

**Institution:**

City, University of London

**Unit of Assessment:**

D27 English Language and Literature

**1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy****Unit context**

UoA D27 at City, University of London is located in the **UK's newest English department**. Launched in September 2017, the department is one of seven academic departments in City's School of Arts and Social Sciences. Prior to this, City had in 2015 established a semi-autonomous Centre for English within the Department of Journalism. The Centre offered MA programmes in Creative Writing, Publishing and Translation Studies, and launched a new BA English award in 2016. The English Department now houses BA, MA and PhD programmes in English and MAs in Publishing, International Publishing, and Creative Writing and Publishing. A new MA/MFA in Creative Writing is being launched in 2021. The creation of the department supports City's strategic goals of expanding its degree provision in established academic subjects and improving research excellence and intensity. The launch of the new department coincided with City joining the **University of London (UoL)**, a development that has benefited staff and students working in the humanities by providing improved access to library and research facilities, training and events.

Housed in newly refurbished offices in City's College Building in Clerkenwell, Islington, the department comprises nine permanent members of staff (8.5 FTE). Of these, seven (7.0 FTE) count as Category A staff: **Dr Dominic Davies** (postcolonial and world literature, graphic narratives), **Dr Louisa Uchum Egbunike** (African, African-American and black British writing), **Dr Hetta Howes** (medieval literature), **Dr Patricia Moran** (modernist women's writing, head of department), **Dr Edward Paleit** (early modern literature), **Dr Minna Vuohelainen** (nineteenth-century literature and print culture), and **Dr Julie Wheelwright** (literary journalism). All but Wheelwright have joined City since 2016, Davies, Egbunike and Howes as early-career researchers (ECRs). Publishers Ms Maryann Kernan and Dr Patrick Brindle are on education role profiles and do not count as Category A staff in this submission, but contribute to the department's research culture by offering advice on pedagogic research, ethics and publishing queries.

The unit is committed to extending English Studies to **non-canonical, global and interdisciplinary** areas through its research, public-engagement and impact activities, and by promoting research-led, non-traditional curricula. While staff in the unit research and teach across the breadth of English Literature, Creative Writing and Publishing, collectively we understand English to be a living, constantly evolving academic discipline that plays a significant, active role in the modern world by informing and changing attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. We believe that English can help students and stakeholders develop a range of transferable and employability skills as global citizens, and seek to demonstrate the discipline's contemporary relevance by contextualising traditional English for **non-traditional communities of users**, including our local, inner-city Islington community as well as global beneficiaries. This is apparent in our research focused on emerging forms of communication that radically shift our understanding of English in the world, for example by foregrounding the importance of literature in the formation of national and communal identities or by showing how graphic narratives of urban dispossession can aid community building. This ethos is also reflected in our research-led academic provision, which deliberately decolonises and re-envision the curriculum through the inclusion of non-canonical and global Anglophone voices,

and develops students' employability and digital skills by incorporating professional and digital writing.

Research and academic provision in the unit are structured around synergies between the department's three key subject areas: **English Literature**, **Creative Writing** and **Publishing**. The department's staffing strategy seeks to ensure the presence of a range of subject specialisms to facilitate the delivery of our programmes but also encourages **strategic thematic collaborations** to foster joint research projects and the sharing of ideas. Notable concentrations of research excellence are centred on questions of **diversity and equality** (Davies, Egbunike, Howes, Moran, Wheelwright) and **war and conflict** (Davies, Egbunike, Paleit, Vuohelainen, Wheelwright). Other shared research interests include the **medical humanities** and **cultural geography**. The unit seeks to develop these interdisciplinary themes through targeted investment in research, impact activity and staff recruitment, and through strategic collaborations with cognate research units at City, within the UoL and beyond (section 4).

**Equality, diversity and inclusion** (EDI) are at the core of the unit's staffing, research and teaching strategies. This is demonstrated through staff and student demographics, our teaching curricula, our non-canonical research specialisms, public-engagement and impact work reaching out to non-traditional communities in London, nationally and internationally, and our active participation in and leadership of City's EDI initiatives (section 2).

### Research and impact context and strategy

This is **City's first REF submission in English Language and Literature**. Six of the seven Category A staff have joined City in the current cycle. Moran and Vuohelainen were recruited in 2016 to launch the new BA English programme. Paleit, Egbunike and Howes joined in 2017 and Davies in 2018. Wheelwright was employed by City at the time of REF2014 but was not returned.

The new department has focused on defining its **research identity and establishing a shared research culture** centred on **global and non-canonical Anglophone literatures**. The unit has sought to enhance its research excellence, intensity and diversity by recruiting research-active new staff both at senior and early-career levels. The success of this strategy is evidenced by high levels of **research productivity**, including the return of five monographs and six long-form editorial projects in this submission. Over 72 per cent of the outputs submitted are **interdisciplinary**. The unit has also strategically supported **shared research specialisms**, prioritised projects combining academic excellence with City's established strengths in professional and creative writing, and encouraged interdisciplinary collaborations within and beyond the institution. Examples of such collaborative work include efforts to connect with City's interdisciplinary research centres (e.g. Gender and Sexualities Research Centre); the unit's interdisciplinary work on the theme of conflict, which informs both our impact case studies (section 4); and Wheelwright, Moran and Davies's writing workshops for care home staff, underprivileged inner-city women and disadvantaged local youth (section 4). Regular **research events**, coordinated and publicised by Davies, foreground the unit's central research areas and feature both departmental and external speakers.

The unit has created and implemented **structures and strategies** designed to enable sustainable research excellence. The department has established clear, smooth and transparent processes for facilitating and supporting research, administered through the departmental Research and Ethics Committee (section 3). These processes facilitate **Open**

**Research**, for example by encouraging colleagues to exceed minimum Open-Access requirements, offering departmental research funding to support Open-Access publishing costs, and promoting ORCID sign-up. The seven Category A staff have between them deposited 47 items in City's Open-Access repository during this REF cycle. Promotion processes also require staff to maximise Open Research. The department further contributes to Open-Access publishing through editorship of Open-Access journal issues by Howes (special issue of *Open Library of the Humanities*, 2019) and Vuohelainen (special issue of *Victorian Popular Fictions Journal*, 2019). The validation of **MA and PhD awards in English** (launched 2019) offers staff opportunities for postgraduate teaching and research supervision and supports the growth of our postgraduate community.

With its conviction that English is a socially engaged and globally relevant discipline, the unit is actively engaged in impact work. Our main pathway to impact is through **public engagement**. Our innovative teaching and learning provision stresses the **applications of English in the modern world**, which we seek to promote through school and community workshops and widening participation. Strategic priorities include developing **collaborative impact projects** within the department and beyond that grow out of our shared research areas in conflict studies, gender studies, the medical humanities, cultural geography and postcolonial studies, and prioritising **local community work**, for example with inner-city schools and community groups, in these shared research areas. City supports impact development through **investment** in impact projects (section 3), the recognition of impact activities in workloads (section 2), and the services of a dedicated **School impact officer** and external **impact consultants**. The unit has also embedded public-engagement work, including smaller-scale projects, media appearances, event organisation and outreach, into recruitment, appraisal and promotion processes.

The department runs a substantial **public-engagement programme** (section 4). Our two **impact case studies** are centred on Egbunike's research into the Nigeria-Biafra War (1967–70) and Wheelwright's work on women's roles in military conflict. The projects seek to challenge prevailing perceptions by uncovering and voicing the experiences of neglected groups who have experienced war. In addition, the department is working on a range of other public-engagement and impact projects, some of which will develop into future impact case studies. These projects build on interdisciplinary synergies within the department and on external collaborations within and beyond the UoL in seeking to develop **sustainable collaborative projects** centred on shared research themes such as writing and health (Moran and Wheelwright's community creative writing workshops), social justice and cultural geography (Davies's comics workshops) and gender (Howes's radio work).

## Research and impact goals

The unit's strategic priorities for the next REF cycle include:

### Staffing

- Recruiting and retaining research-excellent staff and enabling their continued research productivity and career development, by using the annual appraisal process to identify opportunities and goals for promotion, making available facilities and resources for research through targeted research funding and sabbatical leave, and fostering an inclusive work environment
- Supporting the career development of ECRs through targeted funding to facilitate

promotion, assistance with funding capture, research mentoring and strategic career planning

- Developing research clusters by prioritising staff and PhD recruitment in strategically important shared, interdisciplinary and impactful research areas.

#### Collaborative and interdisciplinary research and emerging themes

- Supporting research collaborations within the department, across the institution, within the UoL and externally by developing shared research interests into research clusters and encouraging interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and international research, particularly in the medical humanities, gender studies, conflict studies, cultural geography and postcolonial studies
- Focusing strategically on emerging themes in English, such as global Anglophone literatures and new methods of communicating and researching English Literature (such as the digital humanities)
- Integrating Publishing and Creative Writing with academic English Literature by prioritising dual specialisms (English Literature and Creative Writing or Publishing) in new appointments and PhD researchers, with the launch of the new MA/MFA programmes in Creative Writing in 2021 offering opportunities to expand the research base
- Hosting visiting scholars and writers in residence in strategically significant research areas.

#### Impact, public engagement and Open Research

- Routinely integrating impact and public engagement into the unit's research by encouraging impactful projects and providing resources to facilitate public-facing research
- Building strategically on previous community workshops to develop permanent collaborative projects, particularly within the surrounding Islington community
- Embedding a culture of Open Research fully into our research practice by encouraging, facilitating and funding increased take-up of Open-Access opportunities.

#### External funding

- Improving external funding capture through dissemination of information about funding opportunities, strategic targeting of funding schemes such as the Wellcome Trust and the AHRC and British Academy's global funding streams, research collaborations, and thorough and constructive peer review
- Building strategically on previous successes in capturing small grants from diverse funding bodies towards larger, externally funded projects in our key research areas.

#### Expanding the postgraduate community

- Further embedding research into teaching and learning through the design of research-led curricula and the development of the department's postgraduate taught (PGT) and research (PGR) provision

- Providing PGR supervisory opportunities to all research-active staff
- Strengthening the PGR community and increasing the number of PhD completions to a total of approximately 15 in the next reporting cycle through the development of the department's academic provision with opportunities for throughput from BA to MA to PhD, a steady increase in PhD admissions, institutional studentships, and improved training for both supervisors and research students
- Aspiring to participate in doctoral partnerships.

## 2. People

### Staffing strategy

The unit has witnessed significant **investment in staffing, facilities and resources** since 2016. Six of the seven Category A staff in this submission have joined City since 2016. The staffing strategy of the unit combines the practical need to ensure a diversity of subject specialisms with a number of research priorities, including research excellence and research intensity; impact and public-engagement potential; attention to equality and diversity; and a deliberate balance between senior and early-career staff appointments. Of Category A staff, Moran is a Reader; Paleit, Vuohelainen and Wheelwright are Senior Lecturers; and Davies, Egbunike and Howes are Lecturers and also ECRs. Moran and Vuohelainen were promoted during the reporting cycle. The seven Category A staff are all on permanent contracts.

The arrival of new, research-active colleagues during the reporting cycle has signalled a significant **cultural shift** in the unit's identity towards research achievement and intensity. As colleagues (many on education role profiles) have left or retired, the unit has deliberately prioritised **research-excellent appointments**. The department is particularly keen to recruit new colleagues with **dual specialisms** in English Literature and Creative Writing or Publishing who are able to contribute to one or more of the department's priority research areas. By stressing the department's innovative curriculum, with its focus on **global, transnational, non-canonical and marginalised Anglophone literatures** and public-engagement activities, staff recruitment actively encourages applications from researchers from non-traditional socio-cultural and academic backgrounds. The department is keen to welcome visiting scholars who are able to contribute to our priority research areas, and in 2018 hosted an honorary visiting researcher, discourse analyst Dr Cinzia Giacinta Spinzi from the University of Palermo.

### Staff development and support

The unit seeks to fulfil its strategic research goals through staff development processes that **encourage and reward research excellence, intensity and impact**. The department's workload model allocates 40 per cent of the contracted hours of staff on research-and-education role profiles to research. Impact case study authors are allowed an additional six per cent of their contracted hours to work on impact activities. All new colleagues are appointed a mentor from the School to help them integrate into the department and to provide advice on the institutional context, balancing the demands of research and teaching, and strategic career development. Brindle, formerly a professional publisher, offers guidance on book proposals and copyright-related issues. The head of department sponsors participation in academic leadership programmes and career-development initiatives, including programmes such as Aurora which target women and under-represented groups. A doctoral track scheme is available to colleagues who do not yet have a PhD. All seven Category A staff in this



submission hold PhDs, with Wheelwright completing her doctorate under City's doctoral track scheme in 2014.

City's **probation, appraisal and promotion processes** encourage research excellence and intensity but also reward impact, knowledge exchange, public engagement, income generation, research-led teaching and academic leadership. During probation and annual appraisal, Category A staff are set clear and measurable objectives in research, teaching/education, enterprise, internationalisation, external and professional contribution, and administration, management and academic leadership. Promotion processes require staff on research-and-education role profiles to demonstrate strong performance in research, teaching/education, service and enterprise. Staff are also encouraged to identify training needs. The line manager (normally head of department) may sponsor professional development activities or teaching relief to enable colleagues to achieve strategic targets, over and above the support provided by the departmental Research and Ethics Committee and various institutional funding pots (section 3). Egbunike, for example, has benefited from a reduced teaching load to facilitate her impact work.

Research excellence and intensity are also encouraged and monitored through City's **Annual Research Quality Monitoring** (ARQM) exercise. Departmental panels, with the help of external peer reviewers, assess the quality of the four best outputs of each research-active member of staff within a rolling four-year period. In the English Department, the assessment process involves all research-active members of staff as internal peer reviewers, facilitating a mutual understanding of the research being conducted by departmental colleagues and giving staff developmental opportunities to reflect on research design. This process also provides opportunities for education staff to demonstrate research activity and potentially progress to research-and-education role profiles.

Recruiting **ECRs** is a significant part of the department's staffing strategy. Apart from the mechanisms detailed above, ECRs are supported through lighter administrative and teaching workloads and have also been the contractual group in receipt of most support from the departmental research fund and various institutional funds. In 2018–19, for example, ECRs received two-thirds of the research funds distributed by the department. In this reporting cycle, departmental funding has allowed our ECRs to attend international subject conferences in Switzerland, Portugal, the US, New Zealand, Nigeria and Brazil, among others, and to develop impact activities. In addition, all ECRs in the department have received institutional Pump-Prime awards in the current cycle (section 3).

The department runs regular **research events**, coordinated by Davies, and an annual **research strategy workshop**, at which colleagues discuss research priorities and impact activities, sometimes with presentations by external speakers. Institutional research training workshops are advertised by a dedicated research support officer and have recently included workshops on interdisciplinarity, grant writing, and talks by major funders such as the British Academy, the Leverhulme Trust and the Wellcome Trust.

### PGR students

Building a **PhD community** is a key priority for the department. The unit previously offered a PhD award in Translation Studies, which achieved two completions in 2015–16 and one in 2016–17. Two government-sponsored graduates subsequently took up lectureships in English and Translation Studies in Kurdistan, Iraq. The unit validated a new **PhD English** award in 2018 in order to broaden its research degree provision and to offer a greater number of staff

supervisory opportunities. The first two PhD researchers commenced this new award in October 2019, one on a three-year School studentship (offered again in 2020) including a fee waiver, approximately £17,000 maintenance p.a. and £1000 in research expenses over the course of the award. One student is due to complete the discontinued PhD Translation Studies in 2021.

The unit regards research students as an integral part of the research community and encourages applications from candidates whose research areas are aligned with our supervisory capacity and research priorities. During the next REF cycle, we aim to **expand the PhD community** by recruiting two or three new PhD students annually, resulting in approximately 15 completions. PhD students are integrated into the departmental research community through participation in departmental research events, and also have their own research seminar series. They can access research and conference funding via the departmental Research and Ethics Committee.

Research students are allocated a **supervisory team** normally consisting of an experienced supervisor (A) who has supervised to completion and a second supervisor (B). Supervisory teams are designed to allow all research-active members of staff to gain supervisory experience and to enable them to progress to supervisor A status in the next REF cycle. The supervisory team split an annual workload allowance of 40 hours between them. The department's **Senior Tutor for Research** (Vuohelainen), who represents the PhD programme at leadership level, liaises between the department, the School and City's Doctoral College, providing up-to-date information on research degree regulations, PGR training, Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) contracts and funding. She also organises upgrade panels, vivas and the research student seminar series.

PhD students provide **feedback** on their experience through a School-level staff–student liaison and programme committee. Feedback indicates consistently high levels of student satisfaction, with the following as examples of good practice: flexibility in seminar arrangements and times; prompt and constructive feedback; clear assessment guidelines; good library resources; good academic support; clear communication.

At departmental level, student **progress** is monitored jointly by the supervisory team and the Senior Tutor for Research. Supervisions, action points, training needs and progress are recorded via the institutional online monitoring tool, Research and Progress (RaP), which acts as a repository of student progression and researcher development. The School undertakes an annual review of all PhD students, supplementing the departmental monitoring system. Where progress appears unsatisfactory, remedial measures are agreed with the student and the department.

New research students attend a centrally organised induction programme, which covers generic **research training** as well as introducing students to institutional **research facilities**. Students can access an ongoing series of training sessions, which cover fundamental skills in research methods, research ethics, thesis writing, viva preparation and career development. Students in the English Department may also audit taught modules, including subject-specific and research methods modules. Where possible, the department aims to offer its PhD students paid **researcher-development opportunities** as GTAs and/or research assistants. In 2019–20, for example, one of the two students who commenced the PhD in English also worked as a GTA, while the other audited a range of taught modules to build up subject knowledge. PhD students who teach benefit from a mentoring scheme and are required to attend the Learning,

Teaching and Assessment module on City's MA in Academic Practice; students with prior teaching experience are sponsored to apply for Associate Membership of the HEA through City's RISES programme.

City's membership of the **UoL** has substantially expanded the range of research methods training on offer. PhD students in English can access subject-specific research events and training at the institutes of the **School of Advanced Study**. City is now also part of the **Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network**, which facilitates PhD students' access to research methods training sessions run by the various partners, including King's College London (KCL), University College London (UCL), Birkbeck, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). UoL funding, awarded on a competitive basis, is available to support PGR research training and conference attendance in addition to the financial support offered by the department.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

The unit makes a significant and active contribution to EDI issues through our **non-canonical research, public-engagement work, re-envisioned curriculum and committee membership**. All staff are expected to undertake EDI training. The Category A staff in this submission represent four nationalities and a 71/29 female/male split. In 2019–20, the departmental Research and Ethics Committee had 60/40 female/male representation. At departmental level, research support is available to staff on fractional or fixed-term contracts and on education role profiles **on an equal basis** to full-time permanent staff on research-and-education role profiles. The ARQM exercise allows for REF-style output reductions without penalty for early-career and fractional staff, and for staff with individual circumstances that have significantly affected research productivity.

The unit's commitment to EDI issues is reflected in our **non-canonical research areas**, which include gender studies, postcolonial and comparative literatures, mental health and disability studies, and studies of war, conflict and genocide. We also work with **underprivileged community groups** both locally and globally (section 4) and seek to **redefine the curriculum** by stressing the significance of global and transnational Anglophone literatures, women's writing and non-canonical popular culture in our research-led teaching. In 2019, Howes won an institutional award for her **widening participation** outreach work. Howes ran workshops at City, introducing primary-school, GCSE and A-Level students from under-represented London schools to her research in medieval literature and gender studies and providing them with a taster of university life in order to enhance their access to higher education. The department regularly hosts **external speakers** on themes of gender, race equality and disability, including in this reporting cycle the Nigerian feminist author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (400 attendees), the Egyptian feminist campaigner Nawal El Saadawi (150), the journalist Gary Younge (150), the first ever Young People's Poet Laureate Caleb Femi, writer and charity founder Susanna Howard, and novelists Kirsty Logan and Sophie Mackintosh (30–50 each). Enthusiastic **student participation** in events such as these bridges our teaching and research.

The unit demonstrates commitment to EDI through active **committee work**. We promote **gender equality** through our contribution to City's membership of the Athena SWAN Charter. During the reporting cycle, Moran has acted as co-chair of the university's Athena SWAN committee with responsibility for overseeing the Athena SWAN submissions of City's four Schools and the application for renewal of the university's Bronze award in 2021. Her period of tenure has witnessed the introduction of new policies on family leave and carers, and efforts to



ensure transparent promotion processes and the presence of women on institutional committees. Egbunike and Howes are on the self-assessment team for the School's Athena SWAN application. The university is developing an application for the Race Equality Charter (REC) Mark for 2021, and signed the UUK/NUS BAME Attainment Gap Pledge in 2019. The unit's commitment to **racial equality** is demonstrated through Davies's roles as the School representative on City's REC Self-Assessment Team and co-chair of the university-wide Student Attainment Working Group. Egbunike is a member of the BAME staff network and two subgroups as part of City's REC self-assessment team.

City's commitment to the fair and equitable treatment of all staff is articulated in the **university's policies** relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Treatment of Fixed Term Staff; Academic Promotions; Parental Leave; and Flexible Working. City's flexible working policy (October 2017) and Sickness Absence Policy & Guidelines (November 2018) establish ways to adjust working hours and expectations. City has recently reviewed and revised its parental/adoption leave provisions (January 2019). A return-to-work support scheme and confidential HR support assist research-active staff in re-establishing research upon return and managing workload expectations. Parental leave taken by PGR students does not count towards the overall suspension-of-study limits that are allowed by university policy. School-level support is available to staff who have accrued additional childcare costs due to attending conferences and other training. Line managers and HR teams can refer staff or research students returning from periods of ill-health or managing long-term illness or disability to Occupational Health for advice and support. City's Staff Counselling Service is available to all staff either by referral from their line manager or by self-referral. Staff and PGR wellbeing is also supported by workshops, courses and programmes offered by the Professional Development Team.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### External research income

**External funding capture** is a key strategic priority for the unit in the next REF cycle. In this reporting cycle, the unit has received modest amounts of external research funding for diversity-related projects from **varied funding sources**. Egbunike and Davies were awarded a total of £4560 British Academy Seed Funding for workshops promoting collaboration with African and Asian researchers (2018–20). Vuohelainen received £527 from the Finnish Literature Exchange and the Norwegian Literature Association to bring Nordic crime writers to a public event in London. In addition, support for the research of the unit includes £17,380 from the British Academy Writing Workshops scheme for Egbunike's publishing and mentoring workshop, 'Lagos in the World, the World in Lagos' (2019); \$10,000 from the Ford Foundation for Egbunike's annual Igbo conference (2019); the provision of venue and catering free of charge by Europe House (EU representative in London) for Vuohelainen's 'In from the Cold: Northern Noir' (2017), and £2400 to Wheelwright to run life-writing workshops at the Nightingale care home (2015–16). In the next cycle, the unit seeks to build on these initial successes in securing funding for EDI-related projects to win larger and more prestigious awards in its priority research areas.

Funding applications are supported by the university's **research office**, which also organises regular external funding workshops. Staff have access to a dedicated School-level support officer with understanding of the funding landscape in the subject area, who advertises funding opportunities, vets applications, organises peer review, and helps with costings. All applications

are peer-reviewed by a member of the School's **peer-review** panel, typically a departmental colleague who offers robust but constructive feedback. Appraisal and promotion processes encourage staff to apply for external funding.

City operates a sector-leading **Research Sustainability Fund** to incentivise external funding applications. During the reporting cycle, the scheme has returned eight per cent of the grant plus one-third of the income associated with Principal Investigator (PI) time to the PI to be used towards research assistance, conference and travel costs, and equipment and consumables. PI accounts can also be used to fund PhD studentships on a match-funding basis. A **teaching buy-out** scheme offers PIs the opportunity to negotiate reduced teaching loads upon receipt of grants covering 20 per cent or more of their salary costs.

### Research support

Research support in the department operates through the departmental **Research and Ethics Committee**, chaired by Vuohelainen who also acts as the unit's research lead and representative on School and institutional research committees. The departmental committee is composed of four or five senior staff representing a range of subject expertise. The committee has developed efficient processes for disbursing research funding through a simple application process, facilitating impact and event organisation, and providing information on research-related issues through a shared online repository. The departmental Research and Ethics Committee also supports research and research integrity by assessing and approving ethics applications via the online ethics clearance system **Research Ethics Online**. Low-risk applications are assessed by at least two members of the committee. Brindle represents the department on the School's Medium-Risk Ethics Committee.

The Research and Ethics Committee administers the **departmental research budget**, which allows each member of staff, irrespective of role profile or fractionality, to apply for a minimum £1000 annually to support and develop activities and outputs aligned with current departmental objectives (section 1). The research fund supports conference attendance, costs associated with publication or dissemination, research trips, career development, video-conferencing, activities in support of external grant capture, impact activities, research events that bring external visitors to City, and professional and subject-association memberships. In distributing additional funds, priority is given to applications that make a demonstrable contribution towards City's REF strategy. In 2018–19, the committee distributed more than £16,000 in funding, over £11,000 of which supported ECR conference attendance and impact development.

**Institutional funding**, particularly for knowledge exchange and impact activities, is available via the Higher Education Innovation Fund, the Impact Development Fund, Early-Career and Mid-Career Pump Priming and the Global Challenges Research Fund. During the reporting period, City has supported the unit's public-engagement activities with over £44,000 through these funds. Over three-quarters of this funding has benefited ECRs, all of whom have received ECR Pump-Prime funding to support workshops and networks such as Davies's 'Infrastructural Reading: Fragments, Flows, Forms' (2019), Egbunike's 'Cartographies of Resistance: Brixton in the Black British Imaginary' (2017) and Howes's WaterWorks ECR network (2019). Institutional funding has also enabled the development of Egbunike and Wheelwright's impact case studies, Moran and Wheelwright's health humanities workshops, and Vuohelainen's Nordic crime fiction event (section 4). A dedicated School-level **impact officer** advises on pathways to impact, evidence gathering and funding. Impact case study authors have also benefited from training provided by external **impact consultants**.

Staff are eligible to apply for a **sabbatical** term for each seven terms of employment. The academic year consists of three terms. In the current reporting cycle, five staff associated with the unit were granted a total of five terms of sabbatical leave. Sabbatical applications are put forward by the head of department, and considered and monitored by the School Research and Enterprise Committee.

### Unit infrastructure and facilities

The department is located in **newly renovated offices** in City's College Building in Clerkenwell, Islington and receives dedicated administrative support from three course officers (undergraduate, PGT, PGR) and a School Executive Assistant. Specialist support is provided by Library and IT Services.

**City's Library** supports research through its extensive **print and digital collections**, including over 300 university-wide databases such as Literature Online, JStor, Gale Primary Sources, JISC Historical Texts and Proquest British Periodicals Collections, and thousands of online journals. The Library houses an important **special collection** of editor-annotated material related to the weekly literary magazine the *Athenaeum* (1828–1921). The Library's collections are maintained by a current annual budget of over £470,000 for specialist resources and a £1.6m spend on cross-School and department content in the format of journal and ebook bundles as well as reference materials. The creation of the English Department has seen significant and growing **investment in the English subject area**:

Academic year	Print and ebooks	Subscription journals/databases
2013–14	£3800	£1676
2014–15	£5400	£1500
2015–16	£5135	£2050
2016–17	£6826	£2181
2017–18	£17,619	£15,701
2018–19	£17,997	£18,327
2019–20	£15,660	£18,360

The Library has a dedicated English **subject librarian** and a **research librarian** (Arts and Social Sciences), who is a member of the University Library Services Research Service Group. The Library offers one-to-one support for researchers in addition to running workshops in key areas such as literature searching, citing and referencing, and specialist database support. A dedicated research hub and specialist online library guides support researchers, while a 'Read for Research' scheme allows researchers to request books for purchase. The Library's Digital Repository team manage City's institutional repository, **City Research Online** (CRO), advocate Open-Access principles and benefits, and liaise with publishers and journals on behalf of academic staff to ensure compliance with copyright regulations. CRO underpins City's Open-Access strategy and researcher profiles and contains over 10,000 research outputs and a growing collection of over 1500 doctoral theses.

City joined the **UoL** in 2016, providing staff and students with improved access to research facilities and networks, including the university's central library and the Institute of English Studies (IES) at Senate House. Membership of the federal university has significantly improved research facilities for staff in the unit by providing access to extensive additional print and

online collections in the humanities and by facilitating research collaborations across the UoL. Examples include Egbunike's collaborative work with SOAS over the annual Igbo conference and with the Brunei Gallery over the *Legacies of Biafra* exhibition, and research events run at IES by Davies and Howes. PhD students additionally benefit from access to research and methods training at IES and the Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network.

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

The department makes a sustained and significant contribution to the research base through numerous academic and public roles, appearances, projects, events, collaborations and activities. The unit seeks to grow and actively redefine the discipline through research contributions that foreground **global Anglophone literatures** and promote new methods of communicating our research findings to **diverse communities**. This section captures some of the most significant of these activities and esteem indicators.

##### Event attendance and organisation

Staff in the unit regularly attend and organise **academic and public events** in order to promote our understanding of English as a socially active discipline that can give a voice to marginalised groups. In addition to ordinary conference attendance, the seven Category A staff have between them delivered 21 **invited talks and keynote addresses**, organised or been invited to host or attend ten **panels or roundtables**, and have themselves organised or co-organised 17 **academic events** and 25 **public events**, across nine countries and four continents. Notable examples of events **at City** include Davies's 'Infrastructural Reading: Fragments, Flows, Forms' (2019), which brought to City speakers from the UK, the US, Canada, Ireland, Switzerland, Finland, Kashmir and India; Wheelwright's 'The Legacy of Mata Hari: Women and Transgression', to coincide with the centenary of the spy's execution (2017); and major public events such as interviews with the Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2018, 400 attendees) and the Egyptian feminist activist Nawal El Saadawi (2018, 150 attendees). Collaborations within the **UoL** encompass Egbunike's ongoing co-convening of the annual Igbo conference at SOAS, which acts as a forum for the diasporic Nigerian community, and Howes's role in co-organising the Biennial London Chaucer Conference ('Chaucer and Europe') at IES in 2019. Noteworthy **public events** number Wheelwright's Mata Hari talks at the British Library (2014), the National Army Museum (2017), the Fris Museum in the Netherlands (2017) and the Washington Spy Museum in the US (podcast, 2019), and Vuohelainen's Nordic crime fiction event at Europe House, London (2017). Prominent examples of **international event organisation** include Egbunike's panel co-ordination at the African Literature Studies Association conference (2019), her contributions to the Aké Festival in Nigeria (2018) and the Mboka festival in Gambia (2019), and 'Lagos in the World, the World in Lagos' (2019), a publishing and mentoring workshop Egbunike developed with British Academy funding. During the pandemic, the unit's activities have moved **online**, for example with Howes's webinar on 'Open Access and Medieval Studies: New Approaches to Water and Beyond' (March 2020) and her online seminar 'Violent Fluids: Feminist Histories of Blood' (Courtauld Gender and Sexuality Research Forum), which attracted 538 participants in July 2020.

##### Collaborative and interdisciplinary academic projects

All staff in the unit participate in **collaborative and interdisciplinary projects** designed to broaden the scope of English Studies. The unit's ECRs are actively involved in **research collaborations**. Howes benefited from City Pump-Prime funding to cofound the ECR WaterWorks network, which brings academics from Trinity College Dublin, Northampton,

Oxford, Surrey, Southampton, KCL and Wolverhampton together with artists, storytellers and other creative professionals. Davies's infrastructural reading examines urban and post/colonial infrastructures, offering opportunities for national and international collaboration such as the British-Academy-sponsored UK–India ECR Collaboration Workshop, 'Violence & Democracy', at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi (2018). Egbunike's *Legacies of Biafra* exhibition (2018) and *In the Shadow of Biafra* film (2020) combine literary studies, history and creative arts, and rely on external networks and international collaboration. Key examples of **interdisciplinary research** include Moran's work in the medical humanities, Vuohelainen's periodical research, Wheelwright's literary journalism and Paleit's joint editorial project for the MHRA's Tudor and Stuart Translations series, which bridges early modern studies and Classics.

### Editorial and peer-review activities

The unit contributes to the research base through editorial and peer-review activities that promote the department's non-canonical and global ethos, vision of English as a socially engaged subject, and commitment to Open Research. **Editorial board memberships** held by staff in the unit include the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* (Davies, lead editor), *Woolf Studies Annual* (Moran) and the Victorian Popular Fiction Association's editorial board (Vuohelainen), foregrounding the unit's commitment to global literatures, gender studies and non-canonicity.

The unit makes a significant contribution to the discipline through **peer-review** activities. Paleit's work as a **reviewer for the AHRC**, a major funder of early modern research, was recognised with a 'Gold Standard' letter in 2019. We regularly review article submissions in **priority research areas** such as postcolonial studies (*Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*), Holocaust Studies (*Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*), gender studies (*Contemporary Women's Writing*, *Women: A Cultural Review*), cultural geography (*Urban Cultural Studies*), comics studies (*Journal of Graphic Novels & Comics*, *Comics Grid*, *Inks: The Journal of the Comics Studies Society*) and journalism and periodical research (*Media Studies*, *Journalism Practice*, *Journalism: Theory, Practice and Criticism*, *Literary Journalism Studies*). We assess book proposals and book manuscripts for a range of academic and university presses (Edinburgh University Press, Liverpool University Press, Routledge, Palgrave, University of Toronto Press, UCL Press, University Press of Mississippi, Victorian Popular Fiction Association). We have reviewed books for the *Times Literary Supplement*, *Times Higher Education* and *English Studies*.

In this reporting cycle, the seven Category A staff have published 13 **edited or co-edited outputs** that promote our vision of English in the world. These include interdisciplinary **essay collections** such as Vuohelainen's *Interpreting Primo Levi: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Palgrave, 2015, with Arthur Chapman, Institute of Education), and Davies's *Planned Violence: Post/Colonial Urban Infrastructure, Literature and Culture* (Palgrave, 2018, with Elleke Boehmer, Oxford) and *Documenting Trauma in Comics: Traumatic Pasts, Embodied Histories* (Palgrave, 2020, with Candida Rifkind, Winnipeg), all of which include creative interventions by creative writers and artists. Other essay collections seek to read their subjects anew, as with Moran's collaborative work with Erica Johnson (Pace University, New York) on *Jean Rhys: Twenty-First-Century Approaches* (Edinburgh University Press, 2015), or Vuohelainen's *Richard Marsh, Popular Fiction and Literary Culture, 1890–1915: Rereading the Fin de Siècle* (Manchester University Press, 2018, with Victoria Margree, Brighton, and Daniel Orrells, KCL). **Special Open-Access journal issues** of *Open Library of the Humanities* (Howes, with James



Smith, Trinity College Dublin, 2019) and *Victorian Popular Fictions Journal* (Vuohelainen, 2019) demonstrate our commitment to Open Access, while co-edited special issues of *Victorian Periodicals Review* (Vuohelainen, with Emma Liggins, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2019) and *Journalism* (Wheelwright, with Susan Greenberg, Roehampton, 2014) offer major critical interventions in periodical research and literary journalism. Finally, the unit has produced **critical editions** (Paleit's co-edition of Thomas May's translation of Lucan's *Bellum Civile* for the MHRA's Tudor and Stuart Translations series, with Emma Buckley, St Andrews, 2020) and **exhibition catalogues** (Egbunike's *An Exhibition of Artists' Responses to 'Legacies of Biafra'*, 2017).

### Academic fellowships and advisory roles

Staff in the unit hold, or have held, various **external fellowships and roles**, which promote our commitment to collaborative research and confirm our international outlook. Davies is a **research associate** of The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH). As an advisor and TORCH committee member, he helped to run a bi-weekly series of events featuring academics and artists in 2018–20. Wheelwright has held **visiting fellowships** at the University of Helsinki (2016) and the Arvon Foundation (2014). The department's BBC/AHRC **New Generation Thinkers** Howes (2017–18) and Egbunike (2016–17) make frequent **media appearances**. Howes's regular appearances and podcasts on BBC Radio 3 and 4 seek to promote and popularise medieval literature, medieval women's writing and themes of gender, water and fluids. In addition to 13 guest appearances between December 2017 and July 2020, Howes is one of the main presenters for the BBC Radio 3/AHRC Arts & Ideas podcast *New Thinking*, and has been commissioned to present a series of podcasts for the Wellcome-funded *Pathologies of Solitude* project at Queen Mary, University of London. Egbunike has contributed to BBC Radio 3 and the BBC World Service on African literature and culture.

The unit contributes to the development of the discipline through **external advisory roles and examinerships**, which in turn enable further research aligned with the departmental ethos. Davies is a peer reviewer for the British Academy's Global Challenges Research Fund's Official Development Assistance stream, 'Heritage, Dignity & Violence' (2019), and an external examiner on 'Expanding the Language of Urban Design' (MA Urban Design, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, June 2020). Egbunike is a council member/treasurer of the African Studies Association UK (ASAUk). Wheelwright has acted as a peer reviewer of Creative Writing research outputs at Portsmouth (2019). Moran and Vuohelainen have provided external PhD supervision at the University of Limerick and Edge Hill University. Unit members have examined PhD and MRes theses at SOAS, Edge Hill University, Sheffield Hallam, University of South Wales, Goldsmiths, Lancaster, Birkbeck and University College London. Members of the unit also act or have acted as **judges** for various prizes such as the George Orwell Dystopian Fiction Prize (Wheelwright), the Arts Foundation Award for creative non-fiction (Wheelwright), the Aidoo-Snyder Literary Prize, Women's Caucus of the African Studies Association (Egbunike) and the Audrey Richards Prize for the best doctoral thesis in African Studies awarded by the ASAUk (Egbunike).

**Academic acknowledgements** of our research include Wheelwright's John C. Hartsock Prize for best article in *Literary Journalism Studies* (2018) and Davies's Honourable Mention from Comics Studies Society's Charles Hatfield Book Prize (2020). In addition, reviews of our work have appeared in *English*, *British Journal of Mental Health Studies*, *Times Literary Supplement*, *Holocaust Studies*, *Victorian Studies*, *Gothic Studies*, *English Literature in Transition*, *Cultural Geographies*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Washington Post*, *Ethnic & Third World*

*Literatures and Literary Journalism.*

### Non-academic beneficiaries

Public engagement and reaching out to non-academic communities are at the heart of the unit's understanding of the discipline, and we are committed to taking our research to **non-academic and non-traditional communities of users**.

Egbunike's impact project, ***Legacies of Biafra***, highlights the importance of commemorating the Biafran War (1967–70). The project seeks to tell the stories of and give a voice to ordinary people who experienced the war, improve their understanding of Biafra, facilitate conversations on the legacies of the war between different audiences, stress the importance of remembrance, and articulate the role of the arts in representing, remembering and understanding the conflict. Its diverse publics include the Nigerian community in London and globally, school children and university students, and visitors to art exhibitions and film festivals. Egbunike's impact work includes *Legacies of Biafra*, a touring exhibition of Nigerian art, which Egbunike curated and which attracted 8000 visitors to SOAS's Brunei gallery in January–March 2018; *In the Shadow of Biafra*, a documentary film about the legacies of Biafra, which premiered at Curzon Bloomsbury in London in January 2020 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Nigeria–Biafra war; and public-engagement and educational events such as an invited talk at the National Theatre to contextualise the setting of Inua Ellams's adaptation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters* during the Nigeria–Biafra war (2019). The project is particularly timely because of the continued relevance of civil war, displacement and refugees in today's world.

Wheelwright's impact project, ***Soldiers and Spies***, foregrounds the roles women have played in military conflict and espionage and seeks to challenge common perceptions of war as a male domain. Her work on women's participation in armed conflict as intelligence agents and combatants highlights the ways in which these roles have historically been trivialised or ignored and seeks to recover neglected histories that challenge conventional perceptions of gendered behaviour. Wheelwright's impact work includes extensive media coverage and public-engagement activity, for example participation in a ZDF/Arte documentary (2017) and a Washington Spy Museum podcast (2019) about Mata Hari, and consultancy work for the Dutch Fris Museum's exhibition *Mata Hari: The Maid and the Girl*, which attracted 90,000 visitors in 2017–18. The case study reaches out to diverse audiences including museum goers, war and gender historians, military servicewomen, school and university students, and the general public in the UK, the US and Europe to promote a multifaceted understanding of the roles that women have played in armed conflict. Wheelwright's work on Mata Hari, in particular, has been widely reported in the British and European press.

In addition to the two case studies, the department is working on a range of other public-engagement and impact projects. One significant strand centres on **writing and health**. Moran is a cofounder of the Health and the Arts network, launched jointly with the University of West London in November 2017 and facilitated by The Culture Capital Exchange, an independent company that designs, develops and delivers knowledge exchange and collaboration between HEIs and the arts, cultural and creative sectors. Moran has hosted panels at City on dementia and mental health such as 'Whose Story Is It? On How to Create Narratives of Dementia and the Self' (2018) and 'Dialogues with Madwomen' (2018), bringing together academics, service providers and individuals with experience of mental health conditions. Moran and Wheelwright's community engagement project 'Constituting Identities: Life Stories from the Margins' (Angell Town Community Centre, 2019) ran a ten-week creative writing course for women from

underprivileged backgrounds in order to help them articulate their stories, which were published in 2019 in an anthology of creative writing by the workshop participants. Wheelwright also delivered creative writing workshops to staff at the Nightingale residential care home in 2015–16, helping Jewish Holocaust survivors with dementia articulate their stories.

Another key public-engagement theme centres on **social justice**. Davies's research focuses on the ways in which literary, cultural and artistic media, particularly postcolonial urban comics, can create more socially just cities and infrastructure projects. In autumn 2019, he ran knowledge exchange workshops at Ringcross Community Centre in Islington, London to encourage disadvantaged youth in the local area to perceive comics as a route to community development and belonging. To explore the relationship between crime and social justice, the department hosts First Mondays, a free monthly crime fiction event attended by leading and upcoming crime writers and regular audiences of 300. Staff in the unit have also organised two EU-sponsored public-engagement events on crime fiction in translation at Europe House, the EU's headquarters in London. 'More Crimes across the Continent' (2014) and 'In from the Cold: Northern Noir' (2017) attracted full-capacity audiences of 120 including publishers, translators, writers and crime fiction enthusiasts. Supported by the European Literature Network and its *Riveter* magazine, the 2017 event focused on social justice in crime fiction by prominent Nordic authors including Håkan Nesser, Kjell Ola Dahl, Torkil Damhaug and Karo Hämäläinen.

Through these diverse activities, the unit aspires to support the research base, promote its vision of twenty-first-century global English, and establish innovative routes for communicating its research to diverse non-traditional audiences.