

<b>Institution:</b> University of Northampton
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Sociology (UoA21)
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Unit context and structure</b></p> <p>The development of Sociology and sociological research at the University of Northampton has shown considerable growth over the last three years, as such REF2021 represents the first submission for Sociology at the University of Northampton. Research in the Sociology Unit of Assessment focuses on a very wide array of topics: childhood and education, migrations and intercultural communication, social inequalities, sociolinguistics, policing and social work. Across all research strands, the Unit of Assessment put evidence-based practice and innovative research-led pedagogies at the foundation of its research, sustaining high quality sociological research with significant national and international impacts.</p> <p>The characteristic of research with children is a focus on children's agency, exploring the condition of children and young people's participation in different social contexts at the intersection between discourse on intergenerational relationships and social practices. This is applied in particular to the study of children and young people's experiences in education, with an eye on peer-relationships and their impact on the learning experience. An important topic approached from the angle of children and young people's experiences is migration and intercultural communication, with research on young immigrants and children of immigrants' participation in the most important social processes. The applied vocation of sociological research with children and young people in the Unit of Assessment is epitomised by the work on early intervention and prevention, positioned within a theoretical framework of Positive Youth Development.</p> <p>Social inequality represents the main interest for other strands of research, characterised by a critical investigation of the construction of poverty and marginalisation in the public discourse. Interested in language, albeit not in discourse but on interaction, is the sociolinguistic strand of research, specialised in the analysis of interaction in educational organisations, in healthcare settings and in public safety contexts, often working with medical personnel, interpreters and migrant patients with the aim to produce evidence-based improvement on services. The dedication to develop evidence-based improvement of organisational practices, particularly with regard to training, is key to research in the area of policing and social work.</p> <p>There is small but very productive strand of research specialised in the advancement of social theory, particularly with regard to a critique of post-modernism. The variety of topics and social issues tackled by sociological research mirror the extensive range of collaborations which are fuelled by the affiliation of the colleagues to different faculties and their relevant research centre (Faculty of Health, Education and Society and Faculty of Business and Law) as well as non-faculty institutes. Sociological research at Northampton is therefore naturally in ongoing dialogue with different disciplines and organisations. Members of the Sociology Unit of Assessment work closely with the Centre for Education and Research (CER), the Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (ISII) and the Centre for Psychology and Social Sciences, in particular within the theme 'Diversity, Community and Identity' (DCI). Other members are part of the Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice (IPSCJ), originally established as a joint venture between the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire and the University of Northampton, but as of 2017, it is now an independent institute with the University of Northampton.</p> <p>Sociological research at Northampton is gradually cohering around two main areas: childhood and youth, intersected with ethnicity, gender, inequalities, international migration, intercultural communication and the evaluation of social intervention, with a range of research exploring the impact of policies and interventions on education, social services, healthcare, employability, social mobility, policing. These complex and multidimensional themes for sociological research reflect UoN's Changemaker Challenges, specifically a contribution to Northamptonshire being the best</p>

county in the UK for children to flourish and learn. This is demonstrated at a University level with the pledge to align its impact work with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), committing to signing the SDG accord in the latter half of 2020 and making its first submission to the 2021 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings.

The appointment of experienced researchers (**Farini, Chalari, Paterson-Young**) combined with the appointment of talented early career researchers (**Lehtonen, Dytham, Cahalin**), some of them coming from prestigious doctoral studies (London School of Economics, University of Warwick) has generated an increase in terms of research outputs, successful research bids and developing research impact.

The fast development of a research culture in the field of sociology at Northampton has formed a critical mass of researchers realising our submission to this UoA. Whilst none of the staff were submitted to REF2014 for Northampton and very few were employed by the university at that time, the support for the developing of sociological research provided by the university has generated a sharp increment of activities and measurable outputs.

## 1.2 Unit research and impact strategy

There is considerable evidence of the flourishing research culture around sociology and sociological themes. This is demonstrated by increased numbers of publications, successful bids and important roles undertaken by members of the Unit of Assessment at an international level. The development of sociological research is part of the 2015 University Strategy working within the framework of the Faculty of Health, Education and Society. The new, multidisciplinary, faculty structure provides a stronger, consolidated infrastructure for our peer review process, research support, governance, impact enhancement and public engagement.

The University Strategic 'Social Impact' Plan (2015-2020) underpins a series of strategic actions:

### 1. To Appoint research-active academics with an established or developing national and international profile.

Seven members of staff have been appointed within Sociology over the REF period demonstrating the growth and the investment of the discipline. Recruitment has been based on two criteria: 1) a combination of research record including publications, successful bids, research leadership (including PGR supervision) and a developing or high profile in international scholarly networks; 2) the alignment of the research interests with the existing activity of the different areas or, alternatively, the contribution of the appointed researchers to the development of new areas of research.

For example, **Paterson-Young** and **Cahalin's** expertise in the evaluation of social intervention have been pivotal to further strengthen the existing activities of the ISII and the IPSCJ respectively and **Chalari** and **Lehtonen's** appointments have been instrumental to develop new areas in Sociology (**Chalari**: identity and migration; **Lehtonen**: gender studies and social inequalities studies). Of particular interest, because it demonstrates a coherent strategy to support the development of research is another example related to Sociology: the appointment of **Farini** developed the area of Childhood and Youth Studies, which was strengthened by the subsequent appointment of **Dytham**.

### 2. To support research active academics, including Early Career Researchers (ECRs)

This is a young, dynamic Unit of Assessment that has produced an impressive volume of research outputs and generated robust research income (for example **Farini's** Horizon 2020 Child-UP project, EUR3,000,000 and **Callender's** 'Community Sentence Treatment Requirements Evaluation project, GBP95,698) over a short period of time. While producing research impact and research outputs, the more senior researchers in the unit have been mentoring ECRs and colleagues who are moving into research from a teaching professional profile. The relatively small

size of the Unit of Assessment invites intensive and personalised support in form of mentorship. An example is provided by the activity of IPSCJ where mentorship is evidenced by several publications co-authored by Callender, the senior researcher, and various ECRs. Mentorship is combined with the opportunity for development offered by other research centres where members of the Unit of Assessment have important roles. For example, Farini leads research seminars for CER; within this centre **Farini** is also the leader of the Special Interest Group 'Children and Young People'. **Farini** collaborates with the Research and Innovation Funding Support office to offer university-wide seminars on bid-writing and research-management. **Farini** chairs the University of Northampton/Regents University PhD Supervisors Forum, exercising leadership towards the support of colleagues in their doctoral studies. Staff are actively engaging with interdisciplinary research centres such as CER (**Farini, Siobhan**) and the 'Diversity, Communities and Identity Research Centres' (**Lehtonen**). The continuing exchange between the Unit of Assessment and other research centres as well as University-wide support proves ideal for an active Unit of Assessment. Sociology offers to the University and to research centres in cognate disciplines unique expertise in social research methods as well as the experience of leading researchers in the design of research and pursuing of funding opportunities. At the same time, ECRs' development within the Unit of Assessment benefits from training offered by other research centres or University-wide to complement individual intensive mentorship.

### **3. Extending and internationalising participation in established networks and expanding our reach in sociological research.**

Members of Sociology engage from positions of leadership with a global variety of HEIs, Research Centres, local and national governments, and public bodies. For example, **Paterson-Young's** role as Trustee for the National Association for Youth Justice, member of the Ethics Committee for West Midland Police and Crime Commissioner and Academic Special in the National Crime Agency, **Callender's** role as academic advisor to the National Volunteer Police Cadets and **Farini** holding the position of vice-president of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee 'Language and Society', during this REF exercise. More examples of national and international leadership are provided in section 4.2. Colleagues use the research centres as platforms to create interdisciplinary partnerships to access recently established funding for research projects related to UK policies.

### **4. Increase the supervisory capacity within the unit by appointing academics who can either supervise doctoral students or to train within a short time-frame.**

Staff have been a part of supervisory teams for 39 doctoral researchers across the university within interdisciplinary teams. This includes a partnership with an external organisation, Regents University in London: UoN validates Doctoral Degree awarded by Regents University, and colleagues work as Directors of Studies in supervisory teams supporting students at Regents. There has been a clear increment of supervisory activity in the last few years. We have appointed 2 senior researchers, **Chalari** (2016) and **Farini** (2017), with experience of being Director of Doctoral Studies that has enriched the department providing valuable guidance and experience to newer staff members. In addition to these senior researchers, 6 staff members have completed their doctoral supervision training ready to take the role of Director of Studies with a further staff member currently enrolled.

### **5. To enhance the research bidding activity and expand the number of research outputs published.**

In the last five years there has been a considerable increment of income generation, including success in the most prestigious competitive calls for projects nationally and internationally. Examples of success include **Farini's** participation in the Horizon 2020 projects 'Child-UP' and 'SPACEX'. **Callender's** ESRC 'Exploring Synergies within Volunteering in Law Enforcement and Public Safety in the UK and Japan', **Paterson-Young's** multi-phase evaluation of Building Better Opportunities project 'Working Progress', funded by the Big Lottery Fund. **Paterson-Young** was

also contracted to deliver another Building Better Opportunities project 'Readiness Action Programme'.

Based on the excellent results achieved in the last three years and in line with the University's Strategic Plan (2020-2025) our ambition is realism. We will continue to undertake large scale international research projects, produce high profile impact and publish significant research outputs. We are committed to supporting the UN SDGs, specifically focusing on SDG4: Quality Education and SDG10: Reduced Inequalities. For instance, **Farini's** edited collection (with A. Scollan) 'Children's Self-determination in the Context of Early Childhood Education and Services, Discourses, Policies and Practices' is among the top used publications on SpringerLink that concern SDG4. The main objectives of the ongoing research for the next years can be summarised as follows:

1. Delivering research to support the evaluation of social intervention, working in partnership with local authorities, education settings, public sector, third sector organisation, across a wide range of sectors at local, national and international level. Some good examples include the 'Evaluating the impact of services for socially excluded young people' project as well as the 'Evaluating the impact of employability programmes on people experiencing multiple disadvantage' project demonstrating that educational programmes designed taking into consideration the social worlds of their beneficiaries and their evolving needs are more efficient in supporting inclusion, resilience and wellbeing, by offering an environment within which socially excluded young people can personally and socially develop, including employability and access to further education;
2. To further strengthen the unit's multidisciplinary identity as a hub for sociological research with children and young people intersecting the already established themes such as migration studies and intercultural communication, education, social inclusion, children's right, agency and social participation, also reinforcing the collaboration with the CER. Examples of this are **Farini's** role as the leader of the Centre for Education and Research Special Interest Group 'Children and Youth' and the Horizon2020 project 'Child-UP', led by **Farini** with the participation of colleagues from Education and Psychology;
3. Continue to lead on social impact on training and life-long learning, particularly with regard to continuing professional development, training for police forces, support of offender's re-integration in society. We do this through our leadership roles with ISII and IPSCJ. ISII will lead the Work Readiness Action Programme to develop a valid, robust and holistic evaluation framework for the employment intervention. IPSCJ will support the development of the Community Sentence Treatment Requirement through local evaluation and the creation of practice documentation aimed at Clinical Leads and Primary Care Practitioners. Another related aim is to lead on the design and development of research-driven online continuing professional development: Horizon2020 project 'Child-UP' will deliver an open access, European-wide MOOC to support the use of dialogue for professionals working with children. This aim is directly linked with our first aim and represents the second main strand of the groups research activities, linking with our second aim;
4. Continue to grow national and international collaborations. Several members of the unit of Assessment have generated impressive networks culminating in successful research bids in cooperation with national and international partners, working for a range of stakeholders with the support of local, national and international political institutions, foundations and private businesses. Examples of partnership with stakeholders that will generate impact in the future is **Paterson-Young** work with Goodwill Solutions to develop solid metrics to would measure the social impact of Goodwill Solutions; **Callender's** collaboration with the University of Tokyo and the University of Tsukuba to create societal and economic impact through partnership with police via the promotion of volunteering in law enforcement and public safety; **Farini's** partnership with The Fondation des Régions Européennes pour la Recherche l'Education et la Formation, The International Institute for Humanitarian Law



and the European School Heads Association to develop training programmes for the education of professionals working with migrant and refugee children across Europe.

### 1.3 Open access

Staff receive training and support in open access, copyright and data-management. In 2019 the University launched its CRIS (Current Research Information System) enabling greater visibility of not only research outputs, but also research activities and datasets. In 2020 the University purchased a platform for digital preservation, and staff are now moving towards a more open research environment, where open research has progressed from being encouraged, to being an integral part of the research life-cycle. Datasets are uploaded to the CRIS on submission, where they are checked for replicability and long-term digital preservation. A data management plan is required for all research projects as part of the ethical approval prior to any research being carried out. To facilitate this, staff are encouraged to use [DMPonline](#) and examples of well-written data management plans, and one-to-one training sessions are available to all staff. A strong emphasis is placed on ensuring that our data adheres to the FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable and reasonable) principles of sharing of data, striving to be as open as possible, but understanding when necessary restrictions are required.

Staff have been provided with training in the selection of places for publication, use tools such as Sherpa/Romeo and the creative commons to check funder requirements, restrictions relating to copyright, and the selection of appropriate licencing of research outputs. The University of Northampton has a small institutional fund to cover the cost of open access where a green (non-payment) route is either not an option, or where the embargo period is extensive. This fund covers the payments for articles, chapters and monographs. Where possible scholarly chapters are made open access. Research activities, such as presentations at conferences, workshops and educational resources are made available under a creative commons licence.

## 2. People

### 2.1 Staffing strategy and staff development

Sociology staffing evidences an important investment in research capacity undertaken by the University with seven appointed post-2014 (**Cahalin, Chalari, Dytham, Farini, Lehtonen, Paterson-Young** and **Simpson**). These appointments are a determined and long-term investment, as all colleagues are employed on permanent contracts.

Research expertise and track record has been a key requirement in person specifications for all Sociology roles at Level 7 and above: candidates' experience of, and capacity to develop, research outputs, funding bids and postgraduate supervision are assessed during shortlisting and interviews. However, the strong tradition of taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision in Sociology at the University has led to several senior, experienced teaching colleagues moving towards research. This has been facilitated by research leaders in the area supporting them to develop the necessary research skills. This is demonstrated by teaching staff's access to PGR and Professional Doctorates' programmes, as part of the faculty's investment in academic research skills-development and capacity-building for mid-career and late career colleagues. Such a significant step change to increase the level and capacity of research active staff has been supported by the expansion of doctoral supervision capacity based on the supervisor training offered by the university as well as the ongoing recruitment strategy. National and international experiences as external examiners of doctoral candidates matured in sociology (the most recent examples concern **Farini** at the Munster Institute of Technology and **Paterson-Young** at University of Coventry), combined with responsibilities in international PhD Schools (**Farini** is a board member for the PhD School of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia) has further reinforced the available expertise and knowledge to support PhD students.

Experienced members within Sociology are moving into the Associate Professor development pathway, supported by the university to access to a role that mirrors the value and impact of their research leadership. 3 colleagues have been promoted to the role of Associate Professor in the latest 2020 round (**Farini**, **Callender** and **Paterson-Young**). These newly promoted Associate Professors will be working with the university's research leadership team to contribute to the development of the new research and enterprise strategy, playing leading roles in the unit action plan and research centres going forward.

In addition to line managerial support, the Faculty of Health, Education and Society University Research Lead and the Faculty of Business and Law Research Lead contribute to the induction of new staff signposting Research Centre themes, promoting links with contacts with shared interests, and inspiring research-related milestones for the probationary period and beyond. The Faculty of Health, Education and Society University Research Lead also serve as the University's Ethics Committee chair, invested by the responsibility to coordinate ethics training across all faculties.

Staff development is supported by the University's 'Researcher Development Programme', which was directly indexed to the four domains of the Vitae (2015) Researcher Development Framework but has since been updated to align with the obligations of the Vitae (2019) Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. Subsequent reviews of the programme in 2020/21 and 2021/22 will deepen this alignment with the Concordat. Sociology staff contribute to the delivery of workshops and organisations of events at the level of Research Centres as well as leading workshops within the Research Development Programme. They play a key role in discipline-focused staff development, supporting the Faculties in welcoming, mentoring and integrating new and prospective researchers, signposting (sub)discipline-specific research events and opportunities, providing colleagues with opportunities to participate in bidding activity alongside more experienced research staff, fostering a friendly and inclusive disciplinary research culture, and facilitating access to networks of external partners and organisations. The position of sociological research across different faculties and research institutes naturally feeds interdisciplinary collaboration, as exemplified by **Farini's** membership of Centre for Education & Research and his successful cooperation with colleagues from the Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology in the delivery of a Marie Skłodowska-Curie action project. Other examples include the collaboration between **Paterson-Young** and **Farini** in the support of doctoral researchers based at the ISII. The flourishing collaboration between the ISII and Sociology at Northampton is particularly promising: the ISII contributes an extensive network of collaboration with business and government bodies offering sociology further opportunities to deliver high impact research; sociology on its part support the ISII in expanding its traditional policy focus towards other strands of social research. More examples that can be cited are **Farini** and **Daly's** cross-faculty collaboration in supervisory team and the longstanding joint research work and publications between **Pilkington** and staff from the Faculty of Business and Law.

## 2.2 Postgraduate researchers

In the current REF period we have supervised 13 PGR students (8 completions, 6 ongoing) within Sociology. Due to the trans-faculty position of Sociological research, all supervisory roles are undertaken within a multidisciplinary team, reinforcing cooperation between faculties and disciplines. As part of this multidisciplinary approach we have supervised 39 PGRs as part of teams across the university. Interdisciplinary collaboration involves Psychology (**Farini**, **Lehtonen**, **Chalari**), Early Childhood Studies and Education Studies (**Farini**), Politics (**Farini**, **Pilkington**, **Chalari**), Public Health (**Farini**) Business Studies (**Paterson-Young**), Law (**Pilkington**), Criminology and Policing (**Paterson-Young** and **Callender**). PGRs are supervised by members of the sociology and are contributing to the current understanding of important social issues in a wide array of contexts, from education to families, from patient-centered healthcare to inclusive social services.

In addition to an extensive package of induction and researcher-development training from the university's Graduate School, PGRs receive discipline-based induction and training delivered by Research Centres such as the CER, the ISII and the IPSCJ, along with the Faculty's Research and

Innovation Development programme. These Centre and Institute-level support mechanisms include, but aren't limited to, offering opportunities for PGRs to contribute to UG teaching, attending research seminars and workshops, identifying and supporting opportunities for PGRs to be involved in ongoing projects, enabling PGRs to make contributions to an annual three-day research conference and career development advice.

The university funds GBP300 for part-time and GBP500 for fulltime students to claim per year of their studies. This money can be used for anything related to their studies such as purchasing equipment or attending conferences. From 2019, PGRs at the University of Northampton can apply to get extra support from a new fund, the Research Environment Enhancement Fund (REEF) designed to help PGRs to develop valuable employability skills, not just for careers in academia, but also in industry. The REEF fund enables students to bid for up to GBP500 to run, facilitate and create opportunities and events with of the aim of enhancing research environment. To support PGRs with their submission, the university offers training workshops to develop their skills creating funding bids, which is a key part of academic life. There are also offers of several competitive bursaries, scholarships and awards available annually or biannually (the Chancellors fund, Dr Mike Daniel Research Degree Scholarship, Sir John Lowther Scholarship for Arts students, T D Lewis Scholarship, The Leathersellers' Company Scholarship, and the Santander Travel fund). UoN is a member of the East Midlands Doctoral Network (EMDoc) and the Midlands Doctoral Researcher Forum (MDRF) giving access to an annual conference involving the collaboration of nine universities in the East Midlands region allows our PGR and their supervisors the opportunity for networking, presenting and wider support.

In addition to academic initiatives, the new Waterside Campus has particularly transformed the experience and working environment of the PGR community by providing an impressive, purpose-built, co-designed suite for the university's whole multidisciplinary PGR community.

Student-centered learning spaces, and areas designed to facilitate interaction at the Waterside Campus have improved the experience for Sociology students as well, fostering a community spirit, mutual trust and vibrant intellectual exchanges that support vitality and sustainability of PGRs programmes.

For example, **Farini**, **Lehtonen** and **Dytham** were instrumental to restart the Sociology Society at the University of Northampton, fostering student's engagement with current sociological issues. The impact of the Sociology Society is demonstrated by the increasing in sociology graduates' applications for scholarships, nationally and internationally but in particular, it should be mentioned sociology student Aleem Ahsan's 'Leadership Programme': an educational platform focusing around pupils (aged 16-19) passions, supported by the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership.

The success of these support structures and strategic investments in PGR workspace is seen in strong, improving Advance HE's Post Graduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) results for PGRs who form part of Sociology. This is also seen at the wider university level with exceptional success across the board seeing UoN come 4<sup>th</sup> in overall satisfaction in 2018 rising to 1<sup>st</sup> in 2020. PGRs have rated the support to research and development offered by the university in the top 8 in all categories, including 1<sup>st</sup> for "resources" and "responsibilities", and 2<sup>nd</sup> for "progression", "research skills" and "professional development". As doctoral supervisor, module leaders for ProfDoc modules, members of the Faculties' Ethics Committees and contributors to the Research Development Programmes, we are playing a pivotal role in the unit and wider university's success.

### 2.3 Equality and diversity

There is a strong tradition of inclusive practice, and research in support of inclusive spaces in HE, within the discipline. The unit complies with regulatory requirements around equality and diversity supported by a central institutional Equality and Inclusion Unit. All Centre Research policies and strategic plans undergo a formal Equality Impact Assessment (as per our institutional REF Code of Practice), which has proved very positive in enhancing practice and prompting new conversations about equality and inclusion in research. All colleagues participate in mandatory, regularly-refreshed

institutional training on equalities and diversities in the workplace. Colleagues regularly participate in workshops on equalities and inclusion within termly Faculty staff development days and are signposted to focused institutional training on unconscious bias and other equality and inclusion topics via individual Performance and Development Review (PDR) objectives.

In addition, many colleagues participate in a growing number of colleague-led institutional support and advocacy groups such as the Global Ethnic Minority (GEM) Network, LGBTQ+ group and Staff Disability Network. Many staff members have also benefited from the University's Navigator (men and transmasculine) and 'Springboard+' (women, trans and non-binary) staff development programme for colleagues in academic or professional services roles which provides an opportunity for staff to undertake personal and professional development and support for leadership, goal-setting and strategic visioning skills.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### 3.1 Income

Despite a tough external funding environment in social sciences, colleagues have collaborated on a total of GBP4,000,000 of research funding of which GBP1,147,386 was directly awarded to the university. This represents a significant achievement for a small UoA that includes many ECRs providing testimony to our international reach. Research income is generated by cooperating with a variety of funders, from the most prestigious EU-funded calls for projects to National institutions to partnerships with third sectors organisations and the private sector.

Notwithstanding the changing relationship with the EU, the government has decided to associate the UK to Horizon Europe, giving the possibility to colleagues to continue to plan bids for funding with their EU-based partners. However, an array of international research partnerships secures flexibility and resilience against the background of a changing environment; for example, **Callender's** partnership with Japanese universities and stakeholders and **Farini's** partnership with non-EU countries in the SPACEX project.

We support staff in their funding applications through the cross-university service the 'Research and Innovation Funding Support Office' (RIFS). This team specialises in providing support for all aspects of funding applications providing support on bid writing, signposting to opportunities and how to meet funder requirements. Colleagues have supported RIFS initiatives by leading workshops in bid writing and management of the research process, for instance in the context of the university's annual Research Conference.

A significantly larger proportion of our research income has taken the form of large-scale, multi-year grants competitively awarded to multidisciplinary consortia, demonstrating the fruitfulness of existing and further developing international research networks. Examples of these are Horizon 2020 'Child UP' won by **Farini**, ESRC 'Exploring Synergies within Volunteering in Law Enforcement and Public Safety in the UK and Japan' won by **Callender** and the 'Building Better Opportunities' project 'Working Progress' (a series of several projects on the evaluation of educational and social services) won by **Paterson-Young**. Our research income is largely international, driven by large-scale EU awards for sociological research in Europe to support more inclusive and empowering communities for children and the public. This international reach is also reflected in the growing number of international roles, keynotes and esteem indicators reported by colleagues (see section 4). This will become even more critical in the coming years with the changing position of the UK in the international research landscape.

It is also important to highlight that alongside prestigious large-scale funding, more funding successes have come from ECRs bidding for the first time, which represent a core and promising step towards further development of our research capabilities. Examples of this are **Dytham's** 'Improving the Evaluation of Outreach', funded by the Office for Fair Access and Department for Education and 'Research to understand successful approaches to supporting most academically able disadvantaged pupils', funded the Department for Education, as well as **Simpson's** 'Me and



My Mobile, supported by the Social Work Fund.

### 3.2 Infrastructure and facilities

During the current REF period, all colleagues and PGRs moved to the new, purpose-built, GBP330,000,000, multi-award-winning Waterside Campus. This strategic investment in institutional infrastructure and facilities has been important for sociology. Researchers now share flexible academic workspaces with colleagues within the multidisciplinary Faculty of Health, Education and Society and Faculty of Business and Law. This is enhancing collegiate dialogue, community-building, bid-development and strategic collaborations, as it is demonstrated by the developing collaborations with the Centre for Education and Research and the Diversity, Identity and Community Research Centre, resulting in the creation of interdisciplinary doctoral supervisory teams and current cooperation under **Farini's** leadership in the delivery of the large Horizon2020 project 'Child-UP'.

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

The unit has sought to contribute to the vitality and sustainability of Sociological research by forming national and international collaborations with renowned researchers, with immediate implications for the success of high impact research and income generation. A key feature has been the fast inclusion of UoN in national and international networks of research collaborators and beneficiaries. Such collaborations flourish from the researchers' excellent skills of interdisciplinarity, knowledge exchange with international partners, and impact-development with NGOs and policy-makers in diverse contexts. These experiences have also enabled researchers to mentor ECR colleagues in fostering collaborations, interdisciplinarity conversations, and research impacts. While the department is characterised by the internationalisation of its research and impact collaborations, it is also important to acknowledge its members' strong links with local, regional and national stakeholders. Colleagues continue to work on interdisciplinary research and evaluation with these longstanding partners, often in collaboration, or as active members of University of Northampton research centres external to the Unit of Assessment, such as ISII, IPSCJ and CER.

### 4.1 Collaboration with governance bodies for research impact

**Dytham's** series of research projects of devoted support of inclusive education includes collaborations with the University of Warwick and important stakeholders such as the Department of Education and Medwell-Hyde. **Dytham's** successful bids include: 'Improving the Evaluation of Outreach', funded by the Office for Fair Access and Department for Education (GBP60,000), 'Research to understand successful approaches to supporting most academically able disadvantaged pupils', funded the Department for Education (GBP39,000), 'Encouraging more girls to study maths and physics at A-Level: what works?', funded by the STEM Skills (GBP23,000), the 'Imagineerium Initiative', funded by: Arts Council England, Medwell-Hyde, the Premier Group and Think Higher via University of Warwick (GBP5,000) and the STEM Skills, funded by the STEM Skills Fund via Institute for Fiscal Studies (GBP5,896).

**Paterson-Young's** rich portfolio of research to tackle disadvantage and exclusion by improving services and practices include collaborations with the National Lottery, YMCA and large third sectors organisations such Goodwill Solutions and Prospects. Notable funding wins from **Paterson-Young** include several projects for the evaluation of educational and social services, 'Prospects' (GBP23,250), 'Building Better Opportunities Working Progress Evaluation' (GBP43,309) and the follow-up 'Building Better Opportunities WRAP Evaluation' (GBP53,918), 'Building Better Opportunities Working Progress Evaluation COVID-19' (GBP28,401), Goodwill Solutions', (GBP9,000), 'Transform Ageing Project' (GBP24,757), Social Wellbeing Contracts (GBP6,176), 'Up for the Cup' (GBP75,000), 'Daylight Centre Fellowships (GBP3,500). Important leadership roles undertaken by **Paterson-Young** include membership of the Ethics Committee in the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner and membership of the Restorative Justice Council. **Paterson-Young** recently has become a Trustee for the National Association for Youth Justice (NAYJ) and a member of the National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers (NOTA).

**Farini** is one of the Faculty of Health, Education and Society Patient Public Involvement Champions; he was also chosen to be the University Representative in the East Midlands Patient Public Involvement Committee.

**Callender's** research portfolio to explore inequality and disadvantage working with stakeholders include: ESRC 'Exploring Synergies within Volunteering in Law Enforcement and Public Safety in the UK and Japan' (GBP35,475), Community Sentence Treatment Requirements Evaluation (GBP95,698), Serious Violence Project (GBP72,296), Police Cadets Research (GBP15,000), East Midlands Special Operations Unit (GBP54,600). **Callender** also support as academic advisor the National Volunteer Police Cadets and he is a member of their programme board. **Callender** is academic advisor to the National Volunteer Police Cadets and was recently awarded a new evaluation project that feeds directly into the Ministry of Justice and Department of Health: 'Community Sentence Treatment Requirements'. In the framework of the 'Community Sentence Treatment Requirements' program, **Callender** sits in the boards for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Lead by **Callender**, the IPSCJ also facilitated a meeting between the Tokyo Metropolitan Authority and the UK Home Office to compare and share ideas about national policy and practice (2019).

Members of Sociology have been invited to perform expert and advisory roles over the current REF period for a wide range of national and international multidisciplinary, multiprofessional funding bodies as well as public bodies and third sector organisations. **Farini** has served as reviewer for COST, European Co-operation in the Field of Science and Technology, the Swiss Federal Government, UNESCO, the Newton Prize, the Italian Ministry for Education, University and Scientific Research, the Programme Rita Levi Montalcini, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships programme and recently has been appointed by the Italian Government as reviewer for research projects concerning the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on social services and education. **Chalari** is an Expert Evaluator of Postdoctoral Research Grants allocation for the Foundation of National Research (Greece) and the Greek Ministry of Finance. **Chalari** is also reviewer for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships programme.

#### 4.2 Successful research collaboration with Higher Education Institutions

Sociology is characterised by the wide array of collaboration between its members and Higher Education Institutions, demonstrated by collaboration to successful research initiatives and academic contributions. **Farini's** Horizon2020 Child-UP project (€3,000,000) aims to support agency and empowerment of migrant children in the access to education and social services has developed through ongoing collaborations with colleagues at Universities of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Seinajoki University, University of Liege, University of Dresden as well as the European School Heads Association (based in the Netherlands), the Fondation des Régions Européennes pour la Recherche l'Education (based in Belgium) and the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (based in Italy). 'Child-UP', develops a previous successful Erasmus+ project (SHARMED, €480,000) won by **Farini** whilst working for another institution in 2015 which has supported an ongoing partnership with the University of Jena.

Another project with the active involvement of **Farini**, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie action project includes SPACEX (€690,000), to transform urban space in places of democratic participation through public art sees the participation of 27 partners in 9 EU countries and 1 Third Country, Palestine, including world renowned academic institutions, research institutes, arts organisations, biennials, urban agencies, a film festival and a creative media agency. SPACEX involves The Royal College of Art, the National College of Art and Design (Dublin), the University of Amsterdam, the University of Vienna, the University of Cyprus, Tate, the Coventry biennial, the Athens Biennial, the Italian Institute for Documentary Film (Florence). We have supported PhD students as part of inter-university collaboration, for instance **Farini** supervises two students in cooperation with Regents' University in London.

**Callender** has developed a research partnership with the University of Tokyo and the University of Tsukuba in Japan with the aim to create societal and economic impact by increasing the number

of volunteers in law enforcement and public safety, thereby improving perceptions of safety in the community and citizens sense of civic responsibility.

#### 4.3 Engagement with scholarly and learned societies and fellowships

Members of the Sociology team have had leadership and founding roles in multidisciplinary associations and learned societies. **Farini** has been Vice-president of International Sociological Association. Research Committee 25, "Discourse and Society" (2010-2018), member of the European Sociological Association Research Network 4, "Sociology of Children and Childhood" (2009-current), founder of the London Educational Research Network for Social Justice (2015), founding member of the Centre for Educational Research and Scholarship (2014), member of the British Educational Research Association Special Interests Groups 'Early Childhood', 'Social Theory and Education' (2016-current), founder and member of the Laboratory for the Analysis of Interaction and Mediation (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, 2008-current) and member of Research Network On Trust Dynamics In The Governance Of Children And Youth (Roskilde University, 2012-current). **Farini's** leadership role is exercised also in the European Sociological Association Research Network "Sociology of Children and Childhood". **Pilkington** is a fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts and **Lehtonen** is member of the Feminist Studies Association and member of AtGender - the European Association for Gender Research, Education and Documentation. **Farini** is member of the PhD Programme for the School of Human and Social Sciences, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia as well as collaborating with the Munster Institute of Technology in supporting PhD students. **Chalari** is Visiting Research Fellow in Sociology at the University of Tokyo, Visiting Research Scholar at the Waseca University, Institute of Advanced Social Sciences, Research Associate at the Hellenic Observatory, London School of Economics.

#### 4.4 Dissemination of research: work with media, public outreach, wider roles with journals and prominent roles in conferences

Members of the UoN engage with media outlets to disseminate their research to the wider public. **Chalari** has participated BBC News, BBC World, BBC Radio, SkaiTV Greece and CTV Canada programmes, and has also written articles for The Economist and CNN. **Farini** has participated in BBC News, BBC Radio, SkyItalia programmes and has written articles for newspaper such as the East Anglia Daily times. The impact of **Callender** and **Paterson's** research has been covered by local and international media outlets.

Colleagues hold internationally-recognised disciplinary leadership roles. For example, serving terms as Editors or Editorial Board members for international, interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journals. **Farini** has been the founder and the editor of the Journal Language, Discourse and Society (2010-2018), **Chalari** is editor of the World Journal of Social Science Research (2016-current), **Dytham** is part of the International Journal of Social Research Methodology board (2018-current), **Lehtonen** is member of Editorial Board of MAI: Feminism & Visual Culture (2019-current) and **Paterson-Young** is member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Qualitative Criminal Justice and Criminology (2020-current) whilst contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals Encyclopaedia and to an edited book commissioned by Palgrave on impact aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals (2019-2020). All members within the unit review for journals that are leading within their discipline.

**Farini** was programme coordinator for the sessions of the research committee 'Language and Society' at the 2018 International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology (University of Toronto) and Programme Coordinator for the sessions of the same research committee at the 2016 International Sociological Association World Forum of Sociology (University of Vienna). Related to the ongoing partnership with the Japanese HEIs, **Callender** hosted the first International Conference on Volunteering in Policing, in Birmingham which included a range of academic speakers from UK, USA, Ireland and Japan (2019).

The disciplinary reputation of the sociology Unit of Assessment has been recognised via multiple invited keynotes at international multidisciplinary conferences in, for example, UK (**Farini**,

**Simpson, Dytham, Paterson-Young, Pilkington), Poland (Farini), Italy (Farini), Finland (Farini), Greece (Chalari), Japan (Chalari) and Canada (Chalari).**