

**Institution: University of Oxford**

**Unit of Assessment: 31 Theology & Religious Studies**

## **1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy**

### **1a. Overview**

Oxford University's Faculty of Theology and Religion seeks to develop its research and impact through its:

- concentration of expertise within the traditional theological disciplines
- recent appointments in the Study of Religion
- location within a large, dynamic and research intensive university with rich opportunities for cross-disciplinary work and interdisciplinarity
- attractiveness to a broad spectrum of funders.

The Faculty currently comprises 212 undergraduate students, 272 postgraduate students (165 PGR; 107 PGT), and 24 permanent post-holders, as well as 25 further positions, including Departmental Lecturers, post-doctoral fellows, and Faculty Appointed Researchers. The Unit of Assessment [UoA] also includes staff employed elsewhere in the University whose research falls within our discipline. The Faculty's Research Areas, Research Centres and Networks promote a research culture that is rooted in our home disciplines while at the same time committed to dialogue with cognate fields. Since it falls within the Humanities Division of Oxford University, the Faculty also benefits from the infrastructural support for cross-disciplinary research that is provided by The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH). This institutional context has enabled the Faculty to maintain its historic research strengths while forging new collaborations with, for example, the University's Faculties of Classics, English, History, History of Art, Modern Languages, Music, Oriental Studies, Philosophy, and the Medical Sciences Division. With TORCH, we have also established connections with a broad range of external and professional bodies.

Our REF2014 environment statement referred to the changing focus of the UoA following our 2012 decision to re-define ourselves as a 'Faculty of Theology *and Religion*'. This development was the result of some twenty years of work to integrate our research and teaching in Christian Theology with our growing expertise in the Study of Religion. Building on this newly expanded conception of our identity and intellectual horizons, in 2013 we created a raft of new permanent posts in the Study of Religion. Our goal was to recognise the increasing plurality of religious life both in Britain and globally, and to engage with the full range of scholarly methods that are relevant to the study of religion, including those that are integral to anthropology, sociology, and comparative religion. The ensuing process of reconfiguration and realignment has required a major and sustained organisational effort during the current REF period.

Under the leadership of three consecutive Chairs (Foot, Zachhuber, and Ward), the Faculty has sought to nurture intellectual exchange within and across our newly diverse range of disciplines – and all academic staff and graduate students are now active within at least one of our seven Research Areas: Biblical Studies; Christian and Religious Ethics; Historical and Systematic Theology; History of Christianity; Philosophical Theology; Science and Religion; and Study of Religions. This disciplinary regrouping of the Faculty has enabled us to retain and consolidate our

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traditional core specialisms while taking a cross-disciplinary, global approach to the study of religion. In recent appointments, we have sought to extend these opportunities for cross-disciplinary research (see e.g. Macfarlane's appointment).

We have further expanded our research through close collaborations with an array of research institutes in the University, including the Oxford Centres for Hindu Studies; Buddhist Studies; Islamic Studies; and Hebrew and Jewish Studies, as well as the University's six Permanent Private Halls: Wycliffe Hall and St Stephen's House (Anglican); St Benet's Hall, Blackfriars, and Campion Hall (Roman Catholic); and Regent's Park College (Baptist). These bodies contribute to our publications and our knowledge exchange activities, and expand the audiences for our research – and in turn we help to sustain the vitality of their intellectual life. The Faculty is also developing links with three new College-based Oxford research initiatives, each of which is directed by a Faculty member: the Laudato Si' Research Institute at Campion Hall (Deane-Drummond); the Centre for the Study of the Bible at Oriel College (Najman); and the 'Religion and the Frontier Challenges' postdoctoral research fellowship programme at Pembroke College (Jones).

**1b. Strategic Aims for Research and Impact 2014–2021**

In our 2014 REF submission, following our redesignation as a Faculty of Theology and Religion, we identified the following research objectives:

- (1) The development of the Study of Religions
- (2) Retaining our historic strengths in Biblical Studies
- (3) Building upon and expanding our expertise in Ethics
- (4) Strengthening existing leadership in Science and Religion.

In the course of this REF period, each of these four objectives has been achieved:

1. We now have a critical mass of expertise in the Study of Religion across multiple fields. Significant appointments during this REF cycle include:

Abulafia (Abrahamic Religions); Flood (Hindu Studies and Comparative Religion); Freud-Kandel (Modern Jewish Studies); Jones (Study of Religion); Westerhoff (Buddhist Philosophy); Al-Azem (classical Islamic legal thought); and Frazier (Hindu and Comparative Philosophy).

These new appointments, which cross the 'world religions', have enabled us to weave together textual and fieldwork-based approaches with classical and modern specialisms, to form a diverse and coherent research cluster. Following this broadening of expertise, we have been able to publish in new fields, establish new research seminars, and attract a new stream of highly qualified postgraduate researchers.

2. Four of our six posts in Biblical Studies are now fully endowed (Bockmuehl; Downs; Najman; Quick) and the College element of a further position has been fully endowed (Strawbridge).

3. Funding has also been secured for two major Faculty-led research projects with a strong ethical focus and significant interdisciplinary connections: *The Oxford Character Project* (GBP1.95M) and the *Compassion in Healthcare* project (GBP199,258).

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4. In this REF cycle, we have also secured major grants in Science and Religion, totalling over USD6 million, thereby consolidating our global leadership in this field.

We have also been guided by our 2018-21 Research Strategy, which commits the Faculty to the following goals:

- a) supporting individual research
- b) enhancing internal and external collaborations and partnerships
- c) developing our postgraduate and post-doctoral research community
- d) regular auditing of the Faculty's research culture.

We have met these goals in the following ways.

**(a) Support for individual research:** In 2017, the Faculty established a Director of Undergraduate Studies and Outreach and, in 2019, a Graduate Studies Coordinator. Previously, the associated administrative roles were rotated between senior academic colleagues, and the creation of these two 0.5 FTE positions has helped to mitigate the impact of high administrative workloads on staff research time. Other recent developments with the same objective include: an increase in postholders' allowances (to GBP1.5k pre-Covid) to meet the costs of research activities, including travel and conference attendance; and the introduction of a Research Assistant and Graduate Teaching Assistant scheme, enabling full-time postholders to employ a postgraduate student for up to 6 hours a week.

**(b)** We have established a wide range of collaborations, as illustrated below. (For further discussion, please see Section 4b 'Collaboration as a Core Component of the Faculty's Research Culture'.)

**(b-i) Collaborations within the Faculty:** Our recent appointments have led to the development of new research collaborations. For example, we have broadened our expertise in the philosophy of religion, which now includes:

Buddhist philosophy (Westerhoff); Hindu and Comparative Philosophy (Frazier); Indian philosophy (Flood); and medieval Islamic philosophy and law (al-Akiti, Al-Azem); as well as the philosophy of Christianity (Rasmussen, Wood and Wynn).

Following Wynn's appointment as lead for the Philosophical Theology Research Area, this confluence of interests will enable us to establish research projects in the comparative philosophy of religion, and to contribute to a significant broadening of the discipline of philosophy of religion. Wynn's recently awarded grant on 'God-Concepts and Spiritual Wellbeing' (USD234,656, from December 2020) aims to give momentum to this collaboration. Other examples of collaboration between our traditional and recently established Research Areas include a conference on 'Ageing, Suffering, Despair: Toward Patience and Hope for Health Care', co-sponsored by the McDonald and Ian Ramsey Centres and the Healthcare Values Partnership (postponed from May 2020). We have also taken steps to bring our traditional research fields into closer dialogue: for instance, the Patristic and Modern Theology Graduate Seminars have now been combined.

**(b-ii) Academic collaborations within and beyond the University:** Our Research Areas also foster international collaborations. For example, the International Patristics Conference has played an important role in sustaining the Faculty's long-established reputation in Patristics. (This conference is held every four years in Oxford and attracts over 1,000 delegates from around the world.) Two key appointments made in this REF period have enabled us to continue to support

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this venture: Harrison as Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity and Booth as A. G. Leventis Associate Professor in Eastern Christianity (a position shared with History and recently endowed in perpetuity). We have also been active in promoting collaborations with other Faculties within the University. For instance, the Faculty resources various cross-Faculty seminars for academic staff and post-doctoral and postgraduate researchers. Examples include:

‘Ethical Reading: Authenticity’ (with Classics, History and Oriental Studies); the ‘Hermeneutic Interventions Workshop’ (with English and Philosophy); ‘Medieval Church and Culture’ (with History); and a new joint seminar with Philosophy on Mysticism (Lodge and Wynn).

We have continued to support a longstanding shared seminar with History, ‘Religion in the British Isles, 1400-1700’ (MacCulloch, Macfarlane, Maltby). In addition, the Network on ‘Categories of Religion and the Secular in Islam’ has engaged themes in Sociology, Law and Comparative Literature, while the Network on Ancient Music and Theology brings together researchers working on ancient Greek and Roman Music, Theology, Biblical Studies, Music History, Literature and Philosophy.

**(b-iii) External partnerships and impact:** We realise that our intellectual activity can have real world impact, and have developed significant knowledge exchange activities and partnerships with beneficiaries across our Research Areas. These include major engagements in policy (medical, political and military), media, pre-university education, and the culture sector (including film, art, music, poetry). These activities have been pursued at local, national and international scales.

We continue to nurture and develop our long-standing and extensive relationships with religious communities. UoA members hold wide-ranging positions of influence within Christian churches, for instance via the contribution of the four Canon Professors of Christ Church to the life of the Cathedral and Diocese of Oxford; Harrison and Strawbridge’s work on the Archbishop’s Examination Committee; the involvement of Faculty members as Canon Theologians at major Cathedrals (e.g. Gillingham, Maltby and Strawbridge); Lloyd’s position on the Ministry Council of the Church of England; Atherstone, Hordern and Strawbridge’s membership of the Church of England’s Faith & Order Commission, and Atherstone and Strawbridge’s membership of the Liturgical Commission; Maltby’s positions on the General Synod and the Crown Nominations Commission; and Ellis’s service on the Baptist Steering Group and the Advisory Council for the Vatican-led project, ‘Sport at the Service of Humanity’. UoA members have also engaged in knowledge exchange partnerships with churches, such as Strawbridge’s consultancy for the General Synod of the Church of England and her advisory role in designing the intellectual content for the 2020 Lambeth Conference (postponed to 2022).

We have cultivated increasingly significant collaborations with the healthcare profession, following the close partnerships built with Oxford University Hospitals and the University’s Medical Sciences Division. For example, through a collaboration with the Royal Society of Medicine, the Royal College of Physicians, and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hordern has explored the meaning and practice of compassion in healthcare, drawing on Christian and philosophical traditions in Ethics (as evidenced in his impact case study). The resulting policy reports, including *Advancing Medical Professionalism* (2018), co-authored with the Royal College of Physicians, have had a substantial impact on healthcare practice (e.g. on processes for responding compassionately to patient complaints) and on the curriculum for medical students (e.g. incorporating humanities teaching as a thread in clinical training). In another such venture, Southwood ran a Wellcome-funded series of conferences alongside the chaplaincy team at Oxford University Hospitals, focusing on Christian teachings about pain and illness, and the role of the

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chaplaincy within healthcare settings. These events (2017-2019) were accredited as part of the continuing professional development training offered by the Royal College of Physicians.

The UOA has a long track record of encouraging its individual members to develop significant links with the media. In 2019, Daniel was recognised as a 'New Generation Thinker' by BBC Radio 3 and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Nelstrop's film 'Complete Surrender' on female mystics received widespread recognition: it was not only selected for various festivals but won a 'Best Documentary' award at the Love Story Film Festival and was judged 'Best Foreign Documentary' at the Durgapur Short Film Festival (both 2020). And MacCulloch's highly acclaimed BBC2 series 'Sex and the Church' (2015) and his programme on Thomas Cromwell, 'Henry VIII's Enforcer' (2018) demonstrated his ability to deploy meticulous scholarship in a public setting. Other outreach activities have emerged from research fields developed within the Faculty since 2014. Jones has run an extensive knowledge exchange programme with third-sector organisations in India, involving women's rights activists and social workers. This programme illustrates the fruitfulness of the Faculty's investment in the Study of Religions and demonstrates its commitment – shared with TORCH and the University through its internationalisation strategy – to expanding academic and knowledge exchange partnerships in the Global South.

As noted above, TORCH hosts and publicises research projects and promotes Humanities networks, and by engaging with its resources, we have been able to foster other collaborations between UoA members and non-academic partners. For example, TORCH hosts the public-facing Oxford Psalms Network (Gillingham), which has linked researchers in Theology and English and enabled public engagement with the reception histories of the Psalms. The Faculty is also attached to the Mystical Theology Network (Nelstrop). This network brings research on mysticism into dialogue with a wider public, and has shaped the work of artists, including painters, musicians, dancers and especially filmmakers. These networks have further strengthened the interdisciplinary character of our research and our connections to non-academic partners.

Along with our Networks, the Faculty's Research Centres also act as hubs for knowledge exchange activities, and they have had a considerable impact on public debate and policy. For more information about the Research Centres and Networks, including their role in facilitating knowledge exchange, please see Section 4a 'The Contribution of the Faculty's Research Centres and Networks'. The Faculty's Research Centres and Networks provide one central plank in our future strategy for public engagement.

The Faculty's Advisory Board supports our contribution to debates beyond the academy. We have recently recruited two Board members from the cultural sector to help us further align our research priorities with developments in this sphere: Michael Wakelin (Religion and Media consultant) and Elizabeth Oldfield (Director of the religious think-tank *Theos*). In all, the Advisory Board has 12 members, representing our key external stakeholders, including:

the teaching and legal professions (de Bono and Orchard); religion and the media (Odone and Wakelin); religion and politics (Bryant, Goodliff, Oldfield, Wittenberg); museums and libraries (Hobbs); business and innovation (Law); and publishing (Tate and Taylor).

Thanks to its broadly based composition, the Board has ensured that the Faculty's research speaks to contemporary issues in culture and society, as well as contributing to the formation of public policy.

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**(c) Development of our postgraduate and post-doctoral research community:** Over the census period, the 24 permanent post-holders in the Faculty of Theology and Religion have supervised 165.5 doctorates to successful completion. This is a yearly average of nearly 24. In REF2014, our yearly average for completion of research degrees was 17, so this represents an increase of some 40%. Most of those students were located within the Faculty, but colleagues have also supervised students registered in Classics, History, Social Anthropology, Oriental Studies and Philosophy. Early Career Researchers, along with staff holding fixed-term departmental lectureships, are encouraged to teach Master's students, and supervise their dissertations, but are not formally involved in doctoral supervision.

The new position of Graduate Studies Coordinator (see (a) above) has helped us to take a more focused approach to the development of our systems of research student support, training, and pastoral care. In addition, the division of the Faculty's research into seven Research Areas (see above, Section 1a), each with associated seminar series and research-led activities, has enabled postgraduates and post-doctoral researchers in the Faculty to participate in lively intellectual communities within their own fields of expertise. The Research Centres provide further support of this kind. In addition, the cross-disciplinary ventures documented under (b) above give postgraduates and post-doctoral fellows opportunities to range beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. The Faculty encourages recent doctoral students to apply for post-doctoral awards, and we have maintained a high proportion of ECRs during the period of this REF. 15 of the staff returned by the UoA are ECRs (24.59% of all staff, up from 22.22% in 2014). The substantial sums raised in this REF period to support postdoctoral positions testify to our commitment to emerging researchers. (For further detail, see Section 3a below.)

**(d) Auditing the Faculty's research:** The Faculty's Research Committee supervises all aspects of its research and research culture. Currently chaired by Bockmuehl, the Committee sets the Faculty's research priorities and strategy; works with the Humanities Division to identify and track research funding and awards schemes; supports colleagues to initiate bids for grant funding; in the light of the Faculty's research vision, reviews and comments on draft research proposals and grant applications; and advertises, assesses and recruits for postdoctoral and early-career scholarships. The Committee works in close partnership with the Faculty's five Research Centres, e.g. by identifying relevant areas of enquiry, and by reviewing their activities periodically. In this way, it is able to facilitate cross-pollination between the Centres, and between their research and the work of other groups in the University with cognate interests.

We expect high standards of research integrity, and require staff to adhere to ethical, legal and professional frameworks implemented University-wide. The University is a signatory of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). Research involving human participants and personal data is subject to review by the University's Research Ethics Committee. The faculty research committee also ensures that research integrity is given serious consideration during project creation; where appropriate ethical clearance is sought through the relevant central ethics committee to which the faculty submits annually. Regular training is offered at divisional level, targeted at ECRs and students but available to all staff; these events are advertised throughout the faculty.

**(e) Open Access:** The UoA promotes an open research environment. We encourage all our colleagues to use our institutional repository, the Oxford Research Archive (ORA). Training and support are provided by staff in the Bodleian Libraries and via the dedicated 'open access Oxford' microsite.

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The University's Research & Innovation Committee approved a new Open Access Publications Policy in March 2018. This supports the 'green' route to open access; journal articles and conference papers have been Open Access since 2016. The UoA encourages the use of Oxford-linked ORCIDs as a unique author identifier, and mandates the deposit of electronic theses into ORA for all doctoral graduates (by default, a thesis is open access on deposit, unless granted a 1-year or 3-year embargo).

**1c. Specific Objectives for the Future**

We have set ourselves the following objectives for the next REF cycle, to build on existing strengths, and lay the groundwork for further expansion into new fields of research.

1. Attracting scholars of exceptional quality to positions of academic leadership, especially our Statutory Professorships, which are key to the Faculty's strategic leadership. This is one example of our commitment to the University's objective 'to promote and enable ambitious research of exceptional quality' (*University of Oxford Strategic Plan 2018-23*, p. 3).
2. Working with potential donors to secure the endowment of posts, approaching both individuals and trusts, in the UK and North America, who are willing to support the Faculty's research activities through grants or gifts. A priority is to identify potential donors who can help us to strengthen our emerging research and teaching areas. A new post in Qur'anic and Classical Arabic and a new post in Modern Islam, and the consolidation of dedicated posts in Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism, would enable us to further expand our provision in Study of Religion. A further target is to secure funding for a tutorial fellowship in Science and Religion.
3. Supporting the University's Development Office to obtain additional scholarships for our postgraduates. While some current donors in the fields of Science and Religion, Study of Religion and Biblical Studies have made gifts to support graduate study (e.g. we have received GBP250k to fully fund two doctoral studentships in the Study of Religion), we are able to offer financial support to only a small proportion of our graduate students. Securing further bursaries therefore remains a key priority. The pursuit of such funding is integral to our plans to maintain and further develop a vigorous research environment.
4. Achieving the Athena Swan Bronze Award, to ensure that our processes and structures are properly informed by equality and diversity. Although this objective was clearly formulated in 2019, such concerns have become increasingly important in 2020 following the Black Lives Matter Movement, and discussion in the wider University about the legacies of the past. Harrison chairs the Faculty's Equality and Diversity Committee, which is preparing the ground for an application, and sharing experience and good practice with other Humanities Faculties.
5. Exploiting the many opportunities that will be provided by the Stephen Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, scheduled to be completed in 2024. Funded by a gift of GBP150m, the Centre will offer an outstanding physical and intellectual environment, and support interdisciplinary research through the provision of shared spaces for research across the humanities. (Further detail is provided in Section 3b below.)

## 2. People

### a. Staffing Strategy and Staff Development

The Faculty currently comprises 24 permanent post-holders: 9 Statutory Professors (i.e. holders of Endowed Chairs), 5 Full Professors and 10 Associate Professors. The 9 Statutory Chairs are of particular importance in establishing our future research agenda and attracting research students of international quality. 6 of these positions have been filled in the current REF period. In addition, we currently have 10 Departmental Lecturers and related positions, 2 Marie Skłodowska-Curie post-doctoral fellows, and 13 Faculty Appointed Researchers. Academic staff belong to one or more of the Faculty's seven Research Areas (see Section 1a above), each of which is headed by at least one Statutory Professor. These Heads act as the Subject Coordinators for postgraduate teaching in the relevant field, and oversee regular graduate seminars, with the support of modest funding from the Faculty – e.g. to invite outside speakers.

The Faculty recruits staff in the light of its developing research priorities and teaching needs, taking into account emerging challenges and opportunities. Our creation of new posts in the Study of Religion is a striking illustration of this general approach (see above, Section 1b).

All research staff are supported in their pursuit of funding by the Director of Research, assisted by the research facilitator in the Humanities Division, who helps formulate applications for grants and fellowships, and advertises opportunities with deadlines. Staff are eligible for one term of sabbatical leave after every six terms of office and must gain approval for a programme of research in advance. Periods of sabbatical leave may be accumulated at the discretion of the Faculty Board.

The University has developed a comprehensive Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff (last revised in August 2019), which maps closely to the national Concordat to Support the Career Development of Research Staff promulgated by Vitae UK. Oversight of the Code of Practice and its implementation is managed locally by the Chair of the Faculty Board, the Director of Research, and the Faculty Head of Administration. In addition, the Faculty offers various kinds of support, encouragement, and career guidance for all its staff, including post-doctoral Fellows and Departmental Lecturers.

**1. Early career researchers:** A peer-mentoring scheme encourages the career development of ECRs. Annually, each staff member, including ECRs, is paired with a colleague, and the pair then discuss their work, the challenges they face, and possible funding applications, before reporting back to the Faculty Chair after a formal meeting. The mentoring system helps to integrate new members of staff into the Faculty's research culture and enables them to explore possible funding bids. In the current REF period, several recent appointees, including Hordern, Southwood and Strawbridge, successfully applied for funds as a result of the guidance received through the mentoring system. Postdoctoral fellows are supported both through the Humanities Division and through a Faculty mentor (frequently the PI on their grant), who meets with them at least once during each term of their Fellowship. All ECRs are eligible to apply for internal research funds. In these ways, the Faculty seeks to enact the University's commitment to 'enhance the opportunities and support for early-career researchers' (University of Oxford Strategic Plan 2018-23, p. 3).

**2. Newly appointed staff:** In 2018-19, in line with wider university practice, the Faculty introduced two new policies to assist young and relatively new academic staff with the management of their time: a policy concerning their responsibilities in their Initial Period of Office, and a Faculty stint policy on teaching commitments, to help staff negotiate their work-load with regard to their College



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stints. (A 'stint' is the amount of teaching a staff member is formally required to offer as a result of their College association and contract.)

**3. All academic staff:** The Chair of the Faculty meets with staff individually each year to talk through their plans for research, addressing any difficulties they may face. This process is carried out in accordance with the University's annual HR cycle involving Teaching Excellence Awards, Recognition of Distinction Awards, and Mid-term and End of Initial Period of Office reviews. In the present REF cycle, four Statutory Professors received additional Recognition of Distinction Awards (Abulafia, Foot, Harrison and Ward) and two Departmental Lecturers (Sarisky and Oliver) received Teaching Excellence Awards. In addition, over the last three years, two Associate Professors (Hausner and Westerhoff) were promoted to full professorial status. This REF period has also seen 8 colleagues successfully complete their Initial Period of Office. The Chair of the Faculty, Research Director, and Head of Administration and Finance apply all other University staff HR policies described in the Institutional Environment Statement such as flexible working, and ensures the wide communication and encouragement to apply for support, for example additional research seed funding for returning carers.

#### **b. Support, Training, and Supervision of Postgraduate Research Students**

The Faculty attracts many research students, typically offering places to between 40 and 70 students each year, of whom 20 to 40 take up their places. Applications have risen in recent years: 89, 115 and 148 students respectively applied to begin their studies in the years 2018-20. Doctoral supervision is concentrated among permanent post-holders to ensure that students are supported by experienced supervisors with the necessary expertise. Joint supervision is common (often with interdisciplinary contributions from post-holders in other faculties) and enables the mentoring of staff who have not previously supervised doctorates. To ensure that students are properly supported throughout their studies, staff continue to supervise their doctoral students when on research leave.

Along with primary research guidance from their supervisors, students enjoy additional support from College advisors and the Humanities Division training team, who organise annually *circa* 200 training courses, workshops and events for doctoral students and postdocs. The Faculty's commitment to improving student research culture is evident from our creation of the position of Graduate Studies Coordinator in 2019. (For details, see Section 1b above.) As well as providing the usual research seminars associated with each of our Research Areas, and the termly Faculty Research seminar, the Faculty also hosts other regular events for graduates throughout the year. Examples include Ward's 'Wednesday Club' meetings, when an academic staff member gives an informal talk on their research interests; regular student-led seminars in Science and Religion; and a workshop in Ecclesiastical History. All these initiatives give research students an opportunity to share ideas, establish connections with visiting speakers, and to build up a network of support within the student research community. In addition, many Colleges run seminars and termly gatherings, giving their graduate theologians opportunity to nominate speakers and chair discussions. (Examples include: Oriel, Campion Hall, Wycliffe Hall, and Regent's Park). Student-led reading groups and other informal groups also offer peer support to supplement that provided by the Faculty.

The Faculty makes a small number of financial awards, adding to the funds that are available through the Colleges and other sources. In recent years, the Faculty has secured competitive funding annually via the Humanities Division – notably, AHRC, Ertegun and Clarendon scholarships, but also the recently-established BAME studentships and other scholarships for

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specific groups. Currently, 45 students (PGR and PGT) hold University awards, including 3 with prestigious Ertegun scholarships. In addition, we have access to around GBP19,000 each year from various trust funds to support students in difficult financial circumstances. Further funds can be requested at the College and University level.

The Faculty continues to improve its support for the professional development of research students. We benefit from the resources available through the Humanities Division's AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership. And in 2014, we established a Graduate Teaching Training Scheme to enable doctoral students to acquire and hone core teaching skills, and to benefit from additional skills workshops covering matters such as digital skills, public outreach, and careers outside the academy. Feedback from undergraduates has shown that they welcome the involvement of postgraduates in teaching roles and the distinctive perspective they can bring. The Faculty warmly encourages its PGRs to make the most of the training and personal development opportunities offered by the University's Learning and Teaching Training programme. The CTL offers routes to a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in HE and an accredited Teaching Recognition Scheme. The University's Language Centre supports our students' language skills, and offers 11 online courses (including Russian and Georgian) in addition to a large number of courses on site. We are committed to equal opportunity in the recruitment and support of graduate students, and to supporting graduates with children through nursery provision and flexible working.

Since 2017-18, we have offered a more structured programme of seminars and workshops following the appointment of the Faculty's first Postgraduate Professional Development Director. This postholder works closely with the Graduate Studies Coordinator to develop the tailored skills training and experience we offer to our research students, which supplements the training provided by the Division with more focused input relevant to the Faculty's research fields. Workshops cover basic research and writing skills, including the mastering of bibliographical software (e.g. Endnote), writing literature reviews, the use of digital tools and methods, and accessing Oxford's libraries (particularly special collections and archives). Senior scholars lead sessions on conference presentations, preparing articles for publication, and postdoctoral applications. Workshops on the three milestones in doctoral study at Oxford (Transfer of Status, Confirmation of Status, and Submission) are particularly well-received.

Additionally, some of our Research Areas run their own subject-specific professional development sessions for their postgraduates. For instance, early-career researchers in Ecclesiastical History co-ordinate a regular workshop for postgraduates, dedicated to skills training, graduate presentation, and peer feedback and support. Research supervisors in all areas provide advice to postgraduate students on career trajectories, including the planning of profile-building presentations at leading international conferences and publication of research articles.

Recently, the Faculty's research students launched the online *Journal of the Oxford Graduate Theological Society*, with an editorial board of students and an advisory board of senior members of the Faculty. The first issue appeared in 2020: <https://www.jogts.org/index.php/jogts>. The Faculty is enthusiastic about this initiative, which will help to showcase the innovative and creative research produced by Oxford graduate students, as well as promote the work of former Oxford students who have gone on to academic careers. The journal will enable our students to receive feedback on their work, interact with a wider audience, and will help to raise their profiles within the scholarly community.

The Faculty's research students annually elect six graduate representatives to serve on the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee, allowing any concerns about the Faculty's research culture to be brought to the attention of the Faculty Board and the Graduate Studies Committee.

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Graduate representatives are invited to speak to issues addressed at Faculty Board and GSC, and encouraged to propose items for the agenda under 'Open Business'.

**c. Equality and Diversity**

The faculty is seeking to develop the work of TRS-UK; in the first instance the faculty is gathering an evidence base. We expect this review, which includes benchmarking within Humanities and comparison with other departments in the UK, to set targets and agree actions accordingly.

At present, half of the Faculty's Statutory Professors who act as Subject Coordinators are women: History of Christianity (Foot); Old Testament/Hebrew Bible (Najman); Patristics (Harrison); and Study of Religion (Abulafia) – as are a large proportion of recent appointees to permanent positions (Strawbridge, Quick, Macfarlane). We have been seeking funding to support women graduates, and a new DPhil scholarship at Blackfriars for women in Theology was filled for the first time this academic year. In addition, in the most recent round, the Faculty secured two of three of the new BAME studentships. These scholarships are aimed at Master's students and open to students across the Humanities.

The Equality and Diversity Committee reports directly to the Faculty Board and oversees all policies that may affect working conditions. This Committee is instrumental in monitoring our Initial Period of Office and Faculty Stint policies. We are working towards applying for an Athena Swan bronze award in 2022 (as above, Section 1c). This target gives tangible expression to our commitment to inclusivity within the Faculty's research culture in accordance with the University's aim to create 'a supportive, inclusive culture and increase the diversity of University staff at all levels' (*University of Oxford Strategic Plan 2018-23*, p. 4).

Our commitment to religious equality and diversity, both institutionally and intellectually, is evident from our research conversations on such themes as religious diversity, pluralism, and inclusion in the modern world. For example, Hausner's ethnographic research has illuminated the religious experience of several marginalised communities, including diaspora communities in the UK and sex-worker and non-conformist communities in contemporary London. Frazier has worked with both the World Council of Churches and the Vatican on Hindu 'liberation theologies' and European diaspora communities. And Abulafia has applied her research on Abrahamic religions to collaborations in Israel and Germany over religious conflict and inter-religious dialogue.

The same concerns are evident in our research on women's rights and gender justice. Quick and Southwood have published on gender and power relations in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. Reddie has written about the challenge posed to the Church and Christian Theology by Black Lives Matter, and how to teach racial awareness to ministerial candidates. Jones has written on women's rights and equality in the Islamic world, particularly in studies of Islamic family law. The Ramsey Centre's 'Emerging Voices' project seeks to foreground the work of young women scholars in Science and Religion. And the Faculty has recently agreed to support a new student initiative 'Women in Theology', which aims to provide a supportive network and forum for discussing challenges faced by women in the field.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### a. Research Income

The Faculty has a well-established record of supporting its research, impact and outreach activities through grant applications and other forms of external income support. It provides professional services support via a Research Facilitator to all colleagues who want to apply for external funds. The faculty Research Committee provides supportive advice to applicants on strategy and direction, and has oversight of large-scale applications. Success in winning external grants, coupled with strategic use of internal research funds as seed-funding have allowed us to grow our research income by about one-third. Over this REF period:

- Faculty post-holders have raised a total of GBP6,566,341 in research income,
- With a yearly average of GBP938,049
- Up by 32% on the yearly average of GBP708,133 in the previous REF period.

Nearly 55% (GBP3,589,477) has come from non-EU charities (particularly the John Templeton Foundation), 16% from Research Councils (GBP1,053,020) and 13% from UK charities (GBP850,725). These monies have supported a wide range of ambitious projects including the following:

‘The Rise of Christian Theology’ (British Academy, Zachhuber); ‘Engaging Healthcare’ (British Academy, Hordern); ‘The Protestant Spirit’ (British Academy, Zahl); ‘Qazis, Courts and Living Shari’a’ (AHRC, Jones); ‘Renouncing the World’ (Leverhulme, Hausner); ‘Theological Method’ (Leverhulme, Ward); and ‘The New Madhyamaka’ (Templeton, Westerhoff).

Consistent with our goal of consolidating and extending our expertise in Ethics and in Science and Religion (see above, Section 1b), we have raised substantial sums to support these fields. For example, in Ethics, we have secured funding for The Oxford Character Project (Biggar, John Templeton Foundation, GBP1.95M) and the project Compassion in Healthcare (Hordern, AHRC, GBP199,258). We have also secured major grants to promote our global leadership in Science and Religion, including the following:

resourcing of teaching and research in Oxford (McGrath, John Templeton Foundation, USD811,389); establishing research programmes and networks in Science and Religion in Latin America (Pinsent, John Templeton Foundation, USD1,954,372) and in Eastern Europe (Pinsent, two grants, John Templeton Foundation, USD234,565 and USD2,971,688); and developing natural theology as a tool of cultural and ecclesial engagement (McGrath, Issachar Fund, USD257,944).

The faculty is committed to supporting early-career grant funding and ensures professional advice and support is given to all those applying. A faculty group reviews all ECR fellowship applications, provides mentoring for appointees, and encourages access to internal funds. Spending on British Academy funded fellowships totals GBP692,668 and on Leverhulme funded positions GBP180,160. In addition, 5 Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellows were appointed, and 9 Templeton funded fellows.

The faculty has also made extensive use of Oxford University’s John Fell Fund, established to foster a proactive approach to research opportunities in all subject areas, especially projects with

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an interdisciplinary emphasis. In this REF cycle, we received GBP268,604 from the Fell Fund to develop collaborative research, in addition to GBP140,793 from the Wellcome Institutional Strategic Support Fund. The Faculty used these funds to develop its core research objectives, including public engagement and the strengthening of our work in the Study of Religion and Science and Religion. Projects funded by the Fell Fund since 2014, many of which paved the way for larger funded projects, include:

‘Advancing Medical Professionalism: Teaching in the University of Oxford’s Medical School’ (Hordern); ‘A Common Imagination: Scriptural Interpretation among Jews and Greeks’ (Ward); ‘Shamanic Healing in South Asia’ (Hausner); ‘Qazis, Courts and Everyday Shari’a in India’ (Jones); and ‘God, Science, and the Rise of “No Religion”’ (Henson).

**b. Infrastructure**

The Faculty forms part of the Humanities Division (along with Classics, English, History, Languages, Linguistics, Music, Oriental Studies, Philosophy and the Ruskin School of Fine Art), but retains considerable autonomy as budget holder with its own administrative team. Divisional research funds, won through a bidding process, have been important for a number of initiatives in this REF cycle (e.g., Bockmuehl, Biggar, Foot, Najman, and Hausner).

Currently the Faculty is housed in the Gibson Building in the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, which is close to the Divisional offices, the Faculty of Philosophy (with which we share an undergraduate degree programme) and the Theology and Philosophy Library. As members of Colleges, most permanent post-holders have their offices in the Colleges, with the Faculty providing any necessary equipment. Three postdoctoral fellows with College associations have their offices provided by the College, and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie postdoctoral fellow had an office in the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies as a Visiting Scholar. Other postdoctoral fellows are at present housed in the Gibson Building, along with Departmental Lecturers, administration staff, the Head of Finance and Administration, and the Faculty Board Chair.

The Stephen Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities aims to foster closer collaboration between the Humanities disciplines in the University through their co-location within a strategic new building. It will provide a home for seven Humanities Faculties, including Theology and Religion, plus six Faculty libraries. Specifications for the Faculty’s space in the Schwarzman Centre will include a dedicated area for postdoctoral fellows, greatly increased space for graduate study, and shared facilities designed to promote cross-disciplinary exchange. Oxford’s new Institute for Ethics in AI will also be based here, and will provide an exciting opportunity for Faculty members with relevant interests to develop their work in this field.

The Faculty has developed a research culture that identifies where grant funding can support career trajectories as well as new projects, ideas or research directions. We make use of the funding and administrative framework provided by TORCH and the Humanities Research Support Team, which includes grant application advice from embryonic idea to submission, a process which is combined with Faculty mentoring for applicants and oversight from the Research Committee and its Director. An example is the identification of Quick during her first year of appointment (2019) as an ideal nomination for the Philip Leverhulme Prize. Her award (one of only five in Philosophy and Theology throughout the UK) for a project on concepts of beauty and aesthetics in the Hebrew Bible will help her connect the Hebrew Bible to the history of aesthetics and will shed new light on both disciplines.

**c. Research Library Facilities**

The University's many libraries, known collectively as the Bodleian, contain more than 13 million items, and stock is added at an average of one thousand items per day. Together, this makes them the largest and most diverse collection for the support of teaching and research in any institution of higher education in the UK. In addition to vast print and archival collections, the Bodleian offers access to more than 100,000 electronic journals, newspapers, and magazines and over 1,500 licensed electronic databases and reference works. At present, 10.3 million requests for e-journal articles are made annually, while database searches average 14.4 million annually. Current e-book stock comprises more than 1,000,000 items, with 9.9 million section requests in the last academic year. The Bodleian's current annual expenditure for electronic resources is GBP6,084,465.

The Theology and Religion collections and the materials budget are managed by the librarian for the Philosophy and Theology Faculties Library, who works in close collaboration with members of the Faculty and with other subject librarians. There are approximately 3,500 Library members, including members of other faculties, and loans average 80,000 each year. The Philosophy and Theology Library will be incorporated into the new Humanities Library in the Schwarzman Centre in 2024.

The annual Theology and Religion library materials budget for purchased items (books, journals, and e-resources) is almost GBP110,000 (not including e-resources purchased through other cost-centres). Subject-specific e-resources for Theology and Religion include ATLA, BIBIL, DMLBS, HALAT, Index Religiosus, wide-ranging primary texts in original languages and translations, and the whole corpus of Oxford University Press e-publications, including Oxford Scholarship Online, Oxford Reference Online, and Oxford Bibliographies Online. The faculty ringfences funds for the needs of research students which are disbursed by the Library.

Print provision for Theology and Religion is divided between the Central Bodleian's Lower Reading Room, which houses the open access reference collections for Theology, the closed stacks, where 8.5 million items are available by e-order and daily delivery, and the lending collection of the Philosophy and Theology Faculties Library. This collection comprises 50,000 books, available on open shelves or by order from closed access. E-resources have been a particular strength for the Faculty, enabling multiple students to access material simultaneously, regardless of location or library opening hours. Researchers from the UoA have access to other specialist resources, including the library of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, and the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies library which houses more than 20,000 books. Many individual College libraries also have their own extensive Theology collections.

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

##### 4a. The Contribution of the Faculty's Research Centres and Networks

The Faculty hosts five Research Centres. Each is directed by a postholder, frequently a Statutory Professor, and draws on the interests of other UoA members. All five Centres are explicitly interdisciplinary, encouraging and affirming the importance of collaborative research across disciplinary boundaries.

*The McDonald Centre for Theology, Ethics, and Public Life*  
(Established in 2008, endowed in perpetuity in 2011; directed by Biggar).

This Centre seeks to foster dialogue between Christian ethics and bodies that shape public opinion and policy. In 2014-20, its conferences included: 'What's Wrong with Rights?' (2015); 'How Can Realpolitik be Ethical?' (2016); and 'Chinese "Just War" Ethics' (2017). The proceedings of various Centre-sponsored conferences have been published:

the proceedings of the 2014 conference, 'In Defence of War?', were published in *Studies in Christian Ethics* (2015); the 2017 conference appeared as *The Ethics of Everyday Life: Moral Theology Meets Anthropology and the Social Sciences* (Georgetown UP, 2019); and the 2018 conference as 'Is Religious Liberty under Threat? A Trans-Atlantic Dialogue', in *Studies in Christian Ethics* (2020).

After the 2019 conference, 'Academic Freedom under Threat: What's to be Done?', the Centre Director led a debate that resulted in the launch of the UK's Free Speech Union (FSU) (February 2020) and a briefing paper, *Free Speech and Academic Freedom in UK Universities* (May 2020). The Centre also supports the Oxford Character Project, originally funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation to a value of GBP203k. This has recently been supplemented by a further grant of GBP1.95m from the John Templeton Foundation to fund a three-year project on 'Virtues and Vocations', which began in September 2020. Five new research fellows have now been appointed to conduct research on character formation in business, finance, law and technology.

*The Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion*  
(Established in 1986; directed by McGrath)

This Centre encourages research, public engagement, and knowledge transfer at the interface between religious beliefs, theological concepts, and the sciences. The Centre hosts the digital humanities project 'Special Divine Action' (directed by Pinsent and McGrath). This project is hosted through a dedicated website and YouTube channel, and curates thousands of presentations, interviews, videos and animations on the theme of God's action in the world. As well as engaging non-academic audiences, the project has inspired a major effort to promote philosophical engagement in schools. Aiming to enhance insights into 'Big Questions' at the intersection of science, philosophy, and theology, the project has catalysed the development of innovative teaching practice and has reached tens of thousands of participants. In addition, the Ian Ramsey Centre's annual Oxford conference gathers leading researchers in this interdisciplinary field, and includes sessions designed to encourage and inform early career scholars, particularly doctoral students. In 2018, the Centre established the *Ian Ramsey Centre Studies in Science and Religion*, a monograph series published with Oxford University Press, designed to make significant interventions in the field. Its first two volumes were published in 2019:

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Peter Harrison, ed., *Science Without God? Rethinking the History of Scientific Naturalism*; and Alister McGrath, *The Territories of Human Reason: Science and Theology in an Age of Multiple Rationalities*.

Further works are in preparation. As noted above (see Section 3a), the Centre is also extensively engaged with the creation and resourcing of research networks in Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe, raising substantial funds in the process. We aim to expand this activity during the next REF cycle.

*The Centre for Theology and Modern European Thought*  
(Established in 2007; directed by Rasmussen)

This Centre promotes the interdisciplinary study of the relationships between theology and other areas of intellectual life. One of its most significant recent achievements was the production of the *Oxford Handbook of Nineteenth Century Christian Thought* (2017) edited by core members of the Centre (Rasmussen, Zachhuber, and Wolfe, who is now at St Andrews). This landmark volume proposes a fresh reading of the Christian intellectual tradition across ‘the long nineteenth century’. In addition to organising research seminars during term time, the Centre usually hosts an annual international conference. The theme chosen for the 2020 conference (postponed until 2021) is ‘Theological Genealogies of Modernity’.

*The Centre for the Reception History of the Bible*  
(Established in 2002; directed by Joynes)

This Centre offers a rich programme of interdisciplinary seminars, focused upon intellectual engagement with the Bible, and its cultural appropriation. For example, in 2018-19, the Centre hosted a series of seminars on ‘The Bible in Art, Music and Literature’, attracting audiences from within and beyond the university. The Centre’s Day Conferences have focused on major themes in biblical reception – such as ‘Shakespeare and the Bible’ (2016) and ‘Picturing the Gospels’ (2018). The Centre collaborates regularly with local institutions such as the Bodleian Library (2017), Christ Church Picture Gallery (2018), and the Ashmolean (2019).

*The British Centre for Durkheimian Studies*  
(Relocated to the Faculty of Theology & Religion in 2017; directed by Hausner)

This Centre provides a forum and hub for scholarship on Durkheimian themes in multiple fields, including religion, anthropology, sociology, law, and politics, drawing together leading scholars around the world. The move to the Faculty of Theology and Religion was marked by an inaugural workshop: ‘Why Did Durkheim Have to Die?’, assessing the place of Durkheimian thought in the field of religion over the course of the 20th century. The resulting papers were published as a special issue of the journal *Durkheimian Studies/Études Durkheimiennes* (Vol. 23, 2019). In 2019, the Centre established a partnership between Durkheim research centres at the Universities of Oxford, Aix-Marseille, and Cologne, to foster links with European scholars of Durkheim’s work and legacy. The Centre also maintains connections with North and South American colleagues.

The Faculty also hosts three international, interdisciplinary research networks, directed by Faculty members:

Categories of Religion and the Secular in Islam (Henley); The Oxford Psalms Network (Gillingham, which led to Gillingham’s 2018 book *Psalms through the Centuries* as



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well as outputs by other members of the Steering Committee); and The Healthcare Values Partnership (Hordern, funded by the Sir Halley Stewart Trust).

We have also benefited from the success of College-based research initiatives. These include The Centre for the Study of the Bible, established at Oriel in 2018 (Najman) and 'Religion and the Frontier Challenges', a programme focused upon contemporary religion and global change hosted at Pembroke (Jones). The latter initiative, begun in 2019, will support up to eight post-doctoral scholars over the next 5 years, each scholar being appointed for three years (4 are currently in post). In addition, The Laudato Si' Institute based at Campion Hall was founded in 2019, to engage with the ecological vision set out in Pope Francis's Encyclical of that name (Deane-Drummond). Although these research ventures have their own areas of focus, overlapping interests regularly lead to collaborations (e.g., the Ian Ramsey Centre has worked both with the McDonald Centre and, separately, the Laudato Si' Institute).

**4b. Collaboration as a Core Component of the Faculty's Research Culture**

The Faculty's development is driven by its affirmation of traditional fields of research, and its commitment to using this strength to engage new questions and issues, via collaborative forms of enquiry. The Faculty enacts this approach at three distinct levels.

**1. Collaboration within the Faculty.**

Cross-disciplinary collaborations within the Faculty are supported by our Research Centres and Research Areas, often focusing on themes which can be examined from multiple perspectives. Examples include: the concept of human nature, addressed at the 2017 Ramsey Centre conference; the notion of martyrdom, the subject of a 2020 public seminar at the Centre for the Study of the Bible; and the theme of sacrifice, explored at a 2019 symposium in the Centre for the Reception History of the Bible. Similarly, an interdisciplinary conference organised by Bockmuehl examined the significance of Austin Farrer as a New Testament scholar, philosophical theologian, and literary figure, the proceedings being published as *Austin Farrer: Oxford Warden, Scholar, Preacher* (2020). Ongoing collaboration across these areas is also secured via the work of the Research Areas, and their seminar programmes. Some graduate programmes also encourage discussion across subject lines, such as the MSt programmes in Study of Religion and Biblical Interpretation.

**2. Collaboration with other Faculties, Colleges, and Centres within Oxford University.**

There are extensive collaborative research projects between the Faculty of Theology and Religion and other Humanities Faculties, often facilitated by TORCH. Examples include the relation of Theology and Music (Harrison), and reading practices across disciplines, particularly the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible and Classics (Najman). In addition, there was a year-long collaboration (2018-19) on the Dead Sea Scrolls between the New Testament Seminar (Bockmuehl), the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible Seminar (Najman), and the Seminar for Jewish History and Literature in the Graeco-Roman Period (Goodman), culminating in an international day conference, whose proceedings are forthcoming in 2021 as a curated edition of the leading journal *Revue de Qumran*. With the support of TORCH, the Gordon Milburn Junior Research Fellow in Mysticism (Serrado) set up a Network in Early and Medieval Mysticism. The Faculty's strength in the History of Christianity is expressed in its close relationship with the Faculty of History (Abulafia, Booth, Foot, MacCulloch, Macfarlane), while there are also close relationships between Study of Religions scholars and the Oriental Institute. We have also developed links with the sciences. For example, Hordern led a 4-year collaboration with clinicians, patient organisations, and colleagues from medical sciences (including Oxford, UCL and Queen's Belfast) on the theme of precision

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medicine. This collaboration led to a special issue of *The New Bioethics* and papers recommending changes in the conduct and culture of clinical trials in medical science journals such as *Trials* and *Biomedicine Hub*.

The University's Permanent Private Halls [PPHs] also make a rich contribution to the Faculty's research culture (as noted above, Section 1a). Based at Campion Hall, the Laudato Si' Research Institute has a pioneering role in developing eco-theological approaches to environmental issues. Blackfriars, a Dominican foundation, resources research in the thought of Thomas Aquinas through its Aquinas Institute, directed by Conrad, and is also home to the Las Casas Institute for Social Justice. Regent's Park College (Baptist) has developed a significant research programme and series of academic publications relating to Baptist history, identity, and Theology through its Centre for Baptist Studies (Kreitzer). The PPHs co-ordinate the Faculty's only graduate degree in Practical Theology – the Master of Theology in Applied Theology (MTh), which enables theological reflection upon experience in pastoral practice, mainly in the context of ministry in churches.

### 3. Collaboration beyond the University, with other academic institutions and public bodies, including international partnerships.

Examples include: Bockmuehl's two-year project with the University of Notre Dame (funded by the Catholic Biblical Association) on the New Testament's influence on the Creed, and the Ramsey Centre's project on 'Science, Philosophy, and Theology: Capability Building in Latin America' (2014-17), funded for USD1.92 million, involving collaboration with 46 academic institutions in Latin America. The Ramsey Centre has also developed a more recent project on 'Science, Theology, and Humane Philosophy' in eastern Europe. Following a funded scoping exercise, the project received USD3 million in funding in 2019 to work with 50 different universities, centres, institutes and academies in Central and Eastern Europe from Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Ukraine in the south to Lithuania and Latvia in the north. The Faculty also welcomes visiting researchers from other academic institutions and sees their contribution as a key stimulus to our work. During this cycle, we welcomed 44 visiting international scholars from 13 different countries.

Alongside its engagement with the academic world, the Faculty also works with other communities and publics, especially schools and public institutions:

#### (a) Schools

(i) We shape ongoing debates at the heart of the A Level RS curriculum. McGrath's *The Dawkins Delusion* (AQA and WJEC), Flood's work concerning Hinduism and society (Edexcel), and Hampson's arguments about Christianity and gender (AQA) are required content in syllabus specifications. Books by Faculty members (e.g. Barton, Flood, McGrath, MacCulloch) are cited as teachers' resources by AQA, Edexcel, OCR and WJC in RS and History A Level specifications.

(ii) We have consistently committed to communicating our research specialisms to young audiences. For example, in a three-year collaboration with Academy Conferences, the Ramsey Centre has hosted events for 'Gifted and Talented' pupils across the UK where academic staff (e.g. McGrath, Pinsent and Ward) have delivered workshops on Science and Religion to thousands of school pupils. In addition, many Faculty members (e.g. Apetrei, Biggar, Edwards, Jones, MacCulloch, Marshall, Pinsent, Strawbridge, Zachhuber) have given talks in schools around the UK. The Faculty also welcomes hundreds of Y12 and Y13 students to three annual University Open Days at which senior academic staff deliver lectures and workshops (2015-20: Abulafia, Foot, Gillingham, MacCulloch, McGrath, Southwood, Strawbridge, Westerhoff and

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Wood). These sessions enable our staff to share their work with school audiences, for example Abulafia on Jacob and Esau, or McGrath on God, science and faith.

(iii) The link between specific research and work with schools is seen most strikingly in our contributions to access programmes and events delivered in collaboration with major widening participation projects at the University. Annually, the Faculty delivers an academic programme within the 'UNIQ' summer school – for Y12 students from UK state schools, predominantly those from disadvantaged contexts. In 2019, Strawbridge shared her work on relics and reception history, and in 2018, Southwood discussed her research on forced marriage.

(iv) We also support the OxNET project, improving University access for disadvantaged pupils in London and the North of England. In addition, Pembroke College runs the North West Philosophy and World Religions Centre at Ashton Sixth Form College in Greater Manchester, which involves a range of schools and colleges in the North West. The Centre offers lectures and seminars for Y12 students introducing the subject, study skills and the nature of university-level studies. Faculty members have been key in designing and delivering these seminar programmes (Jones, Henley plus several Faculty DPhil candidates and postdoctoral researchers) and have worked closely with partners from Theology departments in other universities including Manchester, Leeds, Lancaster and Durham. The initiative has encouraged many disadvantaged pupils to apply for Theology and other humanities programmes, at Oxford and elsewhere.

*(b) Public Institutions*

Links between the Faculty and the medical profession again reflect our collaborative approach to research. These connections are evident in the work of the Healthcare Values Partnership (Hordern) and Downs' project on cultural and religious influences on vaccine hesitancy in Tanzania. We are also involved in engaging and resourcing the major religious traditions and communities in Britain. For example, Strawbridge leads an international team producing biblical resources for the 2020 Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Communion (now postponed until 2022). We also have strong links with the media, which allows our research to reach a wider audience. For example, Daniel presented a Radio 3 Documentary 'Sir Isaac Newton and the Philosophers' Stone' (July 2019), a Radio 3 interview on the Free Thinking Festival (April 2019), and appeared on TV with Morgan Freeman in *The Story of God* (May 2019).

Our research also engages a variety of other external agencies, often having a strongly ethical dimension. Richman, who recently completed her doctorate on African religious practices, used her research to advise the London Metropolitan Police and the NHS on issues of exorcism and abuse. Aspray works with refugee charities on Christian responses to refugee crises as part of the 'Religion and the Frontier Challenges' research programme. These collaborations are not limited to the United Kingdom: Ward's work on training NGOs and raising education aspirations in the townships of South Africa, and his influence on handling religious pluralism in Singapore is notable here, as is Biggar's influence on American military thinking about 'just war' issues in Syria and elsewhere, through lectures and briefings at military academies and defence institutions in Europe and the USA. (For further examples, see above, Section 1b, 'External partnerships'.)

**4c. Contributions to the Profession and Marks of Recognition**

Various Faculty members are involved in editing journals and serving on the editorial board of journals and other major reference projects. The following offers a representative sample of such activities:

- Abulafia: advisory board of *The Encyclopedia of Jewish-Christian Relations* (to be published by De Gruyter in 2021); also editorial board, *The International Journal of Levant Studies*.
- Downs: editorial board, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*.
- Foot: editorial board, *English Historical Review* and (until 2020), *BBC History Magazine*.
- Hausner: editorial boards, *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* and *Durkheimian Studies/Etudes Durkheimiennes*, and Co-Editor of *Religion and Society: Advances in Research*.
- Jones: editorial board, *Journal of Islamic Research*.
- MacCulloch: editorial boards, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* and *Studies in Early Modern Religious Tradition*.
- Najman: editorial boards, *Revue de Qumran*, *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*, and *Journal for the Study of Judaism*.
- Southwood: editorial board, *Horizons in Biblical Literature*.
- Strawbridge, editorial boards, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* and *Journal for the Reception of the Bible*.
- Wynn: Editor, *Religious Studies* (2016-18).

Four members of the Faculty (Abulafia, Fiddes, Flood, Harrison) were elected Fellows of the British Academy during this REF cycle. MacCulloch serves as Vice President for Public Engagement of the Academy and received the 2019 Leopold Lucas Prize from the University of Tübingen, honouring his outstanding achievements in the fields of theology, intellectual history, and historical research. Rowland (retired 2014) was awarded the British Academy's Burkitt Medal for Biblical Studies in 2018, and Biggar was appointed to the Pontifical Academy in 2017. Strawbridge was awarded the inaugural Society of Biblical Literature – De Gruyter Prize in Biblical Studies and Reception History for *The Pauline Effect*.

The Faculty hosts several important and influential public lectures in Oxford. These are listed with some examples of speakers from this REF cycle below:

- The Bampton Lectures, established in 1780: David Ford, George Pattison, and Peter Harrison.
- The Ptarmigan Lectures in Patristics: Gillian Clark, Garth Fowden, and Averil Cameron.
- The Wilde Lectures in Natural and Comparative Religion: Alexander Pruss, Mark Wynn, Anne Blackburn, and Jonathan Kvanvig.
- The Hensley Henson Lectures: Foot, who laid the foundations for a new project to write an intellectual biography of the Venerable Bede; and MacCulloch, whose lectures on 'Thomas Cromwell: Enterprising Reformation' offered an overview of his six years of research on Cromwell's career and significance.
- The Speaker's Lectures in Biblical Studies: Gary Anderson, Mark Goodacre, Yvonne Sherwood, and Adele Reinhartz (the last postponed).

**4d. Disciplinary Sustainability**

We recognise the challenges facing our discipline but believe we are in a strong position to contribute to its sustainability, for these reasons:

1. The Faculty has a significant concentration of expertise in each of its seven Research Areas (listed in Section 1a), and each Area sustains a lively conversation through seminars and other research-led initiatives. The Faculty's permanent staff can offer leadership in many traditional fields of theological enquiry, such as Biblical Studies (Bockmuehl, Downs, Najman, Quick, Southwood, Strawbridge), Patristics (Booth, Edwards, Harrison), Church History (Abulafia, Foot, Macfarlane, MacCulloch), and Modern Theology (Rasmussen, Ward, Zachhuber). As noted, in recent years, the Faculty has also acquired substantial expertise in the Study of Religion and Science and Religion. This subject-specific research is further supported by the work of the tradition-focused Oxford Centres for Buddhist Studies, Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Hindu Studies, and Islamic Studies. Each of these Centres comprises a core of research specialists, who can offer wide-ranging support for graduate students in their fields, and anchor strong international research connections.

2. The UoA's members and Research Centres have also pioneered new approaches to emerging questions at the boundaries of our Research Areas, including:

gender and theology (Frazier, Hausner, Jones, Quick, Southwood, Ward); eco-theology (Deane-Drummond); scientific, social and medical issues in theology (Biggar, Daniel, Downs, Hordern, McGrath, Pinsent); interreligious relations and dialogue (Abulafia, Booth, Jones, Ward); and comparative philosophy (Frazier, Westerhoff).

Our capacity to develop funded research projects means we can establish e.g. postdoctoral fellowships in response to emerging research themes or issues of public interest. (For some examples, see Section 3a.) This capacity is enhanced by the strongly entrepreneurial outlook of some Faculty members (e.g. Brooks, Hordern, Najman, and Pinsent).

3. The faculty is alive to the opportunities presented by potential donors to fund shifts within the discipline by enabling the creation of new posts to engage questions that lie beyond the Faculty's current domain of expertise. Recent developments include the creation of the Chair in The Study of the Abrahamic Religions and the Idreos Chair of Science and Religion, both of which reflect developments in the research landscape that captured the imagination of donors. In addition, in 2020, the Faculty secured external funding for a Departmental Lectureship in Modern Catholic Theology. We expect that this position will significantly strengthen our research profile in such areas as 'Global Catholicism', liberation theology, African theology, or Asian theology.

The narrative we have developed in this concluding section, on 'collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society', shows the importance we attach to establishing and deepening relationships with diverse audiences and constituencies. These collaborations have, in turn, shaped our research environment, by helping us to see how our projects can respond to questions whose origins lie outside the academy. In these ways, our recent history demonstrates how the intellectual life of our Faculty, and scholarly enquiry in general, can enrich, and be enriched by, broader cultural conversations.