

Institution: University of Reading
Unit of Assessment: 29: Classics
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>1.1. Context and Structure</p> <p>The University of Reading's Department of Classics promotes world-leading research into all aspects of the civilisations and cultures of the ancient Mediterranean, their interactions, and their legacies, combining the best of traditional and modern approaches. Since 2014 we have greatly increased and diversified our grant capture and continue to shape research agendas through high-quality contributions to the research base, engagement in collaborative and inclusive research, and participation in current issues relevant to our discipline and society at large (section 4).</p> <p>Three research clusters (see 1.2) are designed to enable collaborative work and to fully integrate doctoral and post-doctoral researchers, as well as teaching-intensive staff who wish to develop an active research profile. A particular strength, and a focus of our research strategy since 2014, has been the Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology. The museum is based within our Department but benefits from being embedded within the University's outstanding Museums and Special Collections structure. The Ure has developed its own Research Framework, facilitated by a post-doctoral researcher funded by the University Collections Project.</p> <p>Since REF2014, we have maintained a vibrant research community and achieved our goal to increase the number of early-career researchers. We have welcomed independently funded post-docs (e.g., Hanson) and 37 doctoral students. In addition to academic staff, post-docs, and PGRs from the Department of Classics, our UoA includes: (a) a senior academic based in the Economics Department (Dark), (b) individuals employed on ERC-funded positions, (c) a Visiting Fellow in Modern Greek funded by the Greek government, (d) researchers affiliated to, or visiting, the Ure, and (e) emeritus/retired staff.</p> <p>Classics belongs to the School of Humanities, together with the Departments of History and Philosophy. It is embedded in the university-level Research Theme 'Heritage & Creativity' (H&C), comprising nine Arts & Humanities divisions, with its own Research Dean and professional team supporting grant applications (Research and Enterprise Services, with a H&C Research Development Manager), impact, and research communications. Support for our research comes from the School, the Ure Museum (an assistant curator, an education officer, and a fixed-term post-doctoral researcher), and the H&C Research Theme, which offers financial and mentoring support. We maintain active interactions with other divisions, as well as with Research Centres (e.g., the Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies; the Centre for Literacy and Multilingualism; the Centre for Health Humanities) and more informal research groups.</p> <p>1.2. Research and Impact Strategy</p> <p>Our overall strategy has been to consolidate, and substantially advance, our position as a world-leading centre for Classics in research, doctoral, and post-doctoral training, with a distinctive portfolio of societal impact and outreach activities. Our REF2014 narrative identified three main future strategic goals: increase competitive research funding; foster research synergies within and outside our UoA; and raise the profile of our research community and impact-leading activities. We have performed strongly in all three areas, as evidenced by: 1) a significant boost in grant capture (section 3); 2) increased national and international collaborations; and 3) higher number of independent post-docs and funded doctoral researchers choosing our Department.</p> <p>We have achieved these goals by centring our research strategy on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining our diverse research environment and international outlook through strategic appointments, visiting staff, and student exchanges;

- Sustaining a healthy ECR community by supporting post-doctoral and doctoral funding applications (e.g., the AHRC SWW-DTP; the British Academy PDRF) and maximising opportunities for internal studentships;
- Restructuring our research vision, by developing new research clusters which add energy to existing areas of strength and encourage interdisciplinary collaborations;
- Improving internal peer-review for funding bids, co-ordinating support within the UoA, together with the support offered via the H&C Research Theme Grant Development College; these improvements have led to:
 - Successful diversification of our funding sources;
 - Promotion of a culture of positive research communication, including using innovative communication means to reach new audiences, and deeper engagement with the research impact agenda.

Enhanced Research Management

Our research policies and strategy are developed by a Research Committee chaired by the Research Division Lead (RDL) and comprising the Head of Department, the Director of Postgraduate Research, and, as needed, other colleagues representing our various research strands. An annual Operational Plan informs our research strategy, prepared by the RDL in collaboration with the Research Dean and the Head of School, and reporting to the University Committee for Research and Innovation. Colleagues with distinguished research profile and expertise have provided strong leadership in the role of RDL in this REF cycle (Kruschwitz, Mairs, Marzano). The development and implementation of our research strategy is also supported by a dedicated UoA Lead and by the framework and leadership provided by the H&C Theme. We all help shape these processes, individually and collectively, in ad hoc committees, as well as through discussion in Department Meetings. Resource allocation and leave schemes are decided by Heads of School and Department, in consultation with the RDL. The RDL is member of a School Research Committee and of a Community of Practice including all RDLs in the H&C Theme.

The University's new research structure introduced after REF2014 and the increased peer-support available has resulted in **8 awards of prestigious fellowships**, including 3 British Academy Mid-Career Fellowships (Kruschwitz, 2014–5; Harloe and Mairs, both 2018–9) and 1 Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship (Marzano, 2017–20). These have supported colleagues' research careers and allowed us to recruit replacements at early-career level, both covering teaching needs and adding broader expertise to our research community. With respect to **Digital Humanities**, Nicholls' British Academy Rising Star Engagement Award (BARSEA) allowed him to develop best practice guidance through engagement with diverse stakeholders (4.2; **Impact Case Study**).

New Research Vision

Our research vision is to maintain and enhance Reading Classics' tradition of excellence while using the exceptional diversity of our researchers' expertise to **reshape the discipline in terms of place, time, and methods**. We have established three research clusters to foster innovative approaches that will enable us to contribute to Classics as an international and inclusive discipline: **Communities and Networks; Disciplinary Interfaces; and Legacies**. These clusters are not rigidly formalized but provide a framework to encourage synergies within our unit and beyond. Work-in-progress seminars are used to identify synergies, and each cluster aims at organizing several talks by external speakers. WiP seminars have led, *inter alia*, to co-authored outputs and grant applications (e.g., collaborations between [Harloe and Goff](#), and [Harloe and Smith](#)). Not all high-quality research of our UoA is necessarily collaborative and we greatly value the excellent individual research that is done outside the clusters.

The cluster **Communities and Networks** examines the internal make-up of ancient communities and the networks within which they operated (e.g., Marzano on the Roman economy; Aston and Rutherford on Greek religion and society; Smith on the circulation of Greek

pottery). We also map connections hitherto unexplored: networks of religion, culture, and language in Byzantine Egypt (Papaconstantinou); networks of pilgrimage and religious influence intersecting Greece, Egypt, and Anatolia (Rutherford); networks of Hellenicity reaching into Central Asia (Mairs); networks of theology and ritual linking early-Christian communities (Dark; Gray). By plotting these interactions, crossing boundaries of ethnicity, state, and identity, we reveal the Classical world in new and expanded configurations while drawing in diverse participants (e.g., Egyptian ECRs; see 4.2). This cluster has particular synergies with the British Museum (BM), with whom the University has established an institutional partnership (see *infra* and Institutional Environment Statement, IES thereafter). Through this cluster we support interdisciplinary and innovative work (e.g., Hanson's research on ancient cities) and international collaborations (e.g., Marzano and Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 4.1).

Disciplinary Interfaces challenges conceptual boundaries imposed by previous generations of scholarship. Its work is by definition interdisciplinary and international. Key areas are: a) interactions and continuities between different geographical zones and cultures: Greece and the East (Mairs and network on Hellenistic Asia; Rutherford on the Hittites; Mairs and Rutherford on Greece and Egypt); b) interactions between languages (Dickey on Greek/Latin; Mairs on ancient translations); and c) chronological continuities (Dark and Papaconstantinou on Byzantium). Mairs' appointment was a strategic decision post-REF2014 in order to widen the breadth of our research and research-led teaching beyond the classical Mediterranean and has led to collaborations with new international partners (e.g., Shanghai and Nankai Universities, China).

Legacies focuses on the reception of ancient culture both within antiquity and the modern period, and its contemporary relevance. Key areas are: a) collections research and Winckelmann's ground-breaking work on ancient art (Harloe, Smith); b) use of Classics in contemporary Africa (Goff); and c) ancient and modern imperialism (Mairs). Its work has been further supported by the fixed-term appointment, funded by the H&C Collections Project, of Dr Thornton as the Ure research officer; Thornton has developed the Ure's Research Framework and joint research and public engagement projects with the BM, funded by the BM-UoR Research Fund.

The collective success of these clusters is reflected in output volume, grant capture, doctoral and post-doctoral researchers, impact and public engagement in each area. During the assessment period, over **230 outputs** have been deposited in our institutional [repository](#). Our vibrant and inclusive research environment is evidenced also by peer-reviewed publications, single- and co-authored, produced by our studentship, from undergraduate (including through Reading's Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme [UROP]) to PhD level.

The Ure's collection and archives have an important role in our research strategy (**c.5,135 objects** also accessible via [an online database](#) and via **Adlib**, through the University's Enterprise system). As highlighted in the Ure's Research Framework, there are several thematic collection strengths (e.g., 20th-century European history; travel and tourism; gender, representation, and identity) which not only feed into research of our Legacies cluster, but offer concrete opportunities for collaborative projects and funding applications related to current debates (e.g., decolonising collections, repatriation, gender representation), and collaborations between museums and the creative industries (e.g., between 'Museum in a Box' and Smith and Thornton to create '[Annie's Box](#)', an interactive educational resource based on founding curator Annie Ure's life).

Support for ECRs

Increased specialist mentoring of applicants for doctoral and post-doctoral funding has sustained a thriving ECR community. In the assessment period we had **2 independently funded post-docs** (Hanson, British Academy, 2018–2021, mentor: Marzano; Barfoed, Norwegian Research Council, 2019–22, mentor: Smith); **5 PhDs funded by the SWW AHRC consortium**; **3 PhDs funded via Graduate Teaching Assistantships**, and **3 overseas PhDs funded by University of Reading International Studentships**, while 3 further AHRC funded studentships continued from the REF2014 period. The award in June 2020 of a British Academy post-doc mentored by Goff (starting Sept. 2020) confirms the success of our active approach to mentoring.

International Outlook

We have a strong record as a hub for visiting scholars at doctoral and post-doctoral level, granting generous access to workspace, library and IT resources, and, where needed, the Ure's holdings and archive. In the assessment period, we have hosted **10 academic visitors from 4 continents**, including 3 researchers from China, a result of a recently implemented MoU (led by Mairs) between Reading and Nankai University, and of Duff's visiting professorship at Shanghai University; 1 researcher from Egypt, funded by the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education; and 1 from Nigeria, funded by Ibadan University and the Leventis Foundation. Academic visitors from developing countries, but also our own visits abroad (Goff's ongoing involvement with Classics in Africa; Mairs in Egypt) are one way in which we support diversity in our discipline. We seek to develop and promote our academic community, nationally and internationally, and encourage future exchanges, international collaborations, and recruitment of strong ECRs. We also welcome PhD students from other institutions, particularly from overseas. During this cycle, we have hosted **c.12 visiting doctoral researchers from China, Spain, Italy, the UK, and the US**.

Research Communication and Impact Strategy

We communicate our research widely and effectively to academic and non-academic audiences nationally and internationally, with the support of Reading's research communications team and Building Outstanding Impact Support Programme (BOISP), with dedicated Impact Officers and financial support of **c.£15k**. Several colleagues have developed social media presences that engage substantial and diverse audiences, including Dickey (**Impact Case Study**), Mairs (Hermeneis; [Everyday Orientalism](#)), and Nicholls (**Impact Case Study**). We have a lively [Facebook presence \(1,000+ followers from 45 countries\)](#), [Twitter feed \(2,400+ subscribers\)](#), and a [wordpress blog](#) (total average volume of **400 views/month**). The Ure has its own research blog, the '[Ure Routes](#)'. We engage with national and international media, in print, on air, televised, and online. For instance, Harloe, Mairs, and Nicholls featured on BBC Radio 4's *In Our Time*, Dickey on CBC Radio Canada (2016), and Dark's research on Hagia Sophia was picked up in **119 outlets in 21 countries and 7 languages**.

We share our University's ethos that Reading's research is of the highest relevance to present-day issues, treating research impact as an organic part of everything we do. Enhancement of impact activities is embedded into our research strategy. All staff are asked to think creatively about disseminating their research with new and diverse audiences through public engagement; this in turn helps in identifying key audiences and potential partnerships for developing impact. Reflection on public engagement and impact is part of our annual Personal Research Planning (PRP) meetings, which are held in conjunction with Performance and Development Review (PDR) meetings at unit level.

The University provides dedicated support for the development of impact case studies through BOISP, complemented at departmental level by the leadership offered by an Impact Lead (Nicholls, 2014-19). An example of the positive effect of this support system is Harloe's and Smith's work on Winckelmann and LGBT+ issues, which has resulted in collaborations with other institutions, public talks, and an exhibition (see 4.2).

Future Strategy and Priorities

Our recent successes give us confidence in our future vitality and sustainability, but the increasing challenges faced by the HE sector raise questions about the future of UK universities and require innovation in research and research-dissemination methods.

Our future priorities are to: 1) continue our engagement in high-quality and innovative research; 2) maintain and ideally increase our level of grant capture; 3) maintain a sustainable profile of career stages; 4) expand the contemporary relevance and impact of our research. To meet these priorities, we will:

- regularly review our research clusters, encouraging activities within and beyond the University;

- continue our engagement with constructive internal peer-review processes, effective PRP meetings, and mentoring of ECRs;
- increase participation in national and international research networks and grow local opportunities for collaborations by building on existing connections with institutions such as Reading Museum and the Berkshire Record Office;
- diversify our research funding sources by focusing on developing collaborative projects, building on our established and new research contacts;
- diversify PGR funding sources through Collaborative Doctoral Awards, attract independent post-docs by actively inviting applications, and create funded post-doctoral positions through major funded projects;
- engage with current societal challenges and debates, in order to sustain our commitment to diversity and inclusion, while also developing impact. The successful work of our Legacies cluster (4.2) serves as a model;
- extend our engagement with Open Access: the University has an Open Research Action Plan and offers extensive support for Open Research (see IES), including funds for open-access monographs. Key initiatives were already taken at local level in 2019, e.g., identifying book chapters suitable for open-access funding;
- cultivate long-term relationships with established and new stakeholders, to identify their needs and effectively integrate impact into our research's early stages.

The new British Academy post-doc who joins us in autumn 2020 supports our commitment to keeping a sustainable profile of career stages, while the project, 'Queer Tragedy', feeds into strong existing research strands. Exciting future research opportunities will be provided by the recent partnership between the University and the BM to site near our campus the Museum's Archaeological Research Collection. Research collaboration with the BM has been already facilitated by seed-corn funding, professional research support, and a community of champions at both institutions (Mairs for Classics). We will seek to boost opportunities by: 1) supporting collaborative funding proposals that link together expertise and infrastructure at both institutions; 2) developing high-quality Collaborative Doctoral Award proposals.

2. People

2.1. Staffing strategy and staff development

Our unit derives its vibrancy from the team spirit of the people who make it, from the students to the professors. We foster intellectual curiosity and rigorous research skills from the earliest stages, actively investing in future generations of outstanding scholars. This is reflected in our sustained engagement with Reading's distinctive UROP programme, which has led to **12 funded undergraduate research placements** during this cycle, contributing to a stream of motivated students who have subsequently embarked on higher degree programmes at leading UK Universities. Our appointment strategy is driven by a focus on international research excellence and the desire both to enhance existing strengths and to expand into new areas.

Fostering an inclusive research environment: the diversity of our research is also reflected in the make-up of our academic staff who come from **5 countries** with a gender balance of **5 male to 9 female** staff, with **4 male and 8 female staff in senior roles** with research responsibilities (associate professors; full professors). We had **two BAME** staff during the census period (one professor, one post-doc). We proactively invite members of our department with no research responsibility to become involved with our research community (e.g., through research seminars, financial and structural support within our means). For example, we supported the research of sessional lecturer Navratilova, under Rutherford's mentorship, securing H&C Theme pump-priming funds for grant development, a workshop, and her participation in international conferences in the US, Egypt, and Germany on topics concerned with Digital Humanities and secondary epigraphy.

Appointments: all appointment processes are either chaired or otherwise overseen by a member of the University's leadership group, as appropriate to the position's seniority. Offering permanency to Mairs secured breadth and depth in Greek History and the study of colonialism(s) ancient and modern. Pollmann's appointment, the Head of the School (HoS) of Humanities from 2016 until leaving for Bristol in 2018, augmented our provisions in Latin literature and boosted our work on Late Antiquity and Early Christianity, providing context to the research of Gray, Papaconstantinou, and Dark, as well as enhancing our research environment through the realignment of her ERC-ITN network with associated doctoral researchers/Graduate Teaching Assistants. These appointments were supplemented with increased efforts to attract externally funded doctoral and post-doctoral researchers, in order to achieve a sustainable profile of career stages overall.

Transformative role models: We have a proud history of maintaining a fair gender balance in appointments for leadership positions. During the assessment period, in addition to Pollmann (F) as HoS (2016–8), the headship of department was held by Marzano (F), Kruschwitz (M) and Aston (F); research division and UoA leadership was held by Kruschwitz (M), Mairs (F), Marzano (F), and Rutherford (M).

Mentoring, training, and professional development: all newly appointed staff receive an induction and are assigned an experienced research mentor. Colleagues are given the opportunity to reflect on their performance and future research plans through the discussion of their annually updated PRP. For large grant applications, our H&C Research Theme offers peer review through its internal Grant Development College as well as personalised pairings based on research expertise. Additionally, generous funding can be provided by the Research Dean towards pump-priming/action-lab-style activities, to support the development of larger applications (e.g., Kruschwitz's successful ERC application, see below).

The University's People Development and the Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD) offer a wide range of staff training. ECRs are fully integrated in our mentoring structure and offered the opportunity to further develop their professional skills. The H&C Theme has furthermore developed dedicated support for ECRs and facilitated bespoke training for individuals– e.g., in Digital Humanities. ECRs are also encouraged to undertake some teaching in the Department and deliver modules of their own design.

Promotion/career progression: during the assessment period **1 colleague** was promoted from **lecturer/assistant professor to associate professor**, and **4 colleagues** from **associate professor to full professor**, based on a range of criteria including, but not restricted to, research, teaching, and academic citizenship. We have an internal support system whereby staff applying for promotion are mentored through the process and can access personalised advice; the accelerated professional trajectory of some colleagues shows the success of this support system. Mairs is a good example of the Department's successful support for the professional development of early-career staff: originally covering for another colleague, she was made permanent after REF2014 and assigned research and teaching mentors. She was supported for rapid promotion to Associate Professor (2017) and to Professor (2019) in recognition of her outstanding research achievements.

We are proud of the gender balance and inclusivity in our staffing portfolio (see 2.3). Recognizing the difficulties of the academic job market, we endeavour to support research ambitions of staff on teaching-only contracts.

Research leave and allowances: all our researchers benefit from one term's study leave in eight. Research performance during leave is monitored at School level and we encourage those on leave to consider the development of grant applications. We also had additional leave for the development of impact case studies.

All of our academic staff have access to an annual staff development allowance as well as to additional competitive funding from sources within the School, the H&C Theme (especially for the development of funding applications, research collaborations, and impactful activities), and the University (Research Travel Fund, Research Endowment Trust Fund, and BOISP, for travel costs, buyouts, and impact-bearing activities).

Parental leave: we follow the University's [maternity leave policy](#), which gives all pregnant employees up to 52 weeks Maternity Leave regardless of length of service/hours of work. During this assessment cycle, two colleagues took their maternity leave entitlement and a third the statutory two-week parental leave. We support staff returning to work after maternity leave by offering informal peer mentoring (e.g., to catchup with new procedures), by supporting requests for flexible working, and by assigning lighter administrative roles and/or teaching loads, as needed.

2.2. Supporting PGR students

The Department offers a PhD programme in Classics, requiring the production of a thesis of up to 80,000 words' length over a maximum of four years (full-time study: a part-time option is available). During the census period **18 PGR** students were awarded **PhDs** and one an MPhil in Classics, up from 11 in REF2014. At the census date, **14 PGR students were registered** on the Classics PhD programme, studying either full-time (9) or part-time (5). Recruitment of doctoral students is through networking and mentoring of candidates from our own PGT programmes and from national and international engagement. Prospective applicants receive expert advice on their PhD proposals, which has led to securing **12 funded PhD** places, both from internal highly competitive competitions (e.g., Chepel, Prouat, and Feito, each awarded 1 of only 7 annual International Studentships across the University) and external ones (5 funded via the SWW-DTP).

Doctoral researchers are assigned two supervisors, with a clearly identified lead supervisor. Supervision takes place regularly, following the [University Code of Practice on Research Students](#) and [Good Practice Guide for Supervising PhDs](#). Progress and quality of supervision arrangements are monitored through an annual review process, administered by the Graduate School, requiring input from both the doctoral researcher and the supervisors, and independent assessment by internal assessors. After 18 months, students go through the process of Confirmation of Registration, from which they may progress into their degree's final stages.

Our doctoral researchers are embedded in our research community through the provision of dedicated departmental study space, our open-door policy, our organisation of annual doctoral research conferences, and their involvement in our weekly research seminars and research-led teaching.

We benefit from the structural and administrative support, and facilities, of Reading's Graduate School, which provides doctoral researchers with varied training opportunities. All doctoral researchers undergo a Learning Needs Analysis carried out in collaboration with their supervisor(s), and, in addition to the Graduate School's offerings, we consistently encourage them to attend training provided by Reading's CQSD as well as workshops in Classics. Paid teaching opportunities are available as part of their professional development. Moreover, we have offered our doctoral researchers the paid opportunity to provide study advice to undergraduates as Academic Skills and Know-how Advisors.

All doctoral researchers have access to travel funding opportunities within Classics and university-wide. Several have received financial support from the University through 'regional bursaries' made available to locally-based researchers, or PhD funding that is available as part of academic remuneration packages.

We foster a culture in which doctoral researchers may realise their full potential as early-career academics, e.g., by publishing, organising conferences, and considering their research's impact potential. An example is J. Lloyd, who held a SWW-DTP studentship (2015-9). He taught in the Department, gained experience working in the Ure, and organised with Rutherford at Reading the 11th international MOISA conference (2018) on ancient music. He was supported in preparing a BARSEA and a BA PDRF application. Other PhDs/ECRs have organised/facilitated research events at Reading during this assessment cycle, including AMPAL 2020 and the ECRs conference '[Keeping it in the Family](#)' (2019).

The high quality of our support for our PGRs is reflected in their subsequent appointment to post-doctoral positions at other academic institutions, including: the New York Academy of Medicine;

the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; the Open University; Universities of Exeter, Manchester, and Leeds.

2.3. Equality and diversity

We regard the fostering of an inclusive research environment as both an ethical duty and of paramount importance to the sustainability of our research culture. Our research-active staff consists of 15 members (14.5 FTE) (5 identifying as male, 10 identifying as female). This translates into 9 full professors (3/6 M/F), 3 associate professors (1/2 M/F), 1 assistant professor (F), and 2 post-doctoral researchers (1 M, 1 F). Staff in employment at the census date represent 5 different nationalities, include BAME and LGBT+ staff (including both at professorial level).

We support, as much as feasible, flexible working patterns. For instance, in the case of a colleague on 0.5 FTE, her teaching is scheduled in one term only, allowing her to focus on research and impact in the other, and to travel abroad as needed. We have supported flexible working also in the case of colleagues with disabilities or caring responsibilities. We fully engage with, and feed into, our University's equality and diversity initiatives, supported by the University's Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, and members of our unit have held leadership roles in the development of a School-level bid for an Athena SWAN award. We benefitted from generous funding available through university-level diversity and inclusion initiatives, in particular for research led by Harloe and supported through the University's UROP programme, which led to subsequent research and dissemination activities (section 4). Supported by the University, members of our unit have also enjoyed the opportunity to go on leadership training courses specifically for LGBT+, BAME, and female staff, such as Stellar HE and Stonewall Leadership Programme.

In our appointment processes we ensure a gender-balanced selecting panel. We consistently strive to support promotion of colleagues based on their achievement, actively addressing potential gender biases before they become an issue (e.g., in the allocation of research vs. teaching and learning roles). During the assessment period **4 colleagues** were promoted to **full professor** (2 male, 2 female) and **1 colleague to associate professor** (female). Leadership roles were also assigned with careful monitoring of potential gender biases, resulting in a balanced spread over the years covered by this cycle (section 1.2); the same applies to the selection of speakers for our annual Percy Ure Lecture (section 3) and our termly research seminars, and we were proud to host visiting researchers from **Nigeria, Pakistan, and China**. For the 2017 International Women's Day, we showcased **five of our female role models** on [social media](#).

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are not only part of our lived culture, but also form a core aspect of our impactful research, which actively engages with issues of **decolonisation and cross-culturalism** (Harloe, Mairs, Rutherford), the **classical tradition in Black Africa** and **inclusivity in our discipline** (Goff), **LGBT+ and the classical heritage** (Harloe), and **female representation and visibility** in the history of our discipline (Mairs, Smith, Thornton).

The selection of our output portfolio reflects our commitment to equality and diversity. We are returning 100% of eligible staff; for determining research independence for ECRs we have applied the criteria developed by our University Code of Practice (UCP); additionally, all staff could avail themselves of the UCP declaration of personal circumstances procedure. Since the early stages of this REF cycle, we have used a Research Output Support System (ROSS) to manage and support internal peer-review. For output selection, all staff were asked to select up to 10 outputs and provide an initial assessment of their research quality, after which modelling was undertaken on the basis of quality while being mindful of inclusiveness, career stages, and specific circumstances as declared by the researcher. Our UoA Lead received REF-specific training regarding the Equality Act 2010 and unconscious bias training. The University's interim Equality Impact Assessment (2020) and bias analysis (2021) identified no statistically significant differences for protected characteristics in our selection.

2.4. Support during lockdown

Allowing flexible working patterns for staff, especially those with childcare responsibilities, during lockdown was the first response in supporting staff to continue their research activity. We strove above all to maintain a sense of community and prevent isolation, especially for our ECRs and PGRs, by organizing online meetings and events, such as our annual PGR symposium (June 2020).

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Building on our ambitions outlined in the context of REF2014, we have substantially improved our research grant capture.

The following staff were awarded substantial funding in the assessment period (with a total value of c. **£3m**, compared to c. £300k awarded during the REF2014 period): Dickey (**Leverhulme fellowship**: £39.5k), Duff (**Princeton Center for Hellenic Studies fellowship**, £12k), Gray (**Humboldt Fellowship**: €63.6k, paid to the individual and thus not visible in our total unit spend), Harloe (**British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship**: £111k), Kruschwitz (**British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship**: £131k; **ERC Advanced Grant**, €2million), Mairs (**British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship**: £102k), Marzano (**Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship**: £113k), Rutherford (**Käte Hamburger Kolleg Research Fellow**: £13k).

In addition to attracting external funding, staff engaged successfully with the University's internal funding competitions (Research Endowment Trust Fund; University Research Fellowships), totalling **£17,556** for teaching buyouts.

All members of our unit bar one (based in another department but included in all our activities) are based in the Department of Classics, located in Reading's Edith Morley building. Our research and impact benefit from the structural and financial support from the H&C Research Theme and central University Services, including research development and impact development managers, generous funding opportunities and leave schemes, and a successful proposal library for funding applications. The H&C Research Theme has supported research and impact planning and development of our unit with seed-corn funding, buyouts, and workshops / academic fora on, e.g., Open Access, Social Media, and Bibliometrics. Our UoA has received more than **£32k** to support research and impact activity from the H&C Theme during the assessment period. Investment is made against an annual operational plan and planning process involving discussion between the RDL, Heads of Department and School and our Research Dean. The H&C Theme also has Research Communications Officers, who manage online and press dissemination.

In addition to weekly research seminars, we run two annual named lecture series. **The Percy Ure Lecture**, established in 2011 to mark the centenary of Reading's Classics Department and named after its first professor of Classics, and **The Gordon Lecture**, introduced in 2013 in recognition of a bequest by the late Prof. J. E. Gordon. Ure Lecturers during the assessment period were Prof. K. Coleman (Harvard, 2014), Prof. I. Sluiter (Leiden, 2015), Prof. C. Smith (St Andrews/BSR, 2016), Prof. C. Roueché (KCL, 2017), Prof. G. Woolf (ICS London, 2018), Prof. L. Foxhall (Liverpool, 2019). Gordon Lecturers included Prof. M. Lee (Vanderbilt, 2014) and Dr C.-L. Hsu (Tunghai, Taiwan, 2018).

The Ure is a focal point of our research and teaching environment. It is the fourth-largest UK collection of Greek ceramics, with Smith as its curator, Holly (grade 4) as the assistant curator, Romero-Mayorga (grade 4) as education officer, and Thornton (grade 6) as fixed-term post-doctoral researcher officer (01/2019-05/2020) and provides opportunities for **25+** volunteers each year. It is embedded in the structural support provided by the University's Museum, Archives, and Special Collection Services. Post REF2014, the Ure was part of the University Collections Project, with a total investment of c.£500k (see IES). As part of this project, the post leading to Dr Thornton's appointment was created, to develop the research potential of the Ure's collections and archives. The resulting Research Framework has identified opportunities for partnership development and collaborations, both internally and externally, including with the BM. We have identified areas of specific potential to expand the Ure's stakeholders from

Reading students/staff, researchers, the general public, and Reading's local museums to include other University museums, museums with complementary collections, and source communities in Greece, Cyprus, and Egypt from where objects in the museum originate.

Our University Library, with 24/7 term-time access, holds upwards of 16,000 print volumes related to Classics. With an annual library budget of currently £14,000, we have subscriptions to many major journals and editorial projects, and access to extensive electronic resources. We also have a **dedicated departmental resources room** and **postgraduate office** with an additional book provision of some **5,000+ items**, IT equipment, and a dedicated departmental library assistant.

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

4.1. Academic Collaborations

Individual research is only one aspect of our overall approach to the discipline; it is matched by our commitment to inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary collaboration as the key to our field's innovation and vitality.

Our well-established international profile has grown considerably in the assessment period. Research on cultural exchanges between the classical world of Greece and Rome and other contemporary civilizations is one of our core strengths and this has generated several collaborations. Mairs was external researcher for the AHRC-funded project based at Oxford 'Corpus of Ptolemaic Inscriptions' (2013–6). She runs the [Hellenistic Central Asia Research Network](#), **launched at Reading in 2016** with a conference supported by the British Academy-Stein Arnold Exploration Fund, and leading to conferences in Germany and the Czech Republic. Mairs' work on Bactria and the Far East has been instrumental in opening new research and teaching collaborations with China: the Department has an **MoU with Nankai University**, with a forthcoming Student Mobility Agreement, while an **MoU with Fudan University** is being prepared. As a result of these links, we have hosted visiting academics from China. Rutherford's work on Greek religion and on cultural exchanges between Greece, the Hittites, and Egypt has led to **funded fellowships and collaborations with institutes in Europe, the US, and Turkey**. Rutherford is also a core member of the **Network for the Study of Archaic and Classical Greek Song**. Proceedings of a 2013 conference held at Reading under the network's auspices were published by Brill (2019), co-edited by Rutherford.

Our research on ancient languages and epigraphy generated collaborations with the University of Seville (Kruschwitz; this led to his funded appointment as Visiting Professor in Seville and to Dr Limón's **British Academy Visiting Fellowship** in 2018). This collaboration led to the award, while Kruschwitz was at Reading, of the ERC Advanced Grant 'Mapping out the poetic landscape(s) of the Roman Empire' (**€2million**). Dickey sits on the international advisory board for the ERC-funded PLATINUM Project (P.I. Dr Scappaticcio) at the Federico II University, Naples (Italy) and was Spinoza Visiting Fellow at Leiden (2015). Duff is International Advisor for the 'Rome our Home' project funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (2018-21) and held a Ziqiang Visiting Professorship at Shanghai University (September 2016).

Within the cluster 'Communities and Networks', research on the ancient economy continues to underpin strong international collaborations. Marzano was co-applicant for the international **Research Network Grant** '[Structural Determinants of Economic Performance...](#)' (Research Fnd. of Flanders, Belgium: 2012-2016, €52k,) and for the follow-on Network Grant by the same funding body (2017-2021, €62.5k), and organized a symposium (Reading, November 2013, with doctoral researcher Stringer and supported by an Economic History Society grant) and a conference panel (Bonn 2018) co-sponsored by this network. She was also **research team member** for the project: 'Paisajes de la Hispania Romana', led by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and funded by the Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad, Spain (2015–2018, €50k), and for a follow-up project (2018-2020, €35k). Other international collaborations within this cluster include Smith's **Visiting Research Fellowship** at the Humanities Research Centre-Australian National University (2017).

Late Antiquity and Christianity have become a strong focus of our research following strategic appointments made in the current cycle, and this has led to several national and international collaborations. Papaconstantinou was **senior advisor on the ERC-funded** project based at Oxford 'The Cult of Saints' (2014–9; £45.9k), while Dark's Hagia Sophia Project, which resulted in a 2018 monograph, involved collaboration with the Czech Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology and Turkish scholars. Dark is also the **Chair of the Late Antiquity Research Group**, the principal British-based organisation for the archaeological study of Late Antiquity and the Byzantine Empire.

4.2. *Inclusive research*

Several of us have attended, contributed to, and taken on **leadership roles** in the newly formed **UK Women's Classical Committee** (WCC) (Goff, Harloe, Mairs, and Smith). Harloe organised at Reading the workshop '[LGBT+ Classics: Teaching, Research, Activism](#)' under the auspices of the WCC (2018) and the 2016 mid-career workshop (at KCL) and Goff has co-organized the workshop '[Towards a more Inclusive Classics](#)' (ICS June 2020, moved online due to COVID-19).

Fostering interdisciplinary dialogues, discussion of teaching curriculum, and early-career researchers, Goff co-organised the 'Revolution and Classics' event at UCL (2016). Goff's research on the Classics and colonial Africa has led to her involvement in collaborations beyond Europe (e.g., in 2014 she became Research Associate at the University of the Free State, South Africa). Mairs, through a **British Academy Writing Workshops 2020 award**, has developed coaching sessions for Egyptian ECRs to guide them through the stages of bringing their research to global audiences. The two workshops (Cairo, October 2020; Aswan April 2021, postponed from 2020 due to the pandemic), in collaboration with researchers at Ain Shams University and Dr Z. Kamash, RHUL, will build stronger connections between Egyptian and British Classicists.

Harloe's research on Winckelmann has led to a number of events aimed at the general public, including the exhibition '[Winckelmann and Curiosity in the 18th-Century Gentleman's Library](#)' at Christ Church, Oxford (2018, with Smith), workshops and talks in London, Reading, and Oxford (2017-2018), and will also include a digital display on Europeana.eu (forthcoming). Harloe's research and teaching engage proactively with LGBT+ agenda, with significant impact on the local community. In 2018, as a UROP project, she supervised two undergraduate students researching LGBT history in Berkshire, working with the Berkshire Records Office, resulting in a special issue of the *Berkshire Echo* (Jan. 2019). One of the students, A. Hitchings, went on to work for [SupportU](#) and secured HLF for the 12-month project 'Broken Futures: Finding LGBT Lives Affected by the Labouchère Amendment', which also feeds into her academic work for an MRes in Law, subsequently started at our University.

The Ure has a long-established programme of events with primary schools in the south and south-east, recently expanded to include secondary schools in the interests of widening participation. In the assessment period, **142 schools** attended educational events at the Ure, for a total of **5,300 pupils**. Another key strand in this area is the [Reading Ancient Schoolroom](#) (Dickey; **Impact Case Study**). Interactive educational initiatives such as '[Annie's Box](#)' facilitated access for users outside of the museum during lockdown/social distancing rules. Capitalizing on this, the Ure, with funding from the ICS (May 2020, £499) is developing a Public Engagement project to run through 2021, 'Ure Museum in musical boxes'. In this project our staff and students work with the company 'Museum in a Box' to produce easily deployable activity boxes related to our ancient music research and featuring replicas of objects by 3D printing. The Ure's digitization project was also an important asset during lockdown, allowing its staff to continue to support research, for instance by hosting internships and sharing best practice (e.g., in July 2020 Smith spoke on 'virtual internships' at the Classical Collection Networks), and helping our non-academic partners in the post-COVID recovery.

In addition to educational activities, the Ure presents current research to the public and the academic and student bodies through exhibitions (**32** organized in the period including some held elsewhere, e.g., 'Gifts for the Gods', Manchester Museum, 2016) and collaborations with

larger museums. For example, in 2020 it secured a BM Spotlight Loan, *Troy: Beauty and Heroism* and funding in support of the project from the BM Trust (£10K) [the loan has been moved to Feb.-May 2021 due to COVID-19]. Several pilot projects between our academics and the BM have already received seed-corn funding, e.g., Thornton's project exploring approaches to narrating a more diverse past in museum outreach for children, and 'Sounds of the Ancient Mediterranean', based on a detailed study of ancient musical instruments in the BM and the Ure's collections. The Ure also contributes to society by drawing in the local community and providing events for families, including engaging with Heritage Open Days, the Archaeology Festival, and the Young Archaeologists' Club. In the current assessment cycle, **more than 147 family events** and activities were organized, attended by **at least 2,200 people**. We recognize the importance of engaging schools to ensure the future vitality of the discipline and we regularly give outreach talks. For example, in the current REF cycle, Smith gave **21** outreach talks across the UK, reaching a **total audience of c.650** individuals. Furthermore, we support the activities of a local branch of the Classical Association and have provided leadership within the national Classical Association.

An important strand linking our research and educational activities for the wider audience is **Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)**. Developed by Nicholls, and featuring other Classics staff, [Rome: A Virtual Tour of the Ancient City](#), hosted by FutureLearn, has communicated our research to **51,000+** participants from **190 countries**, with **7,553 learners** completing **over 90%** of the course (FutureLearn mean averages for number of joiners on a course and those completing over 90% are 2,580 and 465). Additionally, we have featured on Massolit, a company producing research-based educational films for schools. Since records started in March 2017, Aston's films on Greek religion, recently [endorsed by OCR](#) and recognized as equivalent to textbooks, have been accessed **12,605** times by users in all **5 continents**, while Nicholl's course on ancient Rome was viewed **22,527** times.

In connection with his Impact Case Study, Nicholls, supported by a **BARSEA** award, shared specialist expertise and developed best practice guidance and organised several workshops and colloquia (2015-2017) for academics, the software industry, and the heritage sector. The positive contribution of our research-informed teaching was recognized at national level, with Nicholls winning the **2014 Guardian University Award for Teaching Excellence** for his work using digital modelling of ancient cities in teaching. Contributions to society and economy emerge also from commercial applications of our research: Nicholls licensed parts of his Rome digital model to various parties, including broadcasters (e.g., Travel Channel, Discovery Channel), and has created commissioned work for the BBC and National Geographic.

4.3 Contribution to the research base

We have consistently contributed to the vitality of the discipline and its impact on academic and non-academic communities. We are involved in the support of public-sector bodies and institutions, and our scholarship and contribution to the field has been recognized by distinguished awards and elected fellowships. In the current REF cycle, we had **one Fellow of the British Academy** (Dickey), **five Fellows of the Royal Historical Society** (Dark, Duff, Harloe, Kruschwitz, Marzano), **three Fellows of the Academia Europaea** (Dickey; Kruschwitz; Marzano), **one Fellow of the Pontificia Academia Latinitatis** (Kruschwitz), and **three Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries** (Dark, Marzano, Thornton). Further marks of esteem include: Dickey: **Goodwin Award of the Society for Classical Studies** (2016); Duff: **Visiting Ziqiang Professorship**, University of Shanghai (2016); Gray: two-year **Humboldt fellowship** (2016-8); Mairs: **Fudan Fellowship**, Institute of Advanced Study, Fudan University, Shanghai (2018); Marzano: **Visiting Professorship**, Centre for Urban Network Evolutions, funded by the Aarhus University Research Foundation (2016); **Guangqi Fellowship**, Shanghai Normal University; **JSPS Invitational Fellowship for Research in Japan**, University of Nagoya (both 2019).

Our staff play key service roles within the academic sector, e.g., through holding external examiner positions at UK and overseas institutions, supporting tenure requests, and working for government agencies and charities. For instance, Aston is on the Courses and Teaching Subcommittee of the **British School at Athens** (2016–2021), and the Council and the Search Committee of the **Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies**; Goff was involved in the

launch of the **Classical Association of Ghana**; Duff and Papaconstantinou serve on the AHRC **SWW-DTP Reviewer College**; Harloe is member of the **REF 2021 Classics sub-panel**; Kruschwitz chaired the awards panel for Classics, Celtic Studies, and Modern Languages of the AHRC SWW-DTP (2016-17); Marzano is a Trustee for the **Herculaneum Society**; a former Member of Council for the **Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies** (2015-2018); was the **Chair** of the committee evaluating the Institut Català de Arqueologia Clàssica on behalf of the regional funding body CERCA (2019); and has served on the **History and Archaeology Expert Panel**, Research Foundation of Flanders (2019) and the **SWW-DTP Moderating Panel 5** (2020); Rutherford was on the **AHRC Peer Review College** (2014-2017). Our staff regularly undertake peer review, including for a total of **25 research councils and funding schemes** (e.g., Leverhulme Trust, Horizon 2020/ERC, the Dutch NWO, the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the Italian PRIN-MIUR, and the Canadian SSHRC).

Two members of staff currently serve as **Joint Editor-in-Chief / General Editor** of prestigious journals and encyclopaedias (*International Journal of the Classical Tradition*: Harloe; *Encyclopedia of Ancient History*: Papaconstantinou) and **9 members** have served/serve terms on the editorial boards of journals and publication series.

Our staff have delivered **32 keynotes** and prestigious lectures over the assessment period, several at high-profile international events (e.g., Dickey: the **Gaisford Lecture**, Oxford, 2014; Dark: **Henry Myers Lecture**, Royal Anthropological Institute; Smith: the **Trendall Lecture at Canberra**, 2017; Marzano: guest lecture at the **Chinese Academy of Science**, 2019). We have organised, at Reading and elsewhere, upward of **65** conferences, conference panels, colloquia, and workshops (**47 in the UK; 18 overseas**), several of which directly led to related publications. Some significant examples include: Mairs, workshop 'Bi-/Multi-lingualism and the History of Language Learning and Teaching' (2019), and three events on 'Orientalism, the Classics and Egypt' (Greek Campus, Cairo, 2017; British Council, Cairo, 2018; Bibliotheca Alexandrina, 2019); Marzano: a panel at the 19th International Congress of Classical Archaeology (Cologne/Bonn 2018), subsequently published as an open-access, digital publication as well as in print; Harloe and Smith: workshops on Winckelmann at Reading, the Warburg Institute/KCL, and Oxford (2017–8). Harloe and Mairs also organised a workshop 'Decolonising / Diversifying Classics and Medieval Studies' (with S. Raisharma, Oxford and Z. Kamash, RHUL).

Kruschwitz and Baines led on the department's partnership with Prof. E. Hall (KCL) in her project 'Studying Classical Civilisation in Britain' (also known as [Advocating Classics Education](#); AHRC-funded, 2017–9, subsequently funded by the Classical Association, KCL, and the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies). We continue to work closely with [Classics for All](#), likewise committed to facilitating Classics teaching in the state sector.

The Ure and our department regularly support the museum and heritage sector; for example, it has collaborated with the Garstang Museum, Liverpool to produce the temporary exhibition '[Egypt in Reading](#)' and our academics gave public talks at the Museum of English Rural Life as part of the Being Human festival (2019). We are a key constituent in our University's strategic partnership with the BM (see 1.1; 1.2).

In sum, we have greatly consolidated our position since 2013 and, looking beyond the pandemic, we are confident about our future trajectory.