

Institution: Birkbeck, University of London
Unit of Assessment: 30 (Philosophy)
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p><u>1.1. How research is structured across the submitted unit</u></p> <p>Birkbeck's Philosophy Department is located in the heart of the academic hub of Bloomsbury, London, and is part of the School of Social Science, History and Philosophy (SSHP), one of Birkbeck's five Schools. The Department is a globally renowned centre for philosophical research with a distinguished history in an institution that is specifically devoted to provide higher education for working people through evening study. The continuous distinction of its research community is reflected both in the external recognition received by staff members—in the assessment period, 2 members (Hornsby and James) were elected Fellow of the British Academy, and 1 (Hornsby) was elected International Honorary member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences—and continued institutional investment in the Department. In the assessment period, 8 new colleagues were hired, which laid the foundation for a growth phase during the second half of the period (2017-2020), which is reflected in a high number of promotions (Section 1.2), over a ten-fold increase in research income (Section 3.1), and the creation of new research networks (Section 4).</p> <p>The Department is returning 100% of its 16 staff members, adding up to 13.33 FTE. In its approach to research, the Department cultivates a pluralistic approach that allows people to pursue and collaborate across a range of different interests, including by venturing beyond traditional topics of philosophical analysis. For example, colleagues work on both established figures in the history of philosophy (in particular, Nietzsche, Spinoza, Aristotle, and Descartes) and on the role of women in the development of analytic philosophy; on established topics in the philosophy of mind and language (e.g., propositional and non-propositional content, intentionality, and physicalism) as well as on how philosophy aided by experimental psychology shows what we can learn from fiction; and on traditional topics in political philosophy (e.g., freedom and democracy), ethics (theoretical and applied), metaphysics (e.g., causation), and epistemology (e.g., knowledge, intellectual virtue, and the normativity of logic), as well as on the philosophy underpinning predictive modelling and novel forecasting technologies.</p> <p>More formally, the five research clusters discussed in the Department's 2014 submission have in this period crystallised into four research clusters, in light of new hires. Several staff members contribute to more than one, and each cluster is supported by a number of recurring research events and/or research networks convened or co-organised by members of staff as follows, including through close collaboration with the Institute of Philosophy at the University of London's School of Advanced Studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of Philosophy (Sophia Connell, Ken Gemes, Andrew Huddleston, Susan James, Sarah Patterson). Main associated research events: The Nietzsche Seminar (normally meeting 9 times annually), The London Spinoza Circle (normally meeting 7 times annually), The London Cartesian Circle (normally meeting 7 times annually), Institute of Classical Studies Lecture & Seminar Series (biweekly talks). • Ethics and Political Philosophy (Kristoffer Ahlstrom-Vij, Cristian Constantinescu, Michael Garnett, Andrew Huddleston, Susan James, Hallvard Lillehammer). Main

associated research events: **The Annual Freedom and Autonomy Conference**, **The Birkbeck Ethics Group**, **The Practical, the Political and the Ethical** (seminar series at the Institute of Philosophy, 2015-2017).

- **Language, Epistemology, Metaphysics & Mind (LEMM)** (Kristoffer Ahlstrom-Vij, Stacie Friend, Alex Grzankowski, Jen Hornsby, Keith Hossack, Robert Northcott, Florian Steinberger). Main associated research events: **The London Mind Group** (normally meeting 14 times annually), **The Bloomsbury Forecasting Forum** at the Institute of Philosophy (normally meeting 5 times annually), **The Logic, Epistemology and Metaphysics Seminar Series** at the Institute of Philosophy (normally meeting 14 times annually), **The Political Epistemology Network** (annual conference; location varies), **The London Group for Formal Philosophy**.
- **Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics** (Stacie Friend, Alex Grzankowski, Andrew Huddleston, Hallvard Lillehammer). Main associated research event: **The London Aesthetics Forum** (normally meeting 14 times annually).

In addition to a number of ad hoc discussion and reading groups involving members of other institutions in the University of London, the Department also organises:

- **the Dorothy Edgington Lectures** (biannually), which are accompanied by an international graduate workshop devoted to the work of that year's Edgington lecturer. In this REF period, the Edgington lecturers have been Rae Langton (2014), Kit Fine (2016), Katherine Hawley (2018), and Catherine Elgin (2020; postponed due to COVID-19);
- **the Women in Philosophy Lecture series** (two to three lectures or meetings annually), organised by **the Departmental Women in Philosophy Group**, comprising members of staff and research students. Recent speakers at the Lecture Series include Elselijn Kingma, Alison Stone, and Heather Widdows.
- **Graduate Research Saturday workshops** (twice annually, in Terms 1 and 2) with bespoke research and careers training sessions and talks by (2-3) visiting speakers and student respondents;
- **Approaches to Philosophy Postgraduate Research seminar series** (1-3 events in Term 3), with talks by visiting speakers (suspended in 2020 due to COVID-19); and
- **The Work in Progress seminar** (weekly during term time), where staff members present working papers for discussion. These seminars are open to and attended by postgraduate research students. New staff members and junior staff members are prioritised in allocating presentation slots, in line with the Department's commitment to inclusion and mentorship (see Section 2).

In the assessment period, the Department has also maintained a variety of research links through the hosting of **Visiting Professors** (Catherine Wilson, Bob Hale, John Skorupski, Anthony Savile), **Emerita Professors** (Dorothy Edgington, Samuel Guttenplan, David-Hillel Ruben, Anthony Price), **Honorary Research Fellows** (including Barry Smith, Director of the Institute of Philosophy), and a number of **Visiting and Affiliated Academics** (Simon Hewitt, Hugh Lawson-Tancred, Charlotte Knowles, Nils Kurbis, Simon May, Steph Marston; Christian Onof, Gudrun von Tevenar).

1.2. Research objectives during the assessment period

In its 2014 submission, the Department set as strategic aims to (a) consolidate areas of research strength, (b) build on existing interdisciplinary collaborations, and (c) attract doctoral students. The Department has followed through on each of these plans as follows:

1.2.1. Consolidating areas of research strength

During the assessment period, the Department has made several **permanent junior hires in strategic areas**. These have expanded on or complemented current research strengths in epistemology and philosophy of logic, philosophy of mind, Nietzsche, aesthetics, and history of philosophy, with the result that the Department has both good breadth and balance, as can be seen from the fairly **even spread across the four research clusters mentioned above** (Section 1.1).

The Department has also been successful in **mentoring and promotion of these new hires**. In this REF period, 2 members were promoted to Reader, 3 to Senior Lecturer, and 3 first to Senior Lecturer and then to Reader. This **represents more than half of the Department's FTE** and all but two of its permanent faculty that were eligible (as non-professors) for promotion. The Department has had **a success rate of 100% in promotion applications during the assessment period**.

1.2.2. Building on interdisciplinary collaborations

Additionally, the Department has continued to expand its **interdisciplinary collaborations**, both through new hires and with the help of existing structures in the Department and College as a whole. For example:

- Friend is working with **an interdisciplinary team of philosophers and psychologists** on a Leverhulme project on 'Learning from Fiction' (RPG-2017-365: £83,773);
- Rashed is working with **healthcare practitioners and activists** to produce an understanding of mental illnesses that would also be recognisable and empowering to many persons who experience them ('Encountering Madness'; Wellcome-ISSF £177.233);
- Ahlstrom-Vij has collaborated with **policy researchers** in the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR), Oxford's Centre on Migration, Policy, and Society (COMPAS), and Demos on how people process evidence on the impact of immigration;
- Lillehammer has long-term collaborations on **ethics at the intersection of philosophy and anthropology**, including through a workshop at Birkbeck in 2015, a special issue of *The Monist* and a contribution to *The Cambridge Handbook of the Anthropology of Ethics and Morality* (in press).
- Ahlstrom-Vij has consulted with **technology companies** on the development and testing of new forecasting technologies through his work on prediction markets; and
- The Department collaborates extensively with **the Birkbeck Institute of Humanities**, including through the organization of lectures and/or workshops with International Visitors (most recently, Jonathan Lear in 2018 and Lisa Guenther in 2019).

1.2.3. Attracting research students

Over the REF period the Department has also consolidated and enhanced the provision of its postgraduate research programme, while maintaining its commitment to recruit a consistently strong and diverse cohort of research students.

From 2016/17, the Department's previous MPhil Stud programme was replaced with a new and modular MRes research training programme, to provide a more effective route to doctoral study for those needing further training before embarking on a PhD. Recruitment to this programme has benefited from competitive **bursaries funded by the School** and has resulted in successful downstream recruitment to the MPhil/PhD programme. Of the 28 MPhil/PhD students enrolled in 2019/20, 10 have been recruited via this new MRes route.

Across the MPhil/PhD programme, the total number of students in doctoral research training by headcount saw an increase from 23 in 2014/15 to 28 in 2019/20. The average number of PhD awards over the REF period has remained stable, varying between 2 and 5 (with 4 in 2019/20). (The difference between headcount and FTE owes to the fact that the majority of PGR students in the Department pursue their studies part-time, often alongside being fully employed.)

1.3. Research objectives over the next five years

Recognising that the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to have an impact on our research environment over the next five years, our core focus will be to maintain a research environment which is sustainable but also fosters and develops the aspirations of the Department. In light of this, the Department's future plans include:

- (a) **Further consolidating areas of research strength** through additional **interdisciplinary work** (Section 1.5, 1.6, and 4.4), and expanded provision in **history of philosophy and political philosophy**, where the Department already has significant strength, into the domain of **non-western philosophy or the philosophy of race**, where the Department will be looking to make new hires in the near future. In so doing, the Department will also build on past success in hiring and mentoring junior colleagues through promotion (see Section 2).
- (b) **Increasing research income** through the continued use of the departmental structures discussed below (Section 2.1), involving (a) a **mentoring scheme** geared towards junior colleagues in particular as well as the strategic use of research leave, alongside (b) **competitive seed-funding** internal to both the School and College, which have resulted in a more than ten-fold increase of departmental research income in the second half of the REF period (see Section 3).

1.4. Impact objectives during the assessment period

The Department's impact strategy goes hand-in-hand with its broader research strategy, and is like the latter focused on pluralism, in this case with respect to the type of stakeholders involved. This pluralism is evident in the two case studies submitted in this cycle. Additionally, more recent impact work span across several colleagues—in line with the collaborative nature of academic work in the Department (see 1.1 above)—to ensure the long-term viability of streams of impact, which is crucial for a Department of our size (see 1.5 below). During this REF period, priority has therefore been given to (a) **new impact** produced by research produced by members of staff over the long term, (b) impact produced by research conducted in **emerging areas** of study, and (c) impact produced by research conducted by **several members of staff**.

For the first case study, the Department has continued to develop its impact from the 2014 submission through **Barry Smith's work on the objectivity of taste and tasting**, since its inception in the Department in 2004. Smith has since joined the Institute of Philosophy, at the University of London's School of Advanced Study (SAS), but remains an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department. Building on his work at Birkbeck, Smith was **central to a national effort to add 'a loss of taste and smell' to the official list of Covid-19 symptoms**; helped

launch a **charity working with patients who have lost their sense of smell**; and did extensive **consultancy work for the food and drink industry**, in turn generating prize winning campaigns, commercially run tasting events, and a re-thinking at companies like Coca Cola and Kellogg in how they can work with different sensory modalities in reducing the amount of sugar and salt in their products.

The second case study builds on **Mohammed Rashed's *Madness and the Demand for Recognition*** (OUP 2019), the first philosophical monograph to offer a comprehensive assessment of the claim that madness is grounds for identity, and proposes a way forward for a positive social response to 'Mad activism'. Rashed has been **invited to give expert evidence to the Department of Health**, to write on mental health activism and clinical practice in the *BJPsych Bulletin* (the most popular academic journal among psychiatrists), to **deliver webinars for health practitioners through the non-profit organisation Mad in America**, and to be a panellist at an event on madness organised by the mental health charity Mind.

In line with the inclusive and collaborative impact strategy, and building on the Impact Strategy embodied in its REF 2014 submission, the Department has also expanded its proactive engagement with the subject of **Philosophy at AS-Level** by organising two AS-Level Conferences on the themes of *Are there Moral Facts?* (2016) and *Is Morality Relative?* (2017); in each case publishing an open access online Study Guide and running an associated Essay Prize Competition. These conferences have drawn directly on recent research by Constantinescu, Garnett, Gemes, James and Lillehammer. In addition, several members of staff maintain direct and ongoing links with schools in the London region, including through school visits and participation in collaborative school events.

1.5. Impact objectives over the next five years

Looking ahead at the next cycle, the Department's impact strategy is centred less on individual colleagues and more on impact emanating from **collaborative efforts** within the Department. This work is focused on supporting and realising the impact potential of research conducted by **staff appointed since 2014** and is embedded within the Department's wider research strategy for the longer term.

For example, Ahlstrom-Vij, Northcott, and Steinberger together convene the **Bloomsbury Forecasting Forum** at the Institute of Philosophy, bringing together practitioners and academics working on forecasting across London, with recent talks Future of Humanity Institute in Oxford, among others. Part of the motivation for the forum is academic, as it informs the convenors work in epistemology and the philosophy of science. But the forum is also used as a means for identifying and meeting potential stakeholders, e.g., in relation to Ahlstrom-Vij's forecasting work. Ahlstrom-Vij was first to develop and test so-called **self-resolving prediction markets** (a type of forecasting market able to evaluate both long-term forecasts and counterfactuals) together with a commercial partner in 2017-18. Following the publication of a large-sample replication of his work on such markets through an alumni-funded Research Innovation Grant from Birkbeck, Ahlstrom-Vij is currently consulting for a technology start-up that is applying his work in the development of a novel forecasting toolkit.

Additionally, the Department aims to proactively develop new and original impact produced by research conducted in **emerging areas of study** by **recruiting new staff at post-doctoral or lecturer level** where such research presents an opportunity for **collaboration and interaction with existing members of staff**. Mohammed Rashed's project on madness and the demand for

recognition provides a proven example of success for this model, given the shared expertise in the Department on issues of autonomy and mental health (e.g. Garnett, Lillehammer, Rached).

1.6. Approach to supporting interdisciplinary research

As already noted, the department has continued to expand its **interdisciplinary collaborations** in the assessment period (Section 1.2), and will continue to do so not only by using departmental incentivisation funds to maintain interdisciplinary forums, in turn feeding into College-funded research with impact potential (Section 1.5), but also through more general forms of **stakeholder and public engagement**, to be discussed below (Section 4.2).

1.7. Progression towards an open research environment

All staff members are reminded monthly to deposit publications accepted in the last three months on Birkbeck's green **Open Access system BiRON**, an institutional repository that supports free and long-term access to e-prints, deposited under a non-exclusive licence. For this assessment period, all outputs considered for submission to the REF by the Department complied with Open Access requirements. The Department's internal process of **peer review of grant applications; Academic Review, Research Mentoring** and the sharing of work in progress at the **work in progress seminar** supports and encourages a culture of **research integrity** by means of constructive discussion of research methods, scholarly rigour and the justified presentation research findings. In addition, all research involving human subjects is overseen by a dedicated Departmental Ethics Officer and screened by the School Ethics Committee.

2. People

2.1. Staffing strategy and staff development

As seen in Section 1, the Department's proactive programme of succession planning has proved effective in securing the presence of effective research leadership in the Department, and current planning seeks to extend that strategy with a view to consolidate and further build on these achievements over the next decade. Specifically, as anticipated in REF 2014, during the first half of the period (2013-16), the Department underwent extensive demographic change, with 4 senior colleagues retiring or phasing down to a part-time contract, and 6 new colleagues being hired at Lecturer or Senior Lecturer level, leading to a net increase in staff submitted to REF 2021. This **investment phase** has laid the foundation for effective succession planning as these senior colleagues moved on, culminating in a **growth phase** during the second half of the period (2017-2020), as evidenced by the number of promotions (Section 1.2), the growth in research income (Section 3.1), and the creation of new research networks (Section 4).

More specifically, during the initial phase, the Department put in place **a variety of support structures** to ensure that junior colleagues in particular are supported and thrive academically. These structures include making use of a College wide **mentoring scheme**, implemented at a departmental level by assigning each new member of staff a mentor. The mentor assists the colleague by both introducing them to departmental practices, and helping them navigate College wide procedures such as promotion and grant applications. In workload allocation, care is also taken not to overburden early career researchers with administrative or teaching duties. Every member of staff also has access to **research mentoring** managed by the Department's **Research Lead**, and has an **Annual Review** of their research progress with the **Assistant Dean** (Head of Department). Additionally, College study leave policy is that colleagues can apply for 1 term's leave after 9 terms of service. At departmental level, such leave is planned and used

strategically to support individual colleagues' research development. The recent **success in promoting new colleagues** (see 1.2 above) is a reflection of these practices.

Additionally, the departmental **Research Lead** advises all members of staff on **research grant applications**, as well as on the strategic use of

- an annual £700 School research fund for each member of staff;
- an annual opportunity to top up that fund with up to £2,000 through a competitive application to the School;
- a College Impact Seed Fund, with up to £10,000 available per department;
- a competitive alumni-funded Research Innovation Fund accepting applications for up to £5,000 as seed-funding for new projects;
- the Birkbeck Wellcome Trust Institutional Strategic Support Fund (ISSF), supporting activities within medical humanities;
- an annual Birkbeck Institute of Humanities (BIH) conference funding round; and
- the Departmental Incentivisation Fund, managed by the Assistant Dean (Head of Department).

In the REF period, the College Impact Seed Fund in particular has been used to **generate impact activities**, including through training workshops targeted at senior mental health clinicians, led by Rashed. Additionally, School funds, the College Research Innovation Fund, the Departmental Incentivisation Fund, and access to facilities at the Institute of Philosophy have also been used to **stimulate and facilitate exchanges between academia and business, industry and public or third sector bodies**, including through impact activities (Section 1.5) and stakeholder engagement (Section 4.2).

Since 2014, when one third of staff were employed on temporary contracts, the Department has moved to a position where **all full-time staff are employed on long term/open ended contracts** (with the exception of individuals employed on externally funded research contracts). During this period, the use of Temporary Lectureships has been restricted to the replacement of long-term staff absences (e.g. due to illness).

2.2. Research Students

2.2.1 Approach to recruitment of doctoral research students

The Department maintains a proactive attitude to continuing recruitment to its research programmes. This includes the appointment of a dedicated academic Admissions Officer for handling applications to both its MPhil/PhD and MRes programmes. The Admissions Officer is responsible for handing applications; for advising prospective applicants on the suitability of programmes, research proposals and suitable supervision arrangements; as well as for advertising the Department widely as a dynamic research community that actively welcomes applications from **under-represented groups in the profession**. As part of this effort, the Department introduced its first **dedicated postgraduate research Open Evening** in 2018, which was run in tandem with an open **Birkbeck Women in Philosophy lecture**. Subsequent events will involve the active participation on the Department's **Minorities and Philosophy (MAP)** group (see 2.3 below).

2.2.2 Evidence of studentships from major funding bodies

Over the REF period, MPhil/PhD students in the Department have benefited from four sources of funding. First, during each year between 2014 and 2018, the Department was successful in securing one **fully funded Phil/PhD Studentship** annually from a School-wide competition.

Second, and following Birkbeck's entry as a full member of the **CHASE consortium** in 2018/19, the Department has been able to put forward PhD applicants to the CHASE Doctoral Training Studentship Programme, from which it secured its first full award in 2019. Third, members of staff have successfully secured MPhil/PhD funding as part of externally funded research projects (e.g. the **Leverhulme** funded project *Learning from Fiction: A Philosophical and Psychological Study* (RPG-2017-365: £83,773). Fourth, a number of recent research students have benefited from external funding from international grant awarding bodies (e.g. in Costa Rica, Mexico, and Taiwan). In addition, **the School** provides smaller sums of research expenses to research students on a competitive basis through an annual call.

2.2.3 Monitoring and support mechanisms linked to evidence of progress and of successful completions

All MPhil/PhD students are assigned a Primary and a Secondary Supervisor at enrolment. Their progress is subject to review by termly reports from Primary Supervisor, and by an **Annual Progress Review** (normally by Primary and Secondary Supervisor), the report of which is considered by the Graduate Standing Committee. All students receive written feedback on their Annual Review. The Committee also considers applications for upgrading from MPhil to PhD, either following Annual Review, or on a termly basis. MRes students are assigned supervisors for each of their essay and dissertation components, also under the overall oversight of the PGR Director. As part of their research preparation, the training of MRes students is integrated with the training offered by the Department to MPhil/PhD students, with a view to encourage interaction across cohorts and to sustain a diverse and robust student research community.

During each year of the REF period, between two and five students have been awarded the PhD. (See section 1.3 above). In light of Birkbeck's mission as an institution devoted to **part-time and lifelong learning**, many of the Department's research students either are pursuing, or have already pursued, a non-academic career. And while for some Birkbeck students, following a degree programme is a way of 'skilling up', for others it is a project pursued for its own sake. In consequence, the number of PhD students 'placed' in academic employment is not a fully representative measure of the robustness or success of the Department's MPhil/PhD programme. Nevertheless, the Department has a demonstrable record during the current REF period of its MPhilStud or MPhil/PhD students going on to hold appointments at either lecturer-equivalent or post-doctoral level in Austria, China, Costa Rica, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Taiwan, the UK, and the USA.

2.2.4 Details of the support provided to research students

The Department maintains a dynamic and proactive approach to the training, development and maintenance of its research student community. Key elements of this approach include a **weekly Research Student Seminar**, where students present and comment on each other's work in the presence of a member of staff, who will participate actively in the seminar by presenting their own research at one session. (Six different staff members will both chair and present at this seminar in any given year in order to integrate the research of staff and students in the Department.) MRes students have their own weekly seminar. Both MRes and MPhil/PhD students attend the Department's weekly work-in-progress seminars (section 1.1). In this way, a number of research students will routinely attend three research seminars per week over and above external events organised nearby by the Aristotelian Society, the Royal Institute of Philosophy, and the Institute of Philosophy.

Postgraduate Generic Skills training is organized by the **Birkbeck Graduate Research School**, which is affiliated with the intercollegiate **Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network** and with

the **CHASE Consortium for Humanities and the Arts South-East England AHRC Funded Doctoral Training Partnership**. In addition, the Department offers an engaged and proactive environment for postgraduate research training. All PGR activity is overseen by **the Department's Graduate Standing Committee**, which is chaired by the **Postgraduate Research Director**, who is responsible for the educational aspects of both the MPhil/PhD programme, and the MRes.

In addition, the Department will normally organize **two annual Saturday workshops** that provide subject and task-specific training (e.g. planning your thesis; publishing your research; surviving your thesis and beyond) and give students the opportunity to respond to the papers of visiting academics from institutions beyond Birkbeck and London. In an annual series initiated in 2012, the Department's **Approaches to Philosophy seminars** have given students the opportunity to discuss different methodological perspectives (e.g. 'analytic' vs. 'continental'; a priori vs. empirical; contemporary vs. historical) or challenges (e.g. inter-disciplinarity) with experts invited from other universities, including Birkbeck's institutional partners in the CHASE Consortium. The students, through their representatives, take an active role in the design and organization of these events.

The **Edgington lectures** (organized biannually) involve a set of public lectures; an international graduate workshop; and a departmental reading group, each of which is organized by a research student led committee. Research students also organize and lead **the Department's Women in Philosophy group**, in which they interact with members of junior and senior staff. In addition, research students have access to the many research series co-sponsored by the Department (section 1.1) that take place nearby at Senate House. Student issues and concerns are addressed by means of termly **Staff/Student Exchange meetings** each term; with issues arising being brought to one or more of six Department meetings during the year by the Director of Graduate Research.

2.3. Equality and Diversity

The Department is a signatory to **the Good Practice Scheme of the British Philosophical Association and the Society for Women in Philosophy** (SWIP), which involves devising a departmentally agreed action plan in regards to a variety of areas, including policies for conference and seminar organisation, research projects, and caregiving. Staff and research students in the Department have also formed **the Departmental Women in Philosophy Group**, to support female staff and research students, and which aims to foster and promote an inclusive and responsible culture in teaching and research in the Department and beyond. This Group also organises **the Women in Philosophy Lecture series**. Additionally, the Department recently established a **Minorities and Philosophy (MAP) chapter**, which works towards building an inclusive philosophical community at Birkbeck, and promoting minority philosophers and philosophical topics at Birkbeck and beyond. The Department's MAP chapter held its inaugural lecture on November 6 2020, with Dr Dwight K. Lewis (University of Central Florida).

Considerations about equality and diversity are also taken into account in the allocation of funds from the **Departmental Incentivisation Fund** (see Section 2.1), **leadership roles**, and **study leave**, to ensure that everyone is able to reach their full potential irrespective of specific characteristics or personal circumstances. Furthermore, in line with the ethos of Birkbeck, and in order to ensure that colleagues—especially our junior colleagues—are able to combine a high level of research output with constraints imposed by childcare commitments or other personal circumstances, the Department operates under a system of **flexible working arrangements**, through flexible and remote working where appropriate (even in non-pandemic times).

At College level, the **College Equality and Diversity Committee** supports and champions equality and diversity across the College, and has members from all Schools and includes student and Trade Union representatives. Birkbeck also holds an institutional **Athena SWAN award** at Bronze level, and is also a **Disability Confident Employer**, a **Mindful Employer Charter** signatory, and a **Stonewall Diversity Champion** and holds the **HR Excellence in Research Award**, which monitors and supports our implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (Lillehammer was a member of the Academic Advisory Board that oversaw the development of the action plan and the submission for the award). Each School has an **Assistant Dean for Equalities** who leads on equality and diversity issues, supporting the embedding of institutional equality initiatives, as well as developing and implementing local equality initiatives. The College has also established **five Diversity100 PhD studentships for BAME students**, one per School, for studies beginning in autumn 2020.

In constructing the **REF submission**, including the selection of outputs, the Department has implemented the policies laid out in the **College's Code of Practice**, to ensure that due regard has been paid to potential issues around equality and diversity.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3.1. Research funding and strategies for generating research income

During the first half of the REF period, the Department laid the foundation for growing its research income through a research strategy focused on inducting and mentoring its new junior staff (see Section 2.1) and having a dedicated **Research Lead** that coordinates and advises on grant applications, including by making strategic use of study leave and internal seed funding (Section 3.2 below). This led to an increase in the number of external applications made, up from 10 submitted applications in 2013/14-2015/16 to 33 from 2016/17 and onwards. The Department's **mean success rate of 50%** since the academic year of 2016/17 now compares favourably to a UK-wide success rate across funders and disciplines which is typically below 30%—this being evidence that the applications being submitted are of a higher quality and therefore that the mechanisms being put in place are beginning to bear fruit.

This increased success has also translated into **more research income**, corresponding to **over a ten-fold increase in combined Award Value** for the second half of the REF period (£22,784 for grants starting Aug 1 2013 to Feb 1 2017 compared to £306,973 for grants starting from Feb 2 2017 to July 31 2020). In this period, members of staff have successfully applied for external funding from a wide range of sources, including the **Wellcome Trust** (*Encountering Madness* [101311-17: £177,233]; *Life and Death in Early Modern Philosophy* [201324/Z/16/Z: £4,871]); the **Leverhulme Trust** (*Learning from Fiction: A Philosophical and Psychological Study* [RPG-2017-365:£83,773]; *Evidence and Perceptions in the Post-Brexit Immigration Debate* {RPG-2017-127: £11,643}), the **Arts and Humanities Research Council** (*The Place of High Culture in Modern Life* [PLA08/103953-10: £15,958]), **British Society of Aesthetics** (*Aesthetic Emotions* [PLR00 PLA10 31: £9,908]), and **British Academy** (*Narrative Immersion as an Attentional Phenomenon* [NMG2R2\100117: £9,420]).

3.2. Organizational Infrastructure

The **current procedure for grant applications** in the Department is for individual staff members to initially discuss any grant application plans with the **Research Lead**, who will offer advice as well as bring in the **Research Office** to coordinate any queries relating to suitable

fundamentals and start the costing. The Research Lead will then read and comment on a subsequent draft application, which at the point of a final draft will as a matter of School policy also be read by two further staff members—either internal or external to the Department, depending on the subject matter—by way of **peer review**.

Moreover, the Department's **strategic research plan**, which includes continuously updated plans for grant capture, is reviewed at school level in an annual research review with the Dean of the School and Assistant Dean for Research. In the most recent review, the Department committed to building on its recent success in increased grant capture (see 3.1) through the continued and strategic use of (a) internal funds at departmental, School and College level as seed funding for pilot and proof-of-concept projects, to be leveraged towards larger grant applications; and (b) study leave enabling staff members to complete projects unencumbered by teaching and administration.

The Department's research is also informally integrated with College Institutes and the School of Advanced Study (SAS) at the University of London. For example, the Department has **extensive collaboration with SAS through the Institute of Philosophy**, including through the Practical, the Political and the Ethical Seminar Series; the Logic, Epistemology and Metaphysics Seminar Series; and the Bloomsbury Forecasting Forum. The Department is also represented on the steering group of the **Birkbeck Institute of Humanities** (Huddleston), and has organised several workshops with the support of BIH, including an interdisciplinary workshop at Birkbeck with Lisa Gunther on her book, *Solitary Confinement*, and with Jonathan Lear on his book *Wisdom won from Illness* (James and Lillehammer). The Department has also organised events jointly with the **Birkbeck Institute of the Moving Image** through the running of the London Aesthetics Forum (Friend, Huddleston, and Grzankowski).

3.3. Facilities

The Department is immediately opposite the Senate House, which houses the School of Advanced Studies (including the Institute of Philosophy) and the University of London's central library, and is also where the Aristotelian Society meetings are held. The Department is a 10-minute walk from the British Library, and a short walk from the Royal Institute of Philosophy and several of the other University of London's colleges, with UCL, SOAS, LSE, and King's College London being particularly close.

All full-time members of staff have an office in the main Department building in 30 Russell Square, or in the School's main building in 26 Russell Square. All part-time staff have access to shared office space. A student work room with study and IT facilities, located in 26 Russell Square, is provided by the School for use by postgraduate research students. Additionally, the School buildings in Russell Square include a number of dedicated meeting rooms for the use of seminars and reading groups, including the Department's Ruby Meager Library, which is located in 30 Russell Square.

The Philosophy Department is located a 2-minute walk from Birkbeck's main building and library on Malet Street. The library is further increasing its number of study spaces and improving teaching facilities for academic skills workshops, as part of Birkbeck's Estates strategy for the College's 200th Anniversary in 2023, with £1.3 million spent on this project so far.

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

4.1. Research Networks and Collaborations

During the REF period, the Department has had **research collaborations** with the departments of **philosophy** at DePauw University, New University of Lisbon, New York University, Oslo University (Centre for the Study of Mind in Nature), Salzburg University, Stockholm University, UNAM in Mexico City, University of Agder, University of Bergen, University of Geneva, University of Glasgow, University of Groningen, and University of York; the departments of **psychology** at University of Kent, University of Pennsylvania, and York University, Canada; the department of **bioethics** at the National Institutes of Health, Washington DC; the department of **social anthropology** at Cambridge University; and the institute for **linguistics** at Goethe University, Frankfurt; and **political and policy research institutes** the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR), and the Policy Unit at King's College London

Members in the Department also have **extensive research networks** both within and outside of academia, partly through organising a number of conferences and other research events, including the bi-annual **Edgington Lectures**, the Annual Conference of the **British Society of Aesthetics** (2019), the **Birkbeck Nietzsche seminar**, the annual **Freedom and Autonomy Conference**, the annual conference of the **International Society of Nietzsche Studies** (2018 at Senate House and 2019 at Brown), the **Logic, Epistemology and Metaphysics Forum** at the Institute of Philosophy, the **London Aesthetics Forum**, the **London Post-Kantian Seminar**, the **London Spinoza Circle**, the **London Cartesian Circle**, the **London Mind Group**, the **Bloomsbury Forecasting Forum**, **The Practical, The Political, The Ethical seminar series** at the Institute of Philosophy, and **Reviving Rationalism: A Celebration of the work of Keith Hossack** (2016).

Moreover, as part of a new, College-level partnership between Birkbeck and **New York University**, the Department has a series of (post-pandemic) two-day conferences planned with NYU's Department of Philosophy, alternating between London and New York, with travel funding for faculty and PhD students. This includes a conference dedicated to the philosophy of Aristotle, bringing together researchers from Birkbeck, NYU, King's College London, and University College London that has been postponed from July 2020 because of COVID-19.

4.2. Wider Contributions to the Economy and Society

The Department's engagement with non-academic partners proceeds partly through **impact activities**, already discussed in Section 1.4 and 1.5, and partly through **more general forms of stakeholder and public engagement**. For example:

With regard to **commercial entities**, Smith has conducted extensive consultancy work for the food and drink industry, while Ahlstrom-Vij, Northcott, and Steinberger's have engaged and built links with industry through the Bloomsbury Forecasting Forum, and Ahlstrom-Vij has engaged in consultancy for prediction market companies. In terms of **educational (non-academic) partners**, Lillehammer, Constantinescu, Garnett, Gemes, James, Huddleston, and Steinberger have engaged with schools through AS-level conferences and more generally with schools in the London region.

With regard to **governmental and policy**, Rashed has offered expert evidence to the Department of Health and delivered webinars for health practitioners through the non-profit organisation Mad in America, while Ahlstrom-Vij has been working with the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR), where he is Research Fellow, on how people process

evidence of the economic impact of immigration through the lens of different conceptions of moral deservingness. He has been invited to present his work in a number of academic settings (e.g., Georgetown, Oxford, Cambridge, and St Andrews) as well as in non-academic settings.

Members of the Department have also engaged in **more general engagement with the public**. For example, Friend gave a talk, 'Fictional Portraits', at the Symposium on Portraiture at the National Portrait Gallery in 2018, with a general audience, and also co-organised a day-long event on 'Immersion in Film' open to the public in 2018, followed by a London Aesthetics Forum Workshop in the morning and a Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image (BIMI) film screening and round-table in the afternoon. Connell and Lillehammer have volunteered at the weekly philosophy seminars at the Stuart Low Trust, which provides out of hours community activities in north London focusing on arts, nature, mental health and well being.

4.3. Contributions to the Sustainability of the Discipline

Members of the Department also hold, or have held, a number of **leadership roles** within learned societies and associations. James served as President of the **Aristotelian Society** (2015-16), President of **European Society for Early Modern Philosophy**, a Committee Member for the **Sanders Prize in the History of Philosophy**, Executive Board Member at the **Society for the Study of the Emotions** and Member of the Management Committee at the **British Society for the History of Philosophy**. Friend is President of the **British Society of Aesthetics** (previously Vice President). Constantinescu has served as Advisor at the **British Society for Ethical Theory**. Lillehammer has served as Chair of the **Jacobsen Committee** in the University of London (2015-17). Huddleston is a Trustee of the **British Society of Aesthetics**, Executive Committee Member and Treasurer, **Royal Musical Association Music and Philosophy Study Group** and a Member of the Advisory Board for the **Alpine Fellowship**. Patterson is an Elected Member of the Council of the **Royal Institute of Philosophy**. Northcott is Honorary Secretary for the **British Society for the Philosophy of Science** and Member of the Advisory Board for the **Centre for the Philosophy of Natural and Social Sciences** (CPNSS), at The London School of Economics. Connell is a Member of the Management Committee of the **British Society for the History of Philosophy**.

Additionally, members of the Department either hold, or have held, a number of **editorial roles**. James is a Member of the Editorial Board at **Journal of Modern Philosophy**, a Member of the Editorial Board at the **Journal of the History of Philosophy**, and a Member of the Editorial Board at **Essays in Philosophy**. She has also been a Member of the Editorial Board for **Oxford Studies in the History of Philosophy**, Member of the Editorial Board for the **History of Philosophy Quarterly**, and Member of the Editorial Committee of **The European Journal of Philosophy**. Patterson was an Editor for **Mind & Language** until 2019. Friend is an Associate Editor of **Analysis**. Lillehammer is a Member of the Editorial Board for **Journal of Moral Philosophy** and Section Editor for **Reproductive Biomedicine & Society Online**. Constantinescu has been Area Editor at **The Journal of Ethics**. Friend is a Member of the Editorial Board of **The British Journal of Aesthetics**. Gemes is a Member of the Editorial Board at the **Journal of Nietzsche Studies**. Northcott served as Co-editor for the **Cambridge University Press Elements series in Philosophy of Science** (2018-20). Huddleston is Reviews Editor and Editorial Committee Member for **European Journal of Philosophy**, an Area Editor at **Ergo** and a Member of the Editorial Board at **The British Journal for the History of Philosophy**. Connell is a Member of the Editorial Board at **The British Journal for the History of Philosophy**. Steinberger is a Panel Member at **Thought: A Philosophical Journal**.

Members of the Department have also given **a large number of invited talks** during the REF period, in the **UK** (Cambridge, Durham, Edinburgh, Essex, Glasgow, Kent, Kings' College London, London School of Economics, Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, Nottingham, Oxford, Queen Mary University of London, Royal College of Psychiatry, Southampton, St Andrews, University College London, University of East Anglia, and Warwick); in other parts of **Europe** (Antwerp, Athens, Bergen, Bielefeld, Bologna, Bonn, Central European University, Cerisy-la-Salle, Clermont-Auvergne, Cologne, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Erlangen, Fribourg, Geneva, Goethe University, Groningen, Hamburg, Helsinki, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Institut d'Études Avancées, Institut Jean Nicod, Stockholm's Institute of Future Studies, Prague's Institute of Philosophy, Leipzig, Łódź, Lorraine, Lund, Oslo, Pardubice, Paris 1 - Sorbonne-Pantheon, Patras, Philipps-Universität, Rethymno University, Rome, Salamanca, San Sebastian, Scuola Universitaria Superiore IUSS Pavia, Sorbonne, Tübingen, Utrecht, Valencia, Venice, Vienna, and Warsaw, Spanish Society for Analytic Philosophy); in **North America** (Boston, Chicago, Columbia, Dalhousie, Georgetown, Johns Hopkins, Kansas City, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Princeton, Salt Lake City, UC Berkeley, UC Riverside, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Utah, Vancouver, Williams College, and Wisconsin, Madison); and **Asia, Australia, and Africa** (Pretoria, Queensland, Seoul National University, Sydney, and Yonsei University).

Finally, members of the Department have **examined a large number of PhD and MPhil dissertations** during the period, and for **more than 25 universities** in the UK and overseas. Among **UK universities** for which members of the Department have examined theses are King's College London, London School of Economics, Nottingham University, Open University, University of Bristol, University College London, University of Cambridge, University of Durham, University of Edinburgh, University of Kent, University of Leeds, University of Sheffield, University of Southampton, and Warwick University. Members of staff have also examined theses **overseas** at Australian National University (Australia), Central European University (Hungary), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (Germany), Institut Jean Nicod at Université Paris Sciences et Lettres (France), Seoul National University (South Korea), Temple University (USA), University of Groningen (The Netherlands), University of Antwerp (Belgium), University of Bologna (Italy), University of Ghent (Belgium), University of Granada (Spain), University of Leiden (The Netherlands), and University of Sydney (Australia).

4.5. Support for and Exemplars of Interdisciplinary Research

Interdisciplinary work and collaboration is at the heart of the Department's activities and continuing research strategy (see Section 1.2.2), as exemplified in this REF period of Friend's **part-experimental project**, 'Learning from Fiction'; Ahlstrom Vij's work with **policy researchers** in the National Institute of Economic and Social Research; Oxford's Centre on Migration, Policy, and Society, and Demos, and Rashed's work with **mental health professionals and activists** as part of his Career Development Fellowship. Further support for and development of interdisciplinary work continues into the next REF period, as exemplified by Ahlstrom-Vij, Northcott and Steinberger's affiliate membership of the **Centre for Cognition, Computation and Modelling** at Birkbeck.

4.7. Indicators of Wider Influence

During the REF period, one member of the Department was appointed as a **Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences**, in the US (Hornsby). Two members of the department were appointed as **Fellow of the British Academy** (Hornsby and James). One member of the Department was awarded a **Ronald Tress Prize**, celebrating excellence in research by early career academics (Steinberger). One member of the Department was

awarded the **Annual Essay Prize** from the **Centre for Philosophical Psychology** at the University of Antwerp (Grzankowski).

Additionally, members of the Department have held a number of **visiting roles and affiliations**, both in the UK and overseas. **Within the UK**, Ahlstrom-Vij has been a Research Fellow at the **National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR)**, London and a Research Associate at the **Centre for the Philosophy of Natural and Social Sciences (CPNSS)**, London School of Economics. Ahlstrom-Vij, Northcott and Steinberger have been Affiliate Members of the **Centre for Cognition, Computation and Modelling** in the Department of Psychological Sciences at Birkbeck. Gemes has been a Visiting Professor at the **New College of the Humanities (Gemes)**. **Overseas**, Edgington was the Carl G. Hempel Lecturer at **Princeton University**, in 2016. Friend has been Visiting Professor at **Uppsala University**. James has been Kohut Visiting Professor of Social Thought in the Committee of Social Thought and Visiting Fellow of the Neubauer Collegium at **University of Chicago**, Laurance S. Rockefeller Visiting Fellow, the Center for Human Values at **Princeton University** (2013-14), Associate Member in the Department of Comparative Thought and Literature, **Johns Hopkins University**, and a Scholar in Residence at **Washington and Lee University**. Hornsby was Townsend Visitor at **University of California, Berkeley** in 2014 and gave the Simon Lectures at **University of Toronto** in 2015. Friend has been a Visiting Professor at **Institut Jean-Nicod, Paris**. Ahlstrom-Vij has acted as Principal Research Consultant for **Dysrupt Labs** in Melbourne, Australia.

During the REF period the Department has contributed to **collaborative arrangements for PGR training** through cross-disciplinary activities funded by the **Birkbeck Graduate Research School** and the **CHASE Doctoral Training Partnership**. In addition, the Department's **Approaches to Philosophy Seminars** have used **Generic Skills funds** from Birkbeck to run a series of workshops between 2014 and 2019 in which staff from other institutions in the CHASE Consortium (East Anglia, Essex, Kent, Sussex and The Open University) and beyond (UCL, Warwick) have discussed questions of **philosophical research methods** and **intellectual traditions** with Birkbeck research students. Plans for the future include the consolidation and further development of such links.