

Institution: University of Chester
Unit of Assessment: 32 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

Unit Context and Structure

The Department of Art and Design has strategically built upon the momentum gained from a positive outcome in REF2014 (achieving the highest percentage of international and world leading outputs across the university). We have maintained an upward trajectory in existing areas of research, enlarged capacity, enhanced diversity, inclusivity and sustainability, and substantially increased our community of research students and level of supervisory experience. This has been accomplished in the context of a considerable shift in the landscape of the department since 2014, which has provided a productive opportunity for reflection and review and subsequent vitality of the research culture.

The present submission builds on a core of practice-based research in Fine Art and Photography, alongside curatorial and critical writing. Our research is markedly interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary, extending into other areas including cultural studies, material culture, aesthetics, philosophy, literature, situated cognition and anthropology. In order to define a distinctive intellectual identity, foster interdisciplinarity, and facilitate strategic planning for the sustainable expansion of the research environment, research is organised within four research clusters:

- (Im)materiality
- Embodiment, Narrative and Performance Practice
- Everyday Objects, Habitus and Thingness
- Place, Space and Site.

The submission in both RAE2008 and REF2014 was commensurate with the size of the Department (4.70 and 3.70 FTE staff respectively). The current submission has more than doubled in size, comprising 9.1 FTE. Since 2014, the size of the Department has increased substantially, and its provision diversified with significant university investment in four new Design programmes (Interior Design, Product Design, Fashion Design and Fashion Marketing and Communication) alongside Graphic Design. This investment in the design curriculum has been supported by the appointment of a Professor in Design Thinking (**Raffo**) whose role includes the future development of design research. Structural changes impacting on the management of research include the amalgamation of the former Faculty of Arts and Media, and Faculty of Humanities, into a new Faculty of Arts and Humanities, together with two new faculty research co-ordinators (including **Piper-Wright** from this Unit), whose role is to develop research and extend collaboration and interdisciplinarity. Strategic initiatives at a department level include: the promotional appointment of our first female Head of Department (Murray) in 2017; two new Deputy Heads of Department (**Piper-Wright, Turner**), three new Associate Professor positions (Murray, **Quayle** and **Bristow**, who is also UoA coordinator), a permanent contract for the department's Research Fellow (**Grennan**), together with the establishment of 'REF', 'TEF' and 'Exhibition' Working Groups drawn from the wider body of staff. The number of female staff has nearly doubled with three in senior roles. These changes have transformed and enhanced the climate and vitality of the department, and led to a significantly more effective, inclusive and democratic collegial environment that places research central to its daily operation and future sustainability. The consequence of these changes is already evidenced by the number of staff submitted to REF2021, thirty-nine REF outputs compared to eighteen, and eight PhD students currently registered to the department compared to two in the previous submission.

Research and Impact Strategy: Review of Research Objectives 2014-2020

This submission represents the midway point in a longer-term strategy that extends beyond REF 2021 and is couched in terms of past, present and future objectives - where we were, where we are now and where we want to be. Our current strategy continues to be ambitious in its aspirations. At

the same time, it recognises the reality of changing circumstances, and placing an emphasis on the department's title of Art **and** Design on greater inclusivity and sustainability.

Following the structural changes within the department and establishment of the REF Working Group (REFWG) (consisting of nine members of staff from across art and design, and one member of the technical staff), the four strategic objectives identified in REF2014 were revised and expanded with the addition of five further objectives leading up to REF2021 and beyond:

1. *Build upon existing longstanding research in cultural memory, materiality and embodiment.*

The department's research strength in this area is evident in the innovative forms of creative practice and historical, cultural and critical perspectives generated by **Bristow, Grennan, McGuirk, Piper-Wright, Quayle** and **Turner** and in the work of ECR's **Clarke** and **Daly**, who have been submitted to the REF for the first time. Externally awarded practice-based PhD's submitted by staff during this period, **Bristow** (UAL 2016) and **Daly** (MMU 2016), further augment research in these areas. In order to extend our strengths and consolidate our 'USP', we have reformulated our research interests across four inter/cross-disciplinary research clusters. This has built confidence by allowing staff across Fine Art/Photography and the Design disciplines, to position their practice within a wider intellectual framework, as well as align their research interests and existing strengths. For example '(Im)materiality' places equal emphasis on both the material realm and the immaterial ideas and experience(s) that this gives rise to. This is particularly manifest in the research outputs of **Carrick** (Fine Art) and **Summers** (Design), both of whom are being submitted to the REF for the first time.

2. *Develop participatory practice as an impact/dissemination tactic.*

The emphasis on participatory practice is evidenced most notably in the work of **Grennan** and **Piper-Wright**, and has been subsumed within broader strategies to develop impact from our research (see Impact Strategy below).

3. *Expand the number of research active staff.*

In line with the University's key priority to increase the number and quality of research outputs, the department has seen the number of research active staff more than double over the period with the 9.1FTE submitted to REF2021 compared to 3.7FTE in REF2014 and thirty-nine feasible outputs for possible selection.

4. *Supporting the University's goal to be the partner of choice in the communities that we serve, develop public engagement and contribution to the cultural economy of the city and region.*

The department has played a key role in developing public engagement and has contributed to the cultural infrastructure and economy of the city of Chester by collaborating with key stakeholders including Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWAC), the Grosvenor Museum and Gallery, Storyhouse Theatre, the Visual Arts Forum (a new collective of artists, arts education specialists, curators and visual arts organisations) and Chester Visual Arts (CVA) <https://www.chestervisualarts.org.uk>, of which the current and previous Heads of Department and Faculty Dean are board members. The department also established the first permanent non-commercial contemporary exhibition space for the city Contemporary Art Space Chester (CASC) <https://www.cascgallery.co.uk>. Initially housed on campus, CASC has extended its reach with a second venue in the city centre attracting over 8,000 visitors to the inaugural exhibition by department staff and alumni. Staff research has been disseminated through public lectures, exhibitions and accompanying workshops, events and co-authored publications (**Clarke, Grennan, Jackson, McGuirk, Quayle, Summers**)

5. *Build capacity, sustainability and inclusivity by broadening the research base, particularly in relation to the establishment of design research and supporting ECR's in this field.*

In line with its overarching aim to ensure sustainability and inclusivity, foundations have been laid for the development of design research by the appointment of **Raffo** in 2015 as Professor in Design Thinking. With an initial remit to set up the new BA Product Design course, Raffo now plays a key mentoring role helping new ECR colleagues across design to develop and frame their existing areas of expertise, professional practice and industrial connections within a research

context, the outcome of which is evidenced in a number of successful ECR Quality Research Funding applications (Furlong, Wilson, Hall).

6. *Advocate for the discipline, and assert with greater confidence the knowledge production that is particular to creative practice.*

The success of REF2014 has led to greater University support for Art and Design and acknowledgement of the distinctive nature of creative arts research at a structural and policy level. This is evidenced in involvement of Art and Design research active staff in several university-wide committees and working groups, including: 'Task & Finish' Research Strategy group (Murray, **Bristow**); Research Committee (**Piper-Wright**); Research Steering Committee (**Bristow**); **Quayle's** involvement as UCU Acting Branch Chair in the consultation and development of the REF Code of Practice; and **Bristow's** input into the rewriting of University wide L7 generic criteria. Research committee membership at faculty level includes: Research Advisory Group (Murray, **Grennan**, **Piper-Wright**, **Bristow**); and Ethics committee (**Quayle**). The department's expertise in practice-based research has impacted on other areas such as Education, where Bristow has co-supervised a PhD an EdD and examined a Professional Doctorate.

7. *Increase capacity for research degree supervision and the research student community.*

Capacity has increased through investment in academic staff doctoral stud: nine out of eleven staff submitted for REF have PhD qualifications (eight are practice-based). Three other staff are currently registered for PhD or Professional Doctorate study with one due to submit a proposal for consideration. The number of accredited supervisors has increased exponentially from one in 2014 to seven in 2020. We have achieved this by working as part of interdisciplinary teams where new supervisors are mentored by more experienced colleagues. The census period has also seen the number of PGR students supervised by department staff increase from two in 2014 to fourteen in 2020. Four supervised with colleagues from other departments (English, Performing Arts, Education) and two at other institutions (Glyndwr University, RCA). There have been four completions.

8. *Further strengthen research-led-teaching as a means of integrating staff expertise, enhancing the student experience and developing transition through PGT to PGR.*

The impact of research-led-teaching is evidenced through a greater progression from UG, PGT, MRes, and PGR students working on projects that are closely aligned to the research interests of staff. These synergies are embedded at all levels of the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. For example, **Bristow's** interest in the relationship between textiles and fine art is a distinctive feature of the curriculum and recognised through external invitations to supervise/examine PGR students (RCA, Northumbria, Winchester, MMU). Building on the research of **Summers**, extended reality research is now used in Graphic Design, Product Design, Fashion Marketing at PGT and PGR levels, and he is currently supervising a PhD in this field. The research-led-teaching agenda is forefronted through twice yearly 'Faculty Research Enhancement Events' co-organised by **Piper-Wright**, **Bristow's** co-supervision/examination of professional doctorates in the Faculty of Education, and staff presentations at the Educating Creatively conference, Sept 2019 (**Summers**, ECR Hooper) and the Association for Photography in Higher Education conference, July 2019 (**Quayle**).

9. *Provide continued support for those areas of sustained research excellence and build on the research networks of established researchers.*

Throughout this period, QR funding and external grant capture has been strategically used to consolidate areas of research excellence and strengthen the international networks of established researchers e.g., archives related to Schwitters in Germany and Norway, and Lowry related fieldwork in Vancouver (**Quayle**); biannual contribution to Nordic Summer University (**McGuirk**); Marie Duval touring exhibition, New York, Berlin, London (**Grennan**); 54 additional conference contributions.

Research Objectives Post-2021

Looking forward, the strategy post-2021 will exploit the University's new 'Citizen Student' strategy, and has been formulated to further increase capacity and ambition through the consolidation of the above strategic objectives, with an increased focus on:

- Expanding reach, and embedding impact and public engagement activities at all stages of project development.
- Continuing development of the emerging area of design research and dedicated QR funding support for early career researchers around key research themes: social sustainability, humanising technology, and digital education futures.
- Strengthening the intellectual infrastructure of the department through the consolidation of its four research clusters, and showcasing the national/international profile of its staff through exhibitions, conferences and symposia in these areas, as well as providing a focus for the recruitment of postgraduate students and external grant capture.
- Consolidating and extending the CASC gallery. A second departmental venue in the Chester city high street, as part of a successful Heritage England Funded Heritage-Action-Zone in partnership with CWAC, will provide a meeting place and focus for research around design thinking and its impact on business and community engagement.
- Increasing greater supervisory capacity and pathways to interdisciplinary postgraduate research through its research cluster themes coordinated by cross-faculty supervisory teams. At the same time, situate our 20-credit research-training module within the context of international debates by strengthening our links with the international research-training network 'Conference for Artistic and Architectural (Doctoral) Research' (CA²RE).

Impact Strategy

Our strategy for impact revolves around the development of public facing exhibitions and events and socially engaged practices and research, which connect with external communities and constituencies. The department has sought to facilitate the achievement of impact arising from its research through the following measures:

- The Departmental and Faculty QR funding application process integrates impact outcomes. The allocation of Department funding is awarded against four main categories: capacity building/early career, maintained activity, exhibition outputs, and conference delivery. Art and Design research is by its nature disseminated in the public realm, via gallery and museum networks, whilst integrating public facing activities and education programmes. QR funding is variously used to extend and enhance the ambition, reach and legacy of projects. Examples include ensuring future impact through the production of publications (**Bristow, Carrick, Clarke, Quayle, Turner**), the transportation of work to additional national and international venues (**Grennan, Turner**), providing income for the development of public-facing events, staff travel to deliver public lectures, and book signings and workshops at national and international cultural organisations and festivals. The making permanent of Grennan's contract was a strategic initiative to facilitate external grant capture and impact, evidenced through projects with numerous beneficiaries, identified in sections 3 & 4.
- A growing reputation for regional leadership has led to enhanced collaboration with key stakeholders including two key projects partnering with CWAC. (1) The proposed international Chester Visual Arts Biennial has received initial Arts Council National Lottery funding to scope the project (£15,000) and (2) Historic England's High Street Heritage-Action-Zone (£1,080,000). The Department of Art and Design is one of the strategic partners, along with the Department of Music, Media and Performance, developing a design and journalism hub with premises on Chester high street alongside a virtual hub to operate online. In addition to the hub, the department is consulting on the development of an arts and design pipeline, appropriating empty shops as incubator units and artists' studios.
- Continuing development of the University's CASC gallery through the website and virtual gallery platforms Second Life and Simlab. Further use of redundant spaces in Chester City Centre as pop-up exhibition venues alongside the continued use of the premises in the current regeneration area of the Forum Shopping Centre.

- Increased impact through further investment in the department's digital and analogue print facilities, publishing and bookbinding equipment and existing staff/technical expertise in areas of artist/photo book production and exhibition design, for example: **Daly's** and **Bristow's** PhD publications.

Interdisciplinary Research

The Department is strongly interdisciplinary. Many staff work across the boundaries of their disciplinary specialisms and both teaching and research are structured and connected by this expertise. Chester is highly distinctive in having a historical legacy of delivering combined undergraduate courses and this is reflected in the co-supervision of doctoral students (e.g. Photography/Fine Art (**Quayle, Turner**); Fine Art/Fashion, Illustration/English (**Grennan**); Fine Art/Education Studies, Fine Art/Dance (**Bristow**), and funded research projects e.g., Narrative Drawing/Performance (**Grennan**). This Departmental approach to research is increasingly rare. In part, the Department can maintain and develop this expertise because it is relatively small and staff work daily in close proximity across disciplines. The interdisciplinary richness of the research is manifest most clearly in the outputs of individual researchers (e.g., **Bristow** (Fine Art, Textiles, Aesthetics, Material Culture); **McGuirk** (Philosophy, Art Education); **McGuirk/Summers** (Situated Cognition and Applied Design Theory); **Piper-Wright** (Aesthetics, Material Culture, STS, Anthropology, Feminist Theory, Performance); **Quayle** (Artist and Literary Legacies); and **Grennan** (Narrative Drawing and Performance)).

The articulation of its research clusters is intentionally interdisciplinary to facilitate support across disciplines, as well as research partnerships. A broad range of strategic mechanisms has been put in place to enable the effective sharing of research interests at department, school and faculty level. Established in 2004, 'Chester Centre for Research in Arts and Media' (CCRAM) provides a platform for the exchange of ideas and the development of dialogue across the school, and with individuals and institutions at a local, regional, national and international level (e.g., **Grennan's** collaboration with a colleague in performance, which became the basis of an AHRC funded project with University of the Arts London). In addition to the dissemination of research through more traditional symposia and the presentation of papers, a recent strategic initiative has been to develop confidence and inclusion through events such as 'Conversations about Practice' (2018). These reduce the emphasis on completed outputs and instead focuses on storyboarding through visual presentation and discourse around the development of ideas and research. The successes of 'Practice-Research Pin-Up' events apply this approach at a departmental level. These were initially developed as a strategy to explore and test the feasibility of the research clusters, as well as foster increased staff engagement. The School of Arts and Media Research Online Network also provides a place to facilitate mentoring and collaboration opportunities and for staff to share knowledge and information. It is also a repository for CCRAM presentations and events. A new 'Centre for Narrative Drawing' led by **Grennan**, provides an interdisciplinary network of research interests by supporting, challenging and developing synergies between the study and practices of storytelling, material culture and depiction. This led to a two-day conference 'Narratives and Alternative Stories' developed by Performing Arts (2018). September 2020 saw the introduction of a new 'Cross-Media Storytelling' module across the Departments of Art and Design and English.

The department is also exploring possibilities for dissemination beyond the University's research repository in order to provide visibility for non-traditional text-based outputs. Staff have contributed to a sub-committee of the University of Chester Research Committee responding to HEFCE Consultation on Open Access requirements post-2014 REF. In order to supplement the University repository and website, and provide greater access to the multi-media richness of its research, the department has developed staff research pages. These provide a more effectively democratic means of sharing both the speculative research interests and more developed projects of all staff beyond the framework of the REF submission.

In order to ensure that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, a revised ethics form has been developed that places greater emphasis on ethical considerations at all levels from UG, PGT, PGR and as a requirement of staff research projects where appropriate. There is considerably more inclusivity and transparency in its procedures through

the democratic structure of the departmental REF Working Group, and the internal review panel for the QR funding applications which it oversees. **Quayle's** work as representative on the Ethics Committee and as Acting Branch Chair of the University and College Union has been instrumental in the development of the REF Code of Practice and supporting a university-wide culture of research integrity.

2. People

Staffing strategy and staff development

The department staffing strategy has largely focused on capacity building and sustainability whilst continuing to support the career development of its mid-career and long-term researchers. Significant changes in staffing have included the appointment of a new Head of Department and a new Faculty Dean, as well as six other new members of staff. There has also been an emphasis on recruiting staff with extensive international industry knowledge to facilitate the development of a community that is outward facing and who will be ideally placed to develop the future potential of applied research. The new appointments have provided a proactive opportunity to address the gender imbalance within the department, reflecting a current ratio of 14:11 male to female compared with 14:5 in 2014.

The department is dedicated to the career development of researchers at all stages of their career. Working within the framework set out by the UK Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, this commitment was recognised in September 2019 by the University successfully renewing its HR Excellence in Research Award for a further six years. Institutional policy is implemented through the introduction of online orientation plans; the streamlining of information, support and training via the University's Researcher Hub; the introduction of a mentoring scheme for researchers; and the University of Chester's annual Research Festival, to which the department regularly contributes. Our early career researchers have been supported by probationary and induction programmes, which introduce staff to the wide range of research policies, operational structures and initiatives. These include: the Research Knowledge and Transfer Office: the university-wide network for early career researchers; the Annual Staff conference, which runs research workshops and showcases successful research projects; the accredited programme leading to a Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, which includes elements of training on the requirements and opportunities of research supervision (65% staff have HEA qualifications); and the Performance and Development Planning Process (PDP) which is the principal formal mechanism for planning career development.

Early career researchers are supported within research clusters, which provide a framework for reflection and help staff to locate and position their individual concerns in relation to existing areas of research. During the last reporting period, mentoring took the form of designated staff pairings, which were not always an appropriate fit. The current mentoring of staff is through the REF Working Group, which now provides a peer support network of staff with different interests and expertise that early career researchers can tap into individually or collectively. Since the appointment of the new Head of Department and establishment of this dedicated cross-disciplinary research team, there has been an exponential shift in the visibility and inclusivity of research. Other formal support mechanisms for all researchers include the Department Research meetings (which deal with more procedural matters), staff 'Practice-Research Pin-Up' sessions, School CCRAM research days (e.g., 'Conversations in Practice' (2018), 'The Three R's' (2019) and 'Research Starting Points' (2020)), and biannual 'Faculty Research Enhancement events'.

All staff are encouraged to apply for QR funding, which accommodates capacity building/early career, maintained activity, exhibition outputs, and conference delivery. 85% of staff have submitted applications which in itself provides an effective means of articulating research concerns and supports colleagues to prepare funding proposals at a relatively early stage of their career. The examination of QR bids by the REF Working Group often involves strategic feedback and guidance for new researchers on how to frame their project, access internal and external funding and demonstrate impact. ECR's **Clarke, Carrick** and **Daly** have all submitted successful applications.

Department QR funding is supplemented by a Staff Development fund (£350 per person) and faculty level QR funding, as well as university-wide support for conference participation and contribution.

A central feature of our strategy has been funded support for staff doctoral study. A distinctive dimension of the department's staff development strategy is that that, unlike more traditional academic research pathways, career progression is not necessarily always the primary motivation of doctoral study. For many of its mid-career and longer-term staff, it is seen as personal enrichment - a way of facilitating, consolidating and extending the creative and intellectual ambitions of what is often an already established practice, and framing it more firmly within a focused research context. Completions in this period include **Bristow** (2016), **Summers** (2014) and **Daly** (2016) (both of whom are mid-career researchers who have submitted for the first time) and an early career colleague who has taken up a position at another institution. Three mid-career/early career researchers are currently undertaking Doctoral study (PhD and EdD) and early career researcher **Clarke** (first full-time academic appointment and submitted for the first time) is currently preparing a PhD proposal. Funded support for postgraduate study extends to technical as well as academic staff. Three technical demonstrators have completed MRes qualifications since 2014, one of whom is now undertaking PhD research. The effectiveness of the department's strategy is evidenced by the fact that 11 staff have now completed or are currently undertaking PhD research compared to 4 in 2014. This has significantly extended capacity for PhD supervision by staff working with more experienced colleagues as part of departmental, faculty and university wide interdisciplinary teams. It is also evidenced in the retention of research active staff, many of whom have worked at the university for ten-plus years, and their career progression over the period of review.

Research Students

The development of a viable postgraduate research community has been a significant achievement. Since 2014, the number of PhD/EdD students who have been or are currently supervised by staff within the department has risen from two to fourteen, substantially enhancing the vitality of its research culture. Of these there have been two completions. There have been two further full-time doctoral completions in the Department of Education (where Bristow took on a secondary supervisory role). There are eight part-time PhD students currently registered within the department (supervised by **Bristow**, **Grennan**, **McGuirk**, **Quayle**, **Summers**, **Turner** and ECR Wilson) with a further proposal under consideration from **Clarke**. **Summers** and **Grennan** are co-supervising PhD students registered in the Department of Performing Arts. **Grennan** is co supervising a PhD student in the Department of English. **Bristow** is co-supervising a PhD in the School of Communication at the Royal College of Art and another student in the Department of Fine Art at Glyndwr University (with a Chester colleague from English). There have been six MRes completions within the department with one student currently registered. There has been targeted recruitment of our own students through progression from the MA Fine Art taught masters and MRes programme, which was a strategic initiative to enhance its PGR community. Undergraduates continuing onto postgraduate study, benefit from a university fee waiver of £1000. External recruitment (including one overseas student) is largely based on the research reputation of staff, which has been a key determining factor in students choosing to study at Chester.

Monitoring and Support Mechanisms

- **Supervision:** Postgraduate students are fully integrated as part of our research community and afforded a high level of pastoral support. Students often have an interdisciplinary team consisting of three supervisors, which allows for a range of perspectives, experience and expertise. All supervisors are required to undertake university mandatory online training for PGR supervision on a three-year basis and attend a 'Supervision Essentials Workshop'. The university also runs workshops and online training for Internal Examiners and Independent Chairs, which is mandatory for staff undertaking these roles.
- **Progress reviews:** All students are required to attend both university and department inductions, and are subject to the standard PGR Review Process. There is an initial probationary period of nine months followed by a progress review, a further review at eighteen months and thereafter an annual progress review. At set points students are required to attend a meeting with an Independent Progress Assessor. These provide an opportunity to evaluate both supervision and student development, as well as a mechanism for students to disclose, in confidence, any

concerns that they may have. The School of Arts and Media, and Department of Art and Design, have designated Senior Postgraduate Tutors who oversee postgraduate research.

- *Training:* All MRes students complete a compulsory Research Methods module, which are taught jointly with the PGT students in the respective departments. PhD students also take advantage of this training. There are two Annual Postgraduate Conferences, one run by the university and one by the School, which provide a supportive environment for both PGT and PGR students to share experience and test out research presentations. There is also a PGR Student Conference Attendance Fund for which students can apply. Students who aspire to teach have access to university-wide online training materials and are encouraged to undertake the training programme delivered by the Learning and Teaching Institute and complete modules leading to the Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. Students also have the opportunity to attend or participate in the faculty-wide 'Research Enhancement Events' and where appropriate, the biennial 'Talking Bodies' Conference organised by the Institute of Gender Studies. The department receives the PGR fee allocation to spend on recruitment, supporting students and enhancing the environment. A recent initiative has been involvement (as the only UK institution) in the international biannual, 'Conference for Artistic and Architectural (Doctoral) Research' (CARE) comprising Universities from Ljubljana, Aarhus, Leuven, Delft, Milan, Berlin, Porto, Hamburg, and Trondheim. Students are invited to submit abstracts, which are subject to peer-review and, if successful, accepted for inclusion in the conference. In April 2017 the department funded a PhD student and his supervisor **McGuirk** to attend the conference held at the KU Leuven, Faculty of Architecture, in Ghent, Belgium. In October 2019, the conference was again held in Ghent and the department paid for two other students to attend with their supervisors **McGuirk** and **Bristow** who served on presentation panels. To help them develop their skills in preparation for their future careers, students are encouraged to input into teaching, contributing to the BA Professional Practice Module and regularly presenting guest lecture case studies for the PGT Research Methods in Art and Design module. They can also apply for paid research positions through the university's 'Uni-Job' scheme.

Equality and Diversity

The University has a clear policy for promoting equality in relation to both its staff and students, recognised through the retention of its Athena Swan Bronze and Gender Equality Charter Mark Bronze awards. One of the department's primary objectives has been to strengthen inclusivity and diversity demonstrated most notably through the much higher representation of women. 41% compared to 26% in 2014 with senior roles now divided equally on gender lines. The protected characteristics of our staff are positively supported and care is taken to ensure that no disadvantage is incurred on these grounds. This demographic shift has been aided through university-wide formal support mechanisms and special interest groups such as the Women's Network, Equality Forum, Disabled Staff Group, Parent's Network and the annual Diversity Festival. This includes 'Making Professor' workshops aimed to build confidence and address the relative underrepresentation of women in senior roles. A 'Professorial Pathways Roundtable' event organised in 2019 to coincide with International Women's Day saw female professors and associate professors from across the faculty (including **Bristow**) interviewed by early career researchers, providing inspiration and raising the ambitions of PGR students and staff colleagues.

The appointment of the first female Head of Department, and inclusive nature of the department's Working Groups, has made for a much more collegial environment where all staff feel that they are able to contribute to the strategic planning of the department. As a relatively small unit we can provide support that goes beyond statutory policies. Shared teaching on modules, and a pool of longstanding visiting lecturer staff that enrich the research environment, has allowed the department to support its staff through life-changing disability, mental health, maternity/motherhood, bereavement, family care and responsibility for the ageing. The University has enabled flexible working with three female and one male member of staff choosing to reduce their hours. The timing of department and faculty events has ensured that staff are not excluded because of caring responsibilities. The availability of the onsite nursery and Sure Start Children's Centre is also a valuable resource. Recognising the under representation of BAME staff, the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor in 2020, has furthered the University's commitment to equality and diversity, illustrated in the introduction of the Race Equality Challenge Group.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

- *Internal Research Funding:* Over the period of review, the department has placed its emphasis on the development of a rigorous internal funding process in order to cultivate the necessary expertise for future external applications. Researchers within the department draw on a range of internal funding to support their activities including Knowledge Transfer Funding, Research Conference Attendance Grants, and QR Research Grants. The majority of QR funding (£82,158 over the period) is returned to the department and has been awarded against four main categories: capacity building/early career, maintained activity, exhibition outputs, and conference delivery.
- *External Research Funding:* The permanent appointment of **Grennan** as Leading Research Fellow in 2017, after fixed-term employment since 2012, was in part a strategic initiative to address the challenge of income generation leading to the delivery of highly impactful research within what is a relatively small teaching-intensive department. Grennan provides a key mentoring role and with four other staff leads our 'Grant Writing Initiative', supporting aspirations to develop individual and collective funding applications around our research clusters. External research funds raised by Grennan since 2014 and concluded within this REF cycle (total £484,000) include: a) AHRC Early Career Grant (£200,000) for the creation of The Marie Duval Archive, publications and touring exhibition, b) Druwe Foundation Grant (£75,000) for the first graphic adaptation of a novel by Anthony Trollope, c) Arts Council England (£28,000) for a public sculpture project in Lincolnshire, d) Arts Council England (£8,000 for a published revival of Marie Duval, f) Arts Council England (£6,000) for development of a new range of fabric and wallpaper with Panaz Burnley, g) Heritage Lottery Fund (£22,000) for public sculpture in Merthyr Tydfil, g) Heritage Lottery Fund (£35,000), for the development of an archive in Knutsford, h) Arts Council England (£13,000) for drawing research, i) National Lottery Heritage Fund (£38,000) for the development of Knowsley Flower Show Archive, j) Plymouth City Council (£10,000) for drawings made with people who work at night, j) National Heritage Lottery Fund (£9,000) for a people's history project in Selby, k) Cadw (£34,000), for public sculpture in Flint and l) Arts Council England (£6,000) for public drawing in Blackpool. All of these were single-time awards with durations of between eight and 30 months. They underwrote increased staff capacity (**Grennan** and staff at partner institutions) and capital expenditure. Research awards post 2019 include i) Arts Council England (£11,998) for a suite of new animations ii) AHRC (£112,514) for co-investigation of R. L. Stevenson adaptations (pending), and iii) AHRC (£617,892) for research into French theatre in Victorian London (pending). The last of these will employ two Post-doctoral researchers.
- *Funding in Kind:* Research income within Art and Design is often nuanced as part of the networks and exchanges that emerge via the collaboration with organisations who have facilitated, supported, and funded major outcomes. This takes the form of production costs for host venues and facilities in gallery and museum exhibition spaces; the design, printing and distribution of catalogue publications; logistics and transportation; Public Relations; and accompanying public and educational programming. The complexity of these networks provides a framework for support, which is not receipted as research funding in the traditional way. Notable examples include **Bristow's** exhibitions at Compton Verney (2020) and Whitworth Gallery (2015), which included a 96-page catalogue; **Quayle's** exhibitions at the Williamson Art Gallery (2018); and **Turner's** Royal Society of Sculptors exhibition at Huddersfield Art gallery (2019), which included a catalogue of which he oversaw the production.

The development of design research will provide a future strategy for the generation of income through interdisciplinary teams. Professor of Design Thinking **Raffo** has already worked with some of the departments and companies within the Faculty of Science and Engineering who have provided consultancy funding (£6,270). He has also had conversations with the University's Centre for Ageing and Mental Health and CWAC's Age-friendly Cheshire West Project about future collaborative projects.

Infrastructure and Facilities

The operational and scholarly infrastructure supporting research and impact has increased substantially with the development of the design programmes. Investment in a new Product/Interior design workshop (with additional bureau-service large-scale 3D printers, vacuum formers and dedicated CAD studios with industry relevant software) supplements the existing sculpture workshop and enhances the research possibilities in relation to 3D fabrication, making of artefacts, and exhibition design/production. A new fashion studio and workshop extends the existing fine art/textile provision with specialised industrial sewing machines and digital printing facilities. A review of the physical organisation of the department's resources has led to the creation of centralised facilities that are accessible for research staff and students across all disciplines. These include capital investment in a new digital print hub; bookbinding equipment and post-production suite; photography store including additional equipment for 360 filming; and facility for high-resolution scanning of negative film, alongside darkroom-based provision and other specialised making processes. Each of the workshops has dedicated technical demonstrator support, with two new appointments for product design and fashion extending the team from four to six. The fact that workshop support is not only directed to individual courses enhances the interdisciplinary possibilities for staff and students. Department staff and students have exclusive access to workshops and studios seven days a week until 10.00pm, and take advantage of the extensive studio space during the vacation periods.

The onsite Kingsway Learning Resource Centre holds book collections and extensive online resources for the Departments of Art and Design and Performing Arts, and offers specialist support from the subject librarian and IT technicians. Staff and students can order books from any one of the nine University of Chester libraries, which are delivered to the Resource Centre. All students and staff have access to the Adobe Creative Cloud suite of programmes, LinkedIn Learning, and more specialist CAD resources within Art and Design and resources/technical support (lighting, sound, recording studios) within Performing Arts.

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

A key aspect of the department's research strategy has been to enrich the vitality of its environment by promoting and sustaining the collaborative partnerships, established networks and habitual relationships of its individual researchers leading to reciprocal learning. This expansion has been guided by two strategic mechanisms: 1) the employment of QR funding to support the production of work for exhibition, and attendance at conferences and events; and 2) formalising longstanding relationships and working together with national and international institutions to further the disciplinary research base and enhance the reputation of our staff as leading specialists within their respective disciplinary fields.

Networks and Collaborations

Bristow's contribution to the expanded field of Textiles is recognised through her long-standing relationship with Dr Jennifer Harris (Curator of Textiles/Deputy Director Whitworth Art Gallery) and subsequent invitation to participate in the Whitworth's international *Art_Textiles* exhibition (2016) and to contribute to the *Companion to Textile Culture* (2020), which "brings together the work of an interdisciplinary team of recognized experts in the field". Of the 24 contributions, only three are from the UK and Bristow is the only artist writing about her own work. Her long-standing relationship with Lesley Millar MBE (Professor of Textile Culture, International Textile Research Centre, University of the Creative Arts) has manifest in numerous invitations to contribute to international exhibitions and accompanying events since 2002. Within the census period, projects include *Matter of Material* conference at Turner Contemporary and special edition of *Textile: Journal of Cloth and Culture* (2018). Also, *Fabric: Touch and Identity* exhibition at Compton Verney, jointly curated with Professor Alice Kettle, (Manchester Metropolitan University). Bristow was a founder member of a national Textile PhD Research Forum, established by UCA, which met biannually at the Art Workers' Guild in London to support PhD researchers working within the Textile field. Her co-authored book chapter with Professors Carole Gray and Julian Malins *The 'Epistemic Object' in the Creative Process of Doctoral Inquiry* extends this interest in Doctoral Research, and led to an invitation from the book's

editor to make a presentation to research staff and students at the University of Wolverhampton (2020).

Grennan's permanent contract was an expedient move that allowed him to develop numerous national and international projects and formal institutional partnerships. These were instrumental in developing the research base of comic scholarship and narrative drawing, and securing Grennan as what AHRC Grant Reviewers describe as “a leading expert in the field”. Key collaborations include: Roger Sabin, Professor of Media, Central Saint Martins (*Duval*); Professor Ortwin de Graef, Dean of Research and Jan Baetens, Professor of Comparative Literature, KU Leuven (*Dispossession*); David Skilton, Emeritus Professor of English, University of Cardiff (*Dispossession*); Katherine Newey, Professor of Drama, University of Exeter (*Drawing from the Stage*); Julia Round, Professor of English, University of Cardiff (*Chasemore*); Dr Ernesto Priego, Centre for Human Computer Interaction London and Dr Peter Wilkins, Douglas College Vancouver (*Parables of Care*); Dr Rikke Cortsen, Associate Professor of Danish, University of Texas (Curie); Christopher Sperandio, Associate Professor of Fine Art, Rice University (*Grennan & Sperandio*); Dr Erin La Cour, Senior Lecturer in Media, Amsterdam University (*Key Terms*); and Dr Rik Spanjers, Lecturer in Media, Amsterdam Free University (*Key Terms*).

McGuirk has been a member of, and contributor to, the Nordic Summer University (NSU) since 2010. NSU is an independent academic institution, dedicated to interdisciplinary research, which, for over sixty-seven years, has organised annual conferences and symposia with international participants across disciplines in the Nordic and Baltic regions. McGuirk has made numerous presentations at NSU and was a representative of the international members at the annual assembly of the NSU in 2011. He co-edited the anthology emerging from Circle 7 of the NSU (2015): *Artistic Research: Strategies for Embodiment* and has a chapter in the forthcoming anthology (2021) *Functions, Fissures and Failures: Strategies of Artistic Research*. (2021). A senior colleague (now retired) has also been a participant in NSU since 2011 and has contributed to the 2018 anthology *Artistic Research Being There: Explorations into the Local* and the forthcoming 2021 anthology.

Piper-Wright's contribution to the ‘expanded field’ of Photography and research into audience engagement with the arts is recognised in her collaboration with community circus (Circus Starr), and app developer (Therapy Box) for her *Show and Tell* project funded through the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts (Nesta/AHRC/Arts Council England) for which Piper-White was the principal investigator. It is also recognised in the expansion of her *In Pursuit of Error* project from a pure photography/art context into visual anthropology/ethnography, via invitation to the cross-disciplinary international panel “Photography and the Method of Art”, at Karlstad University (Sept 2019) and the subsequent development of a visual anthropology network, now underway with panel members.

Since 2004, **Quayle's** long-term association and involvement with *Littoral Arts Trust* events and contributions to wider debates connected with exile cultures has consolidated relationships with a wide range of individuals, institutions and events including the Kurt Schwitters Archive at the Sprengel Museum in Hanover. The research on Schwitters is mirrored in his retracing the life and writing of Malcolm Lowry. Fieldwork in Vancouver (2017-2018) led to a conference invite and the development of new artworks and a book chapter, which investigates the author/artist protagonist in: *Helen Tookey and Bryan Biggs (Eds.) Remaking the Voyage - New Essays on Malcolm Lowry and In Ballast to the White Sea* (2020). This extends connections with the Bluecoat Gallery, Liverpool (2009 ongoing) as well as wider association and collaboration with artists, writers, curators, scholars and researchers in Norway and Canada. As documented in the Impact Case Study, Quayle's long-term collaboration with Tom Wood led to parallel exhibitions at the Williamson Art Gallery and Museum in 2018, which formed part of the Liverpool Independents and Liverpool Biennial programme. He has also worked with Open Eye Gallery curators, past and present, including Tracy Marshall (Northern Narratives) and Sarah Fisher (Open Eye Gallery Director) for the Look 19 International Photography Festival.

Since 2012, ECR **Clarke** has had a close collaborative research relationship with the artist printmaker David Ferry, writing essays and journal articles about his work and delivering joint-authored conference papers. In 2016, four essays were published as the catalogue *The Invader's*

Guide to the British Isles that accompanied Ferry's exhibition of the same name at the Post Office Gallery in Ballarat, Australia. This catalogue provided the template for a further publication in relation to Ferry's exhibition at the Grosvenor Museum and Art Gallery (2019) for which Clarke wrote four texts and was guest curator. **Turner** has been a member of the Royal Society of Sculptors since 2004 and over the period of review has contributed to three RSS exhibitions: *Inspired by Nature* (2018), *RSS Summer Show* (2018); and initiating *Conversations in Sculpture* (2019) as part of the Yorkshire Sculpture International. **Carrick** has collaborated with artist Sean Kaye (British Higher School of Art and Design, Moscow) under the assumed identity of 'Leeds United' since 1994, adopting a serious but often humorous approach to 'institutional critique'. In 2017 they curated *Distant Constellations*, 14 concurrent exhibitions as part of the New Art Spaces initiative by Castlefield Gallery in Manchester. **Daly** is a member of 'The Canal Research Network' and initiated a collaborative partnership with the Canal and River Trust's Waterways Archive at Ellesmere Port to produce a publication and exhibition of a little-known collection of the illustrated travel diaries of Eileen Burke. All of the staff above (three of whom are submitted to the REF for the first time) received QR funding for publications documenting their collaborative projects.

Third Sector Collaborations

The department has been instrumental to the University's strategic goal, contributing to the cultural and economic success of the city through its partnership with Cheshire West & Chester Council to develop a permanent exhibition space, the Chester Art Biennial and contribution to the successful application for Heritage Action Zone funding. In addition to the case studies already discussed in the Unit's impact narrative, the department has contributed to public understanding of the subject through its long-standing strategic partnership with the Grosvenor Museum. Since 2014, staff have delivered individual and guest-curated exhibitions, collaborative publications, public lectures, and workshops. Notable amongst these are: *Michael Sandle: Monumental Rage* (2018) for which **Quayle** contributed a chapter to the catalogue and facilitated an 'in conversation' with Sandle; David Ferry: *The Invader's Guide to the Museum (and other places)* (2019) guest curated by ECR **Clarke**; an exhibition of Clarke's own photographs *Stephen Clarke: End of the Season* (2019); and *Modern Drawings: Vision and Temperament* (2016) for which **McGuirk** provided 3,000 words of text to accompany the exhibits from the Museum's Permanent Collection and a public lecture. Staff have also contributed to public conferences, talks and events at the new Storyhouse theatre: **Summers** and early career researcher Hooper to the *Educating Creatively* Conference (2019); and **Grennan** and **Quayle** to the Lunchtime Lectures series. Together with colleagues from the Media Department, **Summers** also ran a VCR/360 workshop as part of the BFI Film Academy for pre-university students 27.10-2.11.19. Over the period, staff have also collaborated on projects with: Jonathan Cape; Book Works; Myriad Editions; Les Impressions Nouvelles; Steidl; ArtsNK; LeftCoast; Knowsley Borough Council; Selby District Council; CADW (Welsh Government's historic environment service); Flintshire County Council; Panaz Fabric; Festival of Making; Illustrative Festival Berlin; Arts and Heritage; Redhouse Merthyr; Great Places Housing Association; Poor Farm Press; Knowsley Flower Show; Down House; Towneley Museum, National Waterways Museum; and Canal and River Trust.

Editorial Positions and Peer Review

Staff have acted as regular reviewers for the following publications and organisations: *Palgrave Studies in Comics*; *Routledge Advances in Comics Studies*, *Bloomsbury Literary Studies Series* and (as a Judge) *The Sabin Award of the International Bande Desineés Society* (**Grennan**); AHRC Peer Review College (2010-2018); British Federation of Women Graduates prize awards (2019-present); *Journal of Contemporary Painting*, Intellect (2015) (**Bristow**); Bloomsbury: Photography list (2013-present) (**Daly**); CA²RE doctoral conference (2017); *The Journal of Somaesthetics* (2015) (**McGuirk**); *MAI: Feminism and Visual Culture* (Contributing Editor, 2017-present); Special Issue of *Fusion Journal* (14); *Intersections in Film and Media studies* (2018); Common Ground Publishing (2016-present), including *The International Journal of the Image* and *The International Journal of Arts Theory and History* and a book manuscript as part of this role; *Research and Development in Art, Design and Creativity*, Springer (2016); *Arts Expo of the Internet Technologies and Applications* (ITA15) conference, Glyndwr University (2015) (**Piper-Wright**).

Invited Keynotes, Lectures and and/or performances, or conference chair roles

Over the period of review, staff have contributed to the research base of the discipline by delivering 54 peer-reviewed conference papers internationally in the UK, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Finland and Norway.

Examining

Staff have been invited to examine Doctoral theses at the University of Northumbria, University of Southampton, MMU, UAL (**Bristow**); Central St Martins, Loughborough University (Grennan); University of Staffordshire (**McGuirk**) as well as act as internal examiners (**Turner, Bristow, McGuirk**).