

Institution: University of East Anglia
Unit of Assessment: 20 - Social Work and Social Policy
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>1.1 Social work and social policy research at UEA: context and structure</p> <p>The UEA Social Work and Social Policy unit of assessment (UoA) has a long history of research funding, research excellence and impact in key areas of policy and practice affecting vulnerable children, families and older people. Enabled through partnerships with government bodies, professional stakeholders, and individuals and groups who are end-users of social work/social policies, our research and impact addresses local, national and international issues. Researching social work and social policy requires an interdisciplinary focus and the majority of our research involves academic interdisciplinary collaboration and/or partnerships with stakeholders in social work, health, education, and the judiciary; our researchers come from a wide range of academic backgrounds including social work, sociology, psychology, economics, and criminology.</p> <p>Eleven members of staff are submitted (8.9FTE). Eight are based in the School of Social Work (Brandon, Cook, Cossar, Dickens, Larsson, Philip, Neil and Schofield) and they are joined by Nobes (Psychology), Hancock (Norwich Medical School) and Penhale (Health Sciences). Our research is focused on vulnerable people across the age range with two key foci: (1) vulnerable children and families (2) vulnerable and disabled older people. Our child and family research is located within the interdisciplinary Centre for Research on Children and Families (CRCF), hosted in the School of Social Work and now in its 24th year. The work of our 11 category A staff has been enabled and supported by a stable pool of experienced researchers and academic colleagues on teaching and scholarship (ATS) contracts across the four Schools in which staff are located.</p> <p>Research into vulnerable children and families is led by our eight Social Work colleagues, plus Nobes. Hancock and Penhale work on vulnerable older people with multi-disciplinary teams and partners from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMH). Hancock's work concerns older and disabled people at risk of poverty and inadequate care, and she is a member of the Health Economics Group at UEA. Penhale, a member of the Dementia and Complexity in Later Life Group, has focused on safeguarding older people from abuse.</p> <p>1.2 Our research: Progress on meeting our strategic aims and future goals</p> <p>In 2015 we reviewed our research strategy as set out in the REF2014 submission with the help of leading academics from within and outside UEA; this review drew on learning from REF2014 results. As a small but strong unit with successful senior colleagues, our overarching challenge has been to strengthen and expand our core areas of interest whilst drawing in new colleagues and building new collaborations to ensure our future excellence. Hence our key aims since 2015 have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to build on the strength of our research leaders, in terms of our grant income, impact work and high-quality outputs • to recruit, support and encourage the next generation of academics and researchers • to develop new projects and collaborations within our core field of vulnerable individuals and families <p>The vitality of our work is evidenced by the number, range and quality of our projects, impact activities and outputs. This has been supported by £12.2m worth of funding (active projects) of which £8.1m million were new awards during the REF period. Our sustainability rests on long</p>

careers at UEA of our leaders, and the promising next generation of researchers we have recruited and nurtured.

Key achievements: Combining strengths of research leaders, supporting new research leads, developing new projects and collaborations.

Our established leaders (professors, readers: Dickens, Brandon, Schofield, Neil, Hancock, Penhale) and mid-career colleagues (Cossar, Nobes, both associate-professors) have successfully built on previous strengths, achieving excellence and impact for their research. In terms of the next generation, we have supported Cook, Larsson and Philip to move to permanent ATR lectureships and develop their skills through participation in research teams. All are now playing an important role in developing the unit's research and impact (see section 2).

We have doubled our active grant awards from £6m (REF2014) to £12m, accruing a series of major projects, funded in particular by the ESRC, the Department for Education (DfE), NIHR, and the Nuffield Foundation. This has included expansion into new areas such as fathers in child protection, elder abuse, LGBTQ young people in care, and emotional intelligence in social workers. A key development was Hancock and Neil's leadership of UEA's participation in the *ESRC Business and Local Government Data Research Centre (BLGDRC)* (£1,233,622, 2014-19), which supported innovative research using local authority and other administrative data relating to children (led by Neil) and older people (led by Hancock). This project has enabled work across academic disciplines in analysing large datasets. Our total of 81 awards shows that alongside our flagship projects we have been able to carry out a broad range of smaller projects and consultancy activities seeding larger studies or new areas, benefitting local partners and building our impact (e.g. research with a local police force, on children at risk of child sexual exploitation and recruitment into 'county lines').

Examples of key successes of our research teams are given below.

Child protection:

- Ongoing work (led by Brandon and Dickens, funded through two awards totalling £509,505 from DfE) to analyse *Serious Case Reviews* (SCRs) where children have died or suffered serious injury. This has involved a partnership with Sidebottom, a paediatric specialist at the University of Warwick.
- Children's experiences of abuse have been foregrounded in Cossar's innovative participatory research on *Recognition And Telling: Developing Earlier Routes to Safety for Children and Young People* (Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC), 2016-17).
- Providing an evaluation of family law reforms is Dickens' partnership project with Masson, University of Bristol, on the *Outcomes of Care Proceedings*, funded by the ESRC (£153,985, 2015-18).
- Cook and Schofield collaborated with CRCF colleague Biggart on her ESRC Future Leaders project (2012-15) examining *Emotional Intelligence in Social Work*. This led to a key article on *Emotional Resilience and the Role of The Team as a Secure Base* and the development of Emotional Resilience Training for Social Workers (finalist for a UEA Impact and Innovation award, 2019)
- Brandon and Phillip led two ground-breaking projects in the important new area of fathers in child protection. Both were funded by the Nuffield Foundation (£598k across two awards); the second project involved a new partnership with Lancaster University.
- Nobes led three studies exploring *Child Injuries and Homicide By Fathers*, collaborating with national and international colleagues to re-examine datasets from Australia, Colombia and the UK. This work challenges long-accepted assumptions about the additional risk of abuse presented by step-fathers and has led to three linked papers, an article in *The Conversation*, and impact work with the Home Office.

Children in care:

- A team led by Schofield with Larsson published findings from the first major study of *Looked After Children and Offending* in the UK (Big Lottery, £180,000, 2010-2012) providing important evidence to the Laming Enquiry (2016).
- A team led by Cossar (with Schofield, Larsson and a team of young researchers) completed and disseminated the first UK study of the experience and identity development of LGBTQ young people in care, (ESRC, 2014-17, £282,016). A paper on fosters carers' experiences of caring for LGBTQ young people was a top 10% most downloaded paper in Child & Family Social Work. The team also co-produced training materials and an animated film sharing LGBTQ young people's experiences (Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care – CLAHRC, £60,512, 2017-19).
- Dickens published the report (2015) on the ESRC study of the *Role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) in Decision Making* (£306,183, 2012-14) and delivered a range of impact activities including family justice conferences and local authority seminars.
- Schofield and Larsson led research in long-term foster care e.g. a study of the *Implementation of the first DfE Long-Term Foster Care Regulations and Guidance*, including analysis of national administrative data (Nuffield Foundation, £120,548, 2018-21).
- Work analysing administrative datasets has been a key area of growth and interdisciplinary collaboration. Nobes' work with the University of Adelaide has analysed the links between abuse, care and offending pathways drawing on linked Australian datasets, leading to two key papers. Neil has published two papers analysing children in care statistics through her collaboration with BLGDRC researchers; one of these was a top 10% most downloaded paper in Child & Family Social Work.

Adoption:

- Led by Neil and colleagues we have had 16 awards totalling £704k for adoption-focused research.
- Funded by Barnardos and the BLGDRC, an interdisciplinary team collaborating with Loughborough University researched *Regionalising Adoption in Yorkshire and Humberside*. The report shaped the development of three Regional Adoption Agencies and a paper by Neil et al. used novel statistical techniques in analysing risk and protective factors affecting children's development.
- Neil, Rimmer and Sirbu are completing a life-story narrative-based study of the *Experiences of Adoptees as Parents, and Adoptive Parents as Grandparents* (ESRC, £371,614, 2018-21), the first UK research on this topic.
- Neil, Beek and Schofield obtained two waves of funding from the Sir Halley Stewart Trust (£76,477, 2016-20) to develop, pilot, evaluate, disseminate and help implement research-based practice guidance on *Moving Children from Foster Care to Adoption*.
- Neil developed a new interdisciplinary collaboration with the University of Sydney on the Australian Research Council funded action-research project: *Permanency with Lifelong Connections*.

The costs of adult social care:

- Hancock was the PI for a significant study *Care and State Pension Reform (CASPeR)* (£295,266, Nuffield Foundation, 2014-16), a collaboration with LSE (Personal Social Services Research Unit) and the Pensions Policy Institute (PPI). This has led to 18 policy-orientated documents and technical reports published by the PPI, as well as key academic papers and impact.
- Hancock was commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to review approaches to funding the costs of care for disabled older people, resulting in the publication of a report for their anti-poverty strategy.

- Through the *ESRC BLGDRC* project Hancock carried out a series of projects on adult social care using local authority and Care Quality Commission data, linked to NHS digital data.

Elder abuse and older people's voices:

- Penhale's research has focused on elder abuse (including intimate partner violence and the protection of vulnerable adults), and the voices of older people in care decisions. As Co-I on *RReACH* (Residents Research Active in Care Homes project (CLAHRC, 2014-16, £100,068) she has investigated ways to involve older care home residents in research projects.
- Penhale collaborated with colleagues in the School of International Development to explore the exploitation of older people in developing countries, leading to two key research papers about care home admissions in Argentina.

Our future aim is **to maintain and build the quality and volume of our internationally significant social work and social policy research, addressing the key global, national and local challenges encountered by vulnerable people**. Our goals are as follows:

To invest in and support our people:

- Focus on mentoring and enabling early and mid-level researchers to become the next generation of outstanding research leaders.
- Support mid-career and leaders/emeritus fellowship applications as well as early-career fellowships.
- Recruit to our team of ATR staff through new appointments (including staff on the new UEA Sociology Degree team) and supporting research-active ATS staff.
- Develop opportunities to expand PhD numbers through collaboration with external partners and across disciplines.
- Expand our successful research internship scheme to include PhDs and sociology undergraduates.

Expanding the scope of our research and impact with vulnerable individuals and families.

- Develop new project areas to exploit the interests and strengths of junior colleagues and potential new ATR staff members.
- Build interdisciplinary collaborations via the new UEA Health and Social Care Partnership, particularly exploring looked after children's mental health.
- Extend our methodological expertise in quantitative methods with administrative data, innovative qualitative methods, and action-research linked to impact.
- Expand new strategies for dissemination, increasing online presence and access to research outputs in a wide range of formats (briefings, blogs, podcasts, video and other creative outputs).
- Embed impact pathways for all projects in collaboration with non-academic stakeholders.

1.4. Our approach to achieving impact

Achieving impact from our research is front and centre of everything we do and is a key motivating factor for all our staff. Key aspects of our strategy are:

- **Focussing on areas of policy and practice where new insights and understanding, or changes in policy and practice, are needed.**
- **Building explicit impact plans into all research proposals**, including budgeting for impact activities, and adequately resourcing stakeholder engagement in research.
- **Effective dissemination:** producing different outputs for different audiences where the voices of people with direct experience are highlighted.

- **Building partnerships.** Build collaborative partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders including people with relevant lived experience (see section 4). The proactive work needed to develop these relationships is considered an integral aspect of the staff role and is supported financially through school research budgets and project funding.

Our two impact case studies (on *Contact after Adoption* and *The Secure Base Model*) demonstrate the benefits of using these approaches. Both have a strong focus on partnerships and producing outputs/tools/models grounded in theory and research but practical and accessible. They combine rigorous research with clear impact targets, direct personal involvement by academics in partnerships with government policy-makers, agencies and practitioners and innovative materials freely available on websites. Both have taken advantage of external and UEA impact funding and were supported with research briefings, workshops and conferences.

1.5 Progressing towards an open research environment.

All staff have received UEA training on open access requirements, reinforced in School research meetings and supported individually via the UEA open access team. The requirement for open access for articles has been adhered to, assisted by the fact that the majority of our research funding (£7m of £12.1M active awards) has come from UKRI or NIHR, enabling us to publish articles in Gold Open Access formats. The School of Social Work has also funded Gold Open Access for particularly influential, time-sensitive articles (e.g. Cossar's work funded by the OCC). Where funding has not been available for 'Gold' outputs, articles have been added to the UEA repository in a pre-print form to be made more widely available once embargoed periods have elapsed.

We have maintained a tradition of publishing full research reports on the CRCF website and have developed standardised Research Briefings in a professionally designed format for all child and family projects, freely available on the CRCF website. Other reports have been published by funders, with links to these from the UEA website (for example work funded by the PPI, DfE, and the OCC). We have worked to make research reports available to policy-makers, followed up by in-person presentations (see section 4). We report on new and ongoing research activity through interim project reports, the CRCF website and annual report and our networks e.g. the CoramBAAF Research Advisory Group Committee (Schofield, Neil) shares details of new/ongoing projects, as does the Children's Social Care Data group (Neil, Larsson). UEA press releases led to 175 media stories about our social work research.

We have worked towards making primary data FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) by making quantitative and qualitative data available through data archives e.g. data from ESRC projects available in UK Data Archive. This has required investment (built into funding requests, and supplemented through work of interns) in the anonymization of highly sensitive qualitative data e.g. fathers' interview data (Brandon, Philip), deposited in the Timescapes archive.

1.6 Ensuring a culture of research integrity and ethical research practices

Research integrity and ethics have been supported by UEA research ethics sub-committees (in Social Work, Psychology, FMH) and NIHR RECs which provide the formal processes for ethical approval and monitoring. These committees have representatives from different sectors of the research community, including lay members, and are actively involved in ensuring high standards from initial stages through to impact activities. Good practice in research ethics is enabled also through partnerships with external agencies, for example agreeing safeguarding procedures and support mechanisms for participants and completing local authority research governance procedures.

Our research frequently involves sensitive topics, vulnerable participants, safeguarding issues and complex issues around consent for children's participation. We are careful to balance risks to participants and researchers against the need to ensure that hard-to-reach samples and little-heard voices are strongly represented. For example, Cossar's work on managing consent issues in her *LGBTQ in care project* enabled young people who were not "out" to their parent or social worker to take part. Penhale's work has involved covert research in care homes in Argentina, balancing the need to be fully open about the research, with the need to expose unethical coercion of vulnerable older people.

We are seen within and beyond UEA as having particular expertise in research with vulnerable people, and staff have provided consultation on university-wide procedures and national training workshops. Penhale chaired the UEA ethics committee through most of the REF period, contributing to the introduction of a new UEA-wide ethics policy, and initiating a range of ethics guidance sheets. She was a member of the (National) Social Care Research Ethics Committee from its inception in 2009 until 2019. Neil chaired the School of Social Work Research Ethics Committee for several years, now chaired by Philip. Cossar serves as an external member of the NSPCC research ethics committee.

Our research often involves personal/sensitive data held in datasets of national and local government and courts. Our researchers have developed expertise in understanding the application of GDPR in using personal data for research, working with gatekeepers and data protection managers in agencies. We have been supported by UEA's information compliance team, and via external training (e.g. Hancock, Neil, Larsson and BLGDRC researchers completed the ONS or UK Data Archive researcher training).

2. People

We aim to build a body of high-quality, ethical researchers all of whom are capable of winning substantial research funding, becoming principal investigators for outstanding projects, producing high-level outputs, presenting research effectively to diverse academic and practice audiences, impacting significantly on policy and practice.

2.1 Academic staff

Protecting research time: All category A staff are on contracts protecting 40% of their time for research, accounted for with workload management systems in their respective schools. Those with research-related administrative roles (such as ethics committee work, school research director, impact champion, Director of CRCF) are afforded additional time, as are impact case study leads. Staff review their research goals and achievements annually through the UEA research activity planning (RAP) process. This then feeds into the school level annual reviews of research which reflects on progress towards meeting our strategic goals.

Staff who have passed probation can apply for one semester of study leave after every six semesters, to work on clearly specified objectives for their research activities, outputs and impact. Planning for study leave is integrated into the annual research activity planning exercise. Brandon, Cossar, Dickens, Neil, Schofield and Nobes all took study leave. As a result, four research grants were funded to the value of £750k; impact work was developed (Brandon worked on the Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse; Neil created the Contact in Adoption website; Schofield revised the Secure Base website and worked with DfE on a literature review of fostering); and 18 research outputs were produced (five of which are in our submission). All staff worked on their ongoing projects, and the importance of having time to support teams in the early stages of complex projects was emphasised in study leave reports.

Retaining and rewarding staff: We have retained key senior and mid-career staff who have provided leadership, mentoring and continuity (Brandon, Cossar, Dickens, Hancock, Neil, Schofield). Nobes and Penhale joined this UoA as they developed their research interests in relevant areas. Central to retaining key staff has been encouraging colleagues to achieve

promotion, and criteria for this are discussed in appraisal and RAP meetings to enable focused planning towards these goals. Both Dickens and Neil achieved promotion to Professor, and Cossar to Associate Professor. We also encourage and reward staff achievements in impact through supporting applications for University Engagement Awards. These have been received by Penhale (2014), Schofield (2015), Neil (2017) and Cossar (2019). Schofield and Beek were also finalists in the UEA Innovation and Impact Awards for Outstanding Impact on Policy and Practice (2019).

Recruitment: We recruited talented junior colleagues whose careers have been supported and promoted from PhD and postdoctoral work to lectureships (Cook, Larsson, Philip). Cook and Larsson (both joined in 2015) were former PhD students who were offered opportunities to undertake paid research associate work alongside and after their PhD study, followed by appointment as research lecturers. Philip came to UEA as an ESRC funded post-doctoral researcher and then moved from senior research associate (SRA) to research fellow to research lecturer (2018). This developmental process was facilitated by mentoring by senior staff with shared interests e.g. Larsson's PhD was supervised by Schofield, Larsson was then an SRA on Schofield's care and offending project, and Cossar's LGBTQ project. She is now Co-I on Schofield's long-term foster care project, and PI on an Action for Children project on *Reunification of Children from Care* (with Manchester University). Cook worked with Schofield and Biggart (Psychology) on the *Emotional Intelligence in Social Work* project, and was key to producing an article from this. She is now leading a British Academy project on *Professional Identity in Child and Family Social Work*.

New staff are on probation for up to five years and are mentored by a senior member of staff to support their wellbeing and progress, including research profile. They have protected workloads which allow time for research over and above the standard two days a week, enabling work on outputs from their own projects, making substantial contributions to outputs from larger funded projects, and developing new bids. We have supported them to develop research-led teaching modules and take on research administration (Cook is Impact Champion, Philip is Chair of Social Work Ethics Committee, and Cook and Larsson have served on the UEA ESRC internal review panel.) These well-established strategies have been effective in building a very stable and successful staff group vital for our future.

Peer support and quality assurance: We take a collegial approach to quality assurance. For example, in the School of Social Work, all research bids in development are discussed with the Director of Research, often within the annual individual research planning process. Experienced research leads with relevant experience of a topic, a method or a funder will provide support and guidance at all stages of a bid. This is supplemented by assistance with budgets and understanding funder's requirements from the University Research and Innovation Service. With research outputs, a process of sharing and consulting on publication plans and drafts means that every output is reviewed by colleagues before submission.

Financial support for research-related activities: Academic staff and researchers can access financial support for research-related activities such as conference attendance via dedicated research funds, held in researchers' respective schools. For example, in the School of Social Work this fund has allocated over £90,000 to support research-related activities. This funded attendance at key national and international academic conferences and supported researchers to help with project work or bid development, or to host research-related events.

2.2 Research staff.

The scope and quality of research produced would not have been possible without the development of our experienced, flexible, skilled and committed research staff, in particular Beek, Belderson, Rimmer, Sorensen, Morciano and Young, who have worked across different projects managing all aspects of project design, data collection and analysis as well as contributing significantly to impact. Brandon and Philip have led on ensuring our compliance with

the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, and have met regularly with research staff to offer support and ensure that their needs and suggestions are understood and taken into account.

We have provided opportunities to sustain research careers and develop a portfolio of expertise across a range of project areas. We have enabled researchers to progress through research grades via careful consideration of the grading of posts at the proposal application stage. For example, Beek, Rimmer, Sorensen and Young have all held posts at research fellow grade, undertaking roles where they have the opportunity to expand their skills and experience in managing research projects, supervising more junior researchers and interns, and taking leadership on publications. Beek was supported to obtain her PhD by published works. Morciano, Gitsels and Espuny-Pujol helped develop projects with Hancock and Neil in the ESRC BLGDRC. Morciano has now progressed to a permanent senior lectureship at Manchester University and continues to work in partnership with UEA. Philip's research fellow grade has also led on to a permanent lectureship.

We actively explore and support fellowship applications by both researchers and lecturers (internal and external candidates) to boost their career development, with applications being made to Leverhulme, ESRC and Marie Curie Fellowship schemes. The School of Social Work funded a grant of £2k to an external international researcher to support her application to the Marie Curie post-doctoral fellowship scheme. During this REF period Biggart (Psychology), mentored by Schofield, published outputs from her ESRC Future Leaders grant, *Emotional Intelligence in Social Work*.

Researchers have played a significant role in impact and in first authoring publications. For example, Philip is lead author on publications resulting from the Nuffield study of fathers in child protection, and has led on impact related to this project. Rimmer and Sirbu are both leading on publications from the ESRC study of *Adopted Parents*. Beek was the lead researcher on Neil's study of *Contact after Adoption* and Schofield's DfE Innovation Programme study of long-term foster care. She has also led new practice development and innovation projects e.g. Providing a Secure Base in Schools (£12,922, Alex Timpson Trust); Moving to Adoption (£76,477, Sir Halley Stewart Trust). Young's work offering training to adoption professionals has been central to our development of impact in the area of contact in adoption and has developed her profile as an expert in this field.

2.3 Postgraduate research students.

REF 4a degrees awarded, split for Panel C

UOA	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Grand Total
20	2	3		2	2	2	1	12
PhD	2	3		2	2	2	1	12

We have had 22 new PGR students registered across four schools, and 12 degrees completed, with several more submitted. Students have been funded primarily by UEA studentships, and since 2017 applicants have been able to apply for ESRC SeNSS (South East Network for Social Sciences) Doctoral Training Centre 1+3 and +3 studentships. SeNSS is a partnership between 10 universities and social work and social policy is one of 13 disciplinary pathways. Approximately 40 students are funded annually; we have had three successful applicants for these highly competitive awards.

Students have individually-tailored research training plans, supplementing compulsory training in core areas such as research ethics. Training is available via Schools, Faculties, and SeNSS. Students also access external specialist methods training, funded by research support grants (£2,250 per person). SeNSS training can be accessed by *all* PhD students providing access to additional highly-specialised training e.g. advanced quantitative methods, media training and managing consultancy. SeNSS students can apply for funding to undertake research placements, broadening their research skills and experience beyond their own projects. SeNSS runs an annual conference and hosts an online MoodleX digital platform with information and training opportunities for students and supervisors. Students can also contribute to the SeNSS student-run journal Sentic; three of our students have published in this.

Schools offer subject-specific training to PhD students (including from specialist librarians) and promote mutual support. For example, the School of Social Work PhD students work closely together, sharing study facilities and attending Advanced Research Training Workshops. These are led by a designated member of staff and enable students to receive training, debate all aspects of PhD development, share ideas and obtain support. All PGR students have individual desks in the dedicated study and social spaces close to staff offices and are very well integrated into the community and research culture. PGR students have committed supervisory teams, for example often combining a subject specialist with a methodological specialist.

PhD students are offered opportunities to improve their skills and employability by undertaking teaching and paid work as research associates or interns on projects e.g. Murphy worked with Neil helping to evaluate the 'Moving to Adoption' project, co-authoring a practice guide related to this project. Students are encouraged to aim for excellence in writing, teaching and research and several have received university PGR awards (e.g. Jones and McGrath for teaching; McGrath for engagement; Carmichael won a Faculty prize for her article in Social Policy Review).

Students present their work at school or CRCF research seminars and are also encouraged to present at national and international conferences. McGrath shared his PhD findings with the All-Party Parliamentary Group into kinship care in March 2019. Additional UEA or SeNSS funds can be accessed for conferences. e.g. McGrath had faculty funding to attend the European Social Work Research Conference in Belgium. Students are also supported to develop their own initiatives e.g. SeNSS student Rawcliffe set up a 'Research for Practice' podcast.

Career progression for our PhDs who have completed (or are near to completion) includes eight who have gone on to lectureships at UEA or elsewhere (Cook, Larsson, Blake-Holmes, Hernan, Humphrey, Jones, McDermott, Gregory). For others their PhD has led to high-level research posts in the public, voluntary and private sector: Carmichael is a research facilitator for an NHS clinical commissioning group; Haynes is deputy leader of the early-years programme at the Anna Freud Centre; McGrath is Policy and Practice Adviser for Grandparents Plus; Sirbu worked as a researcher for the Brilliant Club before returning to UEA to take up a research post; Crago worked as a researcher at Cambridge University before taking up a post as a data analyst in the private sector.

To encourage PhD recruitment, the School of Social Work worked with UEA Careers Office to set up a paid research internship scheme in 2016. Twelve internships have been awarded to MA/BA Social Work students since then. The scheme also provides opportunities for researchers to build their skills through involvement in the recruitment and mentoring of interns. One of our first interns (Hartley) co-authored a research report and peer-reviewed article (with Neil) and she now holds a PhD studentship. Other social work students have forged a pathway to PhD research through taking our two post-qualifying CPD research methods modules.

2.4 Equality and Diversity

Underpinning our policy on recruiting and developing people is our commitment to equality and diversity, across all protected characteristics. All unit staff undertake training in diversity and recruitment, as required by the university. Those reviewing outputs undertook unconscious bias training. All four schools are engaged with the Athena SWAN recognition process. At all levels, staff have benefited from university policies on parental leave and flexible working to enable them to continue to build their careers alongside managing demands of family life. The need for a proactive and flexible approach to workload management was particularly important in 2020 to ensure that the needs of parents whose children could not be in school or nursery were taken into account for example by reallocating some teaching to ensure that research commitments could continue. Staff in our unit of assessment evidence how female researchers have been able to reach high grades and leadership positions (one head of school, four professors, one reader, one associate professor). A number of our PhD students have benefited from a wide range of additional support from the University, including extra tuition to managing specific disabilities, and equipment installed at home (during the pandemic).

We take account of this commitment to equality and diversity not only in recruiting and supporting our staff but also in our research culture when planning research, seeking ethical approval and achieving impact. All of our work is dedicated to promoting equality and diversity, and hearing and promoting the voices of people whose needs are often overlooked such as LGBTQ young people, children in care, disabled older people and those at risk of abuse, and fathers in the child protection system.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3.1 Research income

Our research funding has been significant for a small group (£12.2m active and £8.1m new awards). The majority of new awards (62%) have been funded by the UKRI or NIHR, with Government departments and major charities (in particular the Nuffield Foundation) being other key funders. The UEA ESRC review panel (Hancock, Schofield, Neil, Larsson and Cook have all served on this) has provided both scrutiny and support for our successful ESRC applications. Our total research income includes c£200k specifically for impact. Some has been crucially won from external funders (e.g. NIHR, Sir Halley Stewart Trust, OCC, RiP, Alex Timpson Trust) supplemented by UEA internal impact funding, including ESRC Impact Accelerator Accounts.

We are strategic in responding to specific funder calls and programmes (such as the DfE Innovation programme, NIHR initiatives) where we have the expertise and the staff capacity, and where high-quality outputs and impact can be achieved. We are also responsive to commissioned research, such as Neil's work with Yorkshire and Humberside adoption consortium and Dickens' socio-legal research with the London Triborough. Opportunities for international research collaborations (see section 4) have also been taken up.

3.2. Infrastructure and facilities.

Research active teaching staff work in individual offices on the UEA campus. From March 2020 all staff have been working predominantly from home, and have either been provided with campus equipment or have been funded to purchase new equipment to enable homeworking. The nature of our research does not generally require particularly specialised equipment or facilities; an exception is high-performance computing facilities available to Hancock and her team in the Medical School. For our research involving sensitive datasets, the BLGDRC funded the creation of a safe room linked to the UK Data Archive, and this remains available to researchers. UEA has an organisational connectivity agreement with the Office of National

Statistics enabling researchers to access government-held datasets remotely via a 'secure lab' VPN network from their work computers.

The CRCF

The CRCF is at the forefront of research on vulnerable children and families, providing empirical evidence to governments, NGOs, the public and private sector to inform policy and practice decisions, led by Brandon as Centre Director since 2014. The Centre is interdisciplinary but run from the School of Social Work, attracting members (currently 30) with common research interests from a range of other schools including Psychology, Education, and Norwich Business School. Category A CRCF members submit their work to a range of REF Units of Assessment, and members also include staff on ATS contracts and contract researchers. In 2016, the Centre celebrated the 20th anniversary of its founding, hosting over 300 alumni and local practitioners at a research conference in UEA's new Enterprise Building.

The CRCF provides an identity for all aspects of the research process from bidding through to dissemination and impact. It has enabled us to place any proposed research project in the context of a wider body of funded and high-impact research, conducted by respected researchers in the unit, which builds confidence in funders. We have continued to value and cultivate the CRCF brand, from Annual CRCF Reports and Conferences through to branded outputs, including our Research Briefings. The running costs of CRCF are normally in the region of £22,000-£26,000 per year which are easily covered by research overheads. This funds a part-time administrator who promotes the outwards facing work of the CRCF, organising our events, managing the annual report, producing briefings and feeding our social media channels.

The CRCF seminar series regularly includes interdisciplinary research, and we have welcomed a range of international scholars e.g. from Spain, Norway, Australia, Chile. Seminars focus both on completed research, but also provide opportunities for researchers (including PhD students) to present and discuss interim findings. In 2018-19 CRCF members co-led an interdisciplinary adult social care seminar series, with FMH colleagues.

UEA Health and Social Care Partnership

Established in 2019, the new UEA Health and Social Care Partnership is a group of organisations that want to work together to improve health and social care for our region. Members include health trusts and local authorities in the Eastern Region as well as UEA academics, professionals, and service user representatives. The partnership runs research groups and projects and plans early-stage research and innovation projects within three priority areas: healthy ageing, young people's mental health, and living with long-term conditions. The partnership is already strengthening our social work and social policy research environment. In 2019 a conference on "Young People's Mental Health and Well-Being" was hosted by Norfolk and Suffolk Partnership Foundation Trust, where delegates worked on identifying key research priorities. Out of this the LANTERN (Looked after Children's Mental Health Research Network) was formed. This interdisciplinary network, led by Hammond in the School of Education, enables our social work and social policy researchers to connect with colleagues in other disciplines as well as practice partners. It has already led to a partnership funded literature review project and subsequent article (worked on by Young from Social Work), a successful NIHR research bid (with Neil as Co-I) that will begin in 2021, and an evaluation of Norfolk's Enhanced Fostering Service (led by Cook and Blake-Holmes in Social Work).

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

The UoA made it a strategic aim for this REF period to build further collaborations with academic and community partners to contribute to the research base and to benefit vulnerable members of society and their families and carers. We have increased our range of collaborations with research funders and commissioners, academic partners, service user groups and practice agencies as we have shown in section 1, with further examples given below.

4.1 Collaborations

Academic partners and networks.

One-quarter of active awards income (£3.2m) has come from grants led by other institutions, with three quarters led by UEA, many of these involving collaboration with other universities. We have collaborated with 43 different institutions. Key partnerships are mentioned in section 1. International collaborations include projects carried out by Nobes (University of Adelaide; University del Bosque, Colombia), Neil (University of Sydney; German Youth Institute), Dickens (with academics from USA, UK, Finland, Norway in a comparative socio-legal study of child protection decision making in courts).

Research staff have developed both formal and informal partnerships with international networks. These include the International Association for Outcome-Based Evaluation and Research on Children's Services (IAOBER) of which Thoburn and Brandon were founder members. Schofield is a member of the International Foster Care Research Network. Neil, as a former host of the International Conference on Adoption Research (ICAR), was involved in the planning and organisation of three international ICAR conferences in the REF period. Cossar has linked up with an Erasmus+ group of European Universities on their project on Safeguarding Young People in Care.

New academics recruited since 2014 have been encouraged to build their networks. Cook has formed national links through the Social Work Judgement and Decision Making Network and the Centre for Social Work Practice (CfSWP), including hosting and presenting at a CfSWP conference at UEA (2015). She has built international networks through the European Social Work Research Association: Decisions, Assessment and Risk Special Interest group (DARSIG) and was invited to present at the University of California (2017) and at the University of Landau, Germany (2020). Since 2014 Larsson has worked with Norfolk police on restorative justice and with the Norfolk 4women group, which provides services for vulnerable and at-risk women, including female offenders.

Collaborations with non-academic stakeholders.

Through the quality and relevance of our research outputs and the assistance of partnerships and networks, we have built a strong reputation that has earned us the trust and confidence of influential stakeholders. Our research leads are all well connected to and active collaborators with UK government departments (e.g. DfE, DWP, MOJ, Home Office), politicians (e.g. House of Commons Committees and All-Party Parliamentary Groups), key national agencies (e.g. NSPCC, Nuffield Family Justice Observatory (NFJO), CoramBAAF, Adoption UK, Association of Child Protection Professionals, Office of the Children's Commissioner, Cafcass); charities (Care for Children; NSPCC); service providers (e.g. local authorities, regional adoption agencies, health services, independent agencies) and national and local service user groups (e.g. Family Rights Group, Become, 4Women, MenCraft, Grandparents Plus). The majority of our projects have active stakeholder advisory groups, with members including CEOs of national organisations, policy-makers, practitioners and service users. Penhale and Cossar are working on the NIHR funded project *Inclusive Involvement for Research in Practice-led Health and Social Care* (Applied Research Collaboration, East of England, £577,312, 2017-21), which is further enabling our involvement of service users in research.

A number of our researchers are considered international experts and have built collaborations with policy and practice stakeholders in diverse countries (see Schofield and Beek's case study for impact in Norway, China, Thailand, Ukraine and Neil's case study for her work with government departments in Ireland, Germany and New South Wales). Penhale has provided expertise to the UN, WHO, Help Age International and Age Platform Europe on intimate partner violence and older women and elder abuse. Further examples of our collaborations to enable contributions are given below.

4.2 Contributions to the research base, economy and society.

All staff regularly review for journals and funders and most also hold honorary positions with academic and non-academic stakeholders, evidencing the esteem in which our research is held, and our contribution to the research base and society. Examples include: Penhale edits the Journal of Adult Protection and has provided expert advice to the German Ministry for Children Women and Elders, the Professional Standards Authority and the Disclosure and Barring Service. She was appointed to the Law Commission Mental Health and Disability Sub-Committee (2020-2023). Dickens chairs the Norfolk Local Family Justice Board and is on the CAFCASS research advisory committee. Brandon is a member of the following boards: Advisory Board for Children's Commissioner 2014- 2017, Academic Advisory Board for the Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse 2015- 2017, National Network of Academics to inform National Policing lead for Child Protection and Abuse Investigation 2014-2018, NSPCC neglect strategy group until 2016. Philip is a trustee of the Menscraft charity. Cook is a reviewer for the Health and Care Research Wales funding board.

Our responsiveness to immediate need has come to the fore in 2020 through our projects related to COVID-19 (e.g. Cook's research on social workers' experiences of remote working; Neil's work with NFJO on children's family contact during lockdown; Penhale's work on safeguarding older people during the pandemic; Hancock's work on pre-COVID care home mortality).

These selected examples highlight how our diverse research makes its contribution to the research base and society in our key areas of policy and practice:

Child Protection

- Cossar's two OCC-funded studies identified what young people think about abuse and neglect and how they seek help. This is making an important contribution to how school staff in England take action to make children safer. The *Recognition and Telling* project was launched in Westminster in 2013 with an address by the then Children's Minister, Edward Timpson, and the Children's Commissioner. The research was used to develop the iCAN (Insights from Children about Abuse and Neglect) framework for professionals. Practical tools to implement the model were made available online in July 2017, endorsed by the Children's Commissioner. iCAN training materials have been used in safeguarding training across English regions. Ofsted is using the materials in mandatory training of all its employees from 2018.
- Teams led by Brandon/Dickens published two substantial Triennial Serious Case Review Analyses (2016 and 2020). Brandon used evidence from the SCR studies to contribute to the Wood Review of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) published in 2016. She has accepted 15+ invitations to address high-profile stakeholder audiences (e.g. 2016 Presentation to All-Party Parliamentary Group seminar at Westminster; 2014, the Annual Conference of the Association of the Directors of Children's Services; 2014 Keynote at Annual Primary Care Child Safeguarding Forum). Research in Practice were collaborators in both analyses and have established a dedicated free-to-access SCR website with briefings for police, health and social care professionals.
- Brandon and Philip's two studies on fathers in child protection have raised awareness and understanding of the needs of these fathers and how to engage them positively in children's lives. Findings have been widely disseminated to non-academic audiences, including an article that won the 2019 Norm Smith Prize for the "best research article that is judged to make a significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge and/or a significant contribution to professional practice published during the year", published in *Australian Social Work*. Philip has developed a Master's level CPD module on working with men in families, delivered to practitioners in the eastern region from 2017 onwards. She produced a film with fathers participating in the research and has collaborated with

Norfolk and Suffolk probation service on staff development events focused on fatherhood and stopping offending.

- In the courts, Dickens led the way in evaluating the impact of significant family law reforms, in particular the expectation that care proceedings would be conducted in 26 weeks. Findings from a Pilot Project in the London Triborough Authority (2012-13, 2015-16) were recommended to the legal profession by the President of the Family Division, Sir James Munby.
- Drawing on her research into social workers' experiences of home visiting, Cook has developed a CPD module on this topic. From her British Academy funded research with experienced social workers, she submitted evidence to the Education Committee's Enquiry on Children's Social Care Workforce, UK Parliament, and delivered a keynote address to the Westminster Forum conference.

Child placement and adoption.

- Schofield is recognised as the key expert on long-term foster care. She was a member of the DfE expert working group on long-term foster care (2013-15) and a new policy framework was informed by her UEA research (2000-2010). She worked with the DfE in developing the Curriculum Framework for CPD courses on permanence. She was awarded the OBE in 2020 for her outstanding contribution to children, families and social work.
- Dickens and colleagues' work on care planning and the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer has given a more nuanced picture of the progress of children in care, and the complexities of inter-professional working to secure good outcomes.
- Neil's Contact after Adoption research contributed to new adoption legislation in Germany, and policy recommendations in Ireland, as well as helping shift entrenched practices in England (see case study 1).
- Schofield and Beek's Secure Base model, based on their foster care research, extended its national and international reach (see case study 2), and developed its application in schools.
- Neil, Beek and Schofield's 'Moving to Adoption' practice model has been disseminated to the DfE and via workshops to 20+ adoption organisations in England, Scotland and Wales. It has been developed into a training course by CoramBAF and has informed new practice guidance in Wales. The new model is well embedded in pilot agencies and several regional adoption agencies began its implementation in early 2020, supported by practice resources on a dedicated website.

The costs of adult social care.

- Hancock's research on the costs and use of Attendance Allowance (AA) and subsidised social care influenced a government proposal (2015) to devolve responsibility for Attendance Allowance to local authorities, combining social care and AA into a single system. Her research evidenced that this proposal risked drastically increasing the numbers of disabled older people falling through the net, and the proposed policy changes were abandoned. The impact was facilitated by UEA's ESRC IAA which supported a partnership with the Strategic Society Centre (SSC). Hancock and SSC held a seminar in the House of Lords (June 2016) where an SSC report, drawing heavily on Hancock's work, was launched. Neil Coyle MP who attended the event tabled 7 related written Parliamentary Questions in July 2016. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report (2016) that Hancock co-authored for their anti-poverty strategy and the SSC report were both quoted extensively in a House of Commons Library publication on the background to the government consultation on the AA changes, and in the consultation's conclusion. In January 2017 the Communities and Local Government Secretary announced that devolution of Attendance Allowance would not be going ahead.