REF2021

Institution: University of Stirling

Unit of Assessment: Law C18

1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

1.1 Context

Stirling Law School (SLS) is a division of Law and Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. The SLS combines cutting-edge, legal research from theoretical, doctrinal, comparative, empirical and interdisciplinary perspectives, and addresses key national and international societal challenges in **energy and environmental law**, **human rights**, **child and family law**, and **private international law and arbitration**.

SLS's research structure and staffing has risen to the challenge set out after REF2014 of growing a "highly collegiate, supportive and ambitious academic community" and enabled us to focus our research on complex legal issues that confront us globally. To this end, we refined our research group organisation to strengthen collaboration between colleagues across SLS and our partner disciplines on major research challenges. Close engagement with law practitioners and the public sector further enhances this cooperative approach. Highlights of our achievements include:

- Appointment of 10 colleagues (new posts and replacements) to deepen and consolidate our research strengths;
- Impact through integrating human rights into climate action and creating just low-carbon transition, helping close the climate accountability gap;
- Impact on Scottish Government policy to make international conventions on economic, social and cultural human rights (notably in the field of family law) enforceable in Scotland, again closing the accountability gap;
- Major contributions to the development of private international law, notably in the fields of recognition and enforcement of judgments, international family law and succession.

As a division, we are agile and responsive to opportunities presented by our diverse collaborative network, which extends globally. Law colleagues are leaders and collaborators in projects within 6 of 12 institutional research programmes that are grouped under the University's three overarching research themes: *Cultures, Communities and Society*; *Global Security and Resilience*; and *Living Well*.

Since its foundation in 2005, SLS, has built on a small research nucleus (7.9 FTE for REF2014) to increase the number of research active staff to 14 (13.2 FTE) in 2021. A strategic review in 2015 led to an expanded senior cohort whose research galvanised our key areas of energy and environment, child and family law, and human rights, and introduced new expertise in private international law, to implement our REF2014 forward research strategy. These appointments have delivered leadership in research projects, extended international collaborative reach, and had substantial input to governmental, public and Third Sector policy consultations fulfilling three further key objectives in our REF2014 strategy.

1.2 Structure

All of SLS' research aligns with the 3 University themes and with 9 research programmes: in theme, 1. Being Connected; Cultural Heritage; Home, Housing and Security; Digital Society and Culture; 2. Environmental Change; Extremes in Science and Society; Global Food Security; Human Security, Conflict and Co-operation; and 3. Health and Behaviour. To optimise and maximise the effectiveness of our research contribution to these programmes, research activity is structured into four groups into which our specialisms fall:

- **Environmental and Energy Law;**
- **Child and Family Law;**

- **Private International Law and Arbitration;**
- **Human Rights**.

Each group participates in projects delivered through University research programmes, although colleagues can also pursue projects that are independent of that framework. Membership of a group is not prescriptive and there is overlap between them. This overlap delivers cohesion through members' close involvement in the work of the other groups, ensures the sharing of best practice between groups, and fosters broader perspectives within the discipline whilst strengthening the range of interdisciplinary partnerships. Through the institutional research programmes, colleagues are also engaged in interdisciplinary partnerships with colleagues in other discipline areas within and beyond the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

Environmental and Energy Law (McLeod Little, Savaresi, Marsden, Okoli)
Whole-system, inter-disciplinary collaboration is fundamental to our research in reconciling the global challenges of climate change and resistance to low-carbon transition. Measures to tackle these challenges can also have negative impacts on liberties and livelihoods, especially if they are pursued without factoring in legitimate concerns. Colleagues work at the cutting edge of legal/regulatory change informed by insights from the humanities and the social sciences to reconcile energy governance, just low-carbon transition, and climate and environmental change with human rights implications. The challenges of securing effective responses to the impacts of climate change and environmental destruction are explored especially in the context of Asian jurisdictions, including China and the Philippines. Here, an absence of effective regional and sub-regional rulemaking provides us (perhaps paradoxically) with an opportunity to propose international legal solutions in countries historically typified by an emphasis on national sovereignty.

Child and Family Law (Sutherland, Boyle, Donnelly, Holliday, Beaumont)
Responding appropriately to children who need care and protection (for example, children in custody or in child abduction disputes), or maintenance, or who engage in offending behaviour is an ongoing challenge in Scotland and many other jurisdictions. Colleagues' work in this area uses doctrinal, empirical, interdisciplinary and comparative methods to promote better criminal and civil justice responses which transcend national boundaries and ensure the child's interests and human rights are at the heart of the law.

Private International Law and Arbitration (Beaumont, Yu, Okoli, Holliday, McArdle)
The conflict of laws, the unification of private international law, and improving dispute resolution systems are complex and politically challenging matters that benefit from appropriate international harmonisation. Group members research these challenges offering solutions through their work with international institutions, state and private actors and arbitral bodies. Their research provides unique perspectives on the challenges and possibilities of various modes of dispute resolution, on recognition and enforcement of foreign judgments, on international family law, and on some intractable problems of applicable law (eg clawback).

Human Rights (All research-active staff but notably Boyle, Noto La Diega, Etone, Sutherland, McLeod Little, Beaumont, Savaresi, Holliday, Barker, and Egan)
While the broad theme of human rights informs the work of the three research groups above, it is a specialist group which drives the research of colleagues within the wider university. This importance is manifest in SLS leadership within the interdisciplinary research programme on Human Security, Conflict and Co-operation. One recurring issue spanning all research groups are the gaps in the realisation of international agreements within domestic legislatures. In this group, the failures in human rights law, and in particular implementing international human rights instruments, provide the focus. Colleagues research models of incorporation that embed human rights into domestic law and, globally, use empirical and socio-legal research to critique the reporting mechanisms through which state parties' compliance is monitored. That research has brought legislative reform at the devolved level in Scotland and consultancy for national governments, as well as working with NGOs in South Africa, Nigeria, the Philippines and Kenya.

Other research includes innovative structural remedies to address systemic violations of economic, social and cultural rights.

1.3 Research and Impact Strategy

Our research strategy of interrogating complex legal and societal challenges through cutting-edge legal research approached from theoretical, empirical, doctrinal, comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives is a core aim of all research groups. It is met by assembling teams of researchers to advance solutions to challenges of regulatory change and governance, accountability, enforcement and jurisdictional convergence under our four broad specialisms. Solutions typically combine traditional legal research techniques with innovative approaches and data-driven methods. The results, as outlined below, are developed in close collaboration with specialists in academic disciplines in the humanities, social and computational sciences, stakeholders, including policy-makers at national and international levels, intergovernmental organisations, non-government organisations, private legal practice, third sector organisations and businesses.

To realise this strategy, we pursue two primary aims:

- **1. Develop new approaches to tackling complex legal issues and societal challenges**

  Our research groups enable us to focus expertise and address complex domestic and international challenges. Through their ethos of openness and inclusion, the groups support the sharing of ideas and collaborative working internally, with other groups and beyond SLS, and with external stakeholders. This has led to collaboration on writing projects and grant applications. Recent examples of the synergies we are exploiting include:

  - partnerships with bodies including the Scottish Government Policy Unit to develop the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Incorporation (Scotland) Bill, and with Together (the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) to examine the accountability gap in access to justice for social rights and propose models of incorporation for embedding these rights into domestic law. Funded through a Nuffield Foundation grant of £338,000, this work has already resulted in the creation of a new human rights framework for Scotland, with the PI (Boyle) appointed to the Scottish First Minister's Advisory Group on Human Rights' Leadership;
  - work with key stakeholders including the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, and NGOs, such as Amnesty International and 350.org, to advise on how to integrate human rights considerations into climate change law, and vice versa, to explore how human rights and climate change law interact, and to address accountability gaps in climate law at the international and national level;
  - a £20,000 Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) Research Network Grant in the Arts and Humanities for the 'Connecting with a Low-carbon Scotland' project, through which the PI (Macleod Little) joined the RSE's Energy Inquiry and presented evidence to Scottish Parliament committees on future energy and just low-carbon transitions;
  - an AHRC Research Network on Private International Law After Brexit, 2019-20 (£31,281). The PI (Beaumont) and Holliday assembled several key players on the future development of private international law in workshops (notably Christophe Bernasconi, the Secretary General of the Hague Conference on Private International Law and Lord Mance, the Chair of the UK Private International Law Advisory Committee).

- **2. Facilitate collaborative, interdisciplinary research**

  Stirling's institutional ethos and academic profile encourages close collaborative links across disciplines. SLS is highly proactive in leveraging institutional strengths in philosophy, politics, public policy, media studies (especially digital), health and sports sciences, social sciences, psychology, business and management, and computational and data science to deepen and broaden our research, strengthening our contributions – as outlined above - to multiple

institutional research programmes. Interdisciplinary research projects have arisen through both planned and serendipitous interaction.

Through these partnering mechanisms, we have leveraged research collaborations that have exposed previously under-exploited synergies between disciplines and demonstrated the added value of our distinct legal research perspective in interdisciplinary projects. This has led to international research links in projects that bridge between jurisdictions and disciplines. For example, collaborative research with institutional colleagues from Philosophy, Media Studies, Health Science and Social Policy under the Health and Behaviour programme culminated in a grant of £180,000 overall from the AHRC/MRC Global Public Health programme examining access to healthcare for young people in prisons in Brazil and Scotland.

- **Approaches to enabling research and impact**

Individualised Personal Research Plans (PRP) are fundamental in realising ambitions, combining identification of person-specific support and/or development and training needs alongside colleagues' research funding applications, impact activities and output plans. These are aligned with our research groups' strategic development. The PRP is thus a key tool for agreeing personal objectives and supporting individuals' contributions to the collective research strategy.

Research funding plans are central to PRPs. Colleagues normally have at least one research grant project 'in play' (whether as PI or CI) at any time. Small grants are viewed as a basis for high-quality publications, as impact triggers, and in laying the groundwork for large bids. Escalation to larger applications is a planned element of our research strategy, designed to expand our research portfolio and provide opportunities to grow our research community and capacity through recruitment of research assistants (RA) and open-ended early career researcher (ECR) posts. Such opportunities are exemplified by Boyle's Nuffield Foundation grant, where a 1 FTE RA is gathering primary data and promoting the project's work across the sector, and an ECR has been recruited through institutional investment to expand capacity within the Human Rights research group. Each research group's strategic plans are agreed with the Head of Law and Faculty Dean and are embedded in colleagues' PRPs and through annual review, to support planned and sustainable expansion. Grant planning is thus a keystone in our staff development strategies.

Outputs are aligned to SLS's mission to increase the visibility, reach and impact of our research through publication in peer-reviewed journals, as monographs in field-leading series, or as chapters in peer-reviewed, theme-focused edited volumes. The written quality of colleagues' work is honed and enhanced through writing, research promotion, editing skills and research ethics workshops offered by the University's Institute for Advanced Studies (IAS) The intellectual rigour of publications is achieved through formal and informal peer-review processes, mentorship and review by senior colleagues, and feedback after presentations at internal research seminars and at invited external presentations.

Impact permeates our research and it is intensified through the Faculty Impact Strategy, which encompasses all researchers and research students. This Strategy has three objectives:

- to improve impact literacy through training and the sharing of best practice, enabling identification of a wide range of potential and ambitious impact objectives;
- to maintain an impact support structure;
- to recognise and track impact as it happens.

Impact is a key dimension of our research planning. The arrangements to collectively achieve it take several forms, and its development and tracking is embedded into colleagues' PRPs. Impactful research is recognised and rewarded within our annual appraisal process, Achieving Success, and through research leave. Faculty Impact Development Funding, to provide additional financial support for workshops, stakeholder networking events and evidence gathering, has been

used by SLS to fund events for staff, to bring in external speakers and to support individuals' attendance at events organised by the legal academic community. Within SLS, our impact case study authors are the 'impact ambassadors' who share knowledge, skills, connections and insights gained during their journeys to successful impact creation. They are the catalyst for impact across our research groups, advising on planned activities to support new projects and sharing best practice on optimising and maximising impact in mature cases.

This collaborative ethos enables identification of challenges/opportunities as they arise, ensuring a proactive and responsive accommodation of changing circumstances, e.g. from legislative changes or reconfiguration of a regulatory framework. The University-wide network of Impact Champions makes it easy to share our best practice and learn from others across every Faculty and Division. We benefit from dedicated impact co-ordination, support and tracking by a Research Impact Officer within Research and Innovation Services (RIS) who coordinates internal and external impact training for staff and research students via the Researcher Development Programme and IAS, and from support in enhancing external awareness-raising via our Faculty Communications Officer within the University's Communications, Marketing and Recruitment office.

The success of this integrated approach to impact is primarily exemplified by our two case studies, which originated within the *Environmental and Energy Law* and *Human Rights* research groups but benefitted from discussion with colleagues across all four groups. *Integrating human rights into climate action: closing the climate accountability gap* started from a recognition that the 2015 Paris Agreement and climate laws lack mechanisms to hold state and corporate actors accountable for failure to fulfil their obligations. Drawing upon the collective national and international experience and connections of the *Environmental and Energy Law* research group, colleagues demonstrated how human rights law and institutions provide readily-available structures to hold actors accountable. Through peer-reviewed papers developed from discussion at SLS group workshops and seminars, leading to external conference presentations and submissions to government and intergovernmental agencies internationally, group members' outputs and programme of targeted engagement contributed to major legal developments. In particular, Savaresi's partnership with external agencies, such as the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), and NGOs, such as Amnesty International and 350.org, gave them the expert knowledge to develop the climate accountability agenda and contributed to multinational corporate actors being liable for their contribution to climate change in the Philippines. More broadly, the planned flow of published outputs coupled with targeted conference presentations and panel memberships ensured that SLS research now underpins litigation, law-making practice and the operation of regulatory mechanisms internationally. We advise the European and Scottish Parliaments, the OHCHR, and Environmental Standards Scotland, the organisation that helps public bodies in Scotland correctly apply environmental law in the new post-Brexit regulatory regime.

Making Rights Real: shaping laws to make human rights enforceable followed a similar developmental track, supported through the work of SLS's *Human Rights* research group and inputs from colleagues in other groups through feedback on presentations and draft papers. Through well-placed publications and contributions to consultations, SLS research has underpinned processes within Scotland to reverse the accountability gap in areas of devolved competence. These outputs and expert advice have been targeted at key bodies such as Together (the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights); this facilitated the development of the expert knowledge needed for their work. Support from the Research Impact Officer and Faculty Communications Officer to enhance the visibility of this research led to invitations to write Parliamentary briefings and provide oral evidence that shaped the contents of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Incorporation (Scotland) Bill.

Other examples of impact include Donnelly (an early career researcher) co-authoring the report for the Scottish Government on Safeguarding, and its findings were instrumental to the public consultation that followed, to the Family Justice Modernisation Strategy and to the provisions of the September 2019 Children (Scotland) Bill. Holliday (another early career researcher) authored

a Stirling Working Paper that exposed the failure of the UK to accept the accession of 4 States to the Hague Divorce Convention, leading to the UK accepting those States in late 2020.

- **Future aims and goals for research and impact**

    i. Located in dynamically evolving fields, the recurrent themes already evident in Law's research groups will continue to offer rich opportunities for impactful research. Coherence and cohesion will continue to be afforded by the group structure, which has the flexibility to adapt to new interdisciplinary opportunities, the emergent specialisms of ECRs and more recently appointed senior colleagues, and to changing circumstances in jurisdictional and regulatory frameworks nationally and internationally. Research output continues to be managed through our PRP and Achieving Success processes, underpinned by the research group discussion and peer-review mechanisms (and aligned with the over-arching institutional research themes and programmes. While our submitted Case Studies revolve primarily around the endeavours of single project leads, they arose from a strategy where research group impact pathways are identified collectively by group members and confirmed through PRPs to build multiple avenues to deliver impact. Pathways and impacts will consequently develop at different pace, but they deliver a continuous flow through the work of the research groups.

    ii. Our research and staffing strategy allowed us to establish areas of research strength which are now internationally recognised. Our next goal is to increase the complexity of the challenges we can realistically tackle through the further development of multi-and inter-disciplinary approaches within Stirling and beyond. Each area crosses notional research group boundaries and carries the potential to strengthen the collaborative nature of our research, and for colleagues working in different areas of law to offer insights from their own specialisms. The influence of established law staff and that of new arrivals is readily apparent in all four areas, and it will allow the research of future appointees and early career researchers to flourish, thus ensuring their progression and encourage staff retention.

    iii. Over the next five years, we will develop our excellence in child and family law by pursuing a programme of socio-legal and comparative research on family justice, broadly construed, building on existing links with key stakeholders and generating income from competitive funding streams. These will facilitate our ambitious projects examining children's experiences of justice and welfare decision-making in family law processes. Using the forthcoming incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scots law as a starting-point, our research will contribute to the development of consistent, rights-based approaches across family justice processes with the aim of improving children and families' access to, and experience of, justice at national and international levels.

    iv. Private international law will continue its focus on developing the theory of pragmatism in the context of global private international law and will produce high quality research on all aspects of the field but notably in global, African and UK perspectives on commercial, family and succession law. Our work in arbitration will continue to energise the Scottish Universities Dispute Resolution Research Network and we will likewise continue partnerships with public, private and third-sector organisations especially in the realms of wind power and sports arbitration. Our burgeoning relationships in Taiwan and Russia respectively will facilitate these aspects, as well as supporting our wider work on access to international civil justice.

    v. Human rights law will build on the success of the MSc Human Rights and Diplomacy by establishing an interdisciplinary doctoral and post-doctoral cohort that will contribute to a growing international research profile. In continued partnership with the United Nations, we will contribute to addressing global societal problems using evidence-based human rights research and practice-based diplomacy skills. We will promote the growth and continued success of the interdisciplinary research strand now established across the

university and which has already provided interdisciplinary parliamentary evidence on key human rights initiatives.

vi. The links between climate change and environmental degradation must be examined and addressed to find sustainable solutions, and a focus on international and regional modes of regulation will continue to inform energy and environmental law research in these areas. As we expand capacity, we will connect further with the global community of scholars and practitioners in our collaborative and individual efforts, offering our campus facilities and our expertise to facilitate research in these areas. Exploring the interplay between climate change and human rights law, the regulation of greenhouse gas emissions from land uses, and supporting the decentralised generation of renewable energy as a means of avoiding environmental degradation will be central to these research priorities. Our work is integral to the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Growth Deal-funded £22M Scottish International Environment Centre, which began development in the second half of 2020. Through it, we will engage with policymakers around the world to promote a green transition out of a fossil fuel-based economy and of the pandemic.

1.4 Open Access

All SLS staff upload publications to the institutional repository STORRE, which provides green open access to research outputs and PhD theses. The University operates an Article Processing Charge Fund which supports the costs of publishing research papers stemming from Research Council grants and open access publishing via the gold route, available to all research-active staff. All STORRE items are listed automatically on colleagues' external web profiles and can also be found through the University's searchable Research Hub web interface. Outputs are then made available automatically or, if currently under publisher embargo, by an automated request function which is directed to the author. This enables colleagues to communicate directly with the requesting individual as appropriate and to give access to the requested output. Research data is stored in dataSTORRE, and accessible in compliance with GDPR regulations.

1.5 Research Integrity

The University subscribes to the UK Research Integrity Office and is a member of the Scottish Research Integrity Network. Accordingly, all SLS activity involving primary research complies with The Concordat to Support Research Integrity and must receive prior approval from the General University Ethics Panel, supported by the institutional Research Integrity and Governance Manager based in RIS. Ethics applications are managed through the secure online Ethics Research Manager. Given the focus of our research groups and the nature of some of our external partnerships, we are alert to both the challenges and advantages of embedded and participant research, with ECRs and PGRs receiving dedicated training, including Peer Review, Ethical Approval, Plagiarism, Authorship and Collaborative Research issues, through University Researcher Development workshops, IAS workshops, and shared best practice within SLS.

2. People

All appointments since 2014 are targeted at growing capacity in research groups. All colleagues are integral to a collegial body that conceives research – including supervising research students – as its central rationale. This concept informs colleagues' attitudes to one another: their availability for discussion, their readiness to read draft work and to offer criticism. These attitudes are underpinned by supportive staffing policies and made effective through our research support structures.

2.1 Staffing Strategy and Staff Development Strategy

Since 2014, SLS has benefited from significant institutional investment in staffing, through replacement of retired colleagues - or those who have moved elsewhere - and with newly created

posts. We have grown from 7.9 FTE research active staff in 2014 to 13.2 FTE in 2021. This turnover provided the opportunity for a strategic review which strengthened the alignment of staffing and research priorities and the resulting plan for growth was incorporated in 2015-2020 planning. This commitment means that appointments – 2 professors and 2 associate professors - to an expanded senior cohort has been continuous across the assessment period, delivering impetus across SLS's research groups. Six new lectureship appointments – 5 open-ended and 1 fixed-term – since 2015 have increased research capacity and broadened our range of research specialisms.

2.1.1 Staff Development

Evidence of the positive influence of the Researchers Concordat (renewed in 2020) within SLS includes research induction programmes upon employment, peer-to-peer mentoring arrangements for all staff, and faculty-organised senior colleague mentoring of early career academics. The Stirling Researcher Development Programme, mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and managed by IAS, is available for all staff.

Law colleagues are members of Faculty- and institution-wide interdisciplinary research teams . For ECRs, introductions to interdisciplinary research are made through the Stirling Crucible programme, which brokers relationships with colleagues across the University and from potential external collaborators. Its intensive residential 'skills labs' offer models and practical experience for interdisciplinary practise. For all colleagues, Crucible-style connection-building is central to Stirling's annual Festival of Research, with work showcased in pecha-kucha presentations and collaborations forged through follow-up initiatives. SLS leadership and input to the research programmes in Human Security, Conflict and Co-operation and Health and Behaviour originated in these interdisciplinary showcases.

Operationally within SLS, researcher development is coordinated by a Research Mentor who is responsible with the Law and Philosophy Research Director for research policy, support and mentoring. Through discussion with them, every researcher produces their PRP, which informs their annual Achieving Success review. The Research Mentor regularly reviews objectives with colleagues and involves other research group colleagues in this mentoring role. Direct research support for all research grant applications is given by a dedicated Research Development Officer who, together with the Research Mentor, supports colleagues in application development, including grant-writing workshops and peer review coordinated via the university's online research management system, Worktribe.

Colleagues' research is tested at an early stage through informal peer-review within research groups. Colleagues are encouraged to present drafts at seminars and conferences to benefit from external feedback, and to make use of our new *Working Papers in Law* series. Grant funding applications and impact plans are likewise conceived as iterative processes, benefitting from discussion and feedback from SLS research groups and from peer-reviewers within and beyond the Faculty.

Through the PRP, colleagues are invited to address the following specific issues:

- Progress of current research projects;
- Status of submitted funding applications and applications in development;
- Impact enhancement;
- Proposed research presentations and conference funding needs;
- Publications anticipated in the next 12 months;
- Participation in event organisation (conferences, guest speakers, workshops, public events);
- Potential applications for research leave, if applicable.

SLS's budget supports all staff (permanent and temporary) with an annual research budget for conference travel and related costs: normally £500 per head, with additional funds available on application through the Head of Law.

2.1.2 ECR Development: is supported through a plan agreed with the Head of Law and approved by the Dean of Faculty. It is subject to annual review and resetting as appropriate during any probationary period. Policies and opportunities from which all 6 of our ECRs in the assessment period have benefited include:

- Stirling's 3-year probation scheme with reduced teaching loads (initially 50% reduction, reducing to 25% in year 3).
- assigning a Senior Colleague to every ECR, to advise on PRPs required by the probationary scheme and provide mentoring. Senior Colleagues work closely with probationers, reading drafts, suggesting directions for research focus, advising on outlets for presentation/publication and research grants.
- active involvement in research groups, exposing them to and involving them in the development and delivery of large research projects led by established colleagues, to provide the experience needed to realise their personal research ambitions (e.g. Etone's participation in Boyle's Nuffield Foundation project).

External project funding for permanent staff means we typically employ at least one lecturer and/or postdoctoral researcher (PDRA) on a temporary contract at any time. For example, Boyle's Nuffield Foundation award currently supports a 1 FTE temporary appointment in Human Rights law and 1 FTE PDRA. All such temporary staff are treated as full Early Career members of SLS, benefitting from the same practical and financial support, but Senior Colleagues also help temporary staff improve their CVs, advise on their draft articles and offer mock interviews.

2.1.3 University and Faculty schemes support all staff and allow the opportunity to review circumstances:

- Achieving Success is an annual cycle through which non-probationary colleagues plan research and teaching, review progress against previous plans, and discuss opportunities and difficulties. Reviews are conducted by the Head of Law. He supports and identifies ways to realise research goals, for example through planning colleagues teaching loads, making time for impact and interdisciplinary work, and reviewing their drafts and proposals.

  Career progression is a topic for every Achieving Success meeting, and advancement is a key element in our reward and recognition arrangements. The Head of Law works closely with colleagues in constructing advancement cases and one post-2015 ECR appointee has already secured promotion to senior lecturer.

- The Faculty provides targeted mentoring by senior colleagues from other areas of the Arts and Humanities. It addresses the following areas: Promotion, Applying for Grants & Managing Awards, Taking & Returning from Parental Leave, Women Working at Stirling University, Working on Casualised and Temporary Contracts, Taking on and Shaping Administrative Work. Law colleagues offer services as mentors and benefit as mentees – this also fosters cross-disciplinary links.

- Colleagues can access ILM and other externally accredited leadership development programmes and women-specific personal and professional development programmes including Aurora (provided by Advance HE) and Stepping Stones (an internal programme), researcher development programmes, and a full suite of health and safety courses (including personal travel safety). Law colleagues are mentors and role models on Aurora and Change Management Programmes.

Through our inclusivity commitments, SLS strongly supports the University's maternity, paternity and parental leave schemes, alongside possibilities for fractional contracts and flexible

working. We work with individuals to find the best approach for them, and since 2014 have supported 2 staff members on fractional contracts, 1 further with flexible working hours and 2 with parental leaves. We support one semester of research leave for colleagues returning from maternity leave and reduced teaching loads for those returning from parental leave. We are committed to normalising parental leave and fractional working for caring or other reasons.

2.1.4 Institutional Research Leave operates at Faculty level and is employed by SLS to provide colleagues with additional time to bring substantial research plans or projects to fruition. Our institutional workload allocation model ensures research, teaching, and administration ratios of 40:40:20, to embed research within the academic routine, with periods of research leave intended to provide extended blocks of focused time for activities that require sustained effort, including impact activities. Colleagues can apply for one semester's leave after six semesters teaching (or two semesters' leave after twelve teaching). Time spent on temporary contract or on parental, caring or compassionate leave contributes to research leave entitlement.

Leave plans are developed and shaped through PRPs and Achieving Success meetings: to coordinate plans for institutional leave with external research applications; to frame the aims of the leave; and agree the outputs to be delivered at its completion. The University formally monitors research leave effectiveness. Since 2014 8 staff members returned to this REF have taken one period of research leave.

2.2 Research students

SLS has benefitted greatly from the expertise of the Faculty Associate Dean of Graduate Studies who through that role is an Executive Committee Member of the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities (SGSAH), the AHRC and Scottish Funding Council-funded Scottish Doctoral Training Programme. Stirling's leading participation in SGSAH, reinforced internally through IAS, has embedded best practice to deliver supervision and skills training to PhD students (PGRs) and stimulated a research environment that focuses on interdisciplinary partnerships and collaboration from which Law PGRs are beneficiaries. SLS colleagues are SGSAH studentship award panel members and 'catalyst' members (who, for example, deliver discipline-specific training sessions on Data Protection and Ethics in the Field to all SGSAH-funded Law PGRs). Award panel membership has created a strong feedback loop, through which potential supervisors work closely with doctoral programme applicants to strengthen projects. This, reinforced through advanced supervisor training programmes in IAS, has enhanced the quality of PGR applications and projects involving cutting-edge research, and increased studentship application success rates.

All SLS PGRs are based in offices with personal workstations in the same building as the Law School, to maximise interaction with staff, stimulate a collegial atmosphere, and encourage full participation in the intellectual life of our community. All have two supervisors, allocated according to staff expertise: through close supervisory interaction, their doctrinal, socio-legal or comparative legal specialisms enhance the more generic research training provided through IAS. 14 SLS staff have been engaged in doctoral supervision since 2014. In that time, 13 PGR students have registered and 18 new or existing students completed (17 PhDs, 1 MPhil). Skills-mapping skills and identifying development needs for students is formalised across the Faculty, with faculty-wide courses on in-depth legal analysis, data protection, research, supervisor training (for example on how to work with international research students and supervision styles) and viva skills. SLS PGRs participate in writing retreats for doctoral students from across the Faculty, and in skills workshops and 'shut up and write sessions' organised by IAS. Membership of SGSAH has broadened and enriched research training opportunities across the Scottish sector, Stirling Law PGRs benefitting especially from its summer school on legal research and impact.

Every student has an annual review with two staff members with at least one of them having relevant subject matter expertise in the student's PhD. All PGRs submit written work and thesis plans for this annual review, supported by supervisors' assessments and, no less importantly,

student assessment of supervision. The reviews are a rigorous examination of the student's progress. Students are offered a mock viva on submission of their thesis.

Development of research presentation skills is encouraged at all stages of the doctoral programme, from induction to pre-viva presentations to staff and fellow students. PGR students participate in SLS research group seminar programmes, the Faculty PG Research Showcase, and are included in the University Festival of Research. All are strongly encouraged to take external opportunities to present their research, aided by individual research support awards from the SLS budget. Additional funds for conference attendance are available on application, with the expectation that recipients present papers that will be refined and submitted for peer-reviewed publication.

By offering assistantship roles in funded projects, and allocating fractional lecturing contracts to cover leave, we have provided our doctoral students with professional development opportunities. Career preparation and placement is supported through workshops on academic and non-academic post-doctoral careers, personal development and well-being, including annual workshops on publication, on how to apply for jobs, plus mock interviews and interview advice as mentioned above. Individualised support tailored to career development has included securing a work placement with the Scottish Human Rights Commission as part of a thesis on better budgeting for human rights, and assistance with a successful application for secondment to the World Trade Organisation. We provide workshops and services on inclusion and equality, for current students and at recruitment stage.

2.3 Equality and Diversity

One of our core objectives is to build an open, diverse and inclusive research community and we have developed iterative policies to achieve this. They are central to our strategic direction and collective self-conception. These are mapped directly with the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policies and practices, and are realised through the Faculty of Arts and Humanities EDI Action Plan, instituted in 2018. SLS colleagues are panellists on the Faculty's Athena SWAN committee,. The past focus was on advancing gender equality, but from 2020 the University has adopted more intersectional activity to ensure a supportive and inclusive research environment for all.

Our key EDI actions, pursued across the University:

- address structural barriers to promotion and advancement from doctoral students through to Chairs;
- support continuing professional development for fixed-term research staff (mainly women at grades 6-8);
- widen accessibility of training materials to doctoral students studying part time;
- and embed equality discussions into all committees with decision-making power.

Within the Faculty EDI Action Plan and aligned with our commitment to the Researcher Concordat, our mentoring scheme is designed to ensure equality and inclusion. Structured career development support for women, principally Aurora and Stepping Stones, has benefitted two Law colleagues, and two others are mentors and role models on Aurora and Change Management Programmes

Our researcher cadre is evenly split by sex but all benefit from policies that recognise and support caring responsibilities and other protected characteristics. The University flexible-working policy welcomes applications from all staff and one SLS colleague has benefited from a flexible working pattern that enables them to remain fully engaged in research development opportunities. A second colleague with protected characteristics has received occupational health support to

ensure integration into our community, with reasonable adjustments made. To support all to attend development events, none are organised outside a 10.00-16.00 window.

This embedded approach to EDI is reflected in our output selection, which underscores the SLS strategy for *all* staff to be supported to develop excellent research and the finest outputs of their work submitted to REF. Through induction events and subsequent mentoring, all ECRs are made aware of expectations in terms of research quality and are resourced to achieve these. Within the framework set by the University and through transparent processes, we have ensured that all outputs are appraised by experienced internal and external assessors. Regular communication on process and rapid notification of outcomes has occurred throughout. The process was Equality Impact Assessed.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Since 2015, we have sought to increase research income by leveraging our strategic research expertise. Our funding strategy is guided by our research group priorities actively engages with the University's themes and programmes, and targets funding sources appropriate to the stage, scale and complexity of projects. We plan our grant-raising activity and target specific calls, diversifying our target funders to reduce risk. The success of this approach has led to a rise in income, from <£50K in 2013/14 to >£500K in 2014-20. In an increasingly competitive environment, this increase reflects the effectiveness of the planning and support measures set out above. These measures provide the foundation for three strategic approaches to income generation:

- developing junior researchers, who are encouraged to build a track record of success by applying for small awards (<£100k) as pump-priming for future larger applications;
- consolidation of such initial successes to target larger schemes such AHRC Early Career Fellowships/UKRI Future Leaders, or collaborate as CIs with more senior or interdisciplinary colleagues on large grants, such as Macleod Little's participation in an AHRC/MRC-funded Global Public Health study;
- build new international collaborations, such as Etone in Ghana, and public partnerships, such as Savaresi with Amnesty International, to grow our funding network.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
No.	5	3	1	0	2	3	1
Value to UoA	£48,391	£150,331	£19,580	0	£8,946	£340,518	£24,949

These figures approximate to £6.4k per annum per FTE research active member of staff.

Worktribe is used to manage and develop research funding applications from the earliest stages. Applicants are assigned a dedicated Research Support team member from RIS and receive early input from the Divisional Director of Research and the Law Research Mentor. The Faculty Research Development Officer offers advice on the formal details of various funding schemes, administrative and financial support staff in RIS provide outstanding support in negotiating the specific requirements of various funding regimes, including costings, proof-reading, fact-checking, nominating internal peer reviewers and advise on ethics and GDPR compliance through formal and informal channels.

Extensive institutional support is available for development of larger funding applications (>£100,000) while informal support is offered within the Division of Law and Philosophy for smaller ones. Grant-writing and other skills development workshops are provided by RIS, with colleagues' specific needs identified through Achieving Success meetings. Support to enable enhanced

participation within UKRI Global Challenges Research Fund projects is available through the University's competitive Connect, Connect+, Spark and Escalator research funding schemes. ECRs are prioritised for support in attending conferences at which they present work-in-progress, to help them build networks of potential collaborators and mentors and to provide opportunities for research dissemination and feedback on draft outputs and impact activities. Conference attendance is thus an integral component of planned project outcomes.

All colleagues are supported for impact development by the Law and Philosophy Impact Champion and Deputy Associate Dean of Research (Impact) and our Research Impact Officer in RIS. This academic/professional services linkage optimises the coordination of internal and external impact training through the Researcher Development Programme and IAS.

STORRE receives all published work and assists the dissemination of research to the wider community. The University Library/Information Services subscribes to a wide range of hard-copy law journals and extensive online subscriptions to legal journals and to databases, including Westlaw, HeinOnline and Lexis. The SLS Subject Librarian in Information Services manages the acquisition of new resources, especially to support our research group specialisms, utilising a significant annual budget.

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

Beyond our immediate context in Scotland and the UK, many of our relationships have global or at least internationally regional reach. Their scale and nature are demonstrated by, for example, Beaumont and Holliday's work with the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law showing high level collaboration on the analysis of the Hague Conventions; and by Okoli's research collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer of the Energy Regulators Association of East Africa on the energy market in the East African Community. Such collaborations not only enrich the research environment for colleagues and PGRs through the input to our workshops (notably the AHRC funded workshops on Private International Law in the UK after Brexit) and seminars by external partners, introducing broader international perspectives to our experience, but also create opportunities for work placements, internships and secondments.

Staff secondment has played a key role in developing such collaborations, strengthening relationships from which funding applications arise, and influencing policy development. Two cases exemplify this strategy and its success:

- McArdle's 0.2FTE secondment to the TMC Asser Institute in The Hague in 2014/15 underpinned his research on international sports law and arbitration. This led to a monograph, a successful Stirling Spark grant application on sport and human rights, and to discussions with FIFA about the human rights 'scorecard' now used in the World Cup bidding process and potentially by other mega-event organisers.
- Savaresi's 0.2FTE secondment to the Scottish Parliament in 2019 to advise on environmental law regulation led in 2020 to her appointment to the new post-Brexit regulatory body Environmental Standards Scotland. This advises the Scottish Government on statutory governance arrangements and oversees performance in complying with and improving the effectiveness of environmental law, and its implementation and application.

Collaboration with non-academic practitioners on research projects and grant applications, linked to our strategy of spreading the scale of funding applications, enables us to assist organisations and individuals who often lack resources to commission large-scale projects, and win seed-corn funding for larger research endeavours. Our successes here are exemplified by:

- Boyle's relationship with the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC), where a £1000 ESRC grant facilitated the preparatory work for a briefing paper for SHRC on incorporation and justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights. This secured an SHRC grant of

£14000, which delivered the evidence base, networks and pathways to impact that underpinned her successful £338000 Nuffield Foundation application, but it also inspired changes in Parliamentary processes and informed Scottish legislative reform.

- Savaresi's work for Amnesty International, which led to an award of £6000 to develop a MOOC on climate change and human rights and fund a workshop on the Carbon Majors Report. The workshop was attended by the Philippines Human Rights Commission and reinforced her policy-informing role with Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights.

- McArdle's £1200 Royal Society of Edinburgh grant funded his collaborative international research on legal aspects of youth concussion prevention. Its internationally co-authored publications have been taken up by UEFA and the Gaelic Athletic Association, and outstanding grant applications address legal dimensions in current concerns surrounding brain-damage and dementia through sports-related injuries.

- Wider research group initiatives, like Barker's £1300 BILETA Research Grant to explore social media hate in UK universities. The results contributed to her co-authored book on social media bullying and hatred, and linked to Noto La Diega's article on the (mis)use of sensitive data on a gay dating app. This led in turn to interviews on CNET and ABC and now informs current debates on social media regulation and data harvesting.

As these examples indicate, SLS colleagues engage continually in communicating their research to diverse audiences within and beyond the academy, an endeavour in which they are aided by our Faculty Communications Officer. Alongside institutional press-releases, colleagues' work is showcased on our externally visible research website pages and further disseminated through blogs and not-for-profit media outlets, for which workshops on writing for non-academic audiences is provided through our Communications Officer. Much of our engagement is directed at law and policy reform fora including the European Commission, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament, on issues as diverse as Macleod Little and Savaresi's reports on the consequences for environmental regulation of Brexit, or Sutherland and Donnelly's research on children's hearings, jointly-reported children and safeguarding.

Important contributions to the research base include Beaumont being one of two editors of the discipline leading *Journal of Private International Law* and one of the main organisers of the very successful biennial global Journal Conferences. He is the Series Editor for Hart *Studies in Private International Law* (18 books during the REF period, two of which he co-edited reporting the findings of two major EU funded research projects). Savaresi is Associate Editor of the *Review of European, Comparative and International Law*, and all colleagues routinely serve on journal editorial boards and as reviewers.