

Institution: Newcastle University (NU)
Unit of Assessment: UoA26 – Modern Languages and Linguistics
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Our overarching goal is to foster impactful, interdisciplinary research with global reach undertaken in an environment that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). Our aim is not only to achieve academic excellence but to generate civil, environmental and societal benefits. ‘Languages in the Real World’ is, in fact, a cross-cutting principle unifying the Unit’s research and impact strategies.</p> <p><u>1a. Context and Structure</u></p> <p>As in REF 2014, Modern Languages and Linguistics research/impact at Newcastle (NU) is undertaken in 3 academic Schools within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HaSS): Modern Languages (SML); Education, Communication and Language Sciences (ECLS) and English Literature, Language and Linguistics (SELLL). All 3 are now led by women appointed since 2014. There has been significant new investment in equipment, facilities and staff since the last REF cycle.</p> <p>Staffing has increased from 49.97FTE Category A eligible staff to 69.4FTE (producing 324 outputs). Additional, open-ended FT posts have been created, including a Research Support Scientist (Ackerman) who co-directs the revamped Linguistics Laboratory (LingLab). The post addresses increased demand for laboratory-based methodologies, arising from the introduction of a cross-NU Research Group in Cognitive Linguistics that enables new inter-disciplinary collaborations. LingLab is accessible to staff and students across the 3 Schools and was significantly enhanced in 2020-2021 by a UKRI World-Class Science Laboratories award. Colleagues have been promoted to senior strategic roles within HaSS. Corrigan was appointed to the new post of Director of Research in Linguistics (DoRL) in 2018 and Harkness became HaSS Pro-Vice Chancellor (PVC) in the same year. We have made significant progress enhancing the diversity and gender balance of our staff team (particularly the number of female FTEs at the rank of Personal Chair (40%)). These positive trends arise from our strong EDI commitments (REF5a, §3.4).</p> <p>In this period, the UoA’s research portfolio improved dramatically too. Award spend has increased by over £1.6M in this REF cycle, with new awards topping the £6.2M mark. The Unit has secured membership of 4 doctoral training partnerships (3 national and 1 international) and members have supervised 206 PhD projects to completion since 2014.</p> <p>The Unit shares interests in language families spanning the globe, with particular strengths in East and South Asian, European, Middle Eastern and South American languages and cultures. Researchers explore questions within historical, philosophical, political and sociocultural studies as well as in contemporary literature, theory and thought, visual cultures, and translating and interpreting. Our capability in linguistics ranges from sociolinguistics and speech and language sciences to applied, descriptive, formal and historical linguistics. Our members have produced research and impact on topics as diverse as Cultures of Memory, Postcolonial Writing, Documentary Film and Film Spectatorship, as well as in subdisciplines of language study such as Acquisition and Development, Applied Linguistics and Communication, Cognition and Evolution, Variation and Change. Some research areas - such as Ageing and Gender - are pursued collaboratively in both Modern Languages and Linguistics. Projects in this cycle reflect new posts in Environmental and Urban Humanities consistent with our ambition to combine research and impact strategies that are both SHAPE- and STEM-oriented.</p> <p>This interdisciplinary approach is underpinned by active engagement with NU’s research structures (Centres, ECR Fellowships and Institutes (REF5a, §§2.2.3/3.2.4); Academies (REF5a, §2.2.5)). The University’s 2018 Vision and Strategy goals (REF5a, §2) embedded support for</p>

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

interdisciplinary research through two key programmes: (i) NU Centres of Research Excellence (NUCoREs, REF5a §§2.21/2.2.2) and (ii) NU University Academic Track (NUAcT) Postdoctoral Fellowships (REF5a §3.2.4). NUCoREs replace discipline-specific research hubs (e.g. Centre for Research in Language and Linguistics) with bottom-up, cross-faculty groupings where UoA26 colleagues are extremely active. Corrigan, Jordan, Jein and Riches are executive members of the Heritage, Ageing Inequalities, Cities and Transformative Neuroscience NUCoREs, respectively. 5 UoA colleagues are developing NU's Childhood and Youth NUCoRE (currently pending approval). Utilising the UoA's existing strengths in transdisciplinary research, we are likewise currently spearheading an NU-wide NUCoRE in Human Communication. We lead the transdisciplinary Centre for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS), representing scholarship in HaSS, the Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering, the School of Biomedical Sciences and the Faculty of Medical Sciences. More than 30 researchers are associate members and there are 10 visiting scholars from as far afield as Argentina and New Zealand. These clusters, alongside the networking and financial support offered by our cross-Faculty research institutes and academies, facilitate multidisciplinary approaches to important research questions both within our own disciplines and in others.

We see this increasingly interdisciplinary, collaborative landscape not only as playing to the research strengths of our configuration across 3 Schools but also as key to the longer-term sustainability of our funding strategy. It combines with our efforts to diversify the portfolio of funding bodies from which we secure awards. Thus, in addition to support e.g. from the EU (Catalá-Carrasco, Satar & Seedhouse, Young-Scholten), ERC (Holmberg) or UKRI (Austin, Corrigan, Cuskley, Jein, Jones, Yu, Stringer), there have been awards from the National Institute for Health Research (Stringer) and charitable institutions such as the British Academy (Meekings), Leverhulme Trust (MacKenzie) and Nuffield Foundation (Law). Similarly, strategies for securing international funding are pursued such as the GCRF award made to Khattab and McKean in January 2020.

1b. Research Objectives (2014-2020)

Table 1 reviews our objectives from REF 2014, describes the actions taken since and gives examples of outcomes.

Objective	Actions	Outcomes
Prioritise publishing in outlets likely to give greatest visibility and impact.	Mentoring; Annual Personal Research Planning (PRP) Meetings (§2c); Facilitating Open Access (OA) compliant outputs and data repositories (§§1e/4a).	Outputs in prestige outlets have grown from an estimate of 20% to 35%; Publication via both Gold and Green OA routes; OA resources.
Raise external grant bid success rates.	Establishing a UoA26 Peer Review College; Increasing levels of involvement in collaborative research projects and/or international networks (§§2c/3a/4a/4b).	Award spend risen by £1.6M; Widescale participation in/leading NUCoREs and projects with international partners.
Enhance professional development of ECRs.	Mentoring during probation period and beyond; Annual PRPs; Targeted CPD opportunities (e.g. 'Getting those Grants') (§2c).	Each FTE Category A eligible staff member (including ECRs) has published, on average, 5 outputs; Yu availed of this targeted

		training, leading to UKRI funding (£804,058); Competitive external awards secured by colleagues of both genders and at all career stages.
Improve recruitment, development and training of PGRs. Further enhance cross-school supervision.	Collaborative bids for Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTP)/ Studentships from major funders (§2d); Staff recruitment in areas creating opportunities for cross-NU supervision (see §2b); Infrastructure improvements (§3c).	Membership of 4 DTPs (2 new and 2 renewals); 27 studentships; New posts; Award from UKRI World-Class Science Laboratories Scheme.
Attain community impact of our research.	Developing a pipeline of impact projects (§1d/§2c/§4b); Mentoring; Appointing Impact Directors; Targeted training; NU/external financial support (§§1d/2c/3b); New external partnerships (§4a); Participation in NU's Policy Academy (§2c).	Successes include: Language Acts and Social Inclusion ; Aphasia Research User Group ; Chinese Independent Film Archive ; Du (as ECR) and Hall became Policy Academy Fellows.

Table 1. REF2014 Objectives, Actions, Outcomes

Our outcomes demonstrating the efficacy of strategies identified in Table 1, coupled with new appointments, opportunities and challenges, has enabled us to shape, extend and adapt aspects of our research and impact vision since 2014 by implementing these 6 strategies:

- Robust succession planning alongside new posts from diverse applicant pools that strengthened our ability to direct research and impact themes in which we already had expertise while further expanding our interdisciplinary horizons (§2b).
- Enhancing measures for Open Access and integrity in research and impact planning (§1e).
- Equally valuing and enabling externally funded projects of differing complexity/duration and led either by lone scholars or teams (§3a).
- Adopting 'Citizen' and 'Global Systems' Science models for ethically engaging with human participants (§§1d/1e).
- Building meaningful research and impact strategic partnerships with other HEIs and external organizations in the UK and abroad (§§1d/4a/4b).
- Recruiting diverse international as well as home applicants for our doctoral training programmes so as to further internationalize and balance the demographic profile of our PGR cohorts (§2d).

1c. Research Objectives (2021-2026)

Our overarching goals are to:

- Develop new research of world-leading quality within the sub-disciplines of Modern Languages and Linguistics in which we already have considerable research power (e.g. Contemporary literature, theory and thought, experimental linguistics, language acquisition).
- Take advantage of our research range and exploit the opportunities this brings to cross SHAPE-STEM disciplinary boundaries (e.g. leading or developing NUCoREs in Ageing Inequalities, Childhood and Youth, Cities, Heritage, Human Communication and Transformative Neuroscience).
- Facilitate sustainable, impactful research with global reach that brings tangible benefits beyond the academy responding to 5 national and international priorities: (i) Global migration crises and the new language ecologies they generate; (ii) Human and linguistic rights abuses; (iii) Urban regeneration; (iv) Social exclusion of marginalized communities (older people, children, those requiring speech and language therapy, refugees and asylum seekers); (v) Environmental degradation and precarity (§4b).
- Create an environment that champions accessibility, diversity, inclusion and integrity while improving aspects of our practices where these principles have not yet been fully realised (§§2a/2d/2f).
- Secure investment from NU and externally for improved estate space and more advanced equipment for LingLab (e.g. additional sound booth installation).
- Build contingencies into our planning of high-quality research, impact and student projects which will ameliorate the consequences of world events such as Brexit, the economic downturn and the COVID-19 pandemic (§§2d/2f/3a).

1d. Impact Objectives

'Languages in the Real World' is an enduring mission for the UoA. Our strategies for pursuing this goal in our underpinning research and its tangible benefits are outlined in §1b. These have led to particular strengths in impacts related to:

- Creativity, culture and society
- Learning, participation and understanding
- Environment, health, social welfare and well-being
- Public policy, law and services

The Unit's impact leadership team (3 Directors of Impact and DoRL) ensures that the research plans of staff/PGRs have significance and reach by adopting inclusive 'Citizen' and 'Global Systems Science' models. Researcher partnership and engagement with individuals, communities, practitioners and policymakers at all stages of the research cycle are encouraged.

Our successes are linked to our expertise at embedding activities within key regional, national and international capacity-building initiatives with external partners. These range from the Alzheimer's Society (Young) and the National Centre for the Written Word (Cuskley) to consultancies with UK (Law) and foreign governments (Howard, R.). Such collaborations have been facilitated by internal and external grants as well as in-kind contributions from stakeholders, communities and institutions. **ICS26-5 Howard**, e.g., has been supported by Faculty funding (§3b) in addition to

successful applications to the Translating Cultures scheme (AHRC, 2014-2016) and Global Challenges Research Fund (2018-2019) (totalling £185,049).

As demonstrated by all 6 Impact Case Studies (ICS) selected, our research has impacts on a range of beneficiaries from wider publics to practitioners and from professional services to curators, educators and policymakers. A testament to our systematic, cross-UoA approach to impact is the fact that our ICSs are drawn from and led by each of our Schools. Our inherent interdisciplinarity and our strategies for mentoring impact projects led by both individuals and teams (comprising colleagues of different genders and career stages) gives us the capacity to generate ICSs with diverse leadership configurations. Thus, speech and language sciences projects represent our team-led research and impact, while the others are directed by individuals.

- **ICS26-2 Howard et al.** demonstrates collaborative impact, furthering work undertaken during previous REF cycles. The team includes a research professor (Howard, D.), a reader (Morris) and a senior lecturer (Webster (PI and a UoA graduate)). Their Comprehensive Aphasia Tests e.g. guides Speech and Language Therapists in cognitive neuropsychological approaches to the assessment and treatment of aphasia, becoming the assessment of choice for clinical use (translated into 24 languages).
- **ICS26-1 McKean et al.** has led to modifications of children's services that affect the life chances of youngsters at risk of poor language development globally. This has been achieved through changes in educational and health policy, professional practice and service delivery.
- **ICS26-3 Corrigan's** work on the complex relationships between language, migration and identity in Northern Ireland typifies the benefits arising from lone scholar research and impact work in SELLL. *From home to here* exemplifies the Unit's success at incubating projects within shorter time-scales (2014-).

This ICS aligns with other Unit-wide research strengths (especially language acquisition and sociolinguistics). 3 projects from SML showcase the impacts generated from other sub-disciplines (archival research and educational/language policies).

- **ICS26-6 Müller** locates and re-purposes rare ego-documents from youngsters representing their experiences of life in Nazi Germany. Like **ICS26-3 Corrigan**, this project secured tangible benefits for the education and heritage sectors especially.
- Young learners are also a central focus of **ICS26-4 Oliart** which demonstrates how 20th-century Peruvian education policies can become more inclusive, preventing drop-out rates for girls and improving teacher retention.
- **ICS26-5 Howard** was chosen to reinforce our expertise in post-colonialism, in the languages and cultures of South America and our partnerships with indigenous peoples in the region. This ICS highlights the key role played by Peruvian female leaders of civil society associations in triggering changes in public servants' practice in the cultural sector (thereby securing linguistic human rights).

Taken together, these ICS underscore our commitment to both understanding 'Languages in the Real World' and to leveraging this understanding for enabling real world benefits.

1e. Integrity and Open Access (OA)

Colleagues have been engaged in FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) projects since the 2000s. To progress towards an open research environment (thereby maximising the visibility of our research (Table 1, §1b) while aligning with the Concordats on Open Research Data and Research Integrity (REF5a, §§2.3.2-2.3.3)), there are UoA strategies for sharing/managing our research data while ensuring that it is collected according to appropriate

ethical, legal and professional frameworks. All our Schools have a trained Ethics Convenor, reporting to a Faculty Ethics Committee and liaising with NU's Intellectual Property and Legal Services team. UoA colleagues have played key leadership roles in School and Faculty level Ethics Committees (Al-Samdani, Corrigan, Jordan, Pichler and Young-Scholten), guaranteeing that our research fits into NU-wide, UUK and UKRIO policies. The UoA's Research Support Scientist and DoRL collaborate with NU's Research Data Manager to disseminate information about the institution's Research Data Service, Data Repository and data management training. Wherever possible, outputs are shared in OA format (through Gold routes - e.g. [McKean et al. \(2015\)](#); [Levickis et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Heyne et al. \(2019\)](#) - and via Green routes utilising NU's own E-Prints Repository). White is a leading partner in the development of the OA UK [Bilingual Toddlers Online Assessment Tool](#). Similarly, [Reilly et al. \(2018\)](#) documents the development of CLARE, the *Child Language Repository*, funded by the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (Law/Levickis). Reproducibility is another important principle that the UoA embraces. Cuskley (2019) publishes not only results but [source code data](#), granting free access to future researchers.

Responding to COVID-19 restrictions, the DoRL is leading a FAIR project in collaboration with the HaSS Research Institutes and Head of Collections Management and Digital Library Services. 'Raiders of the Lost Archive' (begun July 2020) will establish ethical procedures for repurposing legacy data. The immediate objective is to delimit the impacts on research reliant on fieldwork/archives. Longer-term, this initiative will raise awareness of data sharing opportunities and challenges already experienced by UoA staff who have successfully created the research resources above, as well as OA educational materials from impact projects led by Müller, Oliart, Seedhouse and Young-Scholten (§§4a/4b). The *Diachronic Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English* developed by Corrigan (PI) and Mearns is another example (underpinning an ICS in REF 2014 and AHRC-funded from 2000). They have been at the forefront of creating best-practice access protocols for digitizing and sustaining legacy data with tangible benefits. Philip Durkin notes that the *Oxford English Dictionary* "has been a grateful recipient", using the database to "help inform its research into the history of words, phrases, and senses in English."

These OA collaborations and impacts have not only raised awareness within the UoA of the importance of FAIR practices, they have catalysed the development of collective understanding and UoA protocols on ethics, intellectual property and research integrity.

Looking ahead, and in consultation with the Dean of Postgraduate Studies and the Directors of our Doctoral Training Consortia, we intend developing cross-institutional research supervisor CPD workshops on OA, ethics and research integrity tied to our exemplar 'Raiders of the Lost Archive' and FAIR datasets.

2. People

2a. Staffing

Figure 1 captures Category A/B staff distribution at the REF2021 Census date by School, while demonstrating the considerable investment overall in Category A recruitment since 2014 (a rise of 39%), reflecting NU's strategy of supporting UoA's with world-leading potential. 2 key changes involve internal appointments to senior HaSS Faculty positions (see §1a).

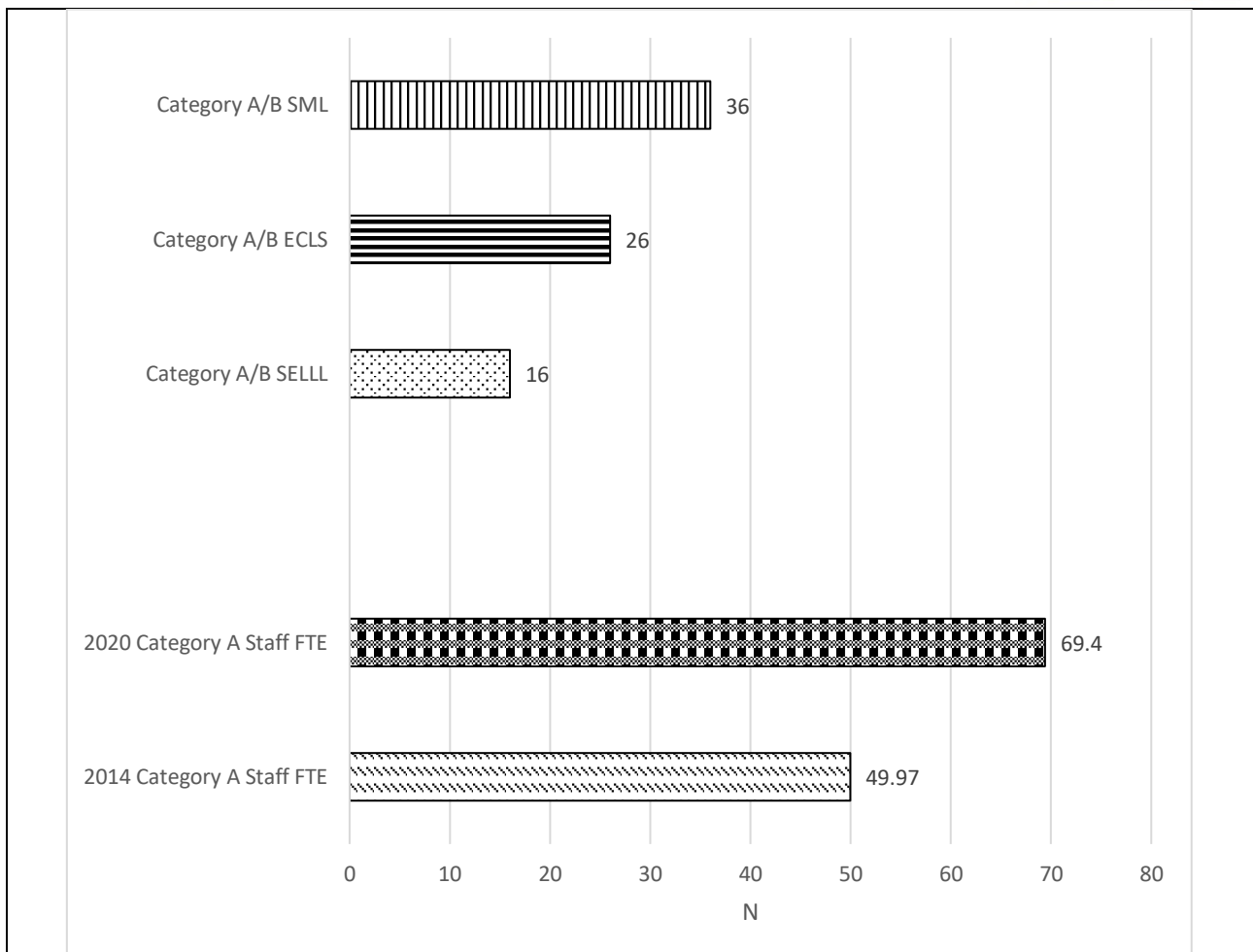


Figure 1. Category A/B Staffing levels by FTE and School

Further appointments recognised the need to broaden the base of researchers (Figure 2). Hence, 40% of staff are in Grade F/G posts (Lecturers/Research Associates) (REF5a, §§3.4.3-3.4.4). This career stage balance evidences a sustainable research environment because these staff are either ECRs in the strict REF sense or their career began just prior to or immediately after 2014. They include staff funded by prestigious British Academy, Marie Skłodowska-Curie and Leverhulme Trust EC Fellowships. Our income since 2014 has permitted the appointment of more Research Associates (RAs) than previously (28). They fulfilled key roles on collaborative projects funded by research councils, charities and government departments. The balance between short-term and open-ended appointments among Category A eligible staff, however, continues to favour the latter (e.g. just 7 fixed-term appointments between 2013-2019). Indeed, several fixed-term RA staff were retained on open-ended contracts (i.e. Al-Tamimi, Ackerman, Ganassin, Mearns, Schartner) whilst others secured posts elsewhere. Thorburn has a permanent position at the University of Lausanne while Levickis was appointed to the University of Melbourne. The Unit has benefited too from investment in a prestigious and highly competitive NU Academic Track (NUAcT) ECR Fellowship (REF5a, §3.2.4). In 2020, SML's Gilbert took up her NUAcT tenure-track appointment (one of just 20 across NU), bringing new expertise on Rwandan genocide and extending interdisciplinary opportunities.

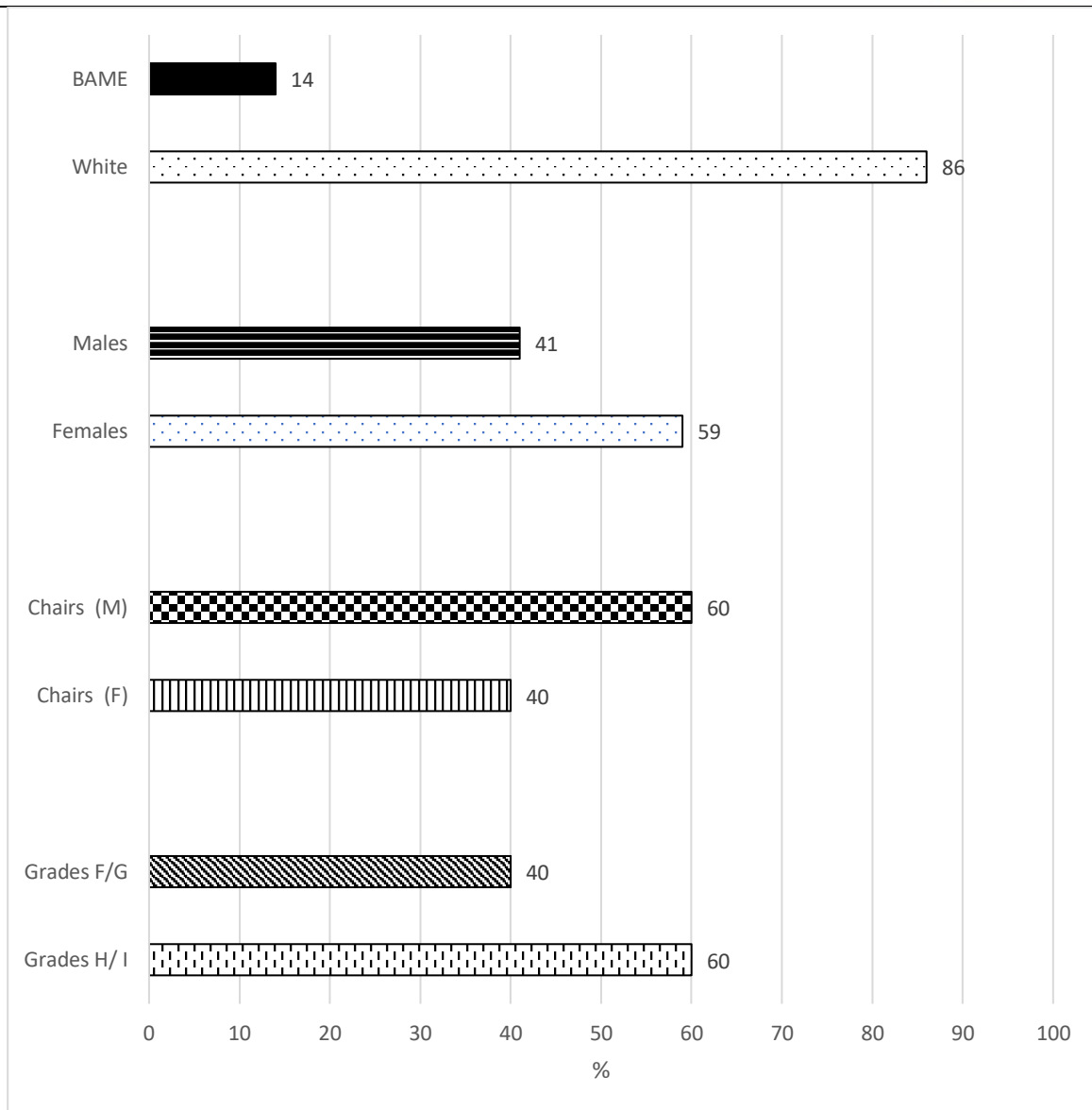


Figure 2. Category A Staff Diversity

Figure 2 additionally shows a reasonable balance between male (41%) and female (59%) staff, if not between colleagues identifying as BAME (14%) *versus* those who claim White British/Irish heritages (86%). Although our BAME profile is 5% above the [2020 national average for non-SET subjects](#), this remains an area of our staffing where our EDI principles have not yet been fully realised. Key to improving our ratio here, are recruitment practices and the NUAcT scheme because 10-15% of awards are reserved for BAME groups. The Unit is a sector leader for gender equality. 40% of our Professors are women (10% above NU and 15% higher than Russell Group averages) (REF5a, §3.4.3). We nevertheless remain ambitious for further development here to better reflect the UoA’s overall gender profile. In contrast to NU’s average of 41% Heads of School being female, all of ours are (Morris (T&R), Robinson (UoA27) (T&R) and Wilczynski (T&S) (REF5a, §3.4.3).

2b. Staff Recruitment Policies

The Unit has implemented a robust, mixed ecology, succession planning policy. Open-ended replacements for retired colleagues have been secured (filled by ECRs primarily but MCRs too). For instance, Whaley (SELLL) and Miller (ECLS) have been succeeded by Mearns and White, respectively.

In addition to balancing/broadening our demographic base and ensuring sustainability, our recruitment strategy from 2014-2020 was designed to develop interdisciplinary capacity and new areas of research while consolidating core strengths in:

- Intercultural/Professional Communication
- Latin-American/Portuguese
- Translation Studies
- Child Language
- Clinical Linguistics
- Phonetics/Phonology
- Sociolinguistics

Fernandez and Henry-Tierney were recruited to augment Translation Studies, while Du's appointment allowed us to expand provision in Translation and Interpreting. Fehimović's profile broadened our expertise in Latin-American and Film studies and further boosted interdisciplinary activity (via CLACS, §1a). More recently, Da Silva Beleza Correia Pinto was recruited (originally University of New Hampshire) to enhance our research in Portuguese. All these Grade F/G staff were appointed on open-ended contracts.

Senior replacement, permanent appointments include Harkness (French) (from Queen's University, Belfast), first appointed as Head of School (then HaSS PVC). Jordan (formerly Queen Mary, University of London) and Malkmus (originally Ohio State) were recruited to French and German, respectively. They all bolster research leadership and raise our profile in existing areas (French Literature/Visual Culture; Women's Writing; German Literature and Intellectual History) alongside emerging cross-faculty ones (Ageing; the Anthropocene).

Corrigan's promotion to a faculty position led to a new permanent ECR replacement post in Sociolinguistics within SELLL. Recruiting Duncan to this additionally improved our interdisciplinary capabilities with respect to the Cities NUCoRE, as did Jein's appointment to SML (from an open-ended contract at Bangor).

The new Cognitive Linguistics Research Group formed by appointing Ackerman (ECR), Cuskley, Smith (ECR), Turnbull, White and Woods further enhanced our interdisciplinarity. Three of them were recruited from postdoctoral fellowships (at Edinburgh and NU). The others were attracted to the Unit from permanent T&R contracts elsewhere (Hawai'i at Mānoa, Huddersfield and Plymouth). Their profiles augment our collective, cross-school expertise in quantitative and experimental methodologies. This new research cluster enables further collaboration with the Centre for Behaviour and Evolution and the National Innovation Centres for *Ageing* and *Data* (REF5a, §2.2.4) as well as in cognitive science, computing, psychology and neuroscience.

There is good evidence (new external partnerships, networks, improved grant capture and a more diverse funding portfolio) that all these appointments are enriching the UoA and its sub-disciplines. They enhanced opportunities for collaboration within and beyond Modern Languages and Linguistics via NUCoREs and have been a springboard for driving our research and impact in new and exciting directions.

2c. Strategies for Staff Retention and Development

All staff, irrespective of career stage or contract type, are considered full and equal community members (REF5a, §3.1.2) with identical access to mentoring/training and internal research funding opportunities both at UoA and Faculty levels. There are robust mechanisms for ensuring

representation. ECR appointees sit on EDI/Research/School Executive Committees. In 2014, following a successful external evaluation, NU was amongst the first 10 universities to retain the HR Excellence in Research Award for a further 4 years in recognition of our on-going commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (REF5a, §3.2.3). The UoA similarly implements these principles, including open recruitment practices, flexible working, workload allowance for professional development and relevant training for postdoctoral researchers and fellows (R&I). The HEI's commitment was reaffirmed in 2020 and includes e.g. a 10-day allowance for pursuing development opportunities for those on R&I contracts.

To improve promotion prospects as well as retention and development of more senior colleagues, formal mentoring and CPD opportunities (including those delivered by external agencies but NU-financed) are likewise available. Promotions in UoA26 during the cycle have ensured excellent research-active staff retention by rewarding performance (REF5a, §§3.1.2/3.2.7). 16 T&R staff became Senior Lecturers, 4 were awarded Readerships and 5 received Personal Chairs (2 males and 3 females). Senior colleagues mentor applicants during promotion applications. Staff at all career stages discuss their own strategic research, impact and training goals annually through formal mechanisms including Personal Development Review (PDR), Probation Review (where applicable) and research-specific Personal Research Planning (PRP) meetings. Informal UoA processes such as monthly drop-in surgeries offered by senior research leaders (including the DoRL) are available too. This culture of collegial support means that all staff offer and receive targeted advice. In addition, a UoA Peer Review College, launched in 2018 by the DoRL, provides reviews of funding proposals. New options at Faculty level further support grant writing application processes and complement Unit level training. 'PI Essentials' and similar workshops run by the Organisational Development Unit (ODU) (REF5a, §3.2.5) have underpinned successful outcomes. Training opportunities for impact projects include *Action for Impact* through [Northern Accelerator](#) (REF5a, §2.4.3) (places for which are confined to ECRs). UoA training is provided by our 3 Impact Directors and overseen by the DoRL. They are supported by the Faculty Research and Impact team who offer additional events such as: 'How to Run Effective Impact Projects in Schools' which was also specifically aimed at ECRs (including PGRs).

PRPs are prepared in consultation with School Directors of Research. PDRs appraise staff achievements against agreed objectives and consider their training and other development needs. These are an important tool for transferring ECRs onto open-ended contracts at the end of probation. This period (with reduced workload) provides CPD opportunities such as the *Faculty Futures* programme and *Principal Investigator Development* training. There are development options too for more senior staff such as the NU Professors' Induction training, facilitating HEI leader networking. Regular 1-1 research mentoring is offered for those who have just completed onerous administrative roles and require support setting new research and impact agendas. 5 senior colleagues have pursued development opportunities such as the *Academic Leaders' Programme* initiative and 1-1 academic leadership coaching. Participants have built successful academic careers as appropriate for their grade alongside enhancing their understanding of research strategy and institutional strategy/operations/policies. In addition, there are 4 NU Academies supporting CPD in Enterprise, Global Challenges, Skills and Policy (REF5a, §2.2.5): Hall and Du e.g. benefited from becoming Policy Academy Fellows in 2018 and 2019, respectively. The DoRL has also initiated a wide range of UoA-training to meet our emerging needs and ambitions such as 'All You Ever Wanted To Know About Impact But Were Afraid To Ask' (5th March 2019). The event (to which ECRs were specifically invited) included critical friend reviewing of potential ICSs from across the Unit.

During this REF cycle, staff research and impact goals have been effectively supported by the instantiation of Workload Allocation Models (WAM). An extra 150 hours are allocated to ECRs so that they can meet research commitments while settling into new teaching/administrative roles and undertaking the Certificate in Advanced Studies in Academic Practice (an additional 75 hours) alongside the research training identified above. WAM support is complemented by sabbatical policies providing regular leave from all duties (bar PGR supervision). Sabbatical leave is possible every 6-7 semesters and 72 have been granted in this cycle to Category A eligible staff. External

Fellowship funding has supported further research leave which is not counted against internal rotas, e.g. Corrigan (AHRC Research Leadership), Cuskley (British Academy), Jein (AHRC EC Research Leadership) and Al-Tamimi/MacKenzie/Müller (Leverhulme Trust). 5 staff on T&S contracts have been awarded sabbaticals, leading e.g. to the publication of research-led textbooks. Innovation Knowledge Transfer sabbaticals for facilitating exchanges between academia and business, industry, public or third sector bodies have recently been agreed with Faculty to capitalize on recent events hosted by the UoA such as the UK Government International Office Policy Forum. We see this route as an important future mechanism not only to enhance our 'Languages in the Real World' vision but to give us a competitive edge for Innovate UK Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.

Evidence of the effectiveness of the WAM and sabbatical leave policies when coupled with the training opportunities undertaken by staff at all career stages and on diverse contract types includes: New skills which have furthered individual ambitions for leadership roles and progressing research or impact plans; The marked rise in research income awarded and an increased volume of outstanding publications produced by researchers at all career stages (Figure 4, §2f); The number of Category A staff who have been retained or promoted, or have become PIs or Co-Is on externally funded projects; The extent and diversity of collaborative networks established by individuals within academia and beyond (§4a).

2d. Student Researchers

Despite increasingly fierce global competition for PGRs and current recruitment challenges, we continue to boast very high numbers of both PhD students (106 registered in the current year alone) and graduates (206 since 2013, at an average rate of 25 completions per year).

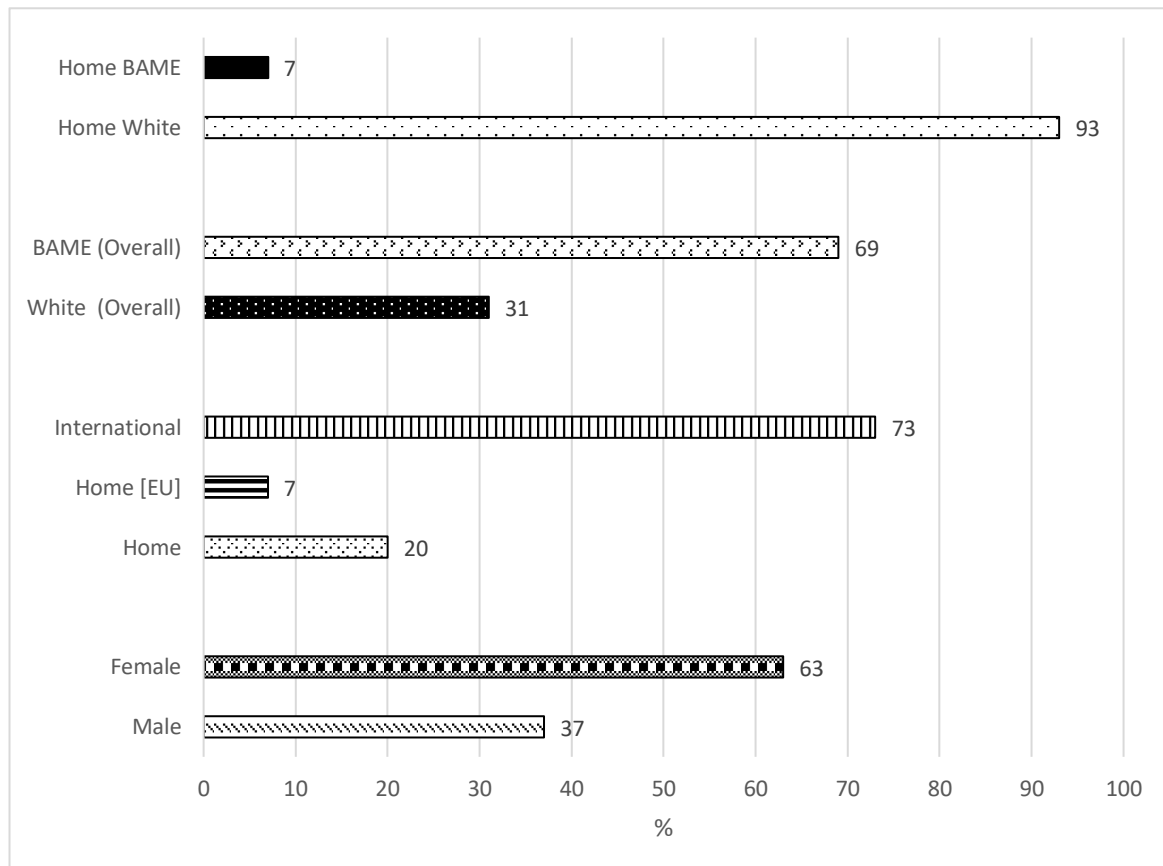


Figure 3. PhD Graduate Diversity, 2013-20

Figure 3 illustrates their diverse demographics. 69% of all graduates self-selected 'BAME' as the ethnic origin with which they identified. There were fewer male than female students (37% and 63%, respectively) while 80% of the cohort hailed from overseas (73% International and 7% EU). These figures, key to our long-term financial sustainability, similarly speak to the credibility of our reputation as an attractive, world-class, research-intensive Unit.

Students applied from Continental Europe, the Middle and Far East as well as South East Asia and Africa, many of whom are attracted by our expertise in these regions' languages and cultures. 84% of these International graduates were from BAME backgrounds. Our strategy for maintaining a balanced and diverse overseas profile safeguards against potential recruitment issues (e.g. global downturns, Brexit or UK Border Agency regulation changes).

The number of home students graduating from our PGR programmes is lower (just 41 out of our total). UK-domiciled students of White British/Irish ethnic backgrounds predominate (93%). This is an area of our intake we continue to address. Measures include schemes for persuading talented alumni to return as PGRs. We offer paid Vacation Studentship and Internship programmes at stages 2/3 UG level, followed by the opportunity to apply for bursaries tied to our Masters programmes (including one that is exclusively for black and minority ethnic applicants). Such strategies put alumni in an excellent position to win competitive awards via our doctoral training programmes. In addition, our BAME students include Syrian graduates whose experiences inspired NU's [Sanctuary Scholarships](#) (REF5a, §3.4.4) and whose own fees were waived post-conflict.

The UoA's commitment to providing an accessible environment is likewise evident in the range of disability and well-being support offered. Applications are made through an online portal. For applicants who notify the Graduate School of support required relating to a protected characteristic, visits are organised (including contact with Student Wellbeing). The quality of all our applicants is assured by instigating a rigorous admissions selection process (involving at least 2 academic selectors who adhere to NU's Guide to Equality at Work and Study). Each PGR application is also reviewed by the Graduate School and each School's PGR Director.

There are internal NU PhD studentship schemes for attracting talented students, particularly the Research Excellence Academy (REF5a, §3.2.2). It supported Trebacz e.g. who became a postdoctoral researcher on the ESRC-funded Khatib *et al.* GCRF project (§§1a/4a). The 4 external schemes from which the UoA specifically benefits (27 studentships being awarded in the cycle) are: (i) [AHRC Northern Bridge DTP](#) (NBDTP); (ii) [ESRC Northern Ireland and North-East DTP](#) (NINEDTP); (iii) [Centre for Behaviour and Evolution](#) (Leverhulme Trust); (iv) [International Doctorate for Experimental Approaches to Language and Brain](#) (IDEALAB). These consortia permit the UoA and our partners to develop an evolving suite of specialised courses, language study and placements with HEI and non-academic partners in the UK or internationally (e.g. Rowe's placement at California's Huntington Library or Varinelli's attendance at the [IES International Palaeography Summer School](#)). Such collaborations play an important role in fulfilling our 'Languages in the Real World' vision because they leverage partnerships with a wide range of external organisations. This bespoke training is supported either by the consortia further detailed below or - at NU/UoA level - by access to competitive internal funding schemes.

NBDTP above is a collaboration with Queen's University Belfast (QUB), Ulster University (UU) and 4 other HEIs in North-East England (N-E). The partnership extends our BGP1 programme (October 2019-September 2029). Annually, it offers 65-67 fully funded studentships to outstanding applicants. NINEDTP is a collaboration between QUB, UU and 4 other N-E HEIs (October 2017-September 2028), receiving £2 million annually. Both schemes include Collaborative Doctoral Awards strands, requiring an external, non-HEI partner and serving to generate new links e.g. with the British Library or NHS. The Leverhulme Trust is our most recent partnership (January 2020-December 2024). It is a collaboration between us, The Centre for Behaviour and Evolution, Experimental Northeast Cluster and Open Lab with Wallenberg on its Steering Committee. There are five, 4-year PhD studentships annually. They go to exceptional candidates destined to be the new generation of Behaviour Informatics researchers. We have supervised 9 PGR students to

Masters level already, so we expect that this will become another important route for enhancing interdisciplinarity (§1a). Furthering other objectives in Table 1, §1b, ECLS became a lead in IDEALAB (2016-). This outstanding, laboratory-based 3-year doctoral programme integrates interdisciplinary approaches to experimental and clinical aspects of language and the brain, increasing PGR diversity as well as international collaboration with HEIs and external partners. A shared curriculum and common research training programmes were developed, cumulating in a joint degree. IDEALAB currently involves 3 other full-partner universities (2 EU and 1 Oceania), leveraging long-standing collaborative relationships and the member institutions' research power. It also involves 16 associated industry partners (health, publishing and technology sectors).

Self-funded PGR students likewise gain from the research environment/training events sustained by these DTPs. Given our commitment to FAIR principles, consortia-funded Events (e.g. Summer Schools) are open to students outwith the doctoral partnerships and are shared across the UoA via video archives and [YouTube links](#) so everyone benefits.

There is joint supervision within Modern Languages and Linguistics, across Faculties and with additional external partners. E.g. Hall (SML) and Mearns (SELLL) supervise Buckley's PhD on the computational analysis of Norman French. Henry-Tierney co-supervised McCannon's doctorate 'How Else to See the Sky?' with colleagues in UoA27 who also collaborate with Jones on Varinelli's project exploring Italian translations of Shelley. Our cross-Faculty supervisions involve collaborations with: Business School/Natural and Environmental Sciences (Reichard); the School of Arts and Cultures (Alsamdani, Bracknell); BioSciences (Corkett-Beirne, Hoogland, Hughes, Keeble, Outhwaite) and Population Health Sciences Institutes (Kirkman, Willoughby). Staff expertise is sought after via other collaborative doctoral routes too such as establishing 'Co-Tutelle' MoUs between UoA colleagues and other HEIs globally. These partnerships expand our capacity to collaborate internationally at doctoral level and enrich NU students' experiences by further extending their research networks beyond the UK. Agreements range from Université de Paris (2014-2019) and the University of Bern (2018-) to the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (2019-) and the University of Rennes (2014).

Our capacity for transdisciplinary supervision is partly a reflection of the Unit's inherent interdisciplinarity given its constituency but it also stems from the fact that colleagues in SML are formally trained in both Arts and Humanities *and* Social Sciences (rare amongst similar departments nationally). The agility for PGR collaborations and strategic partner placements which this unique research environment generates enhances the student experience/their transferable skills and better prepares our graduates for a much wider range of career paths.

2e. Student Support and Monitoring

Desk space, IT and relevant specialised equipment for research students are provided as standard. Each School has a dedicated Professional Services team member facilitating the smooth operation of our diverse programmes. A comprehensive postgraduate researcher development programme is linked to NU's 'e-portfolio' system, aiding personal development planning by highlighting training and employability skills (REF3a, 3.2.2). We support the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Training (recognised by the AHRC/ESRC) as well as regular reading/writing groups. Students are assigned at least two supervisors (within HaSS, cross-faculty or inter-institution). ECR supervisors are teamed with experienced colleagues. Staff receive initial training and annual refreshers. One, formal supervisory meeting is mandatory monthly (likewise recorded on 'e-portfolio'). Student progress is closely monitored via project approval and Annual Progress Reviews managed by colleagues outwith the supervisory team, guaranteeing impartiality. Final reports are reviewed by all School Heads/Postgraduate Research Directors and the Faculty Dean of Postgraduate Studies (ensuring best practices). Students receive induction, mentoring and monitoring support to deliver aspects of our research-led UG programmes to broaden skill-sets and are encouraged to follow Postgraduate Certificate modules (e.g. 'Postgraduates Who Teach'), facilitating HEA Associate Fellow recognition. Faculty and PGR programmes annually provide over 700 hours of training, delivering theoretical/practical skills

relevant to diverse humanities/social science research and future careers. The UoA's PG Student Voice Committees provide fora for PGRs to shape the agenda for their facilities and training needs.

In addition to the bespoke training detailed in §2d, NU/Faculty level conferences (REF5a, §3.2.2), UoA workshops, seminars and 3 annual conferences are held for and led by postgraduates. They provide PGRs with reviewing, event organising and grant writing experiences as does their participation in coordinating NU research meetings. There are opportunities to contribute to and edit the Unit's e-journals. The *Working Papers in Linguistics* series began in 1993 and the *Annual Review of Education, Communication and Language Sciences* has reached its 17th annual volume. Students are also encouraged to present at international ECR conferences and to compete for participation at regular, academic meetings (abstracts accepted e.g. at DiPVac5, Melbourne; SFS2020, Bath; IASCL2020, Philadelphia).

Our PGRs are thus well-placed to secure publications in impactful, outlets (e.g. [Arantzeta et al.](#) (2019), [Childs](#) (2016), [Holmberg & Phimsawat](#) (2017), [Partridge](#) (2019) or [Yu & Wu](#) (2017)). Further evidence is provided by examples of academic first career destinations (see §4 for graduate successes in other professions). These include open-ended appointments at prestigious research institutions nationally and internationally (e.g. Al-Kendi/Ambusaidi (Sultan Qaboos, Oman); Balderson (Cambridge, UK); Bennison (Director of St. Andrew's Centre for Amerindian Studies); Childs (York University, UK); Jie Shi (Liaoning Normal); Josephsen (Otterbein); Manresa (Andina Simon Bolivar, Ecuador); Nimz (Osnabrück); Traylor (Ohio State).

2f. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

NU's EDI and wellbeing values are documented in REF5a, §§3.3.1/3.4 and are likewise core UoA principles. SELL and SML gained Athena SWAN Bronze accreditation (2016 and 2018). ECLS is currently applying. Action Plans for accreditation recognised the need to create effective promotion routes for staff with protected characteristics (e.g. enhanced mentoring for women seeking promotion or to become PIs on UKRI-funded projects; Creation of pathways into leadership roles to ensure proportionate representation (Corrigan) or availing of Aurora Advance HE training with successful outcomes (McKean)). Evidence for the efficacy of these measures is provided in §2a/Figure 2. In addition, colleagues/students with protected characteristics benefit from NU-wide support networks such as BAME Staff, Disability Interest Group, NU Parents/Carers Network, NU Women(Professors), TechNet and Rainbow@NCL (REF5a, §3.4.2).

The UoA leads projects addressing measures to: (i) Combat Linguistic Discrimination; (ii) Promote Language and Gender Inclusivity. (i) Explores the relationship between language bias and disadvantage arising from protected characteristics, limited educational opportunities or socioeconomics. Accent prejudice was thus selected as a theme for our [8th Northern Englishes Workshop](#) and the [Inaugural Barbara Strang Memorial Lecture](#). Prior to the pandemic (but already mindful of the ecological consequences of travel and improving participation by groups with limited mobility) this series was 'born virtual'. Regarding (ii), Henry-Tierney (ECR) developed a '[Language and Gender Inclusivity](#)' resource supported by NU's EDI fund (REF5a, §3.4.2) to facilitate informed and respectful conversations about gender. The training tool is available in several of our languages, disseminating UoA best practice across NU and beyond. It explores gender through language and how language is gendered, a theme underpinning other work in the UoA e.g. Hansen's AHRC-funded *Gendering Murakami Haruki* project (£160,358 from 2017-2018).

The University has robust leadership supporting EDI including a Dean, Faculty Directors and Inclusion Advisory/Project Officers, ensuring EDI is prioritised across the UoA's strategic planning, recruitment, induction/training, teaching, research and impact. The extent to which we monitor and seek to achieve a diverse staff/student community has already been detailed in §§2a/2d. Regarding other UoA-specific mechanisms, each School has an EDI Committee whose chairs report to the Unit's Research Committees. Membership is governed by EDI criteria so as to include PGRs, ECRs and Professional Services colleagues as well as academic staff regardless of contract type. All promotion, appointment and student application specifications now use inclusive language (see (ii) above) and selectors have participated in unconscious bias and active

bystander programmes (REF5a, §3.4.2). This strategy is critical to improving e.g. our longer-term staff-student ethnic balance (Figures 2/3 above). Additionally, UoA staff determining ICS/output selections undertook EDI training, ensuring that decisions were made in an inclusive, transparent and consistent manner, complying with NU's Code of Practice (§4.1). Peer review scores and feedback were shared with authors/ICS leads. Given that there were more high quality outputs with the same scores than required following automatic allocation, principles of collective excellence and EDI guided adjustments. E.g. the apparent discrepancy between the proportion of outputs from men (52%) and women (48%) (Figure 4) and the overall complement of 59% female staff (Figure 2) arises from a preponderance of women being early career. This was addressed when adjusting by ensuring that high quality outputs from Grade F/G pools were prioritised over those from H/I (promoted posts). 40% of our Category A staff have F/G contracts (i.e. are either ECRs as per REF criteria or their career began around 2014). The fact that our submission includes 35% of such outputs, thus reflects our EDI approach in the UoA more broadly.

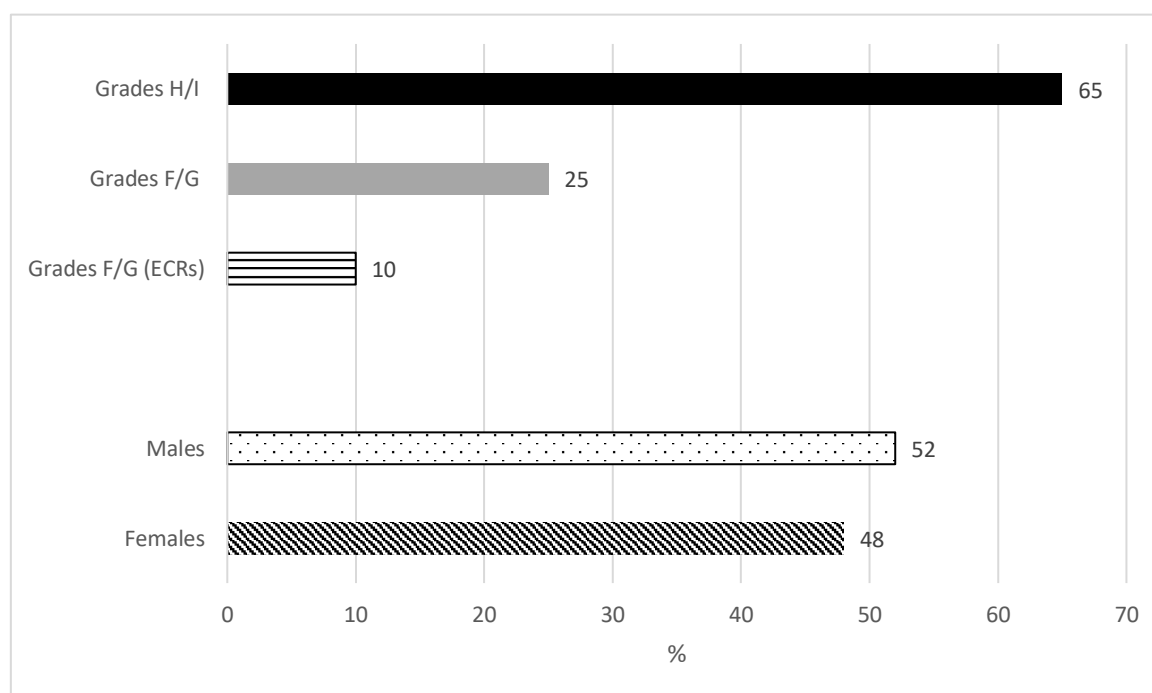


Figure 4. Output Portfolio Diversity (Category A Staff)

Financial and other support has been offered to our EEA colleagues for securing settled/pre-settled status pre-Brexit (Harkness led the initiative NU-wide). The UoA additionally benefits from parent/carer-friendly event timetabling and flexible work patterns. Extra conference funds are available to support research staff/students with caring responsibilities/ill-health. The pandemic accelerated plans to implement videoconferencing for business meetings/research seminars, contributing to environmental sustainability and improving accessibility. There is support and guidance available for remote or home working (including equipment for safe off-campus workstations). Part-time and fixed-term staff have identical opportunities for career progression as full-time staff on open-ended contracts do (§2c). In addition, all staff, irrespective of status, have commensurate access to sabbaticals alongside research-related mentoring/training, promotion and reward procedures (§2c) or any internal research/impact funding streams (§3b). Staff have received parental cover/leave. Further assistance to reinvigorate research trajectories afterwards is offered via our Returners' Programme (REF5a, §3.4.2). This is crucial for maintaining a level playing field given the growing evidence about the pandemic's disproportionate impact on career trajectories. Additionally, NU has pledged to allow for such effects when assessing progression.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3a. Income

New research awards in the UoA topped £6.2M in this cycle. Our spend (£4,800,234) has increased by over £1.6M. This remarkable growth is a result of enhanced infrastructure, alongside major investments in staff, research, mentoring, training and other support for career development at all stages. Our strategy for expanding revenue streams is already safeguarding against risks associated with Brexit/COVID-19. The portfolio extends to funding from UK/EU government in addition to local authorities or health boards. Such grants lead to high-quality research outputs or impacts while helping build relationships with other sectors and consolidating regional, national and international partnerships. There have likewise been major awards won in competitions administered by prestigious external funders including UKRI, Institute of Modern Languages Research and National Institute for Health Research. Grants have been secured from charitable UK and overseas organisations (e.g. Danish Council and Institute of Latin American Studies) alongside a wide range of foundations like Great Britain Saaskawa, Education Endowment and Nuffield. This represents an impressive upward trajectory from our previous portfolio (particularly our successes with the ESRC and EU which, until recently, had not been major investors). ESRC awards alone in this cycle e.g. exceeded £1.7M. The schemes supporting projects are similarly diverse, ranging from major, prestigious UKRI awards for complex, interdisciplinary consortia projects to lone scholar initiatives supported by fellowships awarded to ECRs and more senior colleagues alike. The AHRC-funded [Screening Violence](#) project (2018-2022) (£795,402) is an excellent example of the former. It is led by Austin as PI with Co-Is Morgan and Page (also in our UoA) alongside Co-I's in other disciplines within HaSS and colleagues at St. Andrew's and Ulster. There is a transnational study of post-conflict imaginaries with additional co-investigators and partners in Algeria, Argentina, Colombia and Indonesia. Meekings is sole investigator of [The Voice](#) (British Academy (£269,121, 2018-present)), examining the acoustics of how individuals change their voices in context. It represents our ECR individual fellowship awards as does [World Literature and 20th Century East Asia](#) in which Tsang investigates how political, economic and cultural contact with the West helped revolutionise Far Eastern literature (The Leverhulme Trust (£43,912) (2018-present)).

Funding that fulfils our 'Languages in the Real World' vision while simultaneously developing our international networks and participatory design methods was targeted too. Successes include: McKean *et al.*'s NIHRI4i award (£876,310) developing automated transcription/analysis software to improve Speech and Language Therapy decision-making (2019-2021); Catalá-Carrasco's 2018 commission (€14,018.60) from the Spanish Ministry of Education to co-curate the [RENEWAL](#) art exhibition with NOPHOTO, extending his [Cultural Narratives of Crisis and Renewal](#) project (2015-2018, EU €1,044,000); Yu's AHRC Research Grant (£804,058) for her (2019-2023) project with colleagues at the Beijing Film Academy, KCL and Sussex foregrounds the inaccessibility of independent cinema in China. It likewise benefits marginalized groups, as does Satar (PI) & Seedhouse's (Co-I) Erasmus plus-funded international networking project (2019-2021) (£272,000) for refugees/asylum seekers.

3b. Infrastructure

Our new DoRL appointment enables horizon-scanning alongside monitoring and supporting research and impact activities across the UoA, elsewhere at NU and beyond. Within the Unit, monthly meetings of School Directors of Research and Impact are chaired by the DoRL to facilitate regular discussion. The DoRL additionally liaises with School-based Directors for Postgraduates, Equality and Ethics while reporting to members of Faculty Executive Board (including the Dean of Research and Innovation, Dean of Postgraduate Studies and the Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion). School Research Committees work with their EDI Committees to implement an action plan to promote EDI. All UoA decision-making bodies have balanced memberships in terms of gender and career stage.

The HaSS Dean of Research and Innovation role is complemented by an expanded Professional Services Faculty research and impact team: 2 Impact Officers, 2 Research Funding Development Managers, 2 Business Development Managers. Additionally, the Faculty Research Office and Grants and Contracts teams provide local support and one-to-one advice at all stages of research applications as well as post-award (as do the 3 full-time Professional Services colleagues with responsibilities for School level research finance across the Unit). There is also a new Faculty Research and Projects Officer. They support our research environment more broadly but have a particular remit to oversee strategic planning for developing interdisciplinary clusters generating highly impactful research via the NUCoREs which several UoA colleagues lead (§1a). Other infrastructural transformations in this cycle that are specifically designed to support cross-disciplinary research include the launching of three research institutes (Humanities, Creative Arts Practice and Social Sciences (REF5a, §2.2.3)). They offer funding, facilities and the space for critical thinking, discussion and debate across NU, alongside provision of infrastructure and administrative capacity for pursuing larger and more complex grant applications.

These organizational structures provide a range of Faculty, University and Research Institute competitive internal funding resources (REF5a, §§4.1.4/4.1.5): ESRC Impact Acceleration Awards e.g. have been won by 7 UoA staff (valuing £85,705); Faculty Impact Fund (≤£20K); HaSS Bid Preparation Fund (≤£10K); and Faculty Research Fund (≤£5K for small-scale projects). Additionally, HASS Research Institutes administer the Pioneer Award Scheme for staff/PGRs (between £1-5K). 6 staff (2 of whom are ECRs) have all received such awards in recent calls. A measure of their success is the external funding of projects led by Austin, Cuskey, Howard, Jones, Law, Wallenberg and Yu which benefited from these pump-priming schemes. From 2014, the UoA's research environment has gained from changes to NU's top-slicing model such that FEC overheads/research surpluses are instead transferred to our Schools where it is used to further the UoA's research, innovation and impact ambitions. The resulting funds (comprising an Impact Fund, Research Contingency/Support Funds and contributions to Gold OA fees e.g.) are administered via a competitive bidding process to School Executive Committees of which the DoRL and Impact/Research Directors are members.

3c. Facilities

Committed to aligning our infrastructure with our research and impact strategies, there has been investment in dedicated, advanced IT infrastructure (e.g. High Performance Computing (REF5a, §2.4.3)); specialist proprietary software/licenses (e.g. FileMaker Pro, IBEX farm, LabVanced, Linger(3), SketchEngine, Treeform) and commercial corpora (e.g. BNC/COCA/(SP)ICE/ICAME). We have benefited from Faculty support for establishing a participant recruitment system for research requiring volunteers using a specially-designed Sona Systems database. Furthermore, all staff/PGRs can now draw not only on the extensive resources of the Philip Robinson Library but also on the Marjorie Robinson Library Rooms (MRLR). Our infrastructure has responded to changes in website accessibility legislation (2018) as well as the information landscape (hence the opening in 2016 of the MRLR, which is a truly digital library) while continuing to build on the rich heritage of rare book, manuscript and archival collections underpinning our work. Members with research/impact interests in the legal frameworks surrounding language and minority rights benefit considerably from the Law Library's resources. The Walton Library (in the Medical School) provides extensive materials for those researching in psychology and subjects allied to medicine or biomedical sciences. Our environment is likewise enhanced by the collections and facilities of partner institutions in the region and beyond it, including Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (REF5a, §§2.1.1/2.4.2). Considerable value is added too by the expert involvement of the NU Library staff, notably our Liaison Librarian who contributes to our PGR Researcher Development Programmes (§§2d/2e). They liaise closely to evaluate and prioritise the procurement of specialist resources for research/impact. English Language scholars/PGRs e.g. benefit from access to the Library's extensive digitized, historical British/Irish archives. Purchasing the *Richard Heslop Collection* on phonetics/grammar/etymology was similarly invaluable. Since 2014, the Library has considerably enhanced its audio-visual, textual and electronic data resources such as *Mass Observation Archive*. Invaluable during the pandemic, they support the Unit's research in aspects of visual culture, film and social history especially. Moreover, all our University Libraries operate a

carefully considered Disability Policy to ensure that their joint collection of 0.8 million print books, 0.5 million e-books, 42,000 e-journal titles and 300 online databases (*JSTOR/MLA International Bibliography/OED/Scopus* e.g.) are accessible remotely/via e-Readers.

There has been additional investment in the UoA's estate/equipment. A translation and interpreting suite was completed in 2019 (costing c.£1.6M). It has specialised software and built-in cameras, serving as a key data tool. Given our OA agenda, the suite has also allowed colleagues to develop a bespoke FAIR interpreting corpus. With additional financial NU support, a cloud-based server has been designed, utilising specialist translation-memory-based software and greatly improving our capacity for translation research. Early in the current cycle, NU invested in sound-attenuated/observation booths and eye-trackers for linguistics research. This cluster also has a dedicated laboratory (LingLab), with equipment for airflow measurement, ultra-sound imaging, electroglottography, electropalatography, nasometry, and laryngography. Investment continued with £79K from the UKRI's World Class Laboratories fund (2020-2021). In lockstep, the Unit has recently made a capital investment bid to redevelop and expand our laboratory estate. It is projected to include sound-proofed and semi-anechoic booths as well as a sound-attenuated room.

Our operational research infrastructure benefits from access to shared facilities within NU and cross-institutionally. Since 2016, the Faculty of Medical Sciences has augmented our capacity for studying brain reactions by giving access to their EEG Lab. Similarly, in partnership with Durham University, colleagues can utilize the BENC cluster for promoting and facilitating other types of experimental/behavioural research in the domains of academia, policy and business (ensuring the international visibility of Northeast England as a research leader (REF5a, §1.1)). We additionally profit from recent NU initiatives to invest in highly specialised equipment in major research facilities which are accessible to researchers across the entire institution. [iLab:Learn](#) (2011-2021) is an excellent example and consists of a cross-faculty laboratory for developing appropriate educational and applied linguistics applications of digital technology.

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

The UoA's 'Languages in the Real World' orientation makes us ideally placed to capitalize on relationships built through our impactful research projects that respond to national and international priorities and initiatives. Tangible benefits for a range of stakeholders have arisen (§1d). The UoA benefits from extensive financial and research management support for developing effective, collaborative research teams (often undertaking interdisciplinary joint projects with other academic colleagues and external partners both within the UK and internationally). These include Centres of Research Excellence (NUCoREs) (REF5a, §2.2.1), Research Institutes (REF5a, §2.2.3) and Policy/Global Challenges Academies (REF5a, §2.2.5).

This collaborative orientation extends to successfully participating in Doctoral Training Consortia and recognition via 'Co-Tutelle' initiatives supporting PGRs/external partners regionally, nationally and internationally (§2d). Students and staff alike make important service contributions, promoting and sustaining our discipline for which they have been recognised. Such external roles are further indications of our wider influence. The knowledge and skills acquired by our graduates e.g. have built capacity for public policy as well as cultural and creative engagement globally. This has been achieved by their securing seconded and permanent positions in Government and International Non-Profits. Hanna e.g. is employed by [SIL International](#), documenting and developing indigenous languages to ensure their survival while Lossi is Director of the division of Cultural Industries in Peru's Ministry of Culture.

The strategies underpinning such contributions are illustrated below, alongside evidence demonstrating their efficacy.

4a. Academic Research Collaborations, Networks and Partnerships

The instantiation of the Global Challenges Academy has been a key addition to UoA and Faculty level research management structures for enabling partnership working. It has supported a range of UoA colleagues and collaborators who are diverse in disciplinary backgrounds, career stages, career pathways and protected characteristics. Its resources support topic-focused networks of NU researchers with partners in Low-to-Middle-Income-Countries (LMIC) by hosting events that foster collaborative research. The extent to which the Academy is an enabler is clear from the GCRF award to Khattab (PI) and McKean (Co-I) (January 2020-2024) (ESRC: £1,520,611). Their project ([Language Development in Arabic-Speaking Children](#)) is a multi-disciplinary collaboration between 2 UK universities (NU and Plymouth) alongside the University of St. Joseph (Beirut), Jordan University of Science and Technology, and Birzeit University (West Bank). Activities extend across Egypt, Jordan, the West Bank and Lebanon. The collaboration brings together a team of educators, linguists, paediatricians, psychologists and speech and language therapists to narrow the gap for socially disadvantaged children in the region.

A cornerstone of the UoA's strategy for Open Research (§1e) is to generate sustainable, accessible resources that are valued not only by academic communities nationally and globally but that are relevant for non-HEI partners and wider-publics. Yu's [Chinese Independent Film Archive](#) project (SML) generated an academic network of scholars, collaborating with prominent filmmakers and curators, alongside a range of industry partners (e.g. Sheffield Doc/Fest and CNEX). The outcomes include a research archive and online database showcasing the work of this marginalized group. SELLL's internationally-renowned Diachronic Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English (DECTE) (2000-) is a second such resource with [academic](#) and [public-facing](#) front ends. In this cycle, it has informed the *Oxford English Dictionary* (§1e) and has generated not only new international academic collaborations (via the [Speech Across Dialects of English Consortium](#) e.g.) but outputs - both within the Unit ([Corrigan & Mearns](#) 2016) as well as outwith ([Buchstaller et al.](#) 2017). DECTE remains a core resource for HEI linguistics programmes in the UK and globally (e.g. York University, Toronto from 2013). Since 2014, the corpus's public-facing front end featured in Key Stage 3/4 and Advanced Level syllabi and examinations ratified by Pearson/Edexcel and Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (NI). The EU-funded [Lancook](#), [Linguacuisine](#) and [ENACT](#) projects (totalling £997K between 2011-2021) led by Satar & Seedhouse (ECLS) exemplify the kinds of contribution typifying our applied linguistics research and impact. They culminated in [iLab:Learn](#), our cross-faculty laboratory for developing educational and applied linguistics applications of digital technology, targeted e.g. at local communities including disadvantaged minorities, refugees and asylum-seekers. HundrED selected it as "one of the world's most inspiring innovations in Bilingual Education."

Other representative examples whereby our research environment has been enriched by developing relationships with research users, beneficiaries and audiences to enhance the impact of our research include projects by Jones (SML), Young-Scholten (SELLL) and Law/McKean (ECLS).

Jones's AHRC-funded project [Poetry Translation in Poet-Advisor-Poet Trios](#) (SELLL/SML) explores how Dutch and UK poets translate each other's work with the help of bilingual translator intermediaries (2016-2018; £332,145). Hence, it spans the fields of creative writing, intercultural studies and linguistics as well as translating and interpreting. The initiative is a collaboration between researchers in this Unit, in NU's UoA27 and others at Roehampton University, alongside practitioners at the Dutch Foundation for Literature and Poetry International, Rotterdam, NU Centre for the Literary Arts and Roehampton Poetry Centre.

Young-Scholten's Erasmus-funded [EU-Speak](#) projects (2015-2018) (£786K) trained and developed teachers to work with low-educated adult migrants across the EU. It presented cutting-edge research findings, innovative pedagogical approaches and creative techniques in 6 different on-line modules and is currently available on OA in 5 languages, representing a range of countries in which these immigrants resettle.

Between 2018 and 2020, another EU funding stream (£1.4M) supported a consortium led by Law as PI in collaboration with McKean and colleagues from the Erasmus MC in Rotterdam and the LifBE Institute at the University of Bamberg. This research investigated the effects of social inequality on child development. Its findings instigated recent changes by the EU Commission to the wording of the EU Council Recommendation on their High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care System to emphasize the importance of bilingualism to language development. This project was undertaken alongside their COST Action initiative (IS1406; £408,232) [*Enhancing Children's Oral Language Skills across Europe and Beyond*](#) which included representatives from 36 EU and geographically contiguous countries, leading e.g. to a major 2019 consultation exercise across Germany on the importance of language development and disorders. McKean's involvement in these international collaborative initiatives was pivotal in taking advantage of the networks created to ensure success in the ESRC GCRF bid already noted (with Khattab as PI).

Such projects have naturally led to outputs but they have likewise permitted colleagues within the Unit to fulfil our 'Languages in the Real World' ambitions by working closely with beneficiaries beyond the academy, as further documented in §1d.

4b. Contributions to and Recognition by the Research Base and Wider-Publics

Our significant, wide-ranging contributions in these respects are striking too (including from staff at all career stages and those with caring responsibilities or protected characteristics), which we regard as a further litmus test for the effectiveness of our EDI policies and practices (§2f). Colleagues regularly receive invitations to disseminate their research as **keynotes**. Jein's plenary at *Making Do in Urbanism and the Arts* (Portland, Oregon, May 2020) and Schartner's James J. Bradac prize and subsequent plenary at the *International Conference on Language and Social Psychology* are both examples of such contributions by our younger female staff. Staff/PGRs also regularly (co-)organise scholarly meetings at NU, elsewhere in the UK and abroad. Highlights include DiPVaC2 (2014). The conference was founded by Pichler as an ECR in 2012 and she was a plenarist at DiPVaC4 in Helsinki (2018). More recently, the Unit welcomed IVEC2020, the largest and most prominent event on virtual exchange globally (Satar (ECR)/Sercombe). CamCos9, Part II was held virtually in 2021 to mark Holmberg's retirement. It was hosted by NU and co-organised by PGRs/staff there, alongside a similarly diverse team from Anglia Ruskin and Cambridge universities.

Several colleagues have been elected as **executive members of learned societies or research centres**. To name but a few, Jordan Co-Directs the *Centre for the Study of Contemporary Women's Writing* at London University's IMLR (2016-) and is a Research Advisory Board Member for the University of London in Paris. Corrigan became President-Elect of the International Society for the Linguistics of English in 2018. Prior to that, she was an elected Council Member of the Philological Society (2016-2020). Female colleagues earlier in their careers have had similar invitations. E.g. Cuskley serves as a Committee Member for EVOLANG and Woods was a member of LAGB's Studentship Committee (2014-2016).

Colleagues at all career stages **referee** peer-reviewed journals across the breadth of our disciplines (e.g. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, *English World-Wide*, *Journal of Linguistics*, *Revista de Ciencias Sociales* and *Second Language Research*) and act as **editors** or **board members** of book series for highly-regarded, specialist academic publishers or high-impact journals. Fehimović (female ECR), for instance, fulfils such a role for Routledge's *Remapping World Cinema* while McKean (female) was Editor-in-Chief for the *International Journal of Language and Communication* (the official journal of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists). We likewise edit OA journals, including *Finno-Ugric Language and Linguistics* (Holmberg being not only Editor-in-Chief but founder). Furthermore, colleagues have been invited to guest-edit special issues of peer-reviewed journals, which often have greater reach and impact than regular volumes. Satar (female ECR) e.g. was invited to guest-edit a 2020 special issue of the OA *Journal of Virtual Exchange* with Combe and Capellini of Aix, Marseille. Contributions focused on the

topical challenges associated with pedagogical innovations arising from the telecollaborations that have become *de rigueur* during the pandemic.

Staff contribute to the discipline as **external examiners and reviewers** of PGR programmes and research centres all over the world (including ECRs such as Chen or Fehimović). Similarly, invitations have been accepted to **adjudicate on senior HEI promotion applications** both nationally (e.g. Cambridge, Durham, Edinburgh, York) and internationally (Carleton, Cyprus, Helsinki, Pittsburgh, Toronto). Staff are sought to **review grant applications** submitted to UKRI and to international funding bodies as diverse as the Austrian Science Fund, British Council, Fulbright, Killam Trust and SSHRC. Contributions of this ilk have taken place in both the Global North and, importantly, also in LMIC countries. The range of Hentsche's appointments are thus typical: Reviewed/acted as external examiner on the MRes programme in Latin American Studies, ILAS at the School of Advanced Studies (London) in 2016 and from 2017 onwards; Was appointed AHRC Strategic Reviewer and served on their Peer Review College; Has been a member of review panels directed by Chile's *Comisión Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica* and Germany's Ministry for Education and Research; Is one of 8 members of the international Scientific Advisory Board of Berlin's Ibero-American Institute (appointed by its President), overseeing its operation and assisting the German Science Council in evaluations.

Service roles which make the wider societal contributions that are key to fulfilling our 'Languages in the Real World' mission, respond particularly to these **national and international priorities**:

- Second language literacy education which has become more vital on account of the global migrant crisis (e.g. Corrigan, Satar, Seedhouse, Young-Scholten).
- Raising awareness of human rights abuses and the suppression of ethnic minorities/their cultures (e.g. R. Howard, Oliart, Smith Finley, Yu).
- Articulating the cultural and linguistic politics of urban regeneration and the tensions between concerns that are global (state-oriented) and local (socially marginalized groups) (e.g. Duncan (ECR), Jein).
- Improving the life chances of speech and language therapy patients and disadvantaged children - further reduced by the pandemic (e.g. Charlton (ECR), Law, Menger (ECR), Morris, Salis, Stringer, Van Eeden (PGR)).
- Environmental degradation and precarity (e.g. Malkmus).

Young-Scholten co-founded the international grassroots organisation [Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults](#) (2005-), supporting low literate adults becoming literate in an L2 *ab initio*. They promote, on a world-wide, multidisciplinary and multilingual basis, the sharing of research findings, effective pedagogical practices and policy information. Yu has embarked on service work for wider publics in China, serving as a jury member for the documentary competition at the 2015 Chinese Independent Film Festival. That role initiated the resulting formal partnership with this organisation that eventually led to her successful AHRC application. Jein's AHRC-funded EC Leadership Fellowship project (2018-2019) stimulated a collaboration with local artists and Le 6B Cultural Centre to document urban regeneration in Paris by asserting the voice and visibility in public of socially marginalized groups. Morris is a trustee of the [North East Trust for Aphasia](#), a local Tyneside charity. They have developed Aphasia Therapy resources in conjunction with colleagues at the Tavistock Trust. Stringer leads the [Speech and Language Therapy Research Network](#) in collaboration with NHS practitioner partners. It is affiliated with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and is the first UK specialist support group for practitioners engaging in research. This has enabled long-term capacity building through NIHR internships and other pathways. We have hosted and supervised a number of practitioners as interns who were awarded successful NIHR PhD scholarships. Van Eeden, a former UoA intern, e.g. has begun one such PhD project (supervised by McKean and Stringer).

The transformative value of Modern Languages and Linguistics has motivated the development of close working relationships with policymakers and third sector partners also engaged in addressing these national and international priorities. Smith Finley acts as 'expert country witness' in Uyghur asylum cases in Europe and North America and has achieved an international reputation as a policy expert on account of her human rights advocacy work (with Human Rights Watch, The Rights Practice (London); Uyghur Human Rights Project and the Center for Global Policy (both Washington D.C.)). In the Global South, R. Howard and Oliart have worked alongside South American governments on issues tied to gender and linguistic human rights. Law led a review commissioned by the Education Endowment Foundation and Public Health England to identify priorities for improving practice in the support and management of children with atypical early language development. It highlights interventions that have the greatest potential to improve children's life chances and reduce inequalities further exacerbated by the pandemic. Malkmus (who held the role of Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society Fellow from 2015-2016) explores the history of ecological imaginaries and their relation to other intellectual developments in modernity. He has a partnership with the *Bayerischer Wald* ('Bavarian Forest') National Park (2018-) and has run workshops, public lectures and training for them. He is developing a new partnership with Cairngorms National Park and is planning an international conference on environmental ethics (September 2021).

All these collaborations with policy makers and third sector organisations have the capacity for far-reaching societal impacts addressing national and international priorities and initiatives (of the type documented further in §1d).

In recognition of the research, innovation and impact contributions of our team, Unit members have received **awards, prizes and visiting fellowships/professorships**. The latter have been held all over the world (including in LMIC countries): Murdoch Children's Research Institute and Griffith University, Australia (Law/McKean, 2016); Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (Hentsche, 2016); Kyoto University, Japan (Corrigan, 2015); Institute of Modern Languages Research, University of London (Jordan, 2016); Social Sciences Faculty of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú/Advanced Research Collaborative, Graduate Center, CUNY (Oliart, 2017 and 2020, respectively).

Several colleagues (irrespective of career stage) have had **prizes or awards** for their work. Some representative examples are: Al-Tamimi and Khattab were awarded the Peter Ladefoged Prize at BAAP (2018). Bueno-Amaro (PGR) was similarly honoured for his contribution to DiPVac5, Melbourne, 2020 while Woods won the Richard M. Hogg prize in 2017 for her [\(2020\) article](#). The calibre of new ECR appointments is similarly testified to by learned society recognition (e.g. Duncan, 2018, LSA). Jordan was shortlisted for the Richard Gapper Book Prize for the best book published in French Studies in 2017 while Jones won 1st Prize in the John Dryden Translation Competition (2013). Finally, in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours, Law was awarded an OBE for his outstanding services to Speech and Language Therapy.

Our success with respect to the various awards, invitations and prizes received across the full spectrum of our staff and PGR community stems from our commitment to consolidating old and establishing new partnerships for projects that meaningfully engage with our University, other institutions and diverse wider-publics globally. Languages, linguistics and communication are our *raison d'être*. We are a connected, multicultural and multilingual community whose environment is guided by the tenets of the Irish proverb: *ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine* 'people live protected under one another's shadow.'