014 have come from a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds, including law, psychology, politics, philosophy, history, journalism, geography, and sociology. Each of our research centres supports and encourages interdisciplinarity, and they serve as a focus for both staff and postgraduate researchers (PGRs) in and beyond the School who research in these areas, thereby cutting across the silos created by departmental structures. The School enjoys a particularly close relationship with the Faculty interdisciplinary research institute SPERI (Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute): 25% of our researchers are associate fellows of SPERI, one of the largest representations from any department in the University.

1.2 Achievement of REF2014 strategy

Building on the progress evidenced in our improved performance between RAE2008 and REF2014, we have delivered measurable results in relation to the strategic aims we set out in 2014. We have **enhanced our competitiveness in grant capture**: in this assessment period our research income stands at £2.51m, a 125% increase on the previous total. Our ability to attract funding has helped to drive a significant increase in the proportion of staff at all career stages who are **publishing excellent outputs** in respected journals (e.g. *Modern Law Review; Regulation & Governance; Oxford Journal of Legal Studies; Social and Legal Studies; European Journal of International Law; British Journal of Criminology; Theoretical Criminology*). It has also facilitated **greater breadth, diversity and novelty in our impact**, engagement and dissemination activities: for example, our research has influenced legislation, policy and practice both in England & Wales and internationally (including in Scotland, Germany and Australia); and we have produced award-winning documentaries, live plays and curated websites based on our research. We have **recruited excellent staff** at all levels from research associates on funded projects to professorial staff, and all of our current teaching and research (T&R) staff are now on open-ended contracts, enhancing the sustainability of excellence in our research community. We have also **maintained high standards in PGR admissions, confirmation reviews and completions**, evidenced in an average submission rate of 83% (exceeding the average for our Faculty) and in our continuing emphasis on quality and diversity rather than quantity in admissions.

In 2017-18 the School reviewed its research strategy and set out to (a) clarify the specific mechanisms underpinning the implementation and delivery of our strategic aims; and (b) introduce a new annual action plan to focus our resources and efforts in priority areas and enable short-term performance improvements. Thus, a high degree of continuity in our strategy is now complemented by a more dynamic framework for ensuring ongoing performance improvement, accountability, and swift action to address new challenges. For example, in response to changes in an increasingly competitive external funding environment, renewing our grant capture strategy was among four priority programmes for 2018-19, and in that year we instigated a number of actions (including establishing the role of Deputy Research Director to lead on grant capture, written briefings on sources of external funding for ECRs and strengthening our internal peer review process for draft grant applications). These actions enabled us to maintain our overall trajectory of increasing income capture.

1.3 Impact and engagement strategy

Engagement with practitioners, government bodies and user groups lies at the heart of our strategy to promote the interdisciplinary understanding of law, socio-legal studies and criminology globally. The School is thus committed to sharing expertise and developing the societal benefits of its high-quality research through collaborative mechanisms including co-design and delivery of projects, secondments and consultancy. Our strategy is based on the following pillars:

(a) excellent foundational research in law and criminology;

(b) targeting a range of beneficiaries across public, private and third sectors at local, national and international levels;

(c) achieving different forms of impact (e.g. legislative, policy, practice); and

(d) enhancing knowledge and confidence of staff at different career stages to enable engagement in impact and knowledge exchange (KE) activities.

To implement our impact and engagement strategy, we introduced the role of impact champion in 2008 and in 2014 this became a workloaded Impact Coordinator role. The importance of this role was underlined in 2017 when we appointed to it a professor with a background in law reform at the Law Commission for England and Wales, and in 2020 when we appointed a deputy to ensure the sustainability of our approach to embedding impact in our research culture. This role has been taken on by an ECR with considerable experience of working with policy partners across Europe and beyond (e.g. OECD, Council of Europe, UN), thereby building capacity in this area. The Impact Coordinator and Deputy are part of a research leadership team whose members work together to deliver our strategy. The team also includes a Research Director and Deputy (the deputy leads on grant capture); Research Staff Development Director; PGR Director and Deputy; and Ethics & Integrity Lead. Each of these roles carries a specified workload which recognises the key contribution they make to the School's research environment.

The Impact Coordinator plays a vital role working with new and existing staff, at all career stages, to enhance impact literacy and help researchers identify the impact potential of their ongoing and planned activities. They adopt a tailored 'consultant' approach to achieving impact with staff at all levels and supporting impact projects at all stages from initial inception through to monitoring and evidencing outcomes. We emphasise impact as an integral part of our research culture by including in our induction programme for new staff a meeting with the Impact Coordinator, the aim of which is to identify and support potential impact activity from the outset. Existing members of

staff are also routinely referred to the Impact Coordinator when that is identified as useful in the annual appraisal process.

The aim of this approach is to equip researchers with the tools they need to put their research to work in the world outside academia. Recent examples range from a corporate social responsibility researcher (Rühmkorf) who used his research to collaborate with the premier German business magazine to create a corporate social responsibility compliance ranking for the top 30 German companies; an ECR (Kebbell) whose research was featured heavily in a recent Law Commission consultation paper on the law relating to money laundering, and who has been co-opted onto a high level Law Society working group in the same area; a criminological researcher (Farrall) who has produced a film on the impact of Thatcherism for sixth-form students; a Spanish speaking constitutional lawyer (Castillo Ortiz) who has worked with the most prestigious Spanish think tank on Brexit; and Brexit-related health care law engagement with select committees of Parliament (Hervey).

Our selection of impact case studies reflects the range of beneficiaries of our research. They demonstrate high-level impact on national legislation (Scotland – Shapland; England & Wales – Skinns), with a range of coal face practitioners (police – Skinns; restorative justice professionals and criminal justice social workers – Shapland; health researchers and practitioners – Chico) and NGOs (Skinns, Shapland, Chico). Going beyond high-level policymaking, the case studies exhibit a particular, close-grained engagement with integrating research with ongoing implementation of policy on the ground in close collaboration with professionals (Skinns, Chico, Shapland).

1.4 Research integrity and open research

The School is committed to supporting a culture that respects the importance of the ethical dimension of social science research and in which all colleagues and PGRs have an appropriate awareness of their obligations under relevant legal and professional frameworks. Our criminological research in particular raises thorny ethical issues around research with vulnerable people (recent examples include those in custody and family members bereaved by homicide) and the potential disclosure of criminal activities by research subjects, which require ethics reviewers to consider the extent of any duty of disclosure by the researcher. All empirical research projects led by the School are subject to rigorous peer review by our dedicated Research Ethics Committee (REC). The Committee includes 7-8 members with expertise in socio-legal and/or criminological research. Members undergo University ethics reviewer training and typically spend three years on the Committee. The REC meets annually to share experiences and discuss emerging issues, such that members (who include ECRs) are able to develop and deepen their knowledge and experience of conducting ethics reviews. In January 2019 this practice of reflective annual meetings was celebrated by the University REC as an example of departmental good practice. The School was one of the early adopters of the University online ethics system and engaged in the pilot scheme in 2013-14, such that our REC contributed to the design of the system in terms of functionality and content.

In 2017-18 the School secured funding from the University to facilitate externally delivered lone worker training, which had been identified by the REC chair as a need across a number of ethics applications from both staff and PGRs in the School. To promote awareness of good practice for researcher safety, the Social Research Association *Code of Practice for the Safety of Social Researchers* is available to staff and PGRs via online Staff and PGR Handbooks.

All PGRs in the School undertake a compulsory research ethics and integrity module, in accordance with University policy (see also REF5a) and all staff are notified of opportunities for

ethics reviewer training via a weekly School e-bulletin. All research active staff have completed two online information security training courses: *Protecting Data* and *Protecting Personal Information*. Under the University's research data management policy, all PGRs registered since 2019/20 have been required to produce a data management plan as part of the confirmation review process (see section 2) and to maintain it throughout their project. In the 2019 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), 91% of our PGRs agreed that their understanding of research integrity had developed during their programme of study: an increase from 81% in 2013.

The School has also made progress toward developing an open research environment and is committed to further developing this. Our 2014-20 research strategy established a process to ensure routine compliance with the University's open access (OA) requirements, and we have subsequently moved to a system whereby all research active staff take responsibility for this process as it relates to their own outputs. This process is outlined as part of the induction of new staff, in our online Staff Handbook, and is reinforced via regular audits. We also provide an annual training session on open access to our PGRs.

To ensure maximum discoverability of our research, we aim to put all outputs in White Rose Research Online, our shared repository with Leeds and York (green route). The 384 outputs deposited over this assessment period were downloaded over 66,000 times. This is our preferred route, ensuring equity in publishing opportunities regardless of available funding; we also publish outputs in fully OA journals and are supported by a faculty fund to do so, or hybrid where required for funder compliance. Other examples of our commitment to open research can be found in SCIEL's recently established online working papers series, which is aimed at ensuring public access to our research. We are actively contributing to key debates in our discipline about the challenging interface between commitment to open research and the necessity of working with confidential and sensitive data, for example highly classified police records.

1.5 Future strategic priorities

- To maintain a recruitment strategy informed by principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) to further diversify our staff base, and to maintain a reflexive approach to staff development, including by continuing our distributed leadership model that provides research leadership roles at all career stages.

- To consolidate and expand our research strengths aligned to existing research centres, in particular by continuing to recruit excellent researchers at all career stages who work on cutting edge questions that straddle two or more of our centres (e.g. illicit flows; law, justice and digital societies).

- To deepen our emphasis on interdisciplinarity by further developing collaborative projects with the Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute and other Faculty and University research centres, and by continuing to emphasise interdisciplinarity when recruiting staff.

- To sustain our success in research income capture and continue to support research excellence at all career stages by targeting an expanded portfolio of funding schemes.

- To enhance our public-facing approach to law and criminology by prioritising collaborative and open research, and by building on our existing activities with a diverse range of end users at local, regional, national and global levels. To support this, we will refresh our Impact and KE Strategy by the end of 2021.

- To contribute to the sustainability of the discipline by supporting non-professorial colleagues in their contributions to their academic communities (e.g. editing journals, hosting workshops and giving keynotes).

- To maintain a diverse, vibrant community of postgraduate students by continuing to offer excellent supervision and training in skills that will equip them for careers in and beyond academia.

- To sustain research excellence and wellbeing in our School by continuing to offer high quality support to staff and PGRs through and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. To support this, we will review the pandemic's uneven impact on staff and prioritise support (e.g. internal funding; study leave) to those whose research suffered the greatest disruption.

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2. People

2.1 Staffing strategy

The principal aims of our staffing strategy in this assessment period have been to (a) attract excellent scholars to our School; (b) support and invest in all our staff with a view to enhancing the collective overall strength and impact of our research; (c) increase the proportion of staff on open-ended contracts, with a view to reducing this form of precarity within the sector, encouraging a more competitive pool of applicants for vacant posts and enhancing the sustainability of excellence in the School; and (d) enhance the diversity of our staff group.

We have made significant progress in respect of all of the above. In the assessment period the School has attracted excellent scholars to open-ended posts at all grades, including eight outstanding ECRs, two of whom have been recruited from our own PGR programme. Since undertaking a review of our research centres in 2017, which reduced the number from five to three (see section 3), we have prioritised the recruitment of researchers in corporate and commercial law (e.g. Keren-Paz, Atkinson, Cousins) and international and European law (e.g. Bugaric, Franchini, Pereira) and those whose research straddles two or more of our centres (e.g. Kebbell, Craven). We have appointed 14 lecturers, 4 senior lecturers (SL) and 4 professors. Additionally, four T&R staff have been moved from fixed-term to open-ended contracts (Lee, Rice, Sorsby, Thompson) and a further three on fixed-term teaching contracts have been appointed to permanent T&R posts through open competition (Benbow, Franchini, Kebbell). We have also employed six excellent research associates on externally funded projects (Banwell-Moore, Gray, Jones, Sprawson, Smith, Wooff) and five independent postdoctoral research fellows funded by Marie Sklodowska-Curie (Claes, Van Camp, Wang), the Leverhulme Trust (Tomczak) and GCRF (Hsaio). Of our 36 current T&R staff (34.5 FTE), 8 are professors, 2 are readers, 8 are SL and 18 are lecturers (of whom 8 are ECRs). All but one are on open-ended contracts.

2.2 Supporting excellent research and impact

The School uses a range of mechanisms to maximise the capacity for staff to undertake excellent research. These include a workload model which provides a 50% time allocation for research for all T&R staff. In addition, all researchers have access to financial support for individual research and impact activities (see section 3), and can apply for a semester's research leave for seven served to allow a concentrated period of time for a major project or grant application. In the assessment period, 40 semesters of research leave have been granted to 35 staff. This has been allocated to lecturers (42%), SLs/readers (28%) and professors (30%); and to similar numbers of female (43%)

and male (57%) staff. Examples of accomplishments during study leave include the completion of monographs (e.g. Buchan; Gonzalez-Salzberg; Hayes); writing successful grant applications (e.g. Bacon; Brown; Skinns*;* Kirkham; Xu); and impact development activities (e.g. Burrell; Farrall; Shapland; Skinns). Both our workload model and our research strategy are consistent with the encouragement of KE and impact and many of our researchers actively engage with non-academic bodies on a routine basis within their research time (see section 4 for examples). School-level support for researchers engaged in impact activities has included workloading dedicated time and granting research leave, where the major component of the leave was to allow engagement with stakeholders and ensure research achieved maximum impact in the relevant sphere (e.g. Shapland; Taylor; Chico). The School has also facilitated the secondment of two staff to senior data policy advisory roles at the Health Research Authority (Taylor: Chair of Confidentiality Advisory Group, 3-days per week 2015-2018; Chico: Data Policy Advisor, 3-days per week, 2018-present). These secondments have been instrumental in facilitating the development of one of our impact case studies.

2.3 Staff development

Our ability to attract excellent young researchers has been complemented by dedicated support for ECRs. In line with University policy, ECRs are initially subject to a three-year probationary period, with the School providing individualised support from a probationary advisor and additional protected time for research and scholarship activities throughout their probation. In 2019 a forum for probationary advisors was established by the Research Director to support and share good practice between colleagues in probation advisor roles in the context of the University's introduction of a new Academic Careers Pathway framework (see REF5a). ECRs also meet with the Research Director as part of their induction and are prioritised for a slot in our School research seminar series, to encourage their integration into the research community and enable them to consider potential collaborations. As part of induction, ECRs also meet with the Impact Coordinator and Research Deputy Director for advice and to access support in developing their impact and securing grant funding.

The School has invested new resources in the development of all its researchers. Recognising a need to coordinate our approach to staff development and support T&R staff to prepare cases for promotion, the role of Research Staff Development Director was created in 2018. They have already introduced a new mentoring scheme, supplementing the annual appraisal process and individual research planning meetings, available to staff at all levels beyond probation. They take an individualised approach to matching mentees with mentors that considers their specific development needs. In the first year, 12 researchers applied (including lecturers, SLs, readers and teaching-specialists looking to move into research) and were matched with a mentor. The role also includes the provision of individualised support for staff planning/applying for promotion, and since the role was created our promotion success rate stands at 100%. They have also initiated a series of developmental workshops for ECRs, supported by our research centres. For example, in 2019 SICCL funded the inaugural half-day workshop at which three of its ECRs presented working papers to senior academic and stakeholder discussants from outside Sheffield. In October 2020 the Director organised a panel session for all the School's researchers on 'Prioritising Research in the time of Covid' to share advice and experience.

In addition to the above, the School has, throughout the assessment period, offered individualised support to all its research staff, including all postdoctoral fellows and research associates, via a programme of annual meetings with senior colleagues to review their medium/long-term research plans. Whilst the precise format of these meetings has evolved, there has been a consistent emphasis on encouraging ambitious research and enhancing the quality of individuals' research

outputs, with a view to driving up the internal strength of our research culture and substantially increasing the proportion of staff producing internationally excellent and world-leading outputs. These meetings have also enabled us to plan and coordinate tailored research support across the School. Researchers at all career stages are also eligible for and encouraged to gain experience of PGR supervision, initially by working alongside a more experienced colleague as co-supervisor. Currently 24 staff are involved in the supervision of 45 PGRs (7 lecturers; 10 SL/readers; 7 professors).

2.4 Our PGR community

Our PGR strategy prioritises the recruitment of high-quality students pursuing diverse, original research projects in law, socio-legal studies and criminology which accord with our areas of substantive and methodological expertise. We welcome home and international students with support from a range of funding sources and we aim to sustain a world-class environment for our PGRs via the provision of high-quality supervision, excellent training and personal support, and opportunities to become fully embedded in our research environment.

The quality of our applicants is evidenced in the securing of 12 ESRC scholarships (1+3 or +3) on a competitive basis from the ESRC-funded White Rose Doctoral Training Partnership (WRDTP). Prioritising the recruitment of high-quality candidates, the School has deliberately sought to maintain a diverse community of up to 50 PGRs, which is the optimum cohort size for ensuring intensive and bespoke training and support. We have thus maintained a vibrant and diverse community of between 40-50 PGRs during the assessment period, around one third of whom are non-UK nationals. In order to ensure recruitment to a range of subject areas and a diverse PGR community, 17 School scholarships have been awarded during the assessment period and we have contributed £724k towards PGR fees, stipends and research training support grants for 28 PGR students.

The School hosts an annual half day induction event in early October which is followed by a social event to which staff and more established PGRs are invited. The induction introduces PGRs to the excellent facilities available to all via the WRDTP, and to the Faculty's Doctoral Development Programme (DDP). Engagement with the DDP begins with a mandatory training needs analysis which acts as a gateway to a wide range of training opportunities made available via online training portals of the WRDTP, University and Faculty. As part of a tailored programme of training, all PGRs must undertake a compulsory module in research ethics and integrity, as well as a discipline-specific module which is delivered across three years. Those undertaking legal research must also complete a module in legal research methods in their first year.

All the School's PGRs are supervised by at least two academic staff, with whom they meet on average every 4-6 weeks (pro rata for part-time). In addition to electronic records of supervision meetings and annual supervisor-led reviews, PGRs complete biannual student-led progress reports. These are reviewed by the PGR Director, who acts on any progress or wellbeing concerns. PGRs complete a confirmation review process in accordance with University policy (see REF5a). In the 2019 PRES survey, 95% of our PGRs agreed that they had regular/appropriate contact with their supervisors, and that their supervisors had the skills and subject knowledge to support their research effectively (up from 81% and 86% respectively in 2013).

All our PGRs are encouraged to join at least one of our research centres, to which they can apply for funding to support research activities: for example the centres jointly funded a writing retreat for 15 PGRs in 2019 (5 per centre) following a successful initial event for 10 PGRs funded by CCR in 2018. The School's Higher Degrees Committee includes PGR representatives in its membership,

such that PGRs are involved in discussions and decisions that affect them, and PGRs are included in our research away days. The School also supports an annual PGR-led conference in May, where students present papers and invite staff (in and beyond the School) and peers to act as respondents and/or keynote speakers. Criminology PGRs also have the opportunity to engage in a European doctoral school, including producing a peer-reviewed chapter in a commercially published edited collection (nine in this assessment period). Our PGRs have been involved in the organisation of several regional and national conferences (e.g. Banwell-Moore initiated a WRDTP socio-legal PGR conference hosted in Leeds in 2016 and at Sheffield in 2017; Davies and Yau organised an online conference on law and technology in 2020). Through these means PGR students not only gain excellent experience of presenting their research and of conference organisation, but also access opportunities to build networks and develop collaborations.

Recognising the need to maximise the employability and skills development of our PGR students, they are supported to undertake up to 180 hours of paid employment per year where they wish to do so (pro rata for part-time), and 15-25 students per academic year take up opportunities to deliver seminar teaching to gain skills and experience. They are encouraged and funded by us to attend the University's teaching assistant programme and are also supported by module convenors whose workloaded responsibilities include proper preparation of PGRs for teaching, marking and feedback. Students who teach are offered annual opportunities for appraisal/review/objective setting, as well as support for applications to the HEA fellowship scheme. Several PGRs who gained HEA Fellow/Associate Fellow accreditation whilst studying/teaching in the School during the assessment period have gone on to secure a lectureship or teaching associate position (e.g. Bradford, Kotzamani, Anastasiou, Stark, Udofa).

The success of our strategy is demonstrated in our sustained timely submission rates: for full-time students registered between 2009/10 and 2015/16, an average of 83% submitted within their time limit, which is higher than the Faculty average. It is also evident in the prestige and variation of careers that our PGR students go on to. Some have remained in academia taking up lectureships or research fellowships at universities including Essex, Nottingham, Surrey, Portsmouth, the Open University and Sukhothai Thammathirat University in Bangkok. Others have pursued diverse careers outside the sector, including in NHS management; the armed forces; the police; the civil service (both UK and overseas); legal services; and the voluntary sector. We also achieve excellence in student satisfaction: in the 2019 PRES survey, 86% of our PGRs reported that they were satisfied with their overall PGR experience: up from 76% in 2013 and exceeding 81% for the University as a whole.

2.5 Commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion

The School is committed to values of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). In order to expand our focus on these issues, we established an EDI Committee in 2019 to monitor our performance against the University's EDI Strategy and embed best practices. The Committee's membership has a balance of gender, race, and career stage. The chair sits on the Faculty EDI Committee and the School's Management Board, enabling two-way communication, and has a workload allocation for this role.

We have made good progress towards the diversification of our staff group: 47% of promoted staff are female (three professors, two readers, three SLs) and 44% overall. Women in leadership roles include the current Research Director, PGR Director, Deputy Impact Coordinator and Ethics Committee Chair. Four women have also been directors of our research centres and all our submitted impact case studies are led by women in lecturer (Chico), reader (Skinns) and professorial (Shapland) posts. Membership of our Research Committee includes all career stages,

comprising two professors, two readers, five SLs and two lecturers. We have also maintained a good gender balance in our PGR community: of PGRs admitted in the assessment period, 58% were female and 42% male. Diversity is also evident in that at the point of admission, 35% were aged 30 or over and a third (32%) non-UK nationals. We have also made progress with ethnic diversity and 17% of staff are self-declared minority ethnic.

As noted above, all eligible staff are encouraged to apply for research leave, and periods of leave (e.g. maternity, shared parental leave, buyouts from grant income) qualify toward semesters accrued, so no-one is disadvantaged in terms of access. The School has also encouraged and supported female staff to apply to the University's Women Academic Returners Programme for funding to enable continued career development following a period of parental leave. For example, in 2020 support from this programme enabled Strumia to invest otherwise unavailable time in the development of an application to the ERC Consolidator grant scheme.

In selecting outputs for our REF submission, we have complied with the University's Code of Practice, ensuring equality of opportunity for the inclusion of individuals' outputs according to our internal quality assessments, regardless of seniority, gender or other characteristics. Furthermore, all members of our staff group who are involved in assessing and/or selecting outputs for submission have completed the University's EDI training course, going beyond what is required by our Code of Practice.

2.6 Supporting wellbeing of staff and students

Supporting the wellbeing of our staff and PGR students is a key element of our strategy for creating an inclusive and sustainable research community. For example, in line with the University's Guiding Principles on Flexible Working, the School recognises the positive impact of flexible and/or remote working to support an inclusive research environment, to create a happy and healthy workforce and to improve productivity. Staff at all career stages can apply for flexible and/or remote working. As at submission, four staff had flexible working arrangements, of whom two were women (one lecturer, two SL, one reader).

We recognise the key role of the supervisory team in supporting the individual wellbeing of PGRs, but additional support is offered by the PGR Director, their deputy and a dedicated Student Wellbeing Officer (appointed by the Faculty in 2020), who offer regular opportunities for PGRs to raise wellbeing issues. They also liaise with the University's central support services where students have disabilities and/or mental health/other complex needs. We actively encourage the use of leaves of absence and (where relevant) changes of candidature (e.g. from full-time to part-time) where individual circumstances suggest that these will enhance wellbeing and/or enable a student to successfully complete their programme of study.

In Autumn 2019, the School introduced an informal 'buddy' system, allowing new PGR students to be paired with a more experienced mentor as a point of contact for informal advice on PhD process, wellbeing, and achieving academic progress. Informal feedback from our PGR reps suggests that those who have opted into the scheme have found it very helpful and a good way to learn about our research culture. From 2020, we have run a series of informal drop-in coffee mornings to strengthen and deepen relationships between PGRs, the PGR Directors and support staff. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these were replaced by even more frequent online coffee breaks, sometimes with a particular theme, including teaching matters and wellbeing. This gave regular opportunities to check-in with PGRs and to assess how the pandemic was impacting on them and their studies. PGRs have also been able to access office and IT equipment for use at home and we have funded the purchase of equipment for those based outside Sheffield.

Our experience of supporting staff and PGRs in the pandemic motivated a reconfiguration of the School's leadership structures (introduced from September 2020) to now include a bespoke team devoted to staff wellbeing and development, with two new co-directors of staff wellbeing working alongside directors of staff development and EDI, all of whom sit on and report to the School Management Board. The work of this team will take forward and develop, through and post-pandemic, the support mechanisms we initiated to help colleagues manage a new and varied range of anxieties and disruptions to normal working practices.

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3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3.1 Research income

Capturing research income is a core objective in the School. In the previous REF period, total income stood at £1.11m and the School won £1.94m in new awards. In this period, the School has overseen an increase in both figures, with total income growing by 125% to £2.51m and new awards by 16% to £2.25m. The increase in new awards reflects two significant trends. The first is the larger number of colleagues at all career stages applying for and winning awards. In the previous cycle, 37 colleagues submitted 92 research funding applications, whereas in this cycle 52 colleagues submitted 164 applications. This showcases an important cultural change surrounding research income capture, with virtually all of our research-active colleagues applying for and winning awards. It also highlights the favourable conditions for sustaining our research income capture success in the years ahead.

The other significant trend is the simultaneous consolidation and widening of funders we have targeted. First, colleagues have been able to consolidate past success with UKRI funders. In this assessment period, for instance, colleagues submitted 24 applications to the ESRC culminating in 11 awards – a 46% success rate, well-above the overall 29% success rate reported by the ESRC from the years 2011-18. At the same time, colleagues have targeted a greater diversity of non-UKRI funders and submitted applications to 32 different non-UKRI funders, compared to 25 in the previous period. As such, we have enjoyed success not just with UKRI, but also with public organisations and charities at the international, national and local levels, winning awards from the European Commission (FP7 and Horizon 2020), British Academy, Leverhulme Trust, Nuffield Trust, Health Research Authority, College of Policing, Police Transformation Fund, South Yorkshire Police, University Association for Contemporary European Studies, Society of Legal Scholars, Socio-Legal Studies Association and Legal Education Research Network. This trend again underscores our increasingly vibrant and sustainable culture surrounding research income capture.

3.2 Research infrastructure

Underpinning this success is our responsive and dynamic research infrastructure, which drives not just research income capture but other areas of our research activity too, from the formulation of ideas and production of outputs to the transfer of knowledge outside academia and the cultivation of impact. During the opening two years of this cycle we continued to use the research infrastructure in place at the end of the previous REF period. While this functioned to good effect, as we approached the midpoint in this assessment period, we set in motion three notable infrastructural reforms. First, we established a new Deputy Research Director role whose primary tasks are to ensure our research income capture strategy remains in step with internal and external funding environments and to guide colleagues throughout the research funding application process

(previously these tasks were among the many duties performed by the Research Director). The deputy reports to the Research Director, Research Committee and, by extension, the School at large to ensure accountability and consultation in these processes.

Second, we undertook a department-wide review of our research centres, leading to a renewed focus on the three strongest and most ambitious – SCIEL, SICCL and CCR. To foster vitality and sustainability in these centres, the review recommended: the rotation of directorships every 2-3 years; the appointment of an ECR as deputy director on a similar rotation; the inclusion of at least one PGR representative on each centre's steering group; and annual planning meetings to ensure each centre consults with its wider membership regarding future activities. These reforms have not only facilitated better alignment between the centres and our changing research profile, but have also empowered them to play a more responsive role in nurturing research ideas, projects, outputs and funding applications.

Third, in collaboration with the Faculty and University, we restructured our departmental research support services (see REF5a). Up to 2017, these services were provided through a departmental team made up of one Research Manager and one Research Support Officer. Though functioning perfectly well, there was concern that this arrangement – replicated in every department across the University – limited the sharing of best practice and caused unnecessary duplication. Following a University-wide consultation, these departmental silos were replaced by a smaller number of better resourced Research Support Hubs serving multiple departments. Thus, in 2018 a new Hub was established to support the Law, Politics and Sociological Studies departments. The rationale behind this configuration is that colleagues share a broad research knowledge base, often collaborate with one another in interdisciplinary research projects (see section 4) and target many of the same research funders, so combining the research support services allows for a more coordinated approach to the development and management of research activities. The Hub is run by two Research Managers and four Research Support Officers who are available to colleagues in the School throughout the working week and who are physically present in the School's building three days a week, enabling regular face-to-face discussions. As such, our present research support services have greater capacity and are better able to access resources outside the School compared to our services in 2014.

The coordinated activities of the Research Director and Deputy, Research Committee, Research Centres and Research Hub – linked in with additional Faculty and University research support services – constitute the primary research infrastructure through which our research policies are formulated and administered. These policies can be divided into five interrelated areas.

a) **Feedback:** This infrastructure provides colleagues with a number of informal settings in which to present and receive feedback on research ideas at various stages of development. These include: lunchtime seminars for draft outputs with advance circulation of materials and discussants (three per semester); pitch-to-peers sessions for draft funding applications, which are often tailored to specific schemes and/or career stages (at least one per semester); 'Tea and Jeopardy' ECR sessions (one per semester); and our subject specific reading groups on Foucault, Jurisprudence, Public Law and Legal Theory (ad hoc). These informal settings are complemented by three slightly more formal review processes. The first is the works-in-progress reading process, through which colleagues can request comments from staff with a track-record of writing high quality publications. The second is the REF-reading process in which each output under consideration for REF is reviewed by two colleagues both to assess its quality in REF terms and to provide constructive feedback for future work. The third is the research funding application review process in which all applications are also reviewed by at least two colleagues prior to submission (for UKRI

applications, the University runs an additional round of pre-submission reviews to share best practice and manage demand).

b) **Networking:** Our research centres provide an excellent site for interdisciplinary networking opportunities. CCR, for example, has members from 17 departments across four faculties and routinely brings them together for coffee mornings and one-day conferences in either the Interdisciplinary Centre for the Social Sciences or the Humanities Research Institute (both of which house state-of-the-art IT infrastructure, meeting rooms, exhibition space, and specialised support for social science and humanities research). Further, the School enjoys a close relationship with the Faculty interdisciplinary research institute SPERI (Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute) – indeed, 25% of our research-active colleagues are associate fellows of SPERI, one of the largest representations from any department in the University. Rühmkorf's EU-funded work with LeBaron (then director of SPERI) on modern slavery and global supply chains is an example of collaborative scholarship between the School and the Institute in this assessment period.

c) **Mentoring:** All colleagues participate in Sheffield's Staff Review and Development Scheme (see REF5a) which involves an annual one-to-one meeting with a senior colleague to discuss, among other things, research priorities for the coming academic year, research training and support needs, and balancing research, teaching and leadership responsibilities. In addition, the Research Staff Development Director runs an opt-in mentoring scheme for less formal (but complementary) advice and support tailored to the individual's specific needs. Mentoring from senior staff in other parts of the Faculty and wider University is also available and such arrangements are currently in place for three colleagues. Furthermore, our research centre reforms have better positioned senior colleagues to play a guiding role in the development of research projects and funding applications. A measure of our success in this particular respect is that 41% of research awards in this cycle have come from non-professorial colleagues (an increase from 26% in the previous cycle).

d) **Communication:** Our online staff handbook includes up-to-date information and policies on: the research funding application process (including flow charts of timelines, a repository of successful applications for each scheme and a list of key contacts); KE and impact (including examples and available resources); OA publishing; research ethics approval; and REF guidelines. This information is kept under review by the Research Committee, with updates communicated in all-School meetings. In addition, the Deputy Research Director and Hub work closely with central University Research Services to ensure all relevant research funding opportunities and corresponding University-run application writing workshops are communicated to colleagues via a weekly electronic bulletin. Lastly, the School also celebrates recently published outputs, successful research funding awards, notable conference addresses and far-reaching impact work through the bulletin, website, social media updates, regular updates from the Head of School and Deputy Research Director, and framed posters located throughout Bartolome House (the School's building).

e) **Monetary Support.** The School offers monetary support to colleagues for their research activities by allocating £55k per year to a 'rapid response' research fund administered by the Deputy Research Director and Research Committee (in this assessment period 473 awards from this fund have been made to 76 colleagues totalling £303k); £7k per year to each research centre; and £250 per annum to each research-active colleague. These resources enable colleagues to engage in a variety of research activities including

attending and presenting research at conferences; engaging in networking activities; accessing research assistance; and maintaining membership of Learned Societies.

In terms of KE and impact, our School research infrastructure has been supplemented by significant additional support from the Faculty External Engagement Team, which provides impact training for departments and manages the ESRC Impact Acceleration Account, as well as other University resources for impact and KE. Under these arrangements, the School has benefited from: the provision of impact associates to facilitate and maximise engagement with users (e.g. evidence collection for Rühmkorf's work on German company compliance with corporate social responsibility principles; support for Gee's 2016 workshop on Judicial Leadership in an Age of Austerity involving senior judges and civil servants); funding for travel to meet public body and NGO representatives (e.g. Johnston's work with NGOs and EU trades union in Brussels; Rühmkorf's work with German companies; Shapland's chairing of a restorative justice policy forum in Edinburgh; Burrell's participation in an International Trade Mark Association meeting in New York); access to the Impact Acceleration Account funding (e.g. Skinns, to support development of good police custody benchmarks); the provision of advice to our Impact Coordinator; and intermittent updates on external engagement and impact to all staff (e.g. at our February 2020 research away day).

The final component of our research infrastructure is the physical space in which the School is located. All our academic and professional services colleagues (including PGRs and visiting scholars) are accommodated in Bartolome House – a listed red-brick Victorian building which benefited from an extensive £466k refurbishment in 2008 and a further £189k investment in this assessment period. This means our whole research community – professional services, PGRs and academics alike – enjoy comfortable and welcoming offices, seminar rooms, communal spaces and a Moot Court, all equipped with state-of-the-art audio-visual technologies supported by our own IT team (2 FTE). These surroundings not only form a central part of our collective identity, but also make for a highly conducive environment in which to undertake our research activities and welcome external partners and users.

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

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4.1 Collaboration

Collaborative research is central to the School's identity. Every one of our colleagues enjoys membership of research networks which not only connect together academics across a range of universities and disciplines but also engage users from charities, social enterprises, government departments, judiciaries, professional bodies, media companies, international organisations, supranational institutions and global corporations, to name just a few. These networks operate at the regional level, such as the Northern Public Law Forum (Gee and Tomlinson, founders) and the N8 Policing Research Partnership (Bacon, Shapland, Skinns and White); the national level, such as the SLS and SLSA-funded Women's Legal Landmarks project (Russell) and the Howard League for Penal Reform (Farrall, Sharpe, Skinns); the European level, such as the EU-funded COST network on community sanctions and measures (Robinson) and the European Citizen Action Service and the Law Centres Network (Strumia, founder); and the international level, such as the EC Jean Monnet-funded transatlantic EU Health Law and Policy network (Hervey) and the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (Buchan).

The success of these memberships is evidenced in the collaborative nature of our research income and outputs. Our 37 research awards in this cycle included co-applicants from 23 overseas

institutions in locations including Australia, Belgium, Bhutan, China, Denmark, Germany, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain and Sweden. Of the 86 submitted outputs, 37 were co-authored with 44 academics across Europe, North America and Australasia. Furthermore, colleagues have (co)edited a range of international volumes including: Hervey's *Oxford Handbook on Comparative Health Law* (OUP), which includes contributions from 49 academics and users from 13 countries; Buchan and Tsagourias' *Research Handbook on International Law and Cyberspace* (Edward Elgar), which includes contributions from 26 academics and users from 9 countries; Kirkham's *Research Handbook on the Ombudsman* (Edward Elgar) which includes contributions from 35 academics and users from 12 countries; and Robinson's *Community Punishment: European Perspectives* (Routledge) which includes 11 contributors from 11 countries.

While these activities have been driven by the ambitions of our colleagues, they have at the same time taken shape in a School environment designed to initiate and sustain academic and user collaborations in a number of ways. For instance, colleagues access School funds to pay for their memberships and participate in the events of learned societies across the globe, including the American Society of Criminology, American Society of International Law, Asian Law and Society Association, British Society of Criminology, Constitutional Law Society, European Society of Criminology, European Society of International Law, European Union Studies Association, Industrial Law Society, Institute for Employment Rights International Society of Public Law, Latin American Society of International Law, Law and Society Association, Society of Legal Scholars and Socio-Legal Studies Association.

Furthermore, research centres fund and organise seminar series and visiting scholar programmes to bring selected academics and users into the School to share ideas and develop collaborations. SCIEL, for example, has hosted: judges from the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice; a Former Legal Advisor to the US Department of State; a member of the UN International Law Commission; a Senior Fellow at the NATO Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence; and professors from Yale, Harvard, and the US Naval War College.

Research centres also support initiatives designed to launch collaborative research. Some are more oriented towards academic collaboration. For example, SICCL – supported by the SLS – hosted 4 'Law and Money' conferences between 2014 and 2018 which brought together 45 academics from 31 Universities and 10 countries to explore financial market reform in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. Others are more oriented towards non-academic collaboration. For instance, in 2014 CCR launched the Sheffield University Policing Research Group (SUPRG) to develop collaborative relations with South Yorkshire Police (SYP). SUPRG has since organised five workshops on salient topics such as austerity policing, restorative justice, probation reform, neighbourhood policing and violence reduction and diversion, with a total of 103 participants from both institutions. SUPRG has also played a key role in delivering funded projects, most notably two N8-funded workshops on police-academic collaboration (one of which, 'Working with the Police on Policing', was turned into a special issue of the *European Journal of Policing* edited by Bacon, Shapland and Skinns) and an SYP-funded evaluation of the force's multi-agency data sharing hub (Bacon, Quinlan, Thompson). The School's policies and infrastructure therefore play a key role in cultivating and sustaining our collaborative approach to research.

4.2 Impact and engagement

Our collaborative approach to research extends to non-academic audiences too. Colleagues have created numerous pathways to impact through the dissemination of research findings to public and third sector bodies at the local, national, and international levels. In this assessment period, for

instance, colleagues have provided invited written submissions and/or consultancy to: i) UK Parliament, including the House of Commons Justice, Constitutional Affairs and Public Administration Select Committees (Farrall, Gee), the House of Lords Constitution Committee (Gee) and a range of Ombudsmen (Kirkham); ii) UK Central Government, including Special Advisors in 10 Downing Street (Gee), the Cabinet Office (Robinson), the Ministry of Justice for England and Wales (Shapland, Sharpe, Tomlinson) and the Ministry of Defence (Krajewska); iii) UK justice bodies, including the Supreme Court (Gee), Administrative Justice Council (Kirkham), College of Policing (Bacon, Shapland, Skinns, White), Her Majesty's Inspectorates of Prisons and Constabulary (Skinns), and National Police Custody Forum and Police Custody Standards Board (Skinns); iv) EU agencies, including the Biobanking and Molecular Resources Research Infrastructure (Chico), European Commission (Johnston) and European Parliament (Roger); v) International organisations, including NATO (Buchan), the OECD (Johnston), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Brown); and vi) NGOs and charities, including Amnesty International (Rühmkorf), Brexit Health Alliance (Hervey), British Medical Association (Hervey), Cancer Research UK (Hervey), Howard League for Penal Reform (Farrall), Friends of the Earth (Cullen, Xu), Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (Brown), Global Witness (Cullen, Xu) and Greenpeace (Ni Ghrianne).

Furthermore, these pathways have led to demonstrable impact over and above our impact case studies. For instance: Hervey used her research on EU health law and policy to co-draft an amendment to the EU (Withdrawal) Bill through the auspices of the Faculty of Public Health which was tabled in February 2018; Kebbell's research on money laundering was cited numerous times in a recent Law Commission consultation paper and she has participated in high-level working groups in the Law Society, Home Office and Treasury; Johnston used his research on corporate governance to inform the policy positions of the European Trade Union Institute, revise parts of the EU Shareholder Rights Directive and update the OECD Principles of Corporate Governance; Rühmkorf used his research on corporate social responsibility to create a CSR compliance ranking for the top 30 German companies which has been published in and monitored by the premier German business magazine *Fuchsbriefe;* and Burrell's research on trademarks was instrumental in changing legislation in Australia, influencing the development of Australian intellectual property case law, and reforming the international model laws produced by the International Trademark Association*.*

While using our research to effect change across state, economy and society is central to the identity of the School, we also place a high priority on public engagement more broadly, disseminating research to more general audiences through a variety of media. Farrall, for example, turned his ESRC-funded research on criminal justice under Thatcherism into a documentary called 'Generation Right' which has been screened at 17 festivals around the world and has won awards at the London Classic Film Festival, Oregon Film Awards, Mexico International Film Festival, Impact Doc Awards, Spotlight Documentary Film Awards and the Honolulu International Film Festival. Hervey similarly turned her ESRC-funded research into a documentary called 'Brexit, Health and Me'. Both Sharpe and Skinns developed their ESRC-funded projects on the criminalisation of young women and police custody, respectively, into live plays performed at ESRC Festival of Social Science events. Lastly, Gee was editor and curator of the Policy Exchange's Judicial Power Project website, organising and participating in public seminars and events, advising stakeholders and politicians.

4.3 Sustainability of the Discipline

The ambition, focus on excellence and supportive culture which run through our School also encourage our colleagues to make broader contributions towards the sustainability not only of law

and criminology but a range of other disciplines too. For instance, colleagues at all career stages have performed steering roles in learned societies in the UK and abroad, including the British Society of Criminology (Bacon, Quinlan, Skinns, White), International Society of Criminology (Shapland), South Asian Society of Criminology and Victimology (Shapland), Society of Legal Scholars (E Jones), Socio-Legal Studies Association (Blandy, Kirkham), Academic Association for Contemporary European Studies (Cardwell), International Association of Legal and Social Philosophy (Xu), Health Research Authority (Taylor) and International Bar Association (E Jones). Colleagues are also active members of research grants committees in the UK and abroad, including the ESRC (Brown, Farrall, Keren-Paz, Shapland and Skinns), AHRC (Craven, Keren-Paz, Tsagourias), MRC (Taylor), European Research Council (Taylor), Belgian Research Council (Keren-Paz, Shapland), Danish Research Grants Scheme (Hervey), Estonian Research Council (Rühmkorf), Irish Research Council (Hervey), Israel Science Foundation (Keren-Paz) and Research Grants Council of Hong Kong (Xu).

Alongside these steering roles, colleagues perform a wide variety of editorial roles on a similarly wide geographical scale. For example, 28 colleagues currently or have in this assessment period resided on the editorial board of no fewer than 46 journals. On the law side, this includes the *Journal of the Use of Force in International Law* (Buchan, Tsagourias), *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* (Tsagourias), *International Community Law Review* (Buchan), *Law, Innovation and Technology* (Taylor), *Oriental Law Review* (Xu), *Indian Law Review* (Garg) and *Health Economics, Policy and Law* (Hervey). On the criminology side, this includes the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* (Brown, Farrall)*, British Journal of Criminology* (Farrall, Robinson, Skinns and White)*, Howard Journal of Crime and Justice* (Robinson) and *Probation Journal* (Robinson). Buchan is Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of International Humanitarian Legal Studies*, Knepper was editor of the *European Journal of Criminology* and Shapland is Executive Editor of the *International Review of Victimology.* Colleagues have also reviewed manuscripts for top academic publishers including Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Palgrave, Routledge, Policy Press, Polity Press, Hart, Ashgate and Sage. Lastly, colleagues have examined over 70 PhDs both in the UK (including at Birkbeck, Bristol, Cambridge, Durham, Edinburgh, KCL, LSE, Manchester and Warwick) and overseas (including ANU, Griffiths and New South Wales in Australia; Ghent in Belgium; Simon Fraser in Canada; Shanghai Jiaotong in China; Mines ParisTech in France; Amsterdam and Maastricht in the Netherlands; Barcelona and Pompeu Fabra in Spain and Uppsala in Sweden); they have coordinated international PhD training networks (such as Shapland's role as organiser of the pan-European GERN doctoral school and Tsagourias's role as organiser of PGR workshops for the Interest Group on Peace and Security within the European Society of International Law); and they have steered interdisciplinary PhD training networks (such as Hervey's role coordinating the 'Construction of Human Perfection' PhD network which includes collaborators in Dentistry, Engineering, Psychology and English).

As a consequence of this academic standing, our colleagues have been awarded 38 visiting fellowships at UK universities (including Oxford, Cambridge, Kings College London and Warwick), international universities (including Sciences Po, Columbia, Yale and Melbourne) and a range of non-academic organisations such as US Naval War College (Tsagourias), NATO Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (Buchan), European Court of Justice (Hervey) and the European Trade Union Institute (Johnston). They have also given over 100 keynotes at events in 18 different countries across Europe, North America, Africa and Asia. These include annual conference plenaries (such as Shapland at the European Society of Criminology) as well as flagship events in other disciplines such as the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (Hervey) and the Clinical Ethics Network (Chico, Keren-Paz) annual conferences.

The excellence of our research has been formally recognised in the disciplines of law and criminology, with colleagues at all career levels being awarded prestigious prizes for their various intellectual contributions. For example, at ECR level, Tomczak's book *The Penal Voluntary Sector* won the 2017 British Society of Criminology Annual Book Prize; at the senior lecturer level, Brown's article 'Postcolonial Penality' won the 2017 *Theoretical Criminology* best article prize and Strumia was given a Young Talented Italians Award in 2017; and at the professorial level, Shapland received the BSC Outstanding Achievement Award 2013 and Blandy was elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in 2019.