

<b>Institution:</b> The Open University
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> C17 Business and Management Studies
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>Overview</b></p> <p>Our unit is constituted entirely by the <b>Open University Business School (OUBS)</b>, which sits within the Faculty of Business and Law (FBL) alongside the Law School. OUBS comprises four Departments: Accounting and Finance; People and Organisations; Public Leadership and Social Enterprise and Strategy and Marketing. We share a common purpose to undertake rigorous and engaged research with social impact. We aim to advance knowledge through a collaborative and interdisciplinary research agenda that is consistent with the Open University's (OU) mission of being open to people, places, methods, and ideas. In this context, a 'social justice' theme runs through all the research in our unit. We are submitting 73 staff (71.6 FTE) to REF2021.</p> <p>Our <b>strategic research priorities</b> have guided our development in the following important respects in relation to the previous REF assessment period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In retaining our Research Cluster model, we have implemented all of the 'future research strategies' listed in the 2014 REF submission. We have maintained an emphasis on practice, engagement, the role of business in society, and extended research further into the voluntary and non-profit sector.</li> <li>• We have strengthened the infrastructure of our research environment through a range of measures, including: i) introduction of a sabbatical scheme, on top of the existing OU study leave allowance of 44 days per year; ii) introduction of a 'seedcorn funding' scheme, amounting to a total investment of £560k, to support ambitious research projects, public events and network meetings; iii) reconfiguration of our unit's Research and Enterprise team to prioritise partnership support and collaborative projects; and iv) implementation of an ambitious studentship scheme, which led to a significant growth in PhD student numbers (approximately 80 full and part time PhD student registrations).</li> <li>• We have significantly increased externally funded research income and have developed a range of academically and socially collaborative projects. During the assessment period, research income totalled approximately £7M from over 40 different external funders/donors.</li> <li>• We have built strength and depth in our research capacity across different career stages and strategic areas. Our recruitment and retention efforts reflect our growing research achievements as well as our desire to further develop our research strategy and impact.</li> <li>• We have strengthened our distinctive areas of expertise through the establishment of four interdisciplinary <b>Academic Centres of Excellence (ACEs)</b> and six <b>Research Clusters (RCs)</b>. This research structure has facilitated synergies and fertilization across the boundaries of academic disciplines and has created a dynamic setting for collaborative research and social impact.</li> <li>• We have increased the scale and quality of our research collaborations and partnerships both at the national and the international level. Consistent with the OU social mission, our ACEs and RCs have developed ambitious collaborations with government bodies and world leading firms as well as focusing on 'hard-to-reach', vulnerable, or under-represented audiences (including precarious workers, young adults, and resource poor small and medium sized voluntary organisations).</li> </ul>

***How research is structured***

We are committed to supporting individuals' research in a vibrant and inclusive environment. Our strategic approach and research structure are driven by our social justice mission. The OU REF Code of Practice defines 'significant responsibility for research' as encompassing any academic member of staff who has a minimum of 0.15 FTE allocated to research in their workload. Staff members with lower research allowance who meet some extra research criteria – such as being a principal investigator on an externally funded project or having significant Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) supervision experience – are also included in the submission. This means that the majority of academic staff in our unit is considered as having significant responsibility for research.

Our four Academic Centres of Excellence (ACEs) and six Research Clusters (RCs) augment our research capacity and increase the resilience of our external international networks. These Centres and Clusters ensure that all researchers have a relevant internal research community to engage with, providing crucial support for Early Career Researcher (ECR) colleagues as well as our PhD students. Colleagues often belong to more than one ACE/RC, thus enabling cross-fertilisation and collaboration. Individual research agendas can and do converge into a Research Cluster and a Research Cluster can, likewise, develop into an Academic Centre of Excellence – allowing a pathway for organic growth within a clear governance and support structure. Illustrations of our supportive development of ACEs and RCs include:

- The new RC **Gendered Organisational Practice (GOP)**, which emerged through strategic recruitment of staff and PhD students to this existing area of OUBS strength, with several new academics and PhD students appointed since 2018.
- Research into **Employment, Empowerment and Futures (REEF)** which transitioned from RC to ACE, again as a result of recruitment (Brewis, Woodcock, Ruel, Lord, Vincent, and Nela Smolović Jones). Its remit has progressively widened to incorporate a stronger focus on innovative forms of leadership, empowering methodologies, equality at work and transition to a green economy.

Our research structure thus incorporates a 'bottom-up' element, which creates a more dynamic setting that is open to individual creativity, innovation, adaptability, and academic development. This 'bottom-up' approach ensures that all individual researchers have at least one ACE/RC relevant to their own research expertise. At the heart of each ACE/RC are collaborative research activities that lead to output production, bidding, and engagement with academic and practitioner audiences. All ACEs and RCs are overseen by the Associate Dean for Research, Enterprise and Scholarship (**Vangen**).

***Academic Centres of Excellence (ACEs)***

The cross-disciplinary ACEs are founded on formally established areas of expertise and academic excellence. They draw on expertise across our unit, the Faculty of Business and Law, and other OU faculties. The ACEs receive external and internal funding, are led by a senior director, have a clear vision for growth, and a remit to enhance the OUBS and OU research reputation. Through the integration of research and social engagement (e.g., knowledge transfer, engaged research, and research enterprise) with defined communities, the ACEs generate economic, public, and social value consistent with the OU mission. Our unit currently has four ACEs:

- The **Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL)** is led by **Hartley** and has its origins in a small research grant in 2014, working with five UK police forces. Since then, it has grown rapidly but sustainably to become an ACE in 2016 and aims for both rigour and relevance. The centre now works closely with over 50 academic collaborators, both within our unit and across the OU, as well as working with 22 UK police forces (more than two-

thirds of the policing workforce). CPRL has demonstrable impact on national and local policy and practice among police forces and is consulted regularly on national policy issues. There are eight PhD students linked to CPRL and 24 current research projects funded by UKRI, police partners, and the OU. Between 2019 and 2020 it released nearly 130 academic publications in major peer reviewed journals (including articles in public administration and management journals, as well as practitioner reports and conference papers). The research in CPRL involves different disciplines and faculties focusing on themes such as: investigation, community and vulnerability; digitally enabled policing; leadership, management and organisation; and health, well-being and resilience. Research directions include work on leadership to create public value (Hartley, Roberts); learning and development in and by police organisations (Hartley, Jones, Kadry, Tomkins); operations management, demand management and improvement (Bates, Walley); knowledge mobilisation in policing (Miller), and police decision-making in conditions of uncertainty (Fenton-O’Creevy, Miller).

- The Centre for the **Public Understanding of Finance, Institutions and Networks (PUFIN)** was established in collaboration with the True Potential LLP (£1.4M, five year investment). PUFIN has worked to improve financial literacy and public understanding of personal finance in the UK through interdisciplinary research on behavioural finance (Fenton-O’Creevy, Brambley, Upton, Rutterford) and the delivery of research-led MOOCs, providing individuals with the tools to make sound financial decisions. During the first three years, Sharon Collard provided research leadership before she moved to another university in 2016 and was replaced by **Rutterford**. In the summer of 2020, PUFIN appointed a new director, **Ataullah**, and its scope has broadened to include financial literacy, institutions, and sustainability, with emphasis on financial decision-making. The new research focus seeks to investigate how financial decision-making under uncertainty can empower people and tackle some of today’s biggest and interlinked challenges, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, sustainability, and social inclusiveness. This refreshed research agenda draws upon expertise in strategic financial decision-making within organisations (Ataullah, Skovoroda), the impact of such decisions on sustainability (Bernardi) and the link between decision-making and neurological disorders (Ataullah, Bernardi, Upton). Additional research topics include normative accounting and financial reporting standards (van Mourik) and the role of accountants in accountability and sustainability (Halari). Other research developments are related to the quantitative analysis of the innovation dynamics in entrepreneurial firms and the investigation of private equity and venture capital (Lahr), as well as asset pricing and real options (Wisniewski).
- The **Centre for Voluntary Sector Leadership (CVSL)** was established in 2016, funded by a philanthropic gift of £750k, with **Vangen** acting as principal investigator and director. The centre pursues an engaged research agenda, bringing together the team’s research on governing, leading and managing inter-organisational collaborations (Vangen, Jacklin-Jarvis) with research on leading and leadership development in non-profit contexts (Owain Smolović Jones, Jacklin-Jarvis, Rees, Haslam, Cornforth). CVSL’s research informs teaching and knowledge exchange activities that support smaller, locally based voluntary organisations, which have limited resources to access expensive training and development. Through a focus on inclusive, participative, and collaborative leadership (as opposed to leadership focused on the elite or others in positions of power), CVSL seeks to enable organisations to tackle complex social and environmental challenges faced in the post-austerity policy environment. CVSL currently has seven linked PhD students and approximately ten academics contributing to its activity. The centre has multiple, significant national and international research collaborations and partnerships. These include: i) a European consortium including Euclid, a network of non-profit leaders across Europe that studied the concept of entrepreneurial leadership in the third sector; and ii) a UK consortium led by Sheffield Hallam University, and commissioned by the Lloyds Bank Foundation, to research the value of small charities.

- The **Research into Employment, Empowerment and Futures (REEF)** Academic Centre of Excellence was established in February 2020, growing from a previous research cluster focused primarily on technology and the future of work. REEF expanded to encapsulate and reflect the growing expertise within our unit around empowering modes of organisation. This includes innovations in leadership practice, post-human approaches to research methods, ethics, the role of trade unions in contemporary society and gender. The Centre's director, **Owain Smolović Jones**, is supported by a number of academics with expertise in research areas such as: ethics (Winchester), gender (Brewis, Nela Smolović Jones), methods (Bell), and trade unions (Woodcock). The Centre has a clear commitment to collaborations with organisations such as trade unions, as well as knowledge exchange and engagement with diverse and hard-to-reach social groups. The centre is concerned with the profound change driven by developments in technology, shifts in geo-political power and the climate emergency as experienced by societies and workplaces. It has prepared the ground for a large number of research synergies and co-authored outputs between its members.

### *Research Clusters (RCs)*

Research Clusters were introduced during the previous REF assessment period. They have been retained and developed following their success in promoting a strong, responsive research infrastructure. RCs represent common and congruent research interests of staff and help foster innovation and development in research. Each RC is organised as a “mixed economy” model of research, combining seasoned researchers with early career researchers and PhD students. RCs have a director, are at various stages of exploration and development, and have a long-term plan to grow expertise and reputation. Like the ACEs, the RCs provide an environment for academics to collaborate on a shared research agenda and lead externally funded research and engagement projects, as well as furnishing an academic base for doctoral researchers with related interests. At present, our unit has six RCs:

- **Gendered Organisational Practice (GOP)** is led by **Nela Smolović Jones** and brings together people with a common interest in gender equality, especially feminist solidarity, gendered working bodies, feminist organising and gender and sexuality (Nela Smolović Jones, Brewis, Priola, Ruel). GOP aims to contribute to the collapsing of barriers between the global South and North, political West and East, and brings together practitioners and academics, emerging and accomplished scholars. It provides a space to meet, discuss and share positive and generative forms of solidarity, making an impact in a range of contexts, in the UK and internationally. For instance, GOP has recently organised a virtual roundtable discussion: ‘Attacks on gender researchers and gender equality initiatives within organisations’ (Ruel, O’Shea, Nela Smolović Jones). This event responded to the increasing hostility towards women and members of the LGBT+ community during the pandemic and more broadly, to the rise of right-wing politics globally, which contributes to an erosion of gender equality and the women’s rights of differently gendered people.
- **History and Political Economy of Business and Finance (HYPE)** is a Research Cluster led by **Sotiropoulos**. The Cluster drew upon the experience and activities of the Open Political Economy Group, a cross-faculty research network between FBL and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) at the OU, initially set in 2014. As a result of growing critical mass in this area within our unit, HYPE was established as a Research Cluster in 2019. HYPE brings together interdisciplinary research agendas on finance, using insights from the perspective of political economy (social institutions) and history. The Cluster’s research covers a large variety of interdisciplinary topics: i) Empirical and theoretical work on the history of financial innovation, including research on diversification (Rutterford, Sotiropoulos); ii) The history of monetary and exchange rate policy (Oliver) as well as the macroeconomic processes of financialization (Tori); and iii) Post-colonial approaches to the history of accounting (Verma) and a political economy work on cultural industries (Haigh). HYPE hosts five PhD students and has organised a series of workshops and research

seminars with participants from UK and international universities (e.g., University of Bergamo, Copenhagen Business School, Marburg University, University of Sydney).

- **Social and Responsible Marketing (SRM)** derives from the idea that marketing activities should not only focus on commercial benefits but also embody moral principles and promote positive social and environmental change. The SRM Research Cluster explores three main themes: i) principles and practices of social marketing; ii) sustainable development of marketing activities; and iii) strategic marketing that focuses on behaviour change interventions for societal and environmental well-being (Daniel, Liu, Harris). It offers interdisciplinary research and knowledge exchange opportunities across various marketing topics such as social marketing, strategic marketing, digital marketing, marketing ethics, creativity and innovation, marketing-led corporate social responsibility, social enterprise and voluntary sector marketing, sustainable and ethical consumption, and consumer culture (Abolhasani, Mal, Zhu, Ray, Meng-Lewis).
- The **Social and Sustainable Enterprise (SSE)** Research Cluster, co-led by **Blundel** and **Decker-Lange**, draws upon expertise in entrepreneurship and innovation (Blundel, Dai, Ngoasong, Schaefer, Wahga), as well as the specialist fields of organisational development, inter-organisational collaboration, and supply chain management (Decker-Lange, Kourti, Claes). The research activities of SSE are focused around three interlinked thematic areas: i) Social and environmental practices and values-based approaches in small and medium-sized enterprises; ii) Distinctive forms of enterprise, including social enterprises, craft-based ventures and family businesses; iii) Green innovations, start-up ventures and sustainable growth processes. The Cluster builds on over 20 years of related research, teaching and engagement activities in our unit. This includes pioneering research on cooperatives, performance measurement for social enterprises, values-based approaches to management, corporate social responsibility, and governance and innovation in family businesses and craft-based ventures. SSE members have initiated several externally funded projects. One example is the project: 'Growing Greener: Creating a New Values-based Environmental Engagement Toolkit for SME Intermediaries', which received financial support from the ESRC Impact Acceleration Account. Four PhD students are currently associated with the SSE.
- **Space Exploration Analysis and Research (SPEAR)** is led by **Budd** and supported by a network of OU (FBL, STEM, FASS) and external collaborators, in universities in the UK (Birmingham, Bath, Southampton, Glasgow) and abroad (Australia, Finland, and Italy). This Research Cluster builds upon the existing reputational capital of the OU's expertise in space exploration and its impact upon the economy and society. SPEAR's research agenda includes a £400k portfolio of projects: i) the European Space Agency Exploration Roadmap in Socioeconomics (BEERS); ii) SpacePort Scotland; and iii) the Oxford/Cambridge Innovation Arc project. The Cluster contributes to the £6.8M 'Research England E3' project led by AstrobiologyOU. SPEAR's contribution to this interdisciplinary agenda is focused on the socio-economic analysis of space exploration programmes and missions. In particular, SPEAR evaluates and measures the contribution of the space economy and industry to: economic growth and employment; robotic design; educational, environmental, financial, human, organisational, scientific, technological and social resources and outcomes (Budd, Sancino).
- **Strategic Management and Leadership (SML)** puts forward inclusive and broad interdisciplinary perspectives on strategic management and leadership. It brings together a very dynamic research group, which focuses not only on the strategic management of commercial organisations and the private sector (Frynas, Filiou, Carli, Godfrey, John), but also considers management strategy in public service organisations and their reform (Ongaro). Research on non-market strategy (CSR and CPA) adds to the strength of the group, with particular focus on emerging/developing economies (Frynas, Mbalyohere, John). Further research on corporate social responsibility completes the expertise of the Cluster, with noteworthy focus on emerging and developing economies (Frynas, Mbalyohere).

*Approach to interdisciplinary research*

The above structure of our research into ACEs and RCs is designed to integrate methods, tools, perspectives, concepts and theories from different disciplines – within our unit and faculty, but also across different faculties in the OU and beyond – to address key societal challenges, problems and issues that exceed the scope of a single disciplinary perspective.

Our approach to interdisciplinary research within this assessment period has also been framed by our leadership of one of the university's flagship cross-faculty research initiatives, the **Citizenship and Governance Strategic Research Area (C&G SRA)**. The C&G SRA is currently directed by **Sancino** and spans across FBL and FASS, bringing together academics from different disciplines. The C&G SRA is organised into five research streams: i) collaborative and inclusive governance; ii) faith in law; iii) justice, borders, and rights; iv) gender, intimacies, and sexuality; v) public leadership and management. Through critically engaged and outward-facing research, this cross-faculty research initiative functions as an arena for interdisciplinary, cross-faculty studies of public issues, public spaces, and public values related to 'citizenship' and the policies, practicalities and processes of governance and governmentality. The C&G SRA has generated 21 successful bids since 2015, for a total value of £1.9M and direct research income of nearly £1.5M. The SRA acted as a platform for university-wide collaborative research activities, including the E3 funded Astrobiology bid to Research England worth £6.8M, with a portion of £598k allocated to our faculty for space law and governance research. The C&G SRA has also successfully contributed to a vast range of engagement activities, such as the Year of Migration project at the Tate Exchange.

*How the unit supports a culture of research integrity*

The OU's framework for ensuring research integrity is described in the Institutional Environment Statement. Our academic members of staff and PGRS are fully committed to the culture and practices of the OU as they are described by the University's Code of Practice for Research, the University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and the OU Research Data Management Policy. New research staff go through an induction process to the OU culture and academic integrity. Our PhD students receive training in research ethics and academic integrity via the faculty research training programme, 'Foundations and Practice of Management and Business Research'.

All successful research bids are required to gain ethical approval from HREC. Staff and PGRS who conduct ethnographic research follow the ethics guidelines of relevant subject associations. Through internal seminars and workshops, our researchers are supported to critically appraise and engage with ethical frameworks developed by colleagues within the unit of assessment, such as post-colonial methods, feminist methods and action research, and public engagement approaches. For instance, CPRL runs a regular, lively seminars series (currently online) among academics across all faculties and operates an open-door policy for other academics across our unit and beyond wishing to undertake research with police forces. There are also regular presentations of research in progress and completed with police practitioners. The faculty offers monthly writing days to support researchers writing for academic publication and *ad hoc* online meetings to discuss theory and methodologies. Our departments run a research seminar series featuring work by internal staff and PhD students as well as external visitors. A recent example includes a seminar for the Department for People and Organisations given by Brigid Carroll (University of Auckland) and Frank Meier (Copenhagen Business School) on the application of the philosophical framework Communicative Constitution of Organisation in research. Another example is the PGRS workshop 'Insights into Methodological Approaches in Economic Research', organised and run by PhD students associated with the HYPE Cluster in 2016, with speakers from the UK (Kingston University, University of Manchester) and Italy (University of Bergamo).

**Approach to achieving impact**

Communication, collaboration, and impact are core components of the OU's social justice mission. Our leading-edge technologies are used around the world to break down geographical and social barriers to knowledge, research, and development. This is a first-class infrastructure to communicate the results of our research and enhance impact and knowledge transfer to diverse social audiences. OUBS uses this infrastructure as a central engagement pillar within its impact strategy, delivering considerable research-led learning opportunities for broad audiences. For example, our award-winning collaboration with Money Saving Expert, *MSE Academy of Money*, was launched in 2019. This is a Badged Open Course at introductory level. It draws on OUBS research expertise in personal finance and has attracted 30,000 enrolled learners (over 180k visitors), making it one of the most popular OpenLearn courses. During the same academic year, we launched another new OpenLearn Badged Open Course: *Effective Communication in the Workplace*, which attracted nearly 75k visits and ranked among the platform's most accessed courses.

Key to our research communication infrastructure is our unique relationship with the BBC. Our staff and research students are supported to work with BBC colleagues and independent production companies to develop programme ideas and provide academic advice. Media training is offered, and colleagues are encouraged to work with a wide range of media, including traditional and online media. For instance, our unit provided academic consultation (**Jones**) for a new three-part OU/BBC collaboration 'Catching Britain's Killers: The Crimes That Changed Us' – a series recounting three murder investigations and their extraordinary consequences, which overturned laws, transformed police interrogation, and revolutionised forensic detection. Another example of an academic consultation (**Harris**) is the three-part documentary 'Flatpack Empire' on BBC2, in which IKEA opened its doors to cameras with exclusive access to stores, warehouses, test-labs and design-studios. Over this assessment period, our academics were consultants for 12 TV productions, 15 radio productions, and one production of the World Service Online. This portfolio of programmes reached a total of 180M viewers worldwide. In addition to the broad research communication capabilities offered by our BBC partnership, we also capitalise on collaborations with practitioner platforms such as the People's Space, which offers a portfolio of thought leadership services including workshops, courses, and resources to HR professionals.

To provide the best possible professional support of our research structure and activities, our approach to impact draws upon the expertise of the **Research and Enterprise (R&E)** team. The R&E team runs a series of networking events and partnership building initiatives with other faculties, universities, non-academic organisations (industry, local and national government), to diversify income and to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration. Our **Stakeholder and Alumni Engagement team** supports the dissemination of our research, supporting our staff members with the crafting of press releases and other mechanisms to stimulate media (and thus public) interest and seeks media relations opportunities for academic stories of public interest.

Our Academic Centres of Excellence and Research Clusters build collaborative research agendas around key expertise areas and embed a culture of impact at grass-roots level. This engenders interdisciplinary synergies and facilitates sustainable research impact. We conduct 'engaged' and impactful research that integrates defined stakeholders and communities within research groups. The portfolio of our selected impact case studies is evidence of the success of our strategy to impact. They reflect how our research structure, and in particular our Centres and Clusters, produce collaborative research with social impact.

- The research related to and facilitated by the CPRL has led to three impact case studies. The first, '**Improving Public Leadership through Political Astuteness Skills**', draws on the research expertise of CPRL (Hartley) to develop leadership policy and practises for the public good (delivered in collaboration with the Australia and New Zealand School of Government). The second impact case, '**Improving the Police Forces' Public Demand Management by Using Failure Demand Analysis**', is based on research into non-urgent demand for policing

as it affected the control room of Gloucestershire Constabulary (Walley). The underlying research of our third impact case study '**Challenging the Blame Culture at the Metropolitan Police: Shaping Legislation, Improving Learning and Saving Lives**' is based on research on changing practices and understandings of organisational learning in this police force (Tomkins).

- Our impact case study on the '**Emotional and Attitudinal Factors in Financial Decision-making**' was based on the related innovative body of work on decision making under uncertainty (Fenton-O'Creevy). This line of research was developed as part of PUFIN.
- The underlying research of our impact case on '**Growing Greener: Enhancing the Capacity of Intermediary Organisations to Engage with Small and Medium Sized Enterprises on Environmental Sustainability**' has been conducted by academics and doctoral researchers in SSE Research Cluster (Blundel, Wahga). Several PhD students have contributed to the development of this case, evidencing our inclusive approach to research and impact activities. The impact of this research has been facilitated by multiple externally funded projects and external collaborations (ESRC seminar series with Nottingham Business School 2015-17; ESRC Impact Acceleration Account projects with University of Oxford, Climate Outreach, OxLEP and practitioner organisations 2017-19).
- Research associated to GOP and REEF in the under-studied area of menopause in the workplace and its substantial influence on UK organisations (Brewis) has contributed to the reduction of the workplace taboo around menopause and to making organisations more menopause-friendly. This has led to an impact case on '**Creating Menopause-Friendly Workplaces**'.

#### ***Future strategic plans and goals for research and impact***

Over the next census period we will continue to develop impactful research through investment in ACEs and innovative RCs, seeking to consolidate our inclusive, creative, and vibrant research communities. Our aim is to further enhance the internationalisation and interdisciplinarity of our research through the support and development of collaborative partnerships. Diversification of income and international partnerships will help secure the sustainability of our research environment, including our doctoral research programme. In line with the objectives set in the current REF assessment period, our long-term vision can be summarised as follows:

1. Continue to develop interdisciplinary research agendas and distinctive areas of expertise that address organisational and societal challenges.
2. Develop a financially sustainable research environment. To achieve this, we will continue to bid for, and manage, a large, diverse portfolio of research funding (see Section 3). This diversification strategy responds to changes in the external environment (including Brexit and COVID-19) and enables us to continue to grow and develop our distinctive areas of expertise. We have already begun a programme of development focused on i) 'research enterprise' – diversifying the sources of funding targeted and enhancing our bidding expertise; and ii) internal and external collaborations that provide opportunities to participate in larger, high profile bids.
3. Increase, develop, and deepen national and international academic and professional networks, partnerships, and collaborations to boost further the economic, public, and social impact of our research, especially for hard-to-reach/marginalised communities and groups.
4. Continue to retain and attract nationally and internationally recognised researchers and PhD students. It is crucial that we continue to invest in early career researchers and doctoral students who, as the next generation of researchers, will play a critical role in advancing our disciplines and meeting society's challenges. We will further explore methods of increasing



external funding for PhD students and seek to improve our success rate in obtaining additional studentships through our existing ESRC and AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership with the University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, and Brunel University.

5. Ensure the professional development and mentoring of early and mid-career staff to increase the vitality and sustainability of our research. Continue to build a collaborative environment that supports the growth and development of our key distinctive areas of expertise, as well as those of new staff and students who join us in the future, and develop shared ownership of, and commitment to, the successful implementation of the research strategy. The inclusivity and diversity of our ACEs and RCs are a central element in achieving this objective.

## 2. People

### ***Staffing strategy and staff development***

To meet the objectives of our research strategy and ensure a steady pipeline of researchers capable of conducting and leading excellent research, our staffing and recruitment strategy during this REF period has been to: i) recruit researchers across all three career levels; and ii) support internal promotions to leadership positions and benefit from 'home-grown talent'.

#### *Recruiting researchers across all career levels*

We undertook an ambitious recruitment campaign for research-active staff at all levels of career development. We aimed to create a good balance between early, mid-career and established researchers to ensure sustainability of the research environment and help boost our growing areas of expertise across the departments, our Academic Centres of Excellence and Research Clusters.

We have appointed eight new professors in fields such as organisation studies (**Bell, Brewis**), public administration (**Ongaro**), finance (**Ataullah, Wisniewski**), management (**Frynas**), and marketing (**Liu**). These new appointments to senior career positions have contributed greatly to the strength of our research agenda as well as our capacity for research leadership. For example, Ataullah has advanced the agenda of PUFIN as its new Director, Bell became the Faculty's Director of Research Degrees, and Brewis is the head of the Department for People and Organisations. All new professors have produced many high-quality publications and boosted the reputation of our unit.

Just as importantly, we took clear and effective steps to maintain the expertise of retiring staff and address staff turnover. Most of those staff members who retired continue formally as Professor Emeritus faculty to support research in a number of different capacities, as well as mentor less senior staff members (**Wilson** acts as our REF submission reviewer; **Cornforth** is advisor to CVSL; and **Rutterford** supports research production and PhD supervision on financial and business history).

We have also recruited many research-active early career and mid-career academics in different areas of our overall research portfolio. New appointments to mid-career positions include **Meng-Lewis, Woodcock, Filiou, Godfrey**, and **Verma**. These new staff have made significant contributions to their fields. For example, Woodcock joined the Department for People and Organisations in late 2019 and has already secured UKRI funding. Meng-Lewis has added breadth to research of the SRM Cluster by contributing expertise on responsible sports promotion. Filiou and Godfrey have made significant contributions to the SML Cluster. For example, Filiou has contributed an ongoing stream of research on the topic of innovation, which formed the focus of a stream of online practitioner engagement workshops during the pandemic to increase understanding of how firms can innovate in such challenging times. Verma brought a

post-colonial perspective in the study of business and accounting to the research agenda of HYPE and the school more broadly.

New lecturer appointments include: **Mal, Abolhasani, Zhu, Bernardi, Halari, and Tori**. Abolhasani was key to ongoing cross-University collaborations on the topic of music in green advertising. Mbalyohere has made important contributions to the breadth and internationalisation of research in the SSE Cluster – he is currently leading a bid to Innovate UK to explore the deployment of electric vehicles in Africa, with University and industry partners from UK, Uganda and other African countries. Tori's research on income inequality and financialization made a significant contribution to the HYPE Cluster, with previous research on investment and inequality in developing countries funded by UNCTAD. Bernardi is the co-director of PUFIN and has been part of an initiative with neuroscientists in the UK and Italy to examine financial decision-making by people with cognitive impairments. Halari's research on the role of accountants in a circular economy has supported the reshaping of PUFIN.

#### *Internal promotions*

Since REF 2014 we have promoted four people to Professor and 12 to Senior Lecturer. Some of those promoted to the level of professor undertook leading roles in our research structure: i) **Kodwani** became Executive Dean of the Faculty; ii) **Vangen** founded the Centre for Voluntary Sector Leadership (CVSL) and became the Associate Dean for Research, Enterprise and Scholarship; iii) **Blundel** and **Holti** led large socially impactful projects related to our SSE portfolio (Blundel) as well as REEF (Holti). Promotions to Senior Lecturer have also played an important role in shaping our strategic research directions: i) **Owain Smolović Jones** is the new director of (REEF); ii) **Sancino** is leading the cross-faculty Strategic Research Area of Citizenship and Governance; and iii) **Bristow** is the Deputy Director of Research Degrees, responsible for piloting a teaching skills development scheme for PhD students.

#### *Staff development*

We have a profound responsibility to support and encourage the development of our staff throughout their careers and promote a vibrant, interdisciplinary research culture and community. It is our priority to ensure that we retain our research-active staff and that they are able to develop their intellectual ambitions as fully as possible. We also recognise that staff development plays a critical role in pursuing our strategic research objectives.

All staff are provided with an academic mentor. New appointments are supported by a staff member throughout their probationary period. Directors of Academic Centres of Excellence and Research Clusters also offer research career guidance and leadership, mentoring for early- and mid-career researchers, and peer mentoring for senior academics. All this feeds into the annual cycle of Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA), which provides opportunities to identify and put measures in place (including access to funding) to support career development. During the CDSA appraisal process staff members are encouraged to review and plan their longer-term goals, directions or priorities, including a research and scholarship plan. This includes undertaking appropriate development activities that are aligned with their core roles and responsibilities.

Staff can access financial support for starting new projects or developing existing ones. Our unit runs 2-3 **seedcorn funding** calls every year allowing academics to bid for small pots of money (typically at the level of £2.5k) to undertake research activities – either for independent pieces of research or to carry out pump priming activities that will lead to larger external bids. During the current assessment period, as many as 201 research and scholarship projects have received seedcorn funding, representing a total investment of £560k.

Beginning in 2016, we also instituted a new **sabbatical policy**. Academic staff can apply for sabbaticals to carry out work which is directly relevant to our research strategy, with concrete and demonstrable outcomes. These outcomes include: i) a distinct piece of rigorous academic research that feeds into existing or new distinctive areas of expertise; ii) development of the social and public impact of research and iii) specific work to increase and diversify income that will contribute to the overall sustainability of our research portfolio. Academics can also request sabbaticals to directly improve the research environment of our unit, for example through increased PhD recruitment or research profile building. Since the beginning of the scheme, 25 sabbaticals of three months duration have been awarded across each of our four departments. We recruited experienced teaching fellows to cover these sabbaticals and lessen the overall teaching workload for research-active members to ensure that they had as much time as possible to maximize their research outputs. Sabbaticals are awarded in addition to **study leave time**. All academic staff on contracts of two years or more are allocated ring-fenced 35 days research time as well as 44 days of study leave per annum (pro rata) which is a contractual entitlement. Merit awards are available for individuals and teams in order to recognise exceptional performance or sustained excellence, in research as elsewhere.

We also have a budget dedicated to the development of research impact and aspects of the research environment (e.g., research methods training), and we encourage international research collaborations via the International Fellows scheme, as well as supporting international collaborations via seedcorn funding. The **International Fellowships Programme** enables links and relationships between academics in our unit and international institutions, business schools, faculties or departments based outside the UK. The programme provides funding for a staff member from such institutions to engage in a research project in collaboration with colleagues in our unit. For instance, in the last three years the Department for Accounting and Finance has hosted academics from Kenya, Kazakhstan, Australia, and Japan. Staff can access financial support for attendance at UK and overseas conferences. At Academic Centre of Excellence or Research Cluster level, engagement with research is also fostered through colloquia, reading groups, research conversations and seminars, writing workshops, annual conferences/workshops, research methods training and work-in-progress seminars.

### ***Postgraduate Research Students (PGRS)***

Since 2014 we have had approximately 80 full and part time PhD student registrations; and 36 PhD students have successfully completed their theses. Growth and enhancement of our PhD programme has been a key priority enabled by significant investment, which resulted in a striking growth in recruitment from 2016. This means that many of our existing PhD students are expected to complete their PhD thesis next year.

We operate an annual recruitment cycle onto the programme (October and February intakes) for full- and part-time study (MPhil and PhD). Our PGR programme offers competitive three year fully funded scholarships, attracting students in our core research areas from across the world to study at our main campus in Milton Keynes. This has been supported by an interdisciplinary and collegial research environment, which enables PhD students to be integrated into our campus research community.

Our unit has awarded a total of 64 internally funded PhD studentships, circa £15.5k p.a. plus full fees. Each full-time student receives a Research Support and Travel Grant of a generous £6k over three years (£3k for part-time students), which is used for research expenses including: conference, external seminar and workshop attendance; research training; fieldwork expenses; purchase of necessary equipment; proofing and transcription. Each student is supervised by at least two members of staff who are active researchers and PhD-holders. ECR staff are mentored into PhD supervision by more established researchers in order to build supervision capacity. Staff can supervise a maximum of six PhD students at one time.

Staff are invited to submit project proposals via an annual open call and selection process. This recently included a themed call for projects to address managerial and organisational issues related to climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. The studentships enhance the coherence of the PhD programme and promote openness and social justice, in accordance with the OU mission. This enables a more inclusive recruitment of talented research students. Our current cohort of PhD students is drawn from 27 countries, including Azerbaijan, China, Ghana, Italy, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Turkey and Vietnam. From the 36 PhD awards over this assessment period, 53% were female and 47% male.

We also recruit self-funded PhD students and support PhD projects funded from external sources, including doctoral partnerships with other universities. This comprises the Grand Union Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (2017–22), with the University of Oxford and Brunel University, where our unit recently launched a new pathway in Leadership and Organisational Governance. Our unit is also a member of the Open-Oxford-Cambridge Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (2019–23), with the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge. Two PhD students were recruited via these partnerships in their first year.

Our PhD research portfolio covers a wider area of interdisciplinary research on topics related to social challenges and social justice, reflecting the OU mission. Examples of awarded PhD thesis titles include: 'Performative democratic practice: An ethnographic study of the Women's Rights Centre in Montenegro'; 'Leading for Peace Leadership and its Development in Post-Conflict Contexts'; 'The Disposition Effect, Trading Biases, and Cognitive Reappraisal'; and 'From Dataveillance to Data Economy: Firm View on Data Protection'.

The PhD Programme is led by the Faculty's Director of Research Degrees (**Bell**) who reports to the Faculty Associate Dean for Research, Enterprise and Scholarship (**Vangen**), the Research Degrees Committee and the University's Graduate School. Administrative support is provided by two Research Degrees Coordinators. Our unit has a PhD Student Committee comprised of student representatives from each year, chaired by Bell. We do not offer a distance learning PhD or a DBA/practice-based doctorate. However, we have made temporary but significant alterations to offer appropriate support to current and new PhD students who are now studying remotely, both in the UK and elsewhere, during the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes moving all of our training online for live streaming and recording for later use and adding new sessions such as on homeworking, technology and well-being, and remote data gathering.

Doctoral research training comprises a team-taught module, 'Foundations and Practice of Management and Business Research', which covers philosophical and conceptual topics relevant to the discipline and supports researcher skill development (e.g., research ethics, CV writing and applying for jobs). We also run advanced one-day workshops, for example on qualitative and quantitative analysis and professionally facilitated writing retreats. Student-led activities include an annual PhD Colloquium where all PhD students present their research, themed discussions with invited members of staff, and reading groups. PhD students in our unit can also gain teaching experience via a specially designed programme (introduced in 2019), which gives them the opportunity to gain skills and experience in distance learning education and contribute to the authoring of new module materials or take part in presentation activities, such as webinars.

Our unit has implemented a range of measures to support student wellbeing and progress, including a Grant Extension funding scheme, which funds students whose progress has been disrupted. Each student is assigned an independent third-party monitor that is a member of staff who provides additional mentoring, guidance, and support on wellbeing and welfare issues. In 2020, we also introduced a monthly PhD Group Support Network led by trained student facilitators. This is an initiative proposed by the PGRS representatives. Students are allocated to groups led by appointed facilitators, who are second- or third-year PhD students. The purpose is to provide a source of social, professional, and collegial support opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and to boost student wellbeing and general welfare.

PhD students regularly present their work at international conferences (e.g., European Group for Organizational Studies, Academy of Management, Association of Business Historians) and have published papers, often co-authored with their supervisors, in journals such as: *Economic History Review*, *European Journal of Finance*, *Management Learning*, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*. Our doctoral graduates have obtained academic posts in universities in the UK or overseas in the current assessment period (e.g., Goldsmiths, Liverpool, Coventry, Huddersfield, Northampton, Valencia). Four current members of staff who completed their PhDs in the OUBS have subsequently gained positions as permanent members of staff (**Wahga, Nela Smolović Jones, Haslam, Jacklin-Jarvis**).

### ***Equality and diversity***

As part of the OU's widening participation and social justice mission, promoting equality, diversity and inclusion is integral to OUBS and the faculty. For example, the fact that we value diversity and recognise that different people bring different perspectives is explicitly stated in our recruitment literature. This commitment is demonstrable in that, of the staff submitted to the business and management unit of assessment, there is an almost equal split between male (53%) and female (47%); representation of BAME staff within the unit is 18%, including senior academics and members of the Faculty Executive team; and 5% have a declared disability.

Our approach to promoting equality and diversity within our unit is twofold. First, we proactively embed a variety of mechanisms that support our researchers irrespective of their individual circumstances and, second, we offer individualised reactive support for specific circumstances when needs arise.

Our unit allows staff to exercise a degree of flexibility and independent/remote working appropriate to their terms and conditions, respecting autonomy and professionalism. Staff are offered a range of different choices under the University's Agile Working arrangements (e.g., compressed hours, staggered hours, home working, part-time working and job sharing) through which they may undertake their work. There are examples of staff members in our unit that have reduced their working hours due to caring responsibilities.

Technologies to stay connected are provided and regularly updated, alongside any required training. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to continue our work in this area with a combination of generous university contingency leave, which was separate from standard annual leave provision. In addition, we made specific efforts to accommodate the new ways of working, including laptops being repurposed and provided to staff who did not have an OU machine at home, as well as the offer of cardboard desks and office chairs for ergonomic reasons. Line managers in our unit also collaborated to produce a contingency plan in the event that colleagues had to take leave either because of their own illness or an illness in the family. This was done in a way that clearly reflects our collegial culture as it involved a team of experienced academics being willing to step in.

Career pathways for part-time and fixed-term staff are possible. Where staff and research students need to take periods of **maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave, and sick leave**, there are established university processes in place to ensure that they are well-supported both during these periods and on their return to work or study. An example in our unit is the maternity leave policy into which paid Keeping-In-Touch days are built, with clear guidance as to how these should be used. Similarly, when new mothers return to work after leave, line managers in our unit are required to put breastfeeding arrangements and risk assessments into place (if applicable) as well as arranging a re-induction and follow-up meetings to discuss how their return to work is progressing, and to ensure that any reasonable identified support is put in place. A similar approach is taken with PGRS who need to temporarily suspend their studies for any reason.

The well-being of our staff and PGRS is of paramount importance to us. We are intent on ensuring that OUBS is a great place to work and study. Indeed, our strategic plan places staff well-being as one of four overarching strategic aims, which will inform our decision making and drive our activities in the future. Our culture is profoundly non-hierarchical, inclusive, and supportive and our Extended Leadership team, which includes the Faculty Executive team, is drawn from every area of activity in the Faculty. This means that the full array of staff voices is heard in key decision making. We hold regular Faculty Assemblies where staff can also raise any concerns that they have or questions about new developments. We work in teams for every aspect of our research, which promotes collegiality across staff groups as well as ensuring that support is always on hand when staff encounter research related challenges. Another aspect of our culture is our emphasis on celebrating each other's achievements. Our monthly Research, Enterprise and Scholarship newsletter marks staff and PGRS' accomplishments during the previous four weeks – for example, having a paper accepted, delivering a keynote address, being awarded external funding or successfully defending a PhD thesis.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### *Income*

Our strategy to maintain and expand our interdisciplinary, collaborative, and participatory research over this assessment period has focused on the management of a large and diverse portfolio of research funding sources, aligned to the areas of our research expertise. This strategy has led to a striking growth in research income, from £1.9M in the previous REF round to a total £6.9M in this round.

<b>HESA funder category</b>	<b>Total £k</b>
UKRI Research Councils, etc.	802
UK-based charities (open competitive process)	149
UK central government bodies/local authorities	2,692
UK industry, commerce and public corporations	1,508
UK other sources	619
EU government bodies	320
EU (excluding UK) other	16
Non-EU other	33
UK central government NIHR	789
<b>Total income</b>	<b>6,928</b>

We have been successful in attracting external funding from leading national and international research councils and funders, including the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC), the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR), the British Academy, the European Commission, the Money Advice Service (MAS), the UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI). These successful bids were achieved in an increasingly competitive funding environment. In addition to UKRI sources, we have attracted significant funding from a wide range of industry and government partners, including: Santander; the Institute for Strategic Dialogue; the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; and the Northern Ireland Executive Authority.

We have also attracted external research funding beyond research councils, government and industry partners. Notably, we have benefited from a concerted attempt to win philanthropic resources for funding in business and management research, which has contributed to our overall social mission. In this context, CVSL and PUFIN have received £750k and £1.4M donations respectively to conduct their world-leading and socially impactful research. Our unit

has also experimented with alternative types of practitioner-funding as highlighted by the CPRL, which has expanded to include the majority of England's police forces and as a result allowed it to secure approximately £2.6M in external funding from organisations including the College of Policing and the Metropolitan Police.

External research income has supported our research and impact strategy in a number of ways. For instance, CPRL gained a £1.36M grant in 2016 to undertake a multi-activity programme of research and education, one strand of which was to conduct theoretical and empirical research about police leadership. The grant enabled the employment of a research fellow for a year and the secondment of two police officers as Senior Practitioner Fellows, one for six months and one for three months, working as a team under the leadership of **Hartley**. The team focused on three inter-connected pieces of empirical fieldwork, all of which were published in world leading academic reviews (Public Administration; Public Policy and Administration). CVSL is another successful example of how external research income underpinned our research agenda, built capacity, and supported ECR staff. The original funding of the centre allowed us to hire a director, **Vangen**, and a senior research fellow (Rees). It also provided the necessary financial support to run annual conferences for four years and host a series of webinars for knowledge exchange. It offered two fully funded PhD studentships as well as supported several voluntary sector PhD projects at various stages of completion. CVSL has also run a series of 'leadership development clubs' across the UK and online with participants from France, Italy, Germany, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Tanzania.

### ***Infrastructure and facilities***

The organisational infrastructure of our research has already been outlined in Section 1, with the Academic Centres of Excellence and Research Clusters being the core elements. At ACEs or RCs level, research and impact activity are co-ordinated by a director. Our operational structure includes the four departments also explained in Section 1.

The overall research in our unit is overseen by the Associate Dean for Research, Enterprise and Scholarship (AD RES). This role is part of the Faculty Executive team and the University's extended Senior team. The AD RES (**Vangen**) is responsible for leading the creation and delivery of the Faculty's Research and Scholarship Strategy and the Research Enterprise and Partnership Portfolio Strategic Plan. The AD RES works closely with the Faculty's Research Group (which includes Heads of Department as members), the Professorial Forum (comprising Professors from different areas of expertise), and the Faculty Executive team. The research portfolio is supported by a Director and Deputy Director of Research Degrees (**Bell, Bristow**) and a Director and Deputy Director of the Centre for Innovation and Research in Online Legal and Business Education (**Baxter, Ramanau**), as well as the Research and Enterprise team, which provides administrative support to all research, enterprise and scholarship activity in the Faculty.

The striking growth in research income is attributable to several factors of formal and informal support to colleagues wishing to make funding bids. The Research and Enterprise team provide targeted support, which has developed our bidding capabilities and increased the number of academics actively participating in bidding. Over the assessment period as many as 151 research bids were submitted from our unit to different funders.

Additional success factors are related to the organisational infrastructure supporting research and impact, which includes: regular bid writing workshops; research income being a key element in promotion criteria; visits from funding bodies, e.g. Leverhulme Trust and NEMODE networking events; seedcorn funding for research projects; formation of bidding teams of researchers with varying levels of experience; retention of an external expert in EU funding and support from researchers with experience of EU bids; a monthly digest of research calls in the areas of business and management; introduction of formal peer review processes for bids and monitoring of bidding; and sabbatical applications for developing research bids.

The University continues to create a technologically rich and sophisticated virtual research infrastructure. Within a few minutes' walk from the OUBS building is the world-class OU Library. The library continues to provide staff and research students, wherever they are, with online access to a world-class collection of over 275,000 subscribed academic journals, 540 online databases, 590,000 e-books and a vast selection of online newspapers, images, video and sound, with 24-hour helpdesk support and a range of face-to-face and online training facilities. An efficient inter-library loan system geared to providing online and print access to research materials (via pdfs of documents, articles, loan copies, etc.) complements the OU's own library resources. The library invests in expensive online resources and datasets for business and management research.

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

Our research and impact structure, as described in Section 1, not only outlines our contribution to research base but also offers the foundations as well as examples for wider research collaborations, strategic partnerships, and contributions to society. This section provides some additional examples of the range and diversity of our collaborations and social impact around the activity of our research groups.

##### ***Research collaborations with academics and key beneficiaries***

Examples of successful collaborations with academic partners include:

- **Daniel** is collaborating with academics from the University of Southampton and the Cardiff Business School on a UKRI funded project investigating the economic impact of COVID-19 on UK self-employment by regions and gender. The project is using large scale datasets and interviews to explore the economic impacts on the self-employed across the UK and how this varies according to demographics and business characteristics.
- **Ongaro** is part of the steering committee leading a large EU funded project: 'Co-Production and Co-Governance: Strategic Management, Public Value and Co-Creation in the Renewal of Public Agencies across Europe' (COGOV). The project consortium established a collaboration between ten universities from across the UK (OU, Cardiff, King's College, and Northumbria) as well as EU (partners from Denmark, France, Netherlands, Slovenia, and Croatia). The consortium explores how to combine models of strategic management for public services organisations with approaches to the co-creation of public services. The aim is to discover innovative ways to bring about a citizen-centred strategic renewal of public services in European contexts. The activities of the group have resulted in a range of research outputs and publications as well as several workshops.

The key feature of our collaborations is the bringing together of academic partners with non-academic partners, in most cases in the context of a multi-disciplinary research agenda. Examples in this category include:

- **CVSL** leads a range of significant research collaborations. The centre is a knowledge partner in EU3 Digital, a multi-partner European network project that is led by Portuguese Network of Social Entrepreneurs and Civil Society Leaders Eslied and includes the European non-profit network Euclid and the University of Porto, together with practice partners in Portugal, Spain, and Croatia. The OU element of the project, led by **Jacklin-Jarvis**, investigates the digital skills and practices that are needed for leading third sector organisations. It is funded by Erasmus+ and builds on an earlier partnership project, EU3 Leader, supported by the same funder, that explored and facilitated the transformation from management to leadership within Europe's third sector.



- **Brambley**, as research associate of **PUFIN**, has been the principal investigator from our unit for a £510k project funded by the Money Advice Service on personal finance, in collaboration with other universities (Coventry University) and non-academic partners (True Potential LLP, Social Publishing Project, Community Action: MK, New Central Credit Union, Swan Credit Union, Coventry & District Credit Union). The research income from this project allowed PUFIN to employ an additional group of five researchers – four of them being ECR.

Our partnerships are formed by collaborations, knowledge exchange, and public engagement with diverse and hard-to-reach social groups as well as responding to social emergencies, including research on the COVID-19 pandemic. There are several examples:

- Drawing upon their research on diversity and leadership, **Mbalyohere** and **Ngoasong** – associated with **REEF** and **SSE**– have developed a ‘Black Leaders’ module in partnership with Paul Sesay, the entrepreneur and chief executive of the Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers, National Diversity Awards, Inclusive Companies Awards and The Diversity Group. The accredited module delivers free of charge resources to Black people from deprived backgrounds.
- **REEF** is also involved in a funded collaboration with the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain on supporting migrant and vulnerable workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. A group within REEF has collaborated with Unite, War on Want and the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union to investigate the leadership offered by precarious workers who take industrial action. These projects, led by **Owain Smolović Jones**, **Nela Smolović Jones** and **Clarke**, examine the agency, identifications and organisation of workers to challenge corporate executive decisions.
- **Holti** and **Vincent** – both associated with **REEF**, are working on a cross-faculty research project, led by **Holti**, on developing effective models for the health services needed to support trans adults before, during and after they are seen by NHS-commissioned specialist gender identity services. This project is being conducted in partnership with gender identity services in the NHS and a number of voluntary organisations (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy; Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust; Northamptonshire Healthcare Partnership NHS Foundation Trust; LGBT Foundation; Yorkshire MESMAC; Gender Identity Research and Education Society; Gendered Intelligence) and received funding by the National Institute for Health Research.
- **CPRL** has led a research project on ‘Victim (Dis)Engagement in Domestic Abuse and Rape cases’ (**Hartley, Bates**). This project was selected as a priority project by OU academics and by the 22 police organisation partners of CPRL (the police partners providing research data are: Avon and Somerset Constabulary; Greater Manchester Police, Dorset Police; Hampshire Constabulary Hertfordshire Constabulary; Police Service of Northern Ireland; South Yorkshire Police and Thames Valley Police). The project has had a major impact on both policy and practice. Members of CPRL have been part of weekly virtual meetings from the beginning of lockdown with the National Police Chiefs’ Council which has provided guidance to all UK police forces about how to prevent, police, and record data on domestic abuse and rape during the pandemic. CPRL works with the National Police Chiefs Council in order to design the data needs of the new national project on Domestic Homicide, involving all UK police forces.

### ***Contribution to policy discourse and development***

Researchers in our unit contribute to policy discourse and development by submitting evidence to government consultation exercises and parliamentary committees and by acting as expert advisors to government. Examples include:

- **Budd**, as director of the **SPEAR**, has led an interdisciplinary project investigating the socio-economic analysis of space exploration programmes and missions of the International Space Station. This research project is part of a multi-disciplinary collaboration on the *Benefits of the European Space Agency Exploration Roadmap in Socioeconomics* (BEERS), in which three OU faculties were involved (FBL, FASS, and STEM). The results of the first stage of socioeconomic analysis have influenced the final policy strategy for the European Space Agency Ministerial Council, Space 19+, (published in late 2019), which quoted the results of the project. This strategy sets out the funding commitments and priorities for the 22 member states for the following five years with regard to space exploration.
- Academics involved in **PUFIN** have contributed to policy discourse and development on issues of financial literacy and inclusion. PUFIN has published a series of white and green papers on financial education and planning that have attracted attention by policy makers as well as organised annual conferences bringing academics, policy makers, and practitioners together. For instance, PUFIN's research has influenced policy discourse and development in relation to financial exclusion and has been cited in a report by the House of Lords Select Committee on Financial Exclusion (December 2017 – the report was led by Lowe, from FASS, and **Upton**, PUFIN's director at the time).
- **CPRL** led the research project on 'Implementing the Transformation of Police Learning and Development', a national action initiative funded by the Home Office. The CPRL team was led by **Hartley** and worked closely with the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. The project had an impact on every single police force across the UK, in providing a roadmap and toolkit to assess and improve the quality and range of provision in police departments of learning and development, and in creating a national network for forces to improve provision. The project was highly commended by the Home Office for the quality of its research evidence and its application in policing. The team has contributed to the discipline of management studies through conference papers presented at, for example, the British Academy of Management, and the Academy of Management.

### ***Indicators of wider influence, contributions to and recognition by the research base***

#### *Journal editorships and editorial board membership*

Researchers in our unit served or have served on the editorial boards of more than 30 journals including: European Journal of Finance (Ataullah); Gender, Work and Organization (Priola, Brewis); Group and Organization Management (Liu); Public Administration Review (Hartley, Sancino); International Journal of Management Reviews (Frynas); International Review of Administrative Sciences (Ongaro); Management Learning (Bell); Organization (Bristow).

#### *Refereeing academic publications*

During this assessment period, researchers in our unit have reviewed for over 570 academic journals that span the research expertise areas surrounding our Academic Centres of Excellence and Research Clusters. Examples include: The British Accounting Review (Bernadi); Business Ethics (Haigh); World Development (Kodwani); Economic History Review (Sotiropoulos); Cambridge Journal of Economics (Tori); Accounting and Business Research (van Mourik); Critical Perspectives on Accounting (Verma); Journal of Banking & Finance (Wisniewski); International Journal of Finance & Economics (Halari); Marketing Theory (Abolhasani); Journal of Management & Organization (Filiou); Production Management (Liu); Journal of Customer Behaviour (Mal); Human Relations (Baralou); Organization Studies (Barthold, Clarke); Journal of Business Ethics (Tomkins); International Small Business Journal (Blundel); Journal of Management Inquiry (Dai); Supply Chain Management: An International Journal (Hinton); International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing (Jacklin-Jarvis); British Journal of Criminology (Jones); European Journal of Work and Organizational

Psychology (Kourti); Tourism Management (Ngoasong); Public Administration Review (Sancino); Journal of International Management (Mbalyohere); European Management Review (Carli); Business & Society (Bristow).

#### *Refereeing research proposals and participation on grant committees*

Researchers in our unit have reviewed proposals for a range of funders:

- *UK Research Councils:* ESRC (Blundel, Rutterford, Ngoasong, Harris, Fenton O’Creevy, Priola); British Council (Filiou); British Academy (Liu, Zhu, Ataullah, Bristow). Bell has been the co-Chair Research and Publications for British Academy of Management and chair of grants committee 2018-20, including BAM/Society for Advancement of Management (SAMS) grant scheme.
- *The EU:* ERC (Sancino).
- *International Research Councils and Foundations:* Irish Research Council (Hinton); The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (Sancino); Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (Filiou, who is also member of the scientific advisory committee), National Science Centre of Poland (Wisniewski); Swiss National Science Foundation (Bell); Dutch Research Council (Rutterford).
- *Prestigious charities:* Leverhulme (Sancino, Liu, Rutterford); Newton Fund (Filiou), Independent Social Research Foundation (Sotiropoulos); Carnegie Trust (Brewis, Tomkins).

#### *Fellowships, Prizes and Awards*

**PUFIN** received the 2017 Guardian University Award for Business Partnership for its contribution to society. PUFIN has produced five research-led interactive and freely accessible online courses (MOOCs available through OpenLearn), in cooperation with Chartered Accountants’ Livery Company’s Charity, enhancing financial education and, in turn, empowering individuals in the face of a rising financial uncertainty. The social impact of these free online courses is indicated by the very large number of registrations (enrolled learners cumulatively approaching 260k users) allowing the centre to reach diverse and vulnerable communities or social groups.

Researchers within our unit have been awarded a range of prizes and prestigious fellowships including:

- **Hartley** won the British Academy Research Medal in 2019 as well as the Lifetime Achievement 2020 prize from the International Research Society of Public Management.
- **Brewis** was the winner of the Women’s Business Council ‘Staying On’ Award in 2018.
- **Wisniewski** won the Outstanding Contribution in Reviewing Award by the International Review of Financial Analysis in 2017.
- **Bristow** won the ‘Most Developmental Reviewer Award’ for outstanding reviewing by the Academy of Management, CMS Division in 2019.
- **Baxter, Bell, and Rutterford** have become Fellows of the Academy for Social Sciences.
- **Woodcock** won the EPSRC Digital Economy Crucible Research Priming Award in 2016.

#### *Invited keynotes, lectures, conference chair roles, or conference organisation*

Our researchers have been invited to give approximately 55 keynote speeches at UK and international workshops and conferences. Examples of keynote speeches include: **Bell** delivered the keynote speech on ‘The Ethics of the Hand in Craft Work’ at the 7th Annual Australasian Business Ethics Network (ABEN) Conference, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia, in

December 2017; **Ongaro** was the invited distinguished guest at the 'Back to the Essence of Public Administration Conference' organised by the Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China, in 2018; **Hartley** delivered the keynote speech on 'Ten propositions about public leadership' at the Public and Political Leadership (PUPOL) international conference, in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2018; **Brewis'** keynote speech on 'Menopause and the workplace: for an intersectional approach' was presented at the 5th Diversity and Inclusion Workshop, organised by Copenhagen Business School in 2019; **Rutterford** was the keynote speaker on 'The impact of individual investors on the evolution of British financial markets' at the Critical Finance Studies Conference, Birmingham, in 2019.

Researchers in our unit have also delivered close to 200 invited lectures and talks during this assessment period. Examples include: **Budd** gave an invited lecture on 'Ireland as the Keystone of Brexit' at the Annual Conference of Centre for Brexit Studies, organised by Birmingham City University on 17 March 2018. **Vangen** gave an invited presentation: 'Collaboration and the governance of public services delivery' at the conference for UK–Japanese perspectives on public management reform, which was funded by the Japan Foundation in November 2017 in Osaka, Japan.

Our researchers have been involved in organising several conferences. For example, researchers associated with the HYPE Research Cluster organised the annual conference of the Association of Business Historians (ABH) in 2018 at the OU Milton Keynes campus (**Rutterford, Sotiropoulos, Verma**). The theme of this event was: 'Pluralistic perspectives of business history: gender, class, ethnicity, religion'. The conference was attended by over 70 academics from all over the world. The OUBS also hosted the 11th International Critical Management Studies Conference in 2019, in collaboration with VIDA (**Bloom, Brewis, Bristow, Clarke, Owain Smolović Jones, Priola, Bell, Barthold**). The theme of the conference was: 'Precarious Presents, Open Futures'. It was attended by over 450 academics from all over the world.