

Institution: University of Bolton

Unit of assessment: (A3) Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy

Section 1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

Strategic aims for research and impact

The University of Bolton is committed to the fundamental principles of a Teaching Intensive, Research Informed (TIRI) approach, emphasising that the University will be selective in research, supporting research only: (i) where research activity contributes directly to teaching or (ii) where research generates an operating income that contributes a net surplus to the University's core endeavour (i.e. its teaching activity). It is within this context that we will be a Teaching Intensive, Research Informed institution. The faculty of Health and Wellbeing is multi-disciplinary and includes Nursing and Midwifery, Social Care, Social Work, Early Years, Community Development and Youth work, Clinical and biomedical, Dental Technology and Sport. In terms of the research environment this allows for the development of multi-disciplinary research projects and the ability to draw upon expertise whilst having shared ethos and goals, the first case study presented here is based upon this multi-disciplinary approach.

Research groups:

In line with the TIRI agenda and the UOA's research impact strategy, several research groups are presented. These groups are formed of academic staff in nursing and allied health fields who have responsibilities for the development of undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes, as well as supervision of professional doctorate and PhD students. Research from both groups not only provides knowledge transfer that applies to the community, business and industry but supports the teaching strategy across the university, to help deliver quality research that leads to innovative and highly effective teaching for our undergraduate and postgraduate students. With the support of internal funding awards, all groups are actively applying for funds and seeking to create an open research environment with publications in open access journals. Research integrity is supported throughout the unit by ensuring that all research is conducted in line with ethical and professional frameworks.

Group 1 The importance of professional values and self-care in nurse education

This group looks at ways to develop trainee nursing associate's and nursing students' professional values and the self-care strategies that can assist them in providing compassionate care. They also explore new and innovative ways of delivering teaching through interactive online platforms such as Articulate. Important values such as compassion are explored through research to assist staff in their teaching and improve on the students understanding and demonstration of such values in practice. This work includes academics from Social Care and Social Work as well as the Nursing team, which reflects engagement with consideration of values within Health and Social Care which reflect an integrated approach to both research and practice.

The group have also created an innovative quality-assured programme of education for carers in the care home sector. The project aims to provide education whilst providing opportunities for people working within and aspiring to work in the care homes sector.

Over the next five years, research will be undertaken to evaluate the long-term impact of this course on practice and the community.

The University of Bolton Care Home Education Award has been funded by Health Education England with the prime objectives of **1.** Developing educational experiences which are bespoke for those working within the independent sector. **2.** Enabling staff to experience an educational programme of study to increase their knowledge and skills of caring for older people living in the care home. **3.** Enhance the care and improve outcomes for people living in the care home. **4.** Enhance integrated working and team working within the care home. **5.** The quality Assured educational programme will create an ethos of value, valuing the people who are caring and being cared for.

Group2: Developing nurse education to meet the demands of health care

This group focuses on the development of nurse education to explore how this impacts the future of the nursing workforce and wider health implications for patients and society. The Bolton model for nurse education has grown from strength to strength and has been implemented into many other NHS trusts across the UK. Continuing research into the impact this course has on healthcare organisations and student experience is ongoing.

Future strategic aims and goals for research and impact

From the selected case studies, future strategic aims are to explore how the Bolton Model has been implemented into national courses held at satellite sites and collaborate with other universities that have used the model in their nursing degree courses to produce research that measures the overall impact of student experience and patient care, concerning the national demand for nurses in the UK. A further goal is to expand on this research into professional values with our strategic partners at other universities and healthcare providers who align with the Trainee Nursing Associate programmes, to measure the impact this training has on students in practice. This will help us to understand the wider implications of the professional values training and continue to develop and adapt the programme in line with changing patient, student and organisational needs.

Further research activities aim to assess the impact compassion, mental health and wellbeing training has on practitioners, is ongoing with strategic partners such as North West Ambulance Service, and Greater Manchester Health Innovation. Internal collaboration between other UOA's in Psychology is currently underway to develop and research the implications of positive psychology interventions for nursing associates.

Group 3: Sport

Area 1: Chronobiology and Sports Performance. This area is engaged in research that considers the time-of-day regulation of certain physiological process within the human body, and how they either limit or advance sports performance. Also, this area considers aspects of environmental physiology, principally the impact of time-zone transition related to global sports competition and training.

This area has two PhD students and collaborates with Liverpool John Moores University and the Aspire Academy in Qatar. This research also directly informs core content of the Sport Rehab (MSc), and Strength and Conditioning (MSc) programmes. To date, this

research has produced a series of peer-reviewed publications in this present REF cycle, has contributed to the University's TEDx event, and been disseminated at both national and international conferences.

*Area 2: Sports Psychology and Sociology, and Development. **Group Members:***

This research area works in collaboration with colleagues at four other institutes of higher education.

Themes of Research: 1. Systems approaches to transforming sport and physical activity participation. 2. Physical activity and health promotion in diverse populations. 3. Participant and talent development systems and pathways. 4. Contemporary issues in sport, culture and society.

The research focuses on the delivery of applied interventions with professional teams (Premier League football club) and/or professional athletes (GB gymnast/Super League Rugby-League player). The research provides a reflective insight into the interventions delivered and their perceived effectiveness to meet the needs of the individuals. Each study attempts to bridge the gap between theory and applied practice, by critically evaluating and challenging current practice (for example BPS guidelines around clinical referral) and existing literature (ineffectiveness of solely delivering mental skills to professional athletes) when working with professional athletes across a range of sports.

The studies from this work are integrated as part of teaching every week. The principal investigator teaches the theoretical component of the module and then provides students with case studies (taken from the research) to demonstrate how theory can (and in most cases cannot) be translated into an applied context. These case studies enable a topic to be 'brought alive' for students and are an excellent way to check the students' knowledge and understanding of the topic area being delivered.

*Area 3: Sports Biomechanics. **Group Members***

This area of research is concerned with investigating an integrated approach to injury and performance paradigms. Recently, this research has involved exploring the role of advanced biomechanical techniques in quantifying movement strategies adopted in dynamic changes of direction in sports, which has implications for improving movement efficiency and reducing common lower limb injuries. This work has been utilised to support commercial activity out of the University's ADC, as well as informing the curriculum on both the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (Sport Science and Strength and Conditioning). Specifically, this has involved research partnerships and scientific support with local professional rugby league and football teams, leading to opportunities for students to engage in placements and research activity that have directly contributed to major project modules.

Furthermore, in other discipline specific undergraduate and postgraduate modules, students are encouraged to adopt a similar holistic approach, as demonstrated by the research, to reactive practical problem-based scenarios.

Section 2. People

Staffing strategy and staff development

Faculty breakdown:

The Faculty of Health and Wellbeing is the largest in the university with 175 members of staff and is comprised of 5 academic areas: Nursing and Midwifery, Health, Community, Early Years and Social Work; Clinical and Biomedical; Sport Science, and Dental Technology. The faculty is led by a Dean, with each area having a head of School or Divisional lead, a collaborative approach has been used to establish a research culture and support the development of staff who are new to academia through varied research projects and PhD support. This has been supported with the presence of 1 Teaching Professor / 1 Emeritus professor / 1 Associate Teaching Professor / 2 Assistant Professors. There are increased numbers of staff with PhDs (22) and research experienced staff are supporting the development of increased supervision capacity (10). There are currently 14 Staff undertaking PhD or Professional Doctorates. There is a research coordinator for each of the divisions within the Faculty. Also, many staff members are working on several research proposals. The relative newness of the staff to the University and their professional identity is thus being linked with a significant increase in academic / research skills. This is lead through more experienced academics.

Across all departments and UOA.s, the university is committed to supporting all academic staff to attain a doctorate. In this context, plans to help academic staff who have recently completed a doctorate sustain a good level of research output are ongoing. Staff are encouraged and given the opportunity to do a professional doctorate in healthcare or PhD in a chosen field, to seek promotion in their roles and specific areas. Each staff member has a Personal Review each year and this includes consideration of the research profile and associated professional goals

The growth of professional programmes has considered the importance of research and there is increased proposal to undertake Service evaluation and other projects. Since 2019, the University has been part of the Health Innovation Manchester which will offer increased opportunities for the Faculty to increase research opportunities and those for knowledge exchange which fits with the remit of the Faculty well. There are a number of research hubs established which are aimed at helping increased research outputs.

Staff who are currently not research active are encouraged to engage with colleagues and research groups to explore possible avenues to publish previous work. In addition, support for students wishing to publish their research within one of the groups is available and encouraged through supervision. The University also has a mentoring academy.

Support mechanisms for training and supervision of PGR students

The university considers PhD students as fundamental to the research strategy and TIRI agenda. Their active engagement in research, fresh perspective on key issues, ability to work closely with students and share their experience as PhD students is a distinctive contribution which can complement the inputs from academic staff. The faculty has increased the Number of Masters students which is aimed at increasing numbers progressing the PhD. There is a well established provision in Sport Science (MSc Strength and Conditioning, and MSc Sports Rehab), and Clinical and Biomedical and there are new numbers in Social Care and Health, Community Development and Youth

Work and Early Childhood Studies and Social Work, Dental Technology this growth will complement existing PG provision.

Support for researchers & PG students

As staff develop within the faculty there are a number who are in the process of working towards doctoral study.

Numbers undertaking PhD / Doctoral study: There are 7 in the area of sport currently undertaking PhDs; there are 2 in Nursing and Midwifery with a further 11 undertaking Prof Doc, there are 5 staff undertaking PhDs in Health and Society, with a further 1 undertaking and Prof Doc and 1 a Dc Ed, there are also 2 other currently applying, in Dental Technology one staff member is undertaking Prof Doc and in Clinical and Biomedical there are currently 3 people undertaking Prof Docs

There is a strategy to supporting the development of academics which is based upon a multi-disciplinary approach and the team being supported by more experienced academics to increase the capacity within the faculty the team. This includes training and mentoring of those with a PhD by more experienced supervisors. This includes the completion of a Supervision module with the School of Education. Currently, Health and Social Science have 5 staff who can offer supervision, Clinical and Biomedical have 7 MDs and 2 PhDs, Sport have 4, Dental Technology 1 and Nursing and Midwifery 3

It is also noteworthy that since 2018 there are a number of new masters and a professional doctorate offered in the faculty, which is aimed at providing further doctoral opportunities.

Promotes equality and diversity

The Faculty is highly committed to the promotion of equality and diversity and it is evident within the curriculum offer. Staff come from a range of diverse cultures and backgrounds. The university operates an equality and diversity policy in its recruitment of staff.

Staff have taken part in the research training and workshops which are aimed at encouraging and supporting participation in research activity. This is based upon a knowledge exchange and multi-disciplinary approach whereby those who are more experienced guide those who are new to research, which is related to their focus being based upon practice. The development of research is promoted within the individual Personal Reviews which allow members of staff to create an action plan around their development including undertaking doctoral study.

Section 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Research Income

Funding was provided for PhD work September 2016

Conference attendance and open access publications

Additional income for research has been spent or is planned in the following areas

The Faculty has been working with Health Innovation Manchester since 2018 and this has allowed us to become involved in research across Greater Manchester and will eventually

create experience and Bid opportunities: The current strands of activity where the University is placed is: Service User and Patient involvement, Integrated approaches to Health and Social Care, Diabetic City Challenge and Technology in health care

Research Infrastructure

Research Facilities

Access to software packages such as SPSS, NVivo, and AMOS to assist in the analysis and organisation of qualitative and quantitative data for research projects. The Graduate school offers a series of seminars and workshops to guide PG students and staff through the research processes. There are opportunities for new academics to work with more experienced academics

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

Collaborators and partnerships

A strength of the university is its engagement with regional, national and international collaborative partnership networks. Researchers engaged with beneficiaries throughout 2014-2020 and are ongoing. In Nursing and allied health, this is evidenced through ongoing collaborative partnerships with several local and National NHS trusts, Greater Manchester Health Innovation, North West Ambulance Service, University of Salford, and Manchester Metropolitan University. Social Work is part of the Greater Manchester Social Work Academy links the regional Local Authorities and the HEIs and includes a research and knowledge development strand. Since 2013, and up until 2018, the area of sport has partnered with the Rugby Football League (RFL) as part of a long-term audit of injuries across the elite level of the sport, and this has led to research publications, professional dissemination, and changes to bylaws within the sport with regards to player welfare. Similarly to colleagues from health, academics from sport have also partnered and contributed to the Greater Manchester health Innovations teams, and Cities Changing Diabetes consortium, in areas specifically related to the impact of exercise and nutrition on Cancer and Type 2 diabetes treatment outcomes.