

<b>Institution:</b> York St John University
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Education (UoA 23)
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>Overview</b></p> <p>Education at York St John University (YSJU) has developed significantly since the last research excellence framework (REF) exercise. This achievement is reflected in growth in the quantity and quality of outputs, the proportion of doctorally qualified staff and the numbers of postgraduate research students and programs. As a result, the university now provides a vibrant intellectual environment and a critical and creative scholarly culture for staff and students alike.</p> <p>The context of education at YSJU has a long and distinguished heritage dating back to its inception as a teacher training college in 1841. Its lineage to ecclesiastical origins is reflected in the previous formation of the Faculty of Education and Theology, which created the substantive focus of the 2008 research assessment exercise (RAE) and 2014 research excellence framework (REF) submissions. Since then, in the context of a university-wide restructure of academic schools that has enabled interdisciplinary synergies to develop, a new, contemporary structure has evolved, in which education sits alongside language and psychology. This has created opportunities for enhanced interdisciplinary and multi-professional ways of working, and a focus on mutually enriching priorities of strategic significance. The REF2021 Education unit submission is organised around three prevailing themes deriving from two key areas of academic provision: 1) Initial Teacher Education and 2) Children, Young People and Education. There is a clear expectation that all staff within these two areas are engaged in research and/or academic scholarship on the strategic themes of inclusive education, critical policy studies and/or transforming communities. These, in turn, form the academic spine of both postgraduate and undergraduate curricula and further permeate the work of numerous school partnerships, alliances and strategic relationships, including those of third-sector organisations and agencies and wider social, cultural, and professionally focused communities.</p> <p>The unit's performance during REF2014 was based on eleven staff members (9.4 full-time equivalent [FTE]), 40 outputs and two impact case studies. While this established a secure footing, changes in the REF guidelines and increasing levels of staff doctoral qualification and staff turnover combined to provide scope for the mobilisation of a new research and impact strategy to drive further development and growth in the intervening years. For example, while 77.5% of all outputs were graded at 2* or higher last time, the remainder (some 22.5% of outputs) fell below the threshold of internationally recognised work. Thus, the aim has been to ensure that all outputs are graded 2* or above and that a much higher proportion are ranked at 3* (internationally excellent) and 4* (world-leading), respectively. Similarly, the categories of "impact" and "environment" achieved baseline outcomes of 2* and 1* respectively in REF2014. The present research and impact strategy has been devised to accelerate the gains in progress towards international recognition through a strategically enhanced and reconfigured research infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Research strategy and developments since REF2014</b></p> <p>The university strategy has three priorities: inspiring learning, impactful research, and enabling our students to be clear about careers. The research strategy emphasises interdisciplinary working, demonstrating greater research excellence through external recognition, and wider dissemination of research as key goals. The new UoA research and impact strategy was conceived within this context by the School of Education, Languages and Psychology Academic Leadership Team. The strategic themes of inclusive education, critical policy studies and transforming communities were identified key strengths. These emerged as a result of various factors, including: the expertise of new staff (Clarke) with established research profiles; staff doctoral work and doctoral completions (Creasy, Buckles, Vincent, Elbra-Ramsay, Raymond, Rowe, Haines Lyon and Walker), existing and new national and international collaborations and partnerships (the European Network on Neoliberal Education Policy [ENNEP], see below;</p>

collaborative projects with University of British Columbia, Canada, Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and Liverpool Hope University; and the Erasmus bilateral relationship with University of Vic, Spain), and synergies between research, teaching and learning within the unit. As nascent research themes they thus derived from and reflected current activity and outputs and further foregrounded strategic priorities and accomplishments. While identified as separate themes, in reality they intersect, and the synergies provide opportunities for research collaboration. There is no assumed priority to the order in which they are presented below.

#### Critical policy studies

Our first strategic theme centres on theoretically informed and empirically grounded critical, cutting-edge analyses of developments in national and international education policy and is led by the work of Clarke. This theme is reflected in publications in leading international policy journals, authored and edited books by members of the unit and in national and international collaborative activities. Of particular note, for example, in 2017 the unit hosted a two-day workshop-conference of the ENNEP, attended by international policy scholars such Ball (University College London [UCL]), Wilkins (Goldsmiths, University of London), Allen (University of Sheffield), Bojesen (University of Winchester), Serpieri (University of Naples Federico II, Italy), Verger (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain) and Collet (University of Vic, Spain) as part of an Erasmus and bi-lateral partnership with the University of Vic, Spain. Such high-profile international alliances are complemented with similar strategic and nationally significant research partnerships. In collaboration with colleagues at MMU, for example, several conference symposia and writing projects have coalesced around the twin themes of critical policy studies and transforming communities. These have included research symposia at the British Education Research Association (BERA) conference (2016) and European Conference for Educational Research (ECER) (2017), leading to the production of high-calibre outputs, including a special issue of *Power and Education* (2018), with Hammersley-Fletcher and Schostak, as well as an edited book with Routledge (2020). Further collaborations have developed with UCL, in particular between Mills (UCL) and Clarke (YSJU) in conjunction with an ongoing Spencer Foundation funding proposal (Developing Research Literacy in Initial Teacher Education); and with Liverpool Hope University between Wood (YSJU) and Su (LHU), linked to policy critique in higher education, producing joint articles, a co-edited and co-authored book.

#### Inclusive education

As chair of the City of York's All-Age Autism Strategy Sub-group for Employment and co-chair of York Autism Community of Practice, Vincent has established numerous training partnerships and events developing the theme of inclusive education. These include collaborations with City of York Council and Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), and PRO Autism training group, working with various companies and organisations including Netsells, Flamingo Land, NHS and Ministry of Justice. Vincent has also organised the Autism and Employment: Barriers and Solutions to Meaningful Employment conference in partnership with the National Autistic Society and Ambitious About Autism. Such expertise is further reflected in his recent commission to provide written and oral evidence to Malta's Ministry of Education and Employment as well as through similar international accolades and alliances. For example, as part of a cross-Atlantic international network, Vincent will be reporting on the outcomes of participatory and cross-institutional studies of autistic students to the International Society for Autism Research Annual Meeting, in Seattle, Washington, USA in 2020.

#### Transforming communities

With explicit emphasis on school improvement, the work of Leach has played an instrumental role in transforming communities within and across the local region. One example is the Middlesbrough School Improvement Project (2018–20), achieving impact by removing barriers to learning; enhancing parental partnership through school engagement with parents and families; enhancing students' career and employability prospects; and facilitating transitions in student learning. Another, funded by the Yorkshire Innovation Fund (2014–20), was an applied training programme. With similar transformative potential the project engaged early years' practitioners as a means to improve the quality of their practice. In a different social and multidisciplinary context, Leeson (YSJU) continues to collaborate with Morgan at the University of Greenwich

(2011–present). The partnership is researching children with a parent in prison and/or mothers with addiction and also aims to examine the social and emotional impact on children of single parents operating at the interface of education and public health services.

Such multi-professional alliances, research partnerships and international collaborations have served to enhance the environment through complementary affiliations linked to staff development workshops and high-profile seminar events. For example, the unit has hosted a series of academic workshops, including sessions led by Thompson (Queensland University of Technology, Australia) on writing for journals, Torrance (MMU) on authorship and Sellar (MMU) on co-authoring. In addition, the unit has attracted leading national and international scholars to conduct academic and professionally focused seminars, including Melissa Benn (writer and campaigner) and the following professors: Reay (University of Cambridge), Mills (UCL), Vincent (UCL), Furedi (University of Kent), Lingard (University of Queensland), Misson (University of Melbourne), Pring (University of Oxford). The growth of national and international networks has also created opportunities to recruit international doctoral examiners from Sweden (Alerby, Umeå University) and Spain (Collect, University of Vic), as well as to enlist the service of other leading UK scholars such as Mentor (University of Oxford), Vincent (UCL) and Sambell (Edinburgh Napier University).

This synopsis of accomplishments since 2014 forms the basis of the new research and impact strategy, the essence of which permeates the culture of the school and so enables research, teaching and learning to flourish in complementary ways. In research terms, the present emphasis and configuration conveys an understanding of impact as that which effects “change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia” (UK Research and Innovation, 2020). The current submission is oriented around the following salient impact case studies: a) embracing and enacting agonistic democracy in teaching and teacher education and b) improving employment opportunities for autistic graduates through inclusive education. Both are predicated on the wider ambition to enhance civic ties and further transform social, cultural and professionally focused communities.

### Priority developmental areas

In terms of present and future plans, key priorities include:

1. Continuing to expand our postgraduate research community, so as to:
  - a. Continue to increase EdD and PhD enrolments and completions and build our research communities;
  - b. Provide supervisory opportunities for staff with recent doctoral completions;
  - c. Link the growth in postgraduate researcher (PGR) numbers to intensified activity in relation to our key research themes to develop critical mass in these areas.
2. Expand our research income through various means, including:
  - a. Continuing to develop our national and international collaborations around our key research themes;
  - b. Consolidating and expanding our research cultures and communities through seminars, workshops, conference participation and collaborative research partnerships;
  - c. Providing staff development around grant writing (e.g., two sessions held in September 2020 with Professor Robert Klassen, University of York, and Professor Martin Mills, UCL);
  - d. Continuing to expand the research profiles of our staff members and track records in terms of excellent publications.

## 2. People

### Staffing strategy and staff development

There are 43 academic staff (34.4 FTE) in the two areas of academic provision in Initial Teacher Education and Children, Young People and Education, with a small number of academic staff positioned elsewhere in the university (Stern and Creasy, affiliated with the School of Business)

contributing to the UoA. Of current staff members, four are lecturers and 31 are senior lecturers, with three professors, while 20 (category A staff) hold PhDs and a further 11 are working towards completion. Thus, whereas in 2014 60% of all staff were recorded as either qualified with or working towards a doctorate, in 2020 this figure has risen to 72% and grows every year. The composition of academic staff in the current cycle has continued to evolve in tandem with the changing emphasis and strategic priorities of the unit. Mutual enrichment of research activity with teaching and learning, coupled with expansion and diversification of the academic portfolio, has created new opportunities to elevate the status of research in a context of enhanced scholarship and where the growth of postgraduates (full-time and part-time researchers) has increased almost four-fold. For example, at the end of the REF2014 eligibility period there were just ten PGRs, while in 2020 there are currently 39 active postgraduates studying for doctoral degrees.

Such rapid expansion has prompted awareness and recognition of the need to develop research capacity not only to enhance the research culture of the school but, perhaps more significantly, in relation to making new strategic appointments. For example, the appointment of Clarke has enabled a higher profile for critical policy studies within the unit while simultaneously transforming the leadership of research and enhancing the process of mentoring colleagues towards improved research outcomes, project proposal writing and publications through co-authorship. The long-term strategy, articulated in REF2014, to ensure all staff become research active has continued to grow and develop under Clarke's expert influence, thus enabling staff to undertake more and better research.

Staff have an annual personal development review (PDR), with research as an integral part. Topics discussed include reviewing progress, setting objectives for published outputs, research engagement (grant applications, PGR supervision, scholarship, knowledge exchange) and research development (external visibility, conference attendance, networking). YSJU is a signatory on the Vitae Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, which directly informs our staff development approach. Our centralised research CPD programme (over 40 sessions) is aligned to the four core Vitae competencies and recognises staff individual development needs while also acknowledging that a common set of requisite personal and professional skills are needed for success. CPD delivery is mainly delivered by our professoriate and by external speakers (e.g. Professor Mark Reed delivered our impact workshop). Our new open data repository service (RaYDaR) and research repository (RaY) will further increase the impact and transparency of research at YSJU and support researcher development.

Increasing levels of exposure to research development opportunities through organised seminars, public lectures and bespoke workshop events (as noted above), led by Clarke and colleagues, have also served to increase levels of staff engagement in research. This, while securing an upward trajectory of staff with doctorates, has enabled the unit to keep pace with the recent expansion of PGRs. The recruitment strategy aligns with and enhances the evolving internal infrastructure and contemporary themes noted in Section 1. All new academic appointments since REF2014 have thus come either with doctoral degrees in cognate areas or a contractual pledge to achieve such within a specified period. Moreover, new appointments have been made judiciously, thus reinforcing existing areas of research strength as well as addressing new developmental priorities. One such appointment, for example, can be illustrated in the field of inclusion and special educational needs (Long, EdD PGR), others within the area of childhood and youth studies (Trussler; Yeomans, EdD PGR; Pugh, PhD PGR). In both cases the express intention was to impact the unit's thematic priorities positively and so sustain the ambition to transform communities through research-informed teaching across undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. In a different example, two members of staff who have recently obtained doctorates, Haines-Lyon and Walker, were promoted from fractional fixed-term contracts (0.5 FTEs) to tenured lecturer positions. Again, this reinforces the school's focused commitment to improving research, research-informed teaching and learning and further establishing a clear trajectory for ECRs developed in-house.

Further significant changes to enhance the research environment have been facilitated internally through deliberative recruitment practices linked to newly established research protocols. For example, the extant criteria for promotion from lecturer (grade 7) to senior lecturer in education (grade 8) are based on (research) achievements that reflect significant responsibility for research, including: 1) eligibility to supervise doctorates, 2) a track record of peer-reviewed research publications, 3) presenting at international conferences, 4) collaborating on funding bids to external bodies to support research. Since 2014, four staff members have been promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer within the school, reflecting their increased levels of research engagement and achievement. While the number of professors (2.2 FTE) and associate professors (0.6 FTE) has remained relatively stable, the number of staff with doctorates has grown significantly. For example, in 2014 just nine staff held doctorates and submitted to the REF, while in 2020 there are 15 staff (with significant responsibility for research) with doctorates being submitted.

### PGRs

Numbers have grown from just ten PGRs in 2014, and one PhD completion, to 39 PGRs and eight completions in the current counting period.

Year	Degree	New starters	Total enrolled (for part or whole year)	Completions
2014–15	PhD	3	13	1
2015–16	PhD	5	16	0
2016–17	PhD	1	16	0
	EdD	7	10	0
2017–18	PhD	5	20	0
	EdD	5	14	0
2018–19	PhD	0	20	2
	EdD	10	23	0
2019–20	PhD	2	17	5
	EdD	4	26	0

The granting of research degree awarding powers (RDAP) has enabled a significant rise in PGRs since 2015, many of whom initially were internal staff seeking professional development. The recent flow of completing graduates has created a new and expanding pool of eligible doctoral supervisors (e.g., Raymond, Elbra-Ramsay, Haines-Lyon, internally; Buckles, Creasy, Rowe and Vincent, externally), comprising a broad range of research interests and expertise across both Initial Teacher Education and Children, Young People and Education, with other completions anticipated as the EdD continues to mature. Of the submitted staff, Clarke, Stern, Vincent, Wood, Walton, Leeson, Creasy, Buckles, Leach, Haines-Lyon, Raymond and Elbra-Ramsay currently supervise either PhD or EdD students within the school, supervision which is based on the relevant Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and institutional guidelines (80 % of the UoA).

YSJU has well-established processes for induction, training, and monitoring of PGR students. Formal reviews of PGR student progress are conducted every six months by academics external to the supervisory team. Progress is monitored centrally four times a year (by Research Degree Committee). All supervisory meetings are logged. Supervisory teams are made up of multiple academic staff from the PGR student supervisory register. To be added to the register, staff are required to meet stringent criteria for PGR supervision eligibility pertaining to engagement in research, continual professional development and formal YJSU training. Endorsement from Heads of School or School Research Leads is also required. Applications are assessed by a central committee of senior research staff (again, by Research Degree Committee). It is mandatory that all supervisory teams have at least one member of staff with experienced supervisory status (have previously supervised a PhD student to successful completion). In addition, all PGR students have a PGR tutor who is available to provide support outside of the supervisory team.

All students undertake needs analysis periodically and an individually tailored training programme is created. The needs analysis is based on competencies in the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. Support is provided by supervisory teams and via a centralised PGR training programme that includes core and supplementary workshops at each year of study. Like our staff training programme, our PGT training programme aligns with the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. Core parts of the programme include Research Ethics and Integrity, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for Research, Data Management, and Copyright and Intellectual Property rights. These sessions are compulsory for all PGR students. A range of other central and local support is available to PGR students that include (1) access to centralised services (e.g. Student Services, Chaplaincy, Library and Learning Services, Careers); (2) access to a stipend of up to £900 (£450 part-time) to support travel and consumables associated with their research and professional development; (3) access to the YSJU Graduate Centre providing study space and remote access to a range of specialist software (e.g., AMOS, MPlus, Comprehensive Meta-Analysis); (4) opportunity to complete a postgraduate certificate in academic practice to achieve associate fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA); (5) administrative support provided by the School and Research Office (RO) and (6) various PGR events held throughout the year (e.g., Three Minute Thesis (3MT), Bake Your Thesis, and the annual PGR conference).

### **Equality and diversity**

UoA23 sits within a broader context of support for equality and diversity at YSJU which has implemented several initiatives which ensure policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent. This is formalised in the YSJU Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy and the targets within the YSJU 2026 strategy (e.g., 10% BAME student and staff population; all staff are engaged in equality and diversity training and development appropriate to their role; median gender pay gap below 10%; 95% of staff think the university is a good place to work). Equality impact assessments are a routine part of annual monitoring and progress towards YSJU targets are reported to executive board and the governing body on a yearly basis. Of additional note, YSJU is a member of the Athena SWAN Charter (and is currently applying for a Bronze Award), a Stonewall Diversity Champion (ranked 49th place on the 2020 Top 100 Employers list) and Top 20 Trans employer, a Disability Confident employer, and a Mindful Employer. There are also several active staff networks available for staff to join that align with these awards and this agenda including the LGBT+, BAME and Disability staff networks.

Education complied fully with the YSJU institutional code of practice in selecting research outputs. The UoA lead also undertook Advance HE training on equality and mitigating bias as part of the role. Due to the small size of our submission, it is not possible to report a profile at UoA level here while also complying with HESA guidelines on anonymous reporting when presenting Equality and Diversity data (e.g., all our percentages would be based on less than 22.5 FTE). However, equality and diversity data for the UoA was reviewed internally following the completion of output selections and reported to both the SALT and Athena SWAN development groups as part of promoting greater diversity and inclusion at UoA, school, and institutional levels. Our data was also included as part of an equality and diversity impact assessment at institutional level.

### **3. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

Within the REF period, the unit has accumulated approximately £300,000 in external funding, with income spanning the full range of education, children, and youth service contexts. Successful bids have usefully consolidated the performance of REF2014 while strategically evolving into new areas of research and academic scholarship. Without exception, successful funding proposals have embraced elements of collaboration, partnership working and often broader international networks and alliances reflecting the prevailing research themes (inclusive education, critical policy studies, transforming communities), underpinning outputs and associated impact.

Notable income included £144,821 in funding from the EU'S Erasmus funding scheme for the Social Economy Project led by Meredith, which reflected the social justice commitments of the unit. Meanwhile Stern and colleagues have accumulated circa £108,000 in conference income linked to the overlapping themes of education, spirituality, and religion, with several international research conferences organised through YSJU. These include:

- International Seminar on Religious Education and Values (ISREV) (2014, £48,758);
- Value and Virtue in Practice-Based Research (2014, 2015, 2016, circa £20,000);
- Prayer Spaces in Schools (2017, £22,534);
- Farmington Institute research scholarship support funds (2014, £2,000);

More recently in 2020, Bloom was part of a successful bid for £269,680 to the Wellcome Trust led by University of Roehampton, titled Research-2-practice: Research-informed science lesson plans for busy teachers, of which YSJU was awarded £18,080. Vincent was awarded £8,500 by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust to examine the specific employment needs of autistic graduates in the context of COVID-19. This award to Vincent follows his prestigious Churchill Fellowship (£5,500, March 2017 in addition to HESA reported research income), awarded by the Trust to "exceptional scholars", in this case to establish and develop research in the area of autism and neurodiversity.

Further income (in addition to HESA research income) has been externally sourced by Leach from regional agencies to conduct research projects and independent evaluations with change agendas for inclusion, school improvement and the professional development of early years practitioners in local communities. For example, in 2014–15, the Yorkshire Innovation Fund awarded £30,400 to evaluate the contribution, quality and impact of the Sue Overton Applied Practice training programme upon the professional development of early years practitioners and contemporary practice. Also, during 2015, the Yorkshire Innovation Fund awarded £7,100 to assist Leach in conducting a feasibility study for Home-Start Ryedale Ltd as a means to prepare the ground for a larger funding bid building on the charity's work. Finally, from January 2018 to March 2020, Middlesbrough Borough Council awarded £19,300 to support Leach in conducting an independent evaluation of the Middlesbrough School Improvement Project. As noted above, this was to examine the project's impact in removing barriers to learning, enhancing parental partnership and school engagement with parents and families, enhancing students' career and employability prospects and facilitating transitions in student learning. Meanwhile, Stern's successful application for external funding (2019) to the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA) (£43,000), enabled participation in The Existential Problems Experienced in Old Age – International Perspective project, contained both an inclusive and transformative aspiration.

In addition to these procurements, several scholars have submitted funding proposals to leading research councils, charitable foundations, trusts and external funding agencies aligned with the prevailing trajectory of work. We consider the increase in this activity to be reflective of the upward trajectory of the UoA. The bids have also served to establish broader national and international links to develop research networks, academic scholarship, outputs and impact, and thereby enhance the relationship of research with teaching, learning and collaborative working. For example, in 2018 and 2019, as part of the European Network on Neoliberal Education Policy (ENNEP), Clarke was involved in assembling the European Union COST Action funding bids, bringing together institutions from 16 European Union countries. Such connections helped galvanise the ENNEP, resulting in a two-day workshop, utilising catalyst funding (£10,000) to host a research event at YSJU.

On the theme of transforming communities, and in collaboration with members of the Cathedrals Group of researchers led by the University of Cumbria, Wood was part of a team recently successful in securing funding (£2,500) for a scoping review, "What turns space(s) into place(s)? Stories of resilience and fragility" (2019). The partnership went on to produce a co-authored article published in the *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development* (2019) as well as a co-authored book with Bloomsbury (2020).

In the context of competing for internal research funds, several scholars have successfully secured catalyst funding to enable the development of new networks, research projects and/or testing of prospective impact case studies. Most notably, for example, Clarke received £8,500 catalyst funding for the aforementioned ENNEP Conference hosted at YSJU (2017). Clarke and Wood further secured £859 to assemble *Touching, Feeling, Thinking: A Symposium on Embodiment, Aesthetics, Affect and Education*, and another £1,800 to promote critical media literacies in local schools. Additionally, Walton received seed funding (£1,778) for a pilot study entitled “The Motivations and Outcomes of Study Abroad Among UK Undergraduates Studying Japanese and Korean Languages”. Wood was successful in securing quality-related (QR) funding: first, to support a research investigation into the positioning of parents as stakeholders in higher education, creating the foundation of a chapter in the foreshadowed Bloomsbury publication with Dr Su (2020); and, secondly, to support an enquiry into the enduring influence of Sir Alec Clegg’s educational philosophy and leadership practice in the West Riding of Yorkshire (2018–19, £775), leading to a publication in the *Journal of Educational Administration and History*.

Vincent has successfully secured internal funding several times in the last four years. On three separate occasions linked to different projects, he has secured the following small grants: Student as Researchers fund (2016–19, £2,894); catalyst funding to develop researching autism and employment (2018–19, £2,000) and QR/impact case study funding (2018–20, £3,000) to develop impact case projects.

The process of procuring research funds, both internally and externally, has been facilitated by the university’s expanding research infrastructure and new programme of investment dedicated to achieving impactful research. We have benefited from a new central RO, which includes a head (1.0 FTE) and 5.15 FTE staff. The RO is responsible for overseeing research governance and compliance, supports grant applications, manages PGR student experience, coordinates staff research training and monitors research performance. This has relieved academics in the UoA of substantive administrative duties associated with research supervision, allowing us to maintain a high-quality experience as we expand our PGR cohort numbers. The RO directly improved the quality of support for research grant applications, as evidenced in the increased number, range and type of the UoA’s grant applications.

The new Business Development and Knowledge Exchange Office (BDKEO), which includes a director (1.0 FTE) and 13.5 FTE staff, supports schools in increasing the range and scope of applied research, business development and knowledge exchange and is our main conduit for impact and public engagement. It helped gain accreditation for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) and registered YSJU with Innovate UK, as an approved KTP knowledge base deliverer. It was integral to YJSU achieving Silver Watermark accreditation from the National Co-ordinating Centre of Public Engagement (NCCPE).

Partnerships and local, national, and international alliances play a critically central role in the determination to transform communities. Through the involvement of key stakeholders the unit simultaneously brings together an increasingly experienced academy with strategic partners to promote inclusive research practice and so align with the institution-wide framework to secure civic ties and further enhance social justice.

In addition to the increasing centrality of research, reflected through recently amplified university-wide facilities, the unit has successfully mobilised a hot-desking system to ensure the full integration of PGRs and ECRs, visiting professors, fellows and research assistants within the working space of the school. This is further supported with up-to-date IT and library facilities and online support (with a 44% increase in investment), along with designated budgets annually for academic books, research materials (including a 93% increase in journal titles), web-based support and dissemination of research.



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

The current submission draws on a wide range of esteem indicators, in part reflected through editorships and editorial board memberships of international academic journals. Clarke and Stern are lead editors of the international journals *Research in Education* and *British Journal of Religious Education*, respectively. Clarke is a board member of *Power and Education* while Stern is board member of several academic journals, including: *British Journal of Religious Education*; *Religious Education*; *Journal for the Study of Spirituality*; *Other Education: The Journal of Educational Alternatives*; *Greek Journal of Religious Education* and *Pedagogika Szkoły Wyższej* (the Polish Pedagogy of Higher Education journal). Wood is editorial board member for *Research in Education*.

Clarke is also editor of two special issues in *Research in Education*: one on teacher education and virtue ethics, with Phelan (University of British Columbia, Canada) and Back (Kaye College, Israel); and a second on democracy and education with Bojesen (University of Winchester) and Collet (University of Vic, Spain). A third example is with the *European Educational Research Journal*, a special issue on the changing nature of public education in Europe with Mills (UCL), Mockler (University of Sydney, Australia) and Singh (Griffith University, Queensland, Australia). A fourth, with Schostak (MMU) and Hammersley-Fletcher (MMU), resides in *Power and Education*, examining the process of rethinking democracy and education.

Staff members with significant responsibility for research are actively engaged in peer reviewing of international journals and academic books of leading publishing houses. Clarke reviews for a number of prestigious journals including the *British Educational Research Journal*, *Critical Studies in Education*, *Journal of Education Policy*, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *Anthropology & Education* and *Power and Education*. He also reviews academic book manuscripts for leading publishers Palgrave and Routledge. Stern is peer reviewer for the *British Journal of Religious Education*, *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, *Journal for the Study of Spirituality*, *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, *Journal of Applied Philosophy* and *Journal of Education for Teaching*. He also reviews academic books for several publishers including Bloomsbury, Learning Matters, Oxford University Press, Palgrave and Routledge. Buckles, Creasy, Haines Lyon, Leach, Vincent, Walton and Wood are also actively engaged in peer reviewing, conducting reviews for a wide range of international titles including: *Power and Education* (Buckles, Creasy, Haines Lyon, Leach); *Journal of Further and Higher Education* (Creasy); *Research in Post-Compulsory Education* (Leach); *International Journal of Research and Practice*, *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* and *Advances in Autism* (Vincent); *Educational Action Research* (Walton); *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *Research in Education*, *European Journal of Higher Education*, *Educational Review*, *Studies in Higher Education* (Wood). Wood and Leeson have reviewed academic books for Bloomsbury and Palgrave Macmillan, and SAGE, respectively, in the current period.

In terms of research grant reviewing, Clarke has been international reviewer and panel member for research centre proposals for the National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT), Chile, since 2012 and international reviewer of research grants for the National Science Centre, Poland, since 2015. Since 2019 he has served as international reviewer for New Opportunities for Research Funding Agency Cooperation in Europe (NORFACE).

Further favourable relationships, collaborations and esteemed contributions have emerged through invitations to examine doctoral theses in universities across the UK and internationally. Regarding the latter, Clarke has served as doctoral examiner for the University of Auckland, New Zealand (2018), while Stern has examined for University of Newcastle, Australia (2016), Federation University, Australia (2019) and, most recently, the Australian Catholic University (2020). Both have also examined extensively across the UK, with Clarke examining for the University of Chester (2015, 2019), MMU (2017, 2018, 2020), University of East Anglia (2019), Canterbury Christ Church University (2020), Leeds Beckett University (2020) and University of Edinburgh (2020). Stern has stood as general secretary of ISREV throughout the REF period (organising seminars and collaborating with more than 300 researchers from 35 countries

around the world) and as secretary of the John Macmurray Fellowship (collaborating with scholars from four different continents). This has established a network and reputation, resulting in numerous invitations to examine doctoral theses for the Institute of Education, UCL (2014), Canterbury Christ Church University (2017, 2018, 2019), Edge Hill University (2017), Liverpool Hope University (2016, 2018), University of Brighton (2018) and University of Hull (2020). Additionally, Walton has examined for Dublin City University (2017), Middlesex University (2018) and University of Chester (2019), while Wood has examined doctoral theses at the University of Derby (2016) and Leeds Beckett University (2017).

Respected affiliations and strong working relationships have been strategically augmented through the organisation and convening of international research conferences and through further involvement in academic presentations. Clarke convened the ENNEP (2017), attracting delegates from universities in England, Spain and Italy, leading to EU Cost Action bid (noted above). He also organised *Touching, Feeling, Thinking: A Symposium on Embodiment, Aesthetics, Affect and Education* (2019), drawing delegates from Brunel University London, MMU, University of Aberdeen and Goldsmiths, University of London. In partnership with Skills Development Scotland and the Career Development Institute, Vincent was centrally involved in organising the Career Guidance and Development Conference, University of the West of Scotland (2020). In collaboration with Małgorzata Walejko and the University of Szczecin, Poland, Stern and colleagues convened two academic research conferences, one in York in 2019 and one in Poland in 2020, involving academics from 16 countries. Stern has also been centrally involved in convening the following academic and professionally focused conferences and seminar presentations: *Value and Virtue in Practice-Based Research* (2014, 2015, 2016); ISREV (2014); John Macmurray Fellowship Annual Conference: *Conditions of Equality: John Macmurray on Equality, Freedom and Common Humanity* (2015); John Macmurray Fellowship Annual Seminar: *Macmurray, Fear and Reciprocity* (2016); *Prayer Spaces in Schools* (2017); *Alone Together: An International Pandisciplinary Symposium on Solitude in Community* (2019).

The reputation and esteem of several scholars within the unit has been underscored through invitations to deliver keynote speeches, talks and/or seminar presentations at other institutions internationally. Clarke has given keynote talks to the Annual Conference of the Scottish Education Research Association (Dundee, 2016) and Hong Kong University Faculty of Education Annual Research Student Conference (Hong Kong, 2016) and has been invited to present a keynote at the Nordic Educational Research Association Annual Conference (Denmark, 2021). Stern has given two public lectures at Darden College of Education & Professional Studies, Old Dominion University (Virginia, USA, 2017) and also at Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät der Universität Tübingen (Germany, 2017) and ISREV (Nuremberg, 2018). He has also presented to *Crises of Autonomy in Universities and Higher Education: An International Scientific Conference* (Szczecin, Poland, 2018); *AULRE: The network for learning, teaching and research in religion and education* (Birmingham, 2018); *Value and Virtue in Practice-Based Research* (York, 2014, 2015, 2016); John Macmurray Fellowship Annual Seminars (York, 2015, 2016; Sheffield, 2017, 2018, 2019); *Alone Together* (York, 2019; Szczecin, 2020) and *Philosophy of Education Conference* (Kraków, 2020). Additionally, Walton has been invited several times to present as keynote speaker at Science & Scientist conferences, organised by Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Institute in India, including Bangalore (2016), Nepal (2017) and New Jersey (2019).

Since 2014, the unit has achieved growth in relation to scholars leading and participating on national and international co-authorship partnerships and auspicious collaborations. As member of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (PESGB), Clarke has served as co-organiser of the PESBG West Yorkshire branch (collaborating with Leeds Trinity University) since 2019. Collaborating with Phelan, University of British Columbia, Canada, he has led on the authorship of two journal articles (*Power and Education*, 2015; *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry*, 2019) and a co-authored book (Routledge, 2017). With Back (Kaye College, Israel), Clarke and Phelan jointly authored a recent special issue and editorial in *Research in Education* (2019). Further, with Collet (University of Vic, Spain) and Bojesen (University of Winchester, UK), Clarke produced the aforementioned special issue of *Research in Education* (2019), as well as

establishing Erasmus and bilateral partnership exchanges (2018–19). A third collaboration with Schostak and Hammersley-Fletcher (MMU), led to publications with *Power and Education* (2019) and an edited book with Routledge (2020).

In addition to Stern's various visiting scholarships and academic affiliations, including collaborations as visiting scholar at the Darden College of Education & Professional Studies, Old Dominion University, Virginia, USA (2017) and at Katholischen Fakultät-Theologische der Universität Tübingen, Germany (2016), he is also an active member of the Religious Education Association (2016–), member of the British Personalist Forum (2016–), member of the PESGB and member of BERA. Moreover, he is recent guest editor for *Pedagogia Christiana* (2019–20, two special editions on solitude) and honorary academic advisor for the Centre for Religious and Spirituality Education, Hong Kong Institute of Education (2008–15), as well as consultant to the Identifying Principles and Big Ideas for Religious Education project hosted at University of Exeter (2016–19).

More broadly across the unit, Creasy has collaborated with Corby at Teesside University co-authoring the academic monograph *Taming Childhood?* (Palgrave, 2019), while Vincent has partnered with academics at Leeds Beckett University, University of Portsmouth and Ambitious About Autism on a funding proposal to STAGE, as well as with colleagues at Living Autism on a bid to Innovate UK. Walton has partnered with the Scientific and Medical Network, organising and facilitating a conference weekend (2019), funded by the Salvia Foundation and attended by 14 academics, including four PGRs from YSJU. Moreover, Wood and Leeson have collaborated with academics at Liverpool Hope University (Su) and the University of Greenwich (Morgan), respectively, on joint writing projects and funding proposals leading to the publication of peer-reviewed articles and books.

The contemporary evolution of the unit since 2014 has occurred during a cycle of radical transformation and change: two institutional restructures in a period of only three years (2016 and 2019). Regardless, the unit has successfully identified three thematic priorities which both build upon the baseline accomplishments of the previous REF cycle, while developing discernible new lines of research enquiry that reflect and constitute already established but expanding areas of academic provision. This has emerged contemporaneously with the development of the new School of Education, Language and Psychology to facilitate and create new opportunities for interdisciplinary and multi-professional collaborations, as well as research-capacity building that draws on a rich vein of shared practice and academic cross-fertilisation. The enhanced trajectory of complementary research themes, matched with the continued growth of research-active staff who have doctorates and led by strong local leadership and management within the newly formed school, has produced a picture of robust health, strength and optimism for the future of education research at YSJU.