

Institution: University of Sheffield
Unit of Assessment: D-26 Modern Languages and Linguistics
1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

1.1 Strategic overview

The vision of the School of Languages and Cultures (SLC) is to conduct impactful world-leading research into the relationships between language, identity, culture, and place as related to the nine European languages we offer.

We are committed to researching **national and regional contexts** and have a long-standing record of excellence in traditional disciplinary areas. Our work shapes intellectual debates in areas such as: language and culture in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; intellectual history and literary studies in France, Spain and the German-speaking countries; Latin American Studies (now incorporating USA, Brazil, Haiti and Suriname); the refraction of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural issues through the lens of lesser-studied languages and ‘smaller’ states or regions (e.g. Catalonia, Czechia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland); language variation and policy in social and political contexts (e.g. EU, Russia, Brazil). For example, in this assessment period, Dobrenko’s AHRC-funded research into Soviet culture led to two topical firsts in the field: an edited volume on the Sovietization of east European literature and a major monograph, *Late Stalinism*, as well as two international conferences at Sheffield.

Equally, the School has broadened the scope of its modern languages (ML) scholarship to encompass the **transnational**: we investigate multilingualism, translation and intercultural communication, and comparative research that includes UK/Anglophone society. This approach has yielded significant contributions addressing real-world problems. As an example, recent appointee Baumgarten’s British Academy (BA) project on reactions to accent in the UK property market resulted in an academic workshop and thematic journal issue, and has also been widely picked up in the national press, with further practical applications in the works.

Our research intersects with a broad range of humanities and social science disciplines and employs varied methodologies (text-based, archival, practice-based, corpus linguistics, digital humanities, quantitative, ethnographic, and qualitative methods). These intersections and our international perspective have allowed us to engage in innovative collaborations across the institution and beyond: our researchers are involved in projects in robotics, visual culture, ageing and dementia, education and publishing. We use our diverse language specialisms, research themes and methodologies to catalyse research synergies and underpin them with effective support across the School.

1.2 Unit structure

We have 27 staff on teaching & research (T&R) contracts, 1 research specialist, and 18 teaching specialists, supported by 7 professional services staff (one dedicated to research and PGR), with 66 postgraduate research students (PGRs) registered in the assessment period. The School promotes its transnational and transdisciplinary ambitions by supporting **research clusters** (Visual Culture; Film and Performance; Linguistics; Intellectual History and Politics; Migration, Culture and

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Community; Conflicts and their Legacies; National and Transnational Literatures), which cross-cut language specialisms and bring staff together according to the thematic focus of their research.

Research clusters act as bridges to collaborations within **research centres**, several of which are led by our staff (Bakhtin Centre, Prokhorov Centre for the Study of Central and Eastern European Intellectual and Cultural History, Centre for Linguistic Research, Centre for 19th-Century Studies, Centre for Early Modern Studies, Centre for Research in Film). At the same time, our leadership in the Centre for Dutch and Flemish Studies and Centre for Luxembourg Studies shows our commitment to the interdisciplinary study of national and regional contexts.

1.3 Reflections on strategy 2014-20

In 2014-20, we followed a four-pronged strategy to: carry out excellent research; build funding capacity; train ML researchers; and build a School-wide research culture.

Excellence in research

Staff achieved key research successes, consolidating worldwide reputations, collaborations, networks and leadership in the Anglophone world and in the regions we study. One example is Wood's AHRC and related events on football (e.g. four network events [São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Medellín] including the general public, journalists, undergraduate, MA and PhD students, early career researchers (ECRs), women players and coaches/managers, NGO workers and established academics, with participants from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Uruguay, US, Canada, Germany and UK).

In terms of research findings, our researchers have played a central role in moving forward disciplinary fields. Examples include: cultural theory (Brandist); Soviet culture (Dobrenko); ecology and literature (McCallam); language and prejudice (O'Neill); crime and culture (Swanson); undeclared work and impacts of austerity on work-family reconciliation policy in Europe (Windebank); guidance for improving second language learning, cognitive bases of language and their reflection in official guidelines and public opinion (Baumgarten, Horner, Bermel, Divjak); publishing and broadcasting as knowledge dissemination in Africa and Argentina (Small, Rea); development of female writing and networks in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Bland).

Investments in research infrastructure have further moved Sheffield to the forefront of our fields:

- **The Prokhorov Centre**, facilitated by the international reach of Dobrenko and de Berg, shows our standing in and commitment to intellectual debate. It hosts high-profile lectures and workshops, bringing together leaders in Central and East European studies and resulting in high-quality edited volumes. It has organised 4 international conferences with participants from over 12 countries. An integral part of the Centre is its fellowship programme, which every year enables semester-long research stays at Sheffield for two prominent Russian Federation scholars. The Centre organises the University's prestigious Arts and Humanities Prokhorov Lectures, while co-organising with the Philosophy department its distinguished 'God and the Good' lectures in Sheffield Cathedral. The lectures are delivered by world-leading scholars and public intellectuals, ranging from Sir Christopher Clark to Terry Eagleton, from John Lanchester to Lionel Shriver.
- **The HumLab** exemplifies our ambition to facilitate large-scale collaborative experimental research (see 3.3).

Building capacity

Our ground-breaking research has been consolidated by diversification of funding. To aid this, the School put in place structures that have enabled the transition of individual projects to larger, collective endeavours addressing significant societal questions in multidisciplinary teams.

Staff have led or participated in a range of large-scale funded projects: O'Neill's on linguistic prejudice, with partners in Brazil, Angola; Divjak's on language learning and cognition; Wood's AHRC network; Rea's *Billiken* project, with partners in Argentina; Baumgarten's collaboration with University of Southern Denmark; Bermel's collaborations with the Universities of York, Brighton, Zagreb, Tartu, Charles University Prague, Czech Language Institute, Institute for Croatian Language and Linguistics (leading to a large AHRC grant); Abbott's Baudelaire Song Project.

We have diversified support sources, and lesser-studied languages and impact-related projects have been financially and logistically supported by relevant embassies, governments and foundations (e.g. Luxembourg Embassy: Luxembourg Chair Fund; Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Czech Centre London; General Consulate of the Czech Republic Manchester; Nederlandse Taalunie; Mikhail Prokhorov Foundation; German Embassy; Austrian Embassy; Austrian Cultural Forum; Swiss Embassy; Swiss Cultural Fund; Institut Ramon Lull). As few other UK universities focus on these nations, we have a high profile in the 'home' countries: staff collaborate with local scholars, review research grants for their national agencies, and serve on boards of journals published there.

Training

We maintained and enhanced our role as a leading trainer of the next generation of ML researchers, and our School-wide research support structures, aided by new Faculty research and KE hubs, have enhanced mentoring for grant-writing, impact development and output writing.

Mentoring is available across the institution: SLC's Rea had Elizabeth Wood, Education School, as mentor for her AHRC project dealing with publications for children, and Windebank sat on the advisory board of Horodnic's Marie Curie Fellowship in the Management School. Senior staff routinely undertake research and produce outputs with more junior staff or PGRs (e.g. Windebank working with Perez-Martinez, Sociological Studies; Horner with Bellamy; P. Watt with Zepeda).

Interdisciplinarity in research and training has also benefited PGR experience, with supervisory teams being drawn from across the School and cross-departmental and cross-faculty supervision (see 2.5).

Research culture

Our objectives in REF2014 envisaged a steady state in terms of staff size, and we have adapted to the significantly changed national situation in ML in which staff numbers have reduced. We have responded to this positively by focusing on comparative and contrastive areas of expertise across languages, periods, and disciplines, and encouraging grant capture as a way of building research capacity and connectedness. This strategy also responds to an external environment in which multilingualism and cultural agility have assumed importance equal to that of the deep understanding of individual languages, cultures, or countries, and has allowed us to maintain and foster a strong research culture in a changing environment.

Our achievements were greatly supported by the completion of the project to bring together the four former language departments and the Translation and Intercultural Communication unit into a **fully-functioning, integrated School**, with a significant governance change being implemented in

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2015-16. This allowed us to take a School-wide approach to research support (e.g. School seminar series, School research fund, School-wide mentoring for output writing, grant capture and impact, School-wide research support meetings and annual review meetings).

Consolidation not only improved the efficacy of **School-level funding of research** (e.g. merging the School seminar budgets formerly devolved to departments with the School research fund), but catalysed School-wide intellectual projects leading to an enhanced research environment, and quality outputs and grant capture.

1.4 Future strategy

In the period from 2020, SLC will:

1. Support **interdisciplinary research** alongside '**traditional**' areas by facilitating exchanges of ideas and cross-fertilisation within and without the School and supporting individuals' ambitions and research needs.
2. Foster **collaborative research**, especially in translation studies, linguistics, conflict studies and illiberalism, by enabling and underwriting scoping endeavours, workshops and training, and supporting applications for funding that can realise these projects.
3. Create conditions for **agility** by encouraging and routinising responsiveness to themed priorities, calls and issues in the diverse areas we research.
4. Enhance **open research** by ensuring researchers understand its key planks and its benefits for them.
5. Increase our ability to bring research benefits to relevant stakeholders and audiences by embedding **knowledge exchange (KE)** through early engagement with impact, engagement and KE teams, facilitating training, and fostering long-term relationships with partners.

Unknowns and risks include changing priorities of funding bodies, Brexit, and COVID-19.

Opportunities include the School of East Asian Studies (SEAS) joining our Faculty in 2019, thus facilitating work across further regional and cultural boundaries, especially in the social sciences, a traditional SEAS strength; and focus on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) (see 2.4).

Success will be visible in indicators such as: outputs, impact and engagement, sources of income, profile of staff and student body, contextualized employment record of PGRs and ECRs, presence of staff on professional and other bodies, KE, OA and partnerships.

1.5 Knowledge exchange

Since 2014, our research has benefited stakeholders locally and globally, **shaping cultural output** from festivals to national broadcasters and museum exhibitions. Our public engagement and impact for non-academic users in the UK and abroad, first evidenced in REF2014, continues through our **local and international partnerships** to engage with our city, regional and international community, thereby linking the local and the global.

Our strategy has been to develop KE in our three areas of strength:

1. **Contributions to community life locally, regionally, and internationally:** Crawley Jackson and others' work on community arts engagement; Rea, Small and Ramos Villar's

with the independent publishing sector; P. Watt's on human rights with NGOs and judicial organisations; Wood's on women's football and UN gender equality; Baumgarten's with estate agents.

2. **Dissemination of knowledge** and ideas via media organisations, embassies, cultural institutes, charities, businesses, schools, and arts organisations (Williams and others). In this assessment period, strategic priorities have broadened in scope to include education outside HE (Michallat, Bermel, Rea) and commercial organisations (Rea, Baumgarten).
3. **Commercialisation** activities around intercultural communication and translation (Baumgarten), with the private sector (ZOO Digital) and with UK public services (NHS). Projects are underway that use our language and cultural knowledge to improve mental health care (Michallat, dementia care for immigrants) and assistive technology (Dobson, human/robot interaction).

Our impact strategy comprises the **established** (case studies), the **emergent** (identified pipeline studies), and the **exploratory**. There has been targeted support for developing pipeline case studies and non-case study impact activity via devolved funding and central public engagement funds; there is also support for applications to University initiatives such as Festival of the Mind. Examples include: Louwerse, O'Neill, Rea as pipeline and Michallat, Bermel as significant non-case study activity (Bermel received funding to disseminate findings to the Czech National Heritage Institute and consult with scholars at Charles University who work on language management in the private sector). Staff have been supported to form long-lasting and meaningful partnerships with stakeholders, as well as contributing to relationships established at University level.

Of the three case studies, two were in REF2014; the third represents sustained engagement with media partners supported by our School and Faculty. Thanks to these **long-term relationships**, staff have been called upon to deliver training, serve as spokespeople, and publish peer-reviewed reflections on specific areas of impact.

Impact is fully embedded into our research culture and **support mechanisms** through allocations in our workload model, giving staff timetable flexibility, and seed funding to promote partnerships and respond progressively to those that gather momentum (see 3.1. for amounts). For example, one beneficiary was Rea, whose work on publishing and education has gone from strength to strength, leading recently to one impact and one GCRF grant. Evidence for the long-term value placed on impact is the fact that Faculty Impact & KE Director Crawley Jackson is a staff member in SLC, showing leadership at institutional level.

We have **streamlined support requests** and lowered bureaucratic hurdles to the minimum requirements proportionate to the investment requested or the risk involved. This approach has improved agility, enabling some impact work to become match-funded or financially self-sufficient. For example: Crawley Jackson's work is often underpinned by in-kind investment by arts and heritage organisations; travel costs for Williams's media work are usually covered externally since content has become of proven value over time.

Finally, **students** have been closely involved in many KE projects (Michallat, Horner, Bermel), building our commitment to research partnerships into our curriculum.

1.6 Interdisciplinarity

Since 2014, we have emphasised empowering colleagues to **answer ‘big questions’ in collaborative mode** in areas such as globalisation and multilingualism, while supporting **language and country-specific research**, which we still regard as core to our mission, to continue to thrive.

Our transnational focus and research clusters complement period- or genre-based research and facilitate interdisciplinary work. We have brought together staff, PGRs and visiting scholars from diverse areas to promote innovative transdisciplinary work, examples being the 2019 Translating Thought/Translating Literature conference jointly with English, and the Todorov conference and edited volume.

In order to encourage interdisciplinarity, a **School Seminar Series** was established, replacing the previous language-specific programmes. It draws speakers hosted by language sections and clusters, exemplifying this intercalation of culture-specific and thematic research interests and catalysing the emergence of cross-cutting projects in alignment with School priorities. The series facilitates networking and collaborations with high-profile and emerging external speakers, often from the countries whose languages we are studying, as well as opportunities for our own staff and PGRs to present their work.

Furthermore, this re-organisation has released **funding for research support**, allowing for early exploration of longer-term research plans, support for output production, KE collaborations and grant possibilities.

The clusters, seminar series and Prokhorov initiatives have fostered new relationships and developments, e.g. the idea for Bermel’s successful AHRC ‘Feast and Famine’ bid was the direct result of a cluster research seminar in which Co-I Dunstan Brown was invited. The approach has also spawned interdisciplinary Migration and Linguistics cluster events leading to associated grant capture and GCRF successes.

We have sought to work **with and across University and Faculty groupings**: e.g. SLC is an innovator in digital-humanities research, working closely with the Faculty’s Digital Humanities Institute (on projects such as the dataset of song settings for the Baudelaire Song Project). Staff in SLC were the driving force behind the creation of the Humlab (see 3.3), an interdisciplinary facility for the Languages, English, Music and Philosophy departments and those with a research interest in cognition (linking the humanities with the sciences).

1.7 Open research

As detailed in REF5a, Sheffield has a **long-standing commitment to open research**. We have exemplary systems, including a repository (WRRO) that is shared with the Universities of Leeds and York for maximum impact, a mediated deposit service to reduce the burden on researchers while ensuring compliance with copyright and other stipulations, and a data repository built on the leading Figshare platform.

Our strategy in this assessment period was to build on this framework to **foster an open research environment**. We appointed an OA Coordinator to advocate and to promote culture change among staff and PGRs. We introduced open research into the induction programme of new staff and mandated PGR training modules in ‘Open Access’, ‘Research Data Management’ and ‘Copyright and Licensing’ to embed open research early in academic careers. Since 2008 we have also required PGRs to deposit theses in our eThesis repository, with appropriate embargoes available for commercial or political sensitivities.

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To ensure maximum discoverability of our research, we aim to put all **short-form outputs** in WRRO (green route). The 177 outputs deposited over this assessment period were downloaded over 12,000 times. This is our preferred route, ensuring equity in publishing opportunities regardless of available funding; we also publish outputs in fully OA journals, or hybrid where required for funder compliance. Further, we expect staff to join Publons and secure an ORCID so that they can share information effectively and receive recognition for their shared data sets, publications, grants, and peer review work.

As a discipline that publishes monographs alongside journal articles, we are looking to the challenges, and opportunities, for open publishing of **long-form outputs**. For example, our first fully open monograph (Michallat) was published in the innovative White Rose University Press; Rea has a contract for another.

1.8 Research integrity

We have high professional expectations of researchers as concerns research integrity. These are based on the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity, and overseen by the Senate Research & Innovation Ethics Committee. The ethics policy covers all forms of research throughout the unit, and includes, e.g., the need to obtain ethics approval for any work involving humans, the provision of case study materials to support unit training in ethics and integrity, and the Policy on Good Research and Innovation Practices.

We face a number of challenges specific to our international focus, whether that be working in dangerous environments (e.g., narco-trafficking in Latin America) or engaging with racial and cultural differences and interviewing for linguistic research. For this reason, all staff and PGRs research with an ethics dimension is reviewed by panels of three staff in a rigorous, iterative process. All our PGR students take a mandatory 'Research Ethics and Integrity' module as part of the Doctoral Development Programme. The Research Ethics Lead sits on the Research Committee, advises on all aspects of ethics and integrity, and ensures compliance with procedures. The fact that all academic staff are trained ethics reviewers means that everyone engages with the process, making ethics and integrity part of everyday business.

2. People

2.1 Staffing strategy

Our staffing strategy has aimed to ensure **variety and depth** in subject areas covered and promote a **modern and global focus**. We have achieved this by consolidating areas of excellence, promoting a School-wide perspective and supporting the advancement of early career colleagues.

We have a well-balanced **staffing profile** in terms of the seniority of the current complement of 27 staff on T&R contracts, eight of whom are professors, three readers, nine senior lecturers, seven lecturers, as well as our one current research assistant. Since 2014, we have appointed six research associates and one research assistant on a fixed-term basis to work on funded projects. We have exercised realism in the face of the contextual challenges presented by the sector-wide decline in ML undergraduate numbers. Since 2014 the School has faced the challenge of restrictions in our ability to make new appointments to replace high-profile T&R staff who have retired (8) or left the University for career enhancement (4). However, this is a well-documented national picture for ML, and we have responded strategically by concentrating on strengths,

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distinctive offer and sustainability, while also focussing on supporting and retaining earlier-career staff as well as attracting potential talented new colleagues via external schemes.

Since 2010, our strategy has been to **recruit ECR staff** to replace senior colleagues. This strategy has been successful with those appointed having notable achievements in this assessment period: all produced high-quality outputs; P. Watt has provided a case study once again; Rea was awarded two AHRC and one BA grant and has a pipeline case study; O'Neill has secured BA and GCRF funding. Our recruitment strategy has had two further specific objectives: promote **emerging areas (applied linguistics; intercultural communication)**; and strengthen high-quality research that will lead to **powerful impact and engagement**. The two T&R appointments that we made (Baumgarten, Williams) have expanded our field of inquiry and promoted cross-sectional and interdisciplinary collaboration and the generation of impact. Williams is providing one of our 2020 ICSs and was appointed School KE Lead while still a Vice-Chancellor's fellow (see also 2.2 below). The appointment of Baumgarten in the strategic area of Applied Linguistics (the first T&R appointment in intercultural communication and translation) allows collaboration with colleagues working in language sections specialising in linguistics (e.g. O'Neill, Horner) with a focus on the themes of inequality and prejudice in relation to post-colonialism and migration, and has also prompted literature and culture scholars to work on translation (Johnson, McCallam).

2.2 Staff support and development

We place much emphasis on developing staff as researchers and PGR supervisors. Through a variety of mechanisms, we help staff plan ambitious research, whether individual or collaborative, and provide the support required (see 1.3. for examples of positive outcomes from these measures).

Workload planning for each member of staff is guided by the workload model. The allocation for research has been increased during the assessment period, and all staff have one research day per week and regular study leave. There is an enhanced workload allocation for KE and impact activity. We are moving to new software this year to make the workload allocation process more transparent and equitable.

Study and special leave are regarded strategically by School and Faculty. Projects must fit with School priorities and have a realistic set of deliverables. Staff are eligible to apply for study leave after six semesters of service, but this is flexible depending on strategic priorities. One example is Dobson's monograph project, work on which was prioritised by bringing forward study leave.

For **grant-holders**, we operate a policy that gives partial relief from other duties to concentrate on research, determined by the School's workload formula. This retains the principle that research income is an expectation in an academic research role, whilst providing an incentive to apply.

Probation is a compulsory three-year period during which probationers have support, guidance, and regular monitoring from a mentor in addition to their line manager and section lead. For staff at all career stages, the quality of outputs and related activities (including impact) is monitored and supported by the DDRI (Director of Research and Innovation) directly, in conjunction with the REF co-ordinator, the Director of KE and the Head of School (HoS) via: research support meetings, targeted mentoring schemes and training opportunities, output tracking and assessment, REF stocktakes, Staff Development and Review Scheme, reward and recognition, accelerated increments, promotion, and professorial annual review. A new framework for Academic Career Pathways (ACP) was introduced in 2019 to improve the transparency of promotion criteria and explicitly recognise the various components of an academic role. ACP articulates a core expectation that staff will produce excellent research outputs, while allowing them to specialise in

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other types of research activity at particular times in their careers (grant capture; impact activity; contribution to their wider discipline).

ECRs receive targeted career support through School structures, policies, and practices. ECRs have more allocated research time and lower-than-average teaching loads during probation. ECRs can access mentoring from the Faculty or wider University, and staff in SLC provide such mentoring across the institution (e.g. Rea as beneficiary of mentoring from Education for AHRC grant; Dobson, Swanson, Windebank as mentors in other faculties and UCML). ECRs gain professional experience by: contributing to research-led teaching (where their fellowships allow); playing active roles in centres; initiating, fundraising for, and running events, conferences and networks. All ECRs can access the institution's award-winning Think Ahead researcher development programme, which provides professional development opportunities corresponding to areas articulated in Vitae's Researcher Development Framework. A dedicated professional lead provides individual support to identify appropriate training and development opportunities for specific needs. Alongside this, a specialist careers consultant for researchers offers a career development programme and one-to-one career consultations. Think Ahead also offers a mentoring scheme and comprehensive wellbeing programme. There is compulsory dual supervision of doctoral students in the School, ensuring new academics learn best practice from more experienced staff. ECRs and probationers have opportunities to supervise PhD students. This has proved to be a successful strategy (e.g. Williams's success in securing WRoCAH funding – see below – for his third PGR student in 2020).

Our outstanding support for ECRs is demonstrated by the case of Williams, appointed via the Vice-Chancellor's Fellowship scheme, a cross-departmental recruitment process modelled on the ERC Starting Grant, with three rounds of interview. The programme included bespoke training on project management, assertiveness, time management, and other topics. Williams benefited from three years of research-intensive time, with teaching duties phased into his workload over that period. The programme was supplemented by time out to participate in the (competitive) AHRC New Generation Thinker and Working with Government schemes. A dedicated member of professional services mentored professionalisation and fellows were under yearly performance review. Williams was supported by accelerating his move onto probation, a permanent lectureship as foreseen by the original appointment, and promotion to senior lecturer within one year of transition.

2.3 Support for KE

Encouragement of and support for KE activity are fully integrated into School research structures (see section 1.5).

Faculty's robust system for stimulating and supporting staff with KE is led by SLC's Crawley Jackson, who herself has extensive experience of working with business, law firms, arts and heritage bodies and community projects. She has driven a culture of KE and informally mentored Williams in taking the lead at School-level. Crawley Jackson's work with Museums Sheffield has resulted in a reassessment of their international collection and contemporary commissioning practice. Such shifts in curatorial practices benefit broad local audiences and reframe the museums' collaborations with local contemporary artist communities.

Information and advice regarding **exchanges with industry, third-sector or public bodies** is disseminated across the School and targeted at appropriate individuals, with less experienced colleagues often onboarding via existing projects. For example, McCallam was HEIF-funded Academic in Residence at the Graves Gallery, which involved public talks and a now-permanent public video. Rea, with AHRC and University funding, has worked closely with an Argentine

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publishing house, set up a series of community events aimed at children's education, and produced children's books on animal tales and great Latin American women. This work has benefited diverse communities in its critical re-evaluation of the value of children's magazines, but also in its accessible assertion of women's role in history and culture. Wood, via AHRC and Newton projects, has worked with São Paulo's Museu de Futebol and Buenos Aires-based feminist football NGO La Nuestra to drive public debate and policy on the profile of women's sport. Staff participate in University, Faculty or other initiatives (e.g. Festival of the Mind; Festival of Social Science; Being Human; Off the Shelf).

We **maximised potential impact from research** via HEIF funding, workload relief and flexibility of attendance. A number of staff have been supported in ongoing projects, under review since 2016, and we will intensify our work with any potential case-study authors. Impact is one of two optional research criteria for the ACP framework.

2.4 EDI strategy

SLC's strategic aims are to: promote diversity at recruitment stage and throughout career progression; retain staff via flexible working options; embed diversity awareness in all its practices.

Our staff are drawn from a wide range of social and national contexts. Of our T&R and research-specialist staff, 35.7% are international. In managing applications, we welcome well-qualified applicants whose academic trajectory has been interrupted through caring responsibilities or other career breaks. Strategies include: the Two-Ticks scheme that guarantees interviews to all applicants with disabilities who meet essential criteria; and mandatory appointment-panel chair training covering issues of diversity and disability.

Currently 25% of professors, 75% of readers / senior lecturers and 71% of our lecturers are women. There was gender balance in T&R appointments during the assessment period. Two of the three professors appointed were women; two of three Heads since the 2015/16 governance changes have been women; and two of four DDRIs in the assessment period have been women. Women in the School hold high-profile roles within and outside the institution and are active in networks to promote women in their disciplines. Johnson and Crawley Jackson hold Faculty posts for postgraduate and KE respectively. Women in the School have held significant leadership roles at national / international level (e.g. editorships: Dobson, Windebank; national representation of their language specialisms: Louwerse; leadership of national bodies: Johnson, Windebank).

We support flexible working in line with Faculty and University principles. Needs for caring time are dealt with through: timetabling; timing of research activities; and otherwise informally. Four T&R staff have taken parental leave in this assessment period. One (Rea) has benefited from the Women Academic Returners Programme (see REF5a) and opted to work on a 0.5 FTE contract on a yearly rolling basis as allowed under the University flexible working policy and accompanying legislation. This support and flexibility have contributed to Rea's research successes. Additionally, workload and workflow are adjusted to allow staff to engage in activities outside the institution to enhance their career development (e.g. for Williams' media engagements). In all reward and recognition procedures, periods of leave for caring or medical reasons are fully taken into consideration. Under the new ACP, staff working part-time can select whether to be judged on all criteria in an appropriate pro-rata manner, or reduce the number of criteria against which to be assessed.

The School examines all its administrative roles, interview panels, committee membership, and seminar speakers to ensure gender parity and will extend that approach to inclusion of people with all protected characteristics. EDI is a fixed agenda item on all committees. The School has a

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designated HR officer with whom the Head works closely on HR / wellbeing issues. We also have academic representation on the Faculty EDI Committee.

SLC's research seminars and other research events have included speakers from across Europe, the USA, South America, and East Asia. Speakers have come from high- and middle-income countries, as well as regions such as Georgia (supported by Erasmus Crossways funding). The specific characteristics of gender balance and ethnicity are considered when inviting guests; many of the topics explicitly consider the application of ML research to equality issues (e.g. period poverty, ecology and social disadvantage, linguistic discrimination, otherness in literature). The nominations process is inclusive, soliciting input from PGRs. For example, O'Neill's three-day workshop on 'Language, Prejudice, Social Exclusion and Development' had 22 talks, including 11 speakers from Brazil, Angola, Mozambique and the Bahamas, and around an equal White and minority ethnic split.

All staff undertake a risk assessment for research travel and can indicate any risks associated with disability. If visitors have access or other requirements, then these are communicated to their contact here. Events with external speakers have separate risk assessments. All our recruitment procedures have Two-Ticks processes (including for research assistants). PGR applications invite candidates to signal disabilities.

In preparing for REF2021, the School has carefully followed the Code of Practice, ensuring internal assessors received appropriate training, and respected gender parity in the constitution of the assessors panel. Analysis of our planned submission (including internal ratings) was subject to an equality impact assessment which did not reveal any differences for groups. All meetings where REF-related business is conducted or research policy is formulated include mandatory EDI reflection to flag the impact of decisions on protected groups.

2.5 PGR recruitment and support

We have recruited high-quality PGR students to high-quality projects (66 PGRs registered in this assessment period). In doing so, we achieved a vibrant and sustainable research environment and PGR community with capacity in core strengths. PGR students from the UK, Europe, Latin America and Asia form an integral part of the School's research culture, demonstrating our international reach and reputation.

We worked with home and international applicants to develop excellent funding applications, securing funding from a wide range of sources including 11 studentships from the AHRC Doctoral Training Programme and 9 from the Wolfson Foundation. Two students were funded through the endowed Chair in Luxembourg Studies and one student secured a University Prize Studentship.

As part of our commitment to a diverse and international cohort, we have targeted and worked closely with strong, funded overseas applicants who (can) fit our expertise, helping them develop suitable proposals for study and driving forward our own ambitions and objectives. We have had students sponsored for example by the Syrian, Iraqi and Indonesian governments, and also encouraged and regularly accepted visiting PGRs through Erasmus+, 'Swiss Mobility', and individual agreements.

We are working on making our undergraduate dissertation module, Sheffield University Research Experience scheme projects and MA programmes, especially the new MA in Modern Languages and Cultures (MAMLC) more effective as PGR feeders; further promoting our interdisciplinary and international expertise for second supervision for projects housed in other departments; and using our research clusters to create/supervise innovative PhD projects. We offer the opportunity for

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part-time study, an important indicator of our commitment to improving access and enhancing the diversity of the PGR cohort. Currently 36% of our doctoral students are studying part-time.

We have operated the high admissions standards necessary to ensure that accepted students produce internationally excellent research. Induction has been revamped and there was a score of 100% for satisfaction relating to this in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2019, an increase of 45% since PRES2013. All students have a second supervisor and we engage in cross-Faculty second-supervisor arrangements: 19 students had co-supervision from 12 departments (e.g. with History, English, Journalism, Management, Geography, Computer Science). Each has a separate personal tutor, and we continue to enhance the PGR student experience, with particular reference to mental health and employability. Supervisions take place monthly at a minimum. Students undertake a training needs analysis and one of their supervisors is nominated as responsible for doctoral training, reviewing progress with their supervisees regularly and assisting with their data management plans. Nine months into their programme, students complete a substantial confirmation review; thereafter, progress is monitored formally at biannual review meetings. All students are offered a mock viva. Submission rates are good (81% for students first registered in 2012-16), with 36 degrees awarded in this assessment period.

PGR students feed back on their experience via: Research Committee; Student Staff Committee; Graduate Affairs Committee; and the Faculty equivalents.

The School has an excellent track record in postgraduate research culture. Research clusters have both a staff and PGR lead. Our postgraduates organise conferences, guest speakers, reading groups, writing retreats and have a strong presence on the international conference circuit and produce major publications or impact and engagement outputs. They have edited and contributed to an in-house journal *Track Changes*. Some have won international prizes (e.g. Almanza's AHGBI Publication Prize and Trueman's María A. Salgado Essay Prize).

We have actively supported students to move into employment. Recognising the challenging climate for entering the profession, we offer former PhD students affiliate status to help the transition to employment, or an honorary research fellowship to support ongoing collaboration with the School – thereby providing vital support at a critical stage in their careers, with access to research resources, mentoring and institutional support via the University's Professional Development Programme and Think Ahead framework for ECRs. Researcher employability projects have been built into WRoCAH studentships. In terms of future careers, we provide support and advice on a range of options (around 30% go into non-academic careers). During the current assessment period, PGRs have progressed to academic or related posts: e.g. as lecturers, teaching fellows, postdoctoral researchers, research fellows, and a research calls coordinator, head of language laboratories, translator and translation manager, policy and data analyst, editor, and a research librarian, in e.g. the UK, Germany, Spain, Mexico, Iraq.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3.1 Funding strategy

Our **strategic approach** to income capture, reflecting objectives in §1 above, is to: encourage a culture of longer-term planning through which staff develop and pursue large-scale ideas; and build on existing strengths to address societal challenges, often through targeted schemes. Staff are supported to gain experience with smaller-scale local and external grants, building a track record and confidence that can lead to more ambitious applications, and to use smaller pots for

exploratory work underpinning a larger application. As an example, ECR Williams was successfully supported to apply for internal small grants totalling £19,500, resulting in external grant applications of £494,291 (Leverhulme, BA, AHRC, Wellcome Trust).

1. **Mechanisms:** we provide mentoring and grant-writing support and Faculty research support staff (1.8 FTE) help target suitable grant schemes and obtain expert feedback on drafts through the Faculty Peer Review College. Input from the Faculty Research Hub since its founding in 2019 has deepened support for matching funding opportunities and—crucially—helped maintain momentum through the application process. The Hub also underpins efforts at increased agility, matching research to challenge-led funding. Targeted help is available for data management plans, impact and technical solutions. Funding capture is rewarded through the ACP, which formalises an expectation that all academic staff apply for external research funding.
2. **Financial support:** Staff can draw on the School **Research Support Fund** (RSF, £19,168 allocated in 2014-2019) and the **Faculty Research Application Fellowships** (FRAFs, £5,423 allocated to SLC in 2016-2020). Both provide seed funding that will result in larger research projects supported by external funds. From 2019, we have offered larger **RSF** sums to groups of staff for collaborative projects that could lead to grant capture. This led to two successful multi-year bids for research workshops, one on linguistic variation and language attitudes, and one on visual representations of conflict. Five **FRAFs** and Faculty Small Grants have been awarded to SLC staff, leading to a range of activity including one external award application and a number in preparation.

Grant applications that emerged from a strong impact and research base have been supported via RSF (AHRC KE scheme 2018; AHRC Research Project scheme 2019; BA/Wolfson scheme 2019; Leverhulme Prize scheme 2019 x2).

SLC **KE and impact projects** have been funded by HEIF to the value of £26,702.

3. **Social priorities:** Working with the Faculty internationalisation lead (Wood from SLC), the School has encouraged applications to **GCRF** schemes, several of which have borne fruit (e.g. O'Neill for projects on language, prejudice, social exclusion and development; Wood on women's sport; Rea on post-pandemic education and on Latin American women). Further work is planned with partners in Francophone countries in West Africa (S. Watt, Small, Crawley Jackson). Wood has promoted and supported applications across the Faculty (e.g. Cespedes and Dibben in Music were awarded Academy of Medical Sciences GCRF Network funding for a project on social impacts of music-making in Colombia, including a comparative component with football).
4. **Institutional context:** Opportunities for further collaboration, internally funded in the first instance but with potential for external funding, include the Faculty's **Co-Constructing Humanities** and **Language Analytics** initiatives. The School's research staff have engaged actively to shape these priorities, with Crawley Jackson's work on representations of place in the first instance, and Baumgarten, Bermel and O'Neill's ongoing projects in linguistic analysis in the second.

A key change over this period is the accounting around grants with **indirect costs**. Faculty policy now gives clear and explicit guidelines on how grantees will be released from work and how that work will be carried forward without detriment to other colleagues.

3.2 Funding overview

Research income has grown by 38% from £1.07m over the REF2014 period to £1.48m in this assessment period, with the value of new awards won growing from £1.50m to £1.91m. In the previous assessment period, we had £325k pp (£12.8M) in applications and £40k per head (£1.5M) in awards, with 37 staff returned. In the current period, we had £420k pp (£11.56M) in applications and £79k per head (£1.91M) in awards, with 27 Category A staff submitted.

Major grants awarded during the assessment period include: Abbott, Bermel, Crawley Jackson, Divjak, Dobrenko, Rea, Wood. With our strategy to expand income, we have achieved larger-scale AHRC and Leverhulme grants and smaller awards have been used to great effect from a variety of other sources, e.g. AHRC, BA, WUN, GCRF, Newton, Thyssen, Prokhorov, Wellcome.

As part of our strategy to expand and diversify income, we also have sought and received **funding from embassies** to support our research and impact.

A strategic push was made to secure **funded PGR places** (see 2.5). As the AHRC is our major source of external funding via the WRoCAH DTP consortium of Leeds, York and Sheffield and the process is highly competitive, we selected candidates for support realistically with a view to the College's guidelines. All applications put forward for consideration underwent rigorous review prior to submission by both supervisors and the PGR director. We work similarly with highly qualified overseas candidates to prepare applications for the University's overseas scholarships, and give careful consideration, with input from the PGR director and at least one potential supervisor, to all overseas applicants with secured funding. The School has also worked successfully with CONACYT (Mexico). As one of only two UK universities in the Erasmus MUNDUS Crossways in Cultural Narratives programme, involving 12 partner universities, we managed to recruit three excellent PGRs to our School and Faculty.

3.3 Research infrastructure

Major facilities and new investment have enabled excellent research. In summer 2016, following a £212k investment, the **HumLab** was opened. This Faculty research facility is used primarily by staff and PGRs in SLC, English, Music, and Philosophy. It comprises a soundproof testing 'box', high-spec computers with software for experimental research, and eye-tracking equipment. Divjak played a crucial role in the successful outcome. The Faculty hosts an annual open house at HumLab - a 1-day cross-disciplinary symposium on cognition, language, and music research. The Centre for Linguistics Research organises joint seminars and training days using HumLab. Bermel's new AHRC project also draws on its facilities.

We work closely with the **Humanities Research Institute** (HRI), which supports collaboration and interdisciplinary initiatives, offering a purpose-built venue for seminars, workshops and international conferences. The **Digital Humanities Institute** (DHI), comprising seven staff, develops leading-edge ICT applications for arts and humanities research. SLC-DHI collaborations have brought applications of multimedia research to scholars and the public through innovative and intuitive interfaces (Abbott's Baudelaire Song Project, Divjak's Polish learning materials).

Staff in the School benefit from the University's well-stocked **research libraries** which hold 1.5 million volumes and subscribe to a wide range of digital content across our languages, e.g. the CAIRN platform giving access to a wide range of French-language journals. Library funding is allocated broadly pro rata across research areas, with priority given to new initiatives, for which the Library provides earmarked resource. Since 2014, the University Library has spent £5m on research acquisitions and access. Holdings include the National Fairground Archive (including

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materials on the Russian and Soviet circus) and special collections such as the Bakhtin Centre Collection, the Peter King Collection for Dutch, the 'Private Presses Collection' with rare poems by Matisse, the Madeleine Blaess Papers, and a major collection of 'Bandes dessinées'. These support our research and funding applications and attract visiting national and international researchers. The unique research and impact possibilities are demonstrated by Pugh's PhD on the Blackpool Sideshow and Michallat's OA Blaess project.

Each full-time PGR has a **dedicated workspace** in the School, with storage, bookshelf, and computer. Further shared space for PGRs is available in the HRI, enabling our PGRs to mix with other researchers from throughout the Faculty. We responded to COVID-19 by offering students new COVID-secure space at the Graduate Research Centre.

We benefit from the shared **Faculty IT pool**, who support the HumLab, research project websites, staff research computing needs and the needs of research-led teaching. We have access to upwards of 10 TB secure data storage per staff member.

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

4.1 Collaborations

Collaboration forms an integral part of our research vision and is enacted through our bringing together of the local and the global through our extensive range of partnerships and the international scope and impact of our research and KE projects.

International collaboration is central to our research vision via papers, lectures and conferences, edited books, jointly written essays, exchanges, overseas residencies, and fellowships (Brandist, Dobrenko). Formal inter-University partnerships with, e.g. Charles University, Prague and Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, relationships, via Brandist, with institutions in India and less formal links are actively sustained to support strategic opportunities for future collaboration in areas of our expertise e.g. Bermel's AHRC-funded project.

Colleagues are involved in funded international research networks (e.g. Wood, O'Neill, Rea, Bermel, Divjak), which pursue inclusive engagement with diverse communities and publics, from children and young adults to courts, policymakers and media audiences. Our international partnerships have worked with important institutions to extend their reach, improve their accessibility and inform policy bodies:

- Rea's collaboration with *Billiken* in Argentina has resulted in **major publications** and events that have inspired a national reassessment of this venerable children's publication.
- Bermel's work on language at heritage sites has had direct impact on the public-facing materials used at two castles in the Czech Republic. This research has **informed policymakers** in the regional directorate of the National Heritage Institute and current projects involve the participation of **language planning bodies** in Czechia and Croatia.
- O'Neill's work on linguistic prejudice has **informed the influencers of standard-language discourse** in Brazil, Angola, and Mozambique.
- Baumgarten's research into the effect of accent in interactions in the property market received **substantial media coverage** in the UK and Germany.

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- Wood's work on women and girls in sport has **raised awareness** in Latin American societies through talks at cultural institutions in the UK and South America. His project forms a case study in the 'Heritage for Global Challenges' report recommending future directions for A&H research on behalf of UKRI/ AHRC, GCRF and UNESCO.
- Windebank's work is cited in **EU and national policy briefings** on undeclared work and domestic services (e.g. report of the French Conseil d'Orientation pour l'Emploi).
- P. Watt's work on Mexico's drug wars, including numerous **expert witness appearances** in legal proceedings here and the US, has extensive human rights impact.

Research in SLC has been **disseminated via international media**. Swanson's work on *Latin Noir* with Anemon / ARTE (Europe and Mexico) has led to a **documentary**, premiering at the Miami Film Festival. Williams's work with international media organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic led to the production of **podcasts** for the Austrian Cultural Forum. Wood and P.Watt have provided expertise on **UK and international TV news coverage** on girls' football and Mexico's drug wars respectively.

Closer to home, public dissemination of an '**outside**' **perspective**, orthogonal to UK-centred discourse, forms a coherent thread in our activities. Williams's work across **BBC Radio 3, 4, World Service** and with **newspapers and broadcasters** has used examples of culture, consumption, and luxury across Europe to bring historical perspectives to current trends, while the **Prokhorov public lectures** have brought high-profile visitors, many with a non-UK perspective, to speak on cultural phenomena (access is augmented by illuminating recorded interviews led by Centre director de Berg). Staff have contributed to programmes on cultural history (McCallam on **Radio 4's In Our Time**) and on live political issues (P.Watt on **BBC** and **Sky News**). Participation in current debates on language, immigration, and identity have benefited from SLC expertise (Swanson, Horner and Louwerse on **BBC, Dutch radio, Financial Times** and **Chinese Press**) and contributions to **The Conversation** have been impactful (an article by Goergen was widely shared by other news organisations).

Local and inclusive dissemination of our research has been sustained and developed. Longstanding collaborations with the Showroom Cinema (Dobson, Bermel, Swanson); Sheffield Museums (McCallam, Crawley Jackson) and national partnerships with Wedgwood (Williams); the British Library (Louwerse); National Football Museum (Wood); and the National Rail Museum (Crawley Jackson) ensure contact and KE with a broad set of audiences. **Outreach** to young people has formed a key aspect of our research. In addition to Rea's work on children's magazines, Michallat's research into Madeline Blaess, a Yorkshirewoman who spent the war years as a student in Paris, has resulted in online materials and work packs for French language in schools; Dobson and Swanson's work on film has provided resources and training for schools and teachers on using film in the ML classroom.

Our consistent approach to collaboration is to prioritise activities around impact and **knowledge exchange**. We enhance KE by: having our KE Lead audit activities as a baseline for scaling up selected partnerships; mapping how our work with embassies and other bodies (e.g. Herbert Hughes Memorial Trust) develops our KEF agenda; identifying informal partnerships with universities around the world with a view to formalisation; strengthening partnerships with companies that provide placements; developing CPD and consultancy activity based on our expertise, particularly in applied languages. Projects on intercultural communication with AV dubbing and subtitling companies explore CPD training for enhancing dubbing performance (Baumgarten). Staff have leveraged grants to support further KE and research activity. For

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

example, Williams's Wellcome Small Grant led to a co-authored article published as gold OA, a BBC Arts video, commentary in an Indian broadsheet and coverage by US media.

We are evolving a sustainable and dynamic **social media strategy** to exploit opportunities for research news-making to alert stakeholders, general-public and media to new findings, publications or events, and we make strategic use of the University Media Team to increase the reach of our research in local, national and international outlets.

4.2 Leadership

We support and drive forward our language and related subject area disciplines through providing leadership to **academic associations and journals**. In the assessment period, our staff have held leading positions (30) in subject associations such as: President of the Society for Latin American Studies (Wood), President and Honorary President of the Association for the Study of Modern and Contemporary France (Windebank); President of the Anglo-Catalan Society (Johnson). These roles ensure the dynamic and inclusive development of these fields. Nine staff have held positions as editor of leading journals or advisory boards, including *French Screen Studies* (Dobson) and *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* (Windebank); and 13 posts on editorial boards across three continents. Staff's service on review panels for UKRI funding councils and work on institutional reviews demonstrates a proactive participation in the future of our disciplines.

4.3 Other research and societal contributions

Members of the School are regularly awarded positions as **visiting scholars** (at least 10), contributing to the international development of our disciplines, e.g. Senior Research Fellowship, Slavic-Eurasian Research Centre University of Hokkaido, Japan; Fernand Braudel Senior Fellowship, European University Institute, Florence; EURIAS Senior Research Fellowship, Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, Vienna; Senior Fellowship, Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften, Universität Vienna; Fellowship, New York University Jordan Center.

We ensure the profile and development of our disciplines by acting as **reviewers** for journals and book publishers and grant applications, approaching 200 internationally. Swanson has written a large number of book endorsements. Staff in the School have delivered up to 50 keynote speeches and almost 400 papers (over 200 invited), over 30 public lectures and over 100 media appearances across all continents. Members of the School have organised nearly 100 events, from the local to the international, including conferences, exhibitions and public events.

Colleagues have been involved in agenda-setting research activities (e.g. Brandist, de Berg, Dobrenko, Swanson, on Soviet Language and Culture, World Literature, Magical Realism); and residential fellowships (Dobrenko, Prokhorov Fellows). We contribute expertise on important timely debates: on language and racial prejudice (O'Neill); sport and inclusion (Wood); research policy development (Baumgarten, Horner); future of humanities (Dobson) and transnationalism (Swanson). Wood has been an expert witness with the FA on an alleged racism case in the Premier League, and P. Watt served as expert witness on human rights cases in the UK and USA. There are also contributions to: sustainability and (inter)national priorities: e.g. resources (Michallat); environment (Crawley-Jackson); development in Latin America (O'Neill, P. Watt, Wood); media (Williams, Swanson, McCallam, Rea).

Staff in the School are regularly recognised for their contributions to disciplines as: assessors for tenure and chairs across the world (up to 30); PhD external examiners (50 across 12 countries); and 5 national awards, including the equivalent of a knighthood from the Netherlands (Louwerse).