

<b>Institution:</b> University of Sussex
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 30 (Philosophy)
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>Overall Context</b></p> <p>Since 2014 the <a href="#">Sussex Philosophy Department</a> has continued to develop its unique position within the sector as a department characterised by intellectual cosmopolitanism. Our <b>open border tradition</b> has long rejected the division between so-called ‘Continental’ and ‘Analytic’ or ‘Anglo-American’ philosophy and we embrace <b>interdisciplinarity</b> as integral to philosophical practice. As far back as 2006, Simon Glendinning wrote:</p> <p>“...a new configuration is emerging: departments that are not readily identifiable as either Analytic or Continental, departments which cannot be happily captured by those labels... There is one department that seems to me to have this new shape: the Department of Philosophy at Sussex University. The profile of the department is distinctive, original and interesting.” (Simon Glendinning (LSE), <i>The Idea of Continental Philosophy</i>).</p> <p>In this REF period we have worked to transcend further distinctions and intensify cross-border exchange - notably those between ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’ philosophy, and between ‘practical’ and ‘theoretical’ scholarship. This has been done while embedding impact and public engagement within our research culture in a way that is <b>inclusive, authentic and collaborative</b>. We have re-imagined our interdisciplinary approach through new partnerships with Neuroscience and Cognitive Science, whilst further strengthening the existing collaborative structures that sustain our strengths in Social and Political Thought, and Philosophy and Literature.</p> <p>The unit comprises 12 members of faculty with a shared understanding of the nature and value of the discipline. Our recognition that Philosophy’s overall epistemic aim is to bring <i>understanding</i> of information we already have rather than the discovery of new information enables us to avoid hyper-specialisation into different sub-areas tasked to uncover new knowledge. Instead, we are actively challenging the ways in which the discipline has been historically sub-categorized and in so doing have generated new frameworks and understandings, working towards a more inclusive and socially relevant vision for Philosophy.</p> <p>Across the last REF-cycle we consolidated this identity through strategic faculty appointments and targeted PGR recruitment. Since 2014 we have expanded our boundary-crossing approach and have built on our intellectual traditions whilst responding to new opportunities. So, for example, Sawyer has worked on the Philosophy of Language (‘Theoretical’) and on Conceptual Engineering and Feminism (‘Practical’); Staehler has published on Phenomenology (‘Theoretical’) and midwifery (‘Practical’); Booth has written on Analytic Epistemology (‘Western’) and Islamic Philosophy (‘non-Western’); and Morris and Davies’ work has, separately, brought together abstract work in Metaphysics with contemporary Philosophy of Art and Photography. Our research is reflective of an inclusive, public-facing, open-borders attitude that informs everything we do.</p> <p>For most of the current REF period Sussex Philosophy was located in the multidisciplinary School of History, Art History and Philosophy (HAHP) and enjoyed strong intellectual ties with the School’s other departments. Philosophers took key management roles in HAHP including as Director of Doctoral Studies (Deligiorgi); Director of Teaching and Learning (Stock); Curriculum Officer (Sawyer); and Director of Student Experience (Davies).</p> <p>In the summer of 2020 Philosophy joined a new, and still more multidisciplinary, <a href="#">School of Media, Arts and Humanities (MAH)</a>. This was the result of a bottom-up merger proposed by HAHP, the Schools of English, and Media, Film and Music, and the Sussex Centre for Language Studies in 2019. It brings new opportunities for the unit - practically, financially, and intellectually.</p>

Prominent amongst these is the opportunity the new school offers for increasingly close collaboration with subjects such as English, Media and Film Studies and the momentum that it gives to our work with scholars in the digital humanities.

### **Context, structure, and research strategy since REF 2014**

For REF 2014 our central objective was to consolidate our open borders identity. Our strategy to deliver this involved:

- The development and support of our research strengths across the boundaries of traditional demarcations in order to facilitate original, historically informed thought of the highest quality, and to build on the reputation of the unit (and the University) for multi-traditional, cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research.
- The fostering of stronger connections with other Humanities disciplines (especially History), the social sciences (especially Economics and Politics) and the sciences (notably Medicine, Psychology and Neuroscience), with the aim of furthering disciplinary interaction and interdisciplinary thinking in line with Sussex's guiding ethos.
- The building of creative partnerships and links with non-academic institutions and user-groups which would benefit from faculty research, identifying new areas of collaboration as well as extending existing work.

Since 2014 we have invested in and worked towards:

- Extending our open border approach into new areas of the discipline.
- Developing interdisciplinary research in embodied cognition with the particular aims of:
  - (i) Establishing connections with the interdisciplinary [Sussex Humanities Lab](#) and a renewed relationship with both the Sussex [Sackler Centre for Consciousness Science](#) and the Sussex [Centre for Cognitive Science](#). These latter connections build on Sussex's history of disciplinary innovation in areas such as Neuroscience (as the first UK University to offer a degree in the subject);
  - (ii) Bolstering our research strengths in Philosophy of Mind as well as in Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy.
- Embedding public engagement into all our research through training, mentoring and collective strategy.
- Supporting nascent and more established impact projects with time and resource.

Our overall aim is to consistently challenge and disrupt, to transcend disciplinary borders, and to build partnerships beyond them in pursuit of new understandings, more inclusive ways of working, and intellectual openness. Our open borders strategy allows us to broker cross- and inter-disciplinary dialogues, to marshal systematic thinking for real world issues, and to unsettle received ideas and approaches - even where the consequences of doing so are challenging. Our two impact case studies offer key exemplars of this approach, but so too does Clark's collaboration with Google and that of Booth and Chitty with Money Advice Plus. All this is congruent with Sussex's determination to be 'Disruptive by Design'. At the departmental level this approach underpins the vitality of our research environment, producing innovative research and an outward looking perspective.

### **Achieving our strategic objectives**

- **Open Borders: Trans-Traditional.** We have a strong tradition in what is sometimes called 'Continental' Philosophy, particularly in 'Phenomenology' and 'Critical Theory' (Stahler, O'Brien, Davies, Clark, Chitty, Finlayson), but we have long resisted the 'Continental' vs. 'Analytic' narrative. This refusal is evident throughout our research culture. This REF-cycle began, for example, with a Mind-funded conference, organised by Booth and O'Brien, on 'Revisiting the Divide' (2014). Faculty have been characterised in ways that reflect this tradition-crossing: in recent literature, Chitty has been labelled an 'Analytic Marxist' and O'Brien an 'Analytic Heideggerian', terms that might seem like oxymorons in other Philosophy units. This REF period also saw the publication of

Finlayson's *The Habermas-Rawls Debate* detailing the fruitful exchange between 'Continental' (Habermas) and 'Analytic' (Rawls) philosophy: it was nominated for the prestigious American Political Science Association's Robert A Dahl Prize for scholarship in democracy. The addition of Clark (fully at Sussex from 2019), with his expertise in 'Embodied Cognition' and his explicit use of Phenomenology to inform what is often considered an 'Analytic' kind of Philosophy of Mind, further cements our commitment to this approach and capacity to deliver.

Our research is also engaged in reflections on the 'theoretical/practical' divide, the subject of some of our funding successes. One example is Besson's project on 'The Foundations of Epistemic Normativity' (2018-20) – on which she collaborates with Hattiangadi (Stockholm) and to which Booth and Sawyer also contribute. This project, on epistemic norms and what we ought to believe, brings together epistemology and ethics to interrogate contemporary issues such as 'Fake News' and generated a major conference on 'Epistemology and Post Truth' at Sussex in September 2019. The project sits productively within the Southern Normativity Group (SoNG) co-founded by Booth in 2014 alongside colleagues from the Universities of Southampton, Kent, Cardiff, and Bristol. The network has hosted several conferences – the annual SoNG conference was held at Sussex in 2016 – and specialises in bringing together work in ethics and epistemology.

Our critique of the theoretical/practical divide underpins our impact strategy and has facilitated the emergence of other outward-facing research projects. These include Staehler's research on phenomenology and midwifery; Stock's research on the Gender Recognition Act; Sawyer's research on conceptual engineering and feminism; Booth, Chitty and Deligorigi's research on financial advice; Morris' and Davies' collaborative research on metaphysics and art with Brighton Art Galleries; and O'Brien's research into phenomenology and the ethics of horseracing.

Our willingness to move beyond traditional boundaries is also reflected in research that overrides the 'Western' vs. 'Non-Western' distinction in philosophy. We believe that the 'decolonisation' of the discipline demands more than the coverage of 'non-Western' philosophy; an approach that can appear tokenistic, exacerbating existing inequalities. Instead, we challenge the very distinction, arguing that the two traditions need to be placed in fruitful dialogue so that one is not implicitly portrayed as inferior. At Sussex this approach was initiated by Ganieri's work on Indian philosophy and Analytic Epistemology, aligning with the AHRC and UKRI ambition to 'use research to foster understanding and recognition of human and cultural difference.' It reflects our Equality and Diversity (EDI) approach, which seeks synergies between our intellectual interests, structures and everyday practices. Booth has further developed this focus through two monographs – *Islamic Philosophy and the Ethics of Belief* (2016) and *Analytic Islamic Philosophy* (2017). The latter innovatively brings together work in Analytic Epistemology and Islamic Philosophy. Booth was interviewed about this research for the popular blog [3:16 am](#), and the interview was subsequently discussed within other philosophy news blogs such as [Daily Nous](#), demonstrating our commitment to communicating our research to new audiences.

- **Open Borders: Trans-Disciplinary.** Through to 2020, HAHP provided a fertile home for our trans-disciplinary research. Faculty have regularly collaborated with colleagues at the £3.25m university-funded Sussex Humanities Lab (Clark on Artificial Intelligence and the Digital); The [Centre for German Jewish Studies](#) (O'Brien on Heidegger and the Holocaust); The [Centre for Intellectual History](#) (who co-run MA modules and co-supervise PhD projects with our [Centre for Social and Political Thought](#)); and the [Middle East and North Africa Centre](#) (whose steering committee Booth was on until 2019). Further collaborations will be enabled by the unit's new position within the larger Media, Arts and Humanities School, which will encourage connections with research in Media, such as Berry's work on Social Epistemology - Booth and Finlayson are jointly working on a project with Berry on Political Epistemology - and Fazi's work on Continental

Philosophy of Technology, where we have expertise (evidenced by O'Brien organising the major international conference *Heidegger on Technology* in 2016).

The full appointment of Clark (a British Academy Fellow) in 2019 cemented our strategic commitment to trans-disciplinary philosophy. Clark has systematically targeted age-old dualisms (science and humanities, mind and body etc) to become one of the most influential philosophers working today. His book on embodied cognition, *Being There: Putting Mind and Body Together Again* has been cited 6715 times (one of the most cited books in Philosophy). He arrived at Sussex with a €1,391,134 ERC grant on 'Expecting Ourselves: Embodied Prediction and the Construction of Conscious Experience', and, working closely with colleagues in the School of Informatics – most notably Professor Anil Seth – has led the development of ambitious funding projects since his arrival (see section 3). Clark's work on Embodied Cognition speaks to *all* subjects within MAH - Art History, History (particularly to strengths in the history of the emotions), Media Studies, and English, and provides the new school with fruitful connections between the humanities and the sciences; crucial if we are to re-imagine the Humanities for a post-Covid world.

Our trans-disciplinarity continues to be bolstered through our two research centres. [The Centre for Social and Political Thought](#) has structural ties with Sociology, Law, Media, and Politics. It hosts a weekly Research Seminar, produces the *European Journal of Social Theory* (Sage) and the graduate journal *Studies in Social and Political Thought*. It hosted Sorensen (University of Copenhagen) as a visiting research fellow in 2015-16, during which time he completed the book *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* (2019). The Centre also signed a memorandum of understanding with Wuhan University, China in 2019 (detailed in section 4), increasing the global reach of our academic partnerships. It has hosted several conferences including the Adorno Studies annual conference (March 2020), and, with the University of Brighton's Centre for Applied Philosophy, Politics and Ethics, a conference on *Critical Theory In (a Time of) Crisis* (November 2019).

[The Centre for Literature and Philosophy](#) also draws scholars together across disciplinary boundaries and complements a well-subscribed MA in Literature and Philosophy, co-taught with English. It was established by Deligiorgi in 2007 and directed by her until 2011, since when it has been directed by Stock. Alongside many other events, in 2017 it organised an interdisciplinary conference featuring Luce Irigaray and attended by philosophers, literary and media theorists, historians and scholars of French Literature. An edited volume – co-edited by O'Brien and Irigaray – was published in 2018. Centre members have produced major monographs in this REF cycle, including Stock's *Only Imagine* (2017) which advances the 'extreme intentionalism' theory of fictional content, and Morris' *Real Likenesses* (2020) which brings theoretical work in metaphysics to bear on the philosophy of art and photography.

### Future Strategies

Beyond 2020 we will look to further strengthen our commitment to trans-disciplinary and trans-traditional research by building capacity in the department, within the new school of MAH, and across the Humanities/Science divide. MAH's new Institute of Research and Social Engagement offers a structure for developing interdisciplinary collaborations at scale and a platform from which to build increased visibility for Philosophy. The MAH Research Hub provides an inclusive research environment for the development of faculty and PGR research through a wrap-around support system that includes mentoring, funding and peer review. MAH's digital platform - [REFRAME](#) - allows us to progress an open access commitment that complements our open borders strategy and will move well beyond the fulfilment of REF requirements. We will continue to work with the Sussex Humanities Lab to develop relationships that truly transcend the Arts/Science divide and invest in the future of the discipline through our service, and in the future of the Humanities through research excellence and a porous, open-borders approach.

**Impact Strategy****Open Borders: Philosophy for and with the Public**

Philosophy has the capacity to intervene decisively in real world problems. Our primary focus in the current REF-cycle has been to effect a culture shift so that both impact and public engagement is systematically grounded in our research and valued as an important activity.

Our commitment to impact and public engagement is embedded in our conception of Philosophy as intrinsically a force for social and economic good, while still respecting the value of completely theoretical research. The challenge has been to find concrete ways in which this can be measured, given that Philosophy as a discipline proceeds at the highest degree of abstraction. Rather than adopting discipline-wide templates, our priority has been to develop our own experimental and innovative impact models. This has been challenging and exciting and demonstrates how Philosophy can have unexpected impacts. For example, Staehler's impact case study shows how Philosophy can make a real difference to the practice of midwives and the experience of new mothers; Booth and Chitty's work with Money Advice Plus mobilises the discipline to advise on debt management; Stock's impact case study demonstrates how philosophical thinking can ensure due-process in proposed changes to the law; O'Brien's work with the British Horse Racing Association has re-evaluated the ethical dimensions of the sport; and Davies work with Brighton's Fabrica Gallery offers artists new perspectives on their work. On a global scale, Clark's (embargoed) work with Google addresses the ethical issues pertaining to the growth of artificial intelligence.

We value the process and outcomes of impact-related activity and support staff with teaching and administrative remission when pursuing this work and, particularly, when working on our impact case studies. The existence of a credible impact and public engagement plan is now an important criterion for allocating internal research leave. We have been strategic in supporting (with research leave, for example) the writing of trade books as well as more scholarly writing - for example O'Brien's *Martin Heidegger: A Tarnished Legacy* (2019) and Stock's forthcoming book on sex and gender: *Material Girls: Why Reality Matters for Feminism* (2021). We have used our HEIF and School Research Support funds to prime nascent projects and events, often dovetailing them with research seminars. By so doing we have integrated impact into our everyday research environment. For example, supported by HEIF funds, Booth and Chitty hosted a financial ethics roundtable early in this REF cycle at our departmental research seminar. This led to the formation of the Financial Inclusion Research Network whose partners include Money Advice Plus, Sussex Credit Union, Whitehawk Inn, and Step Change. Developing expertise in impact and public engagement figured strongly in our strategic decision to appoint Clark.

We have developed our impact expertise and opportunities through training and expert guidance. This specialist provision, when combined with the advice available through the university's Research and Enterprise Services team, has facilitated new contacts with research users, and enabled the creation of sustainable partnerships. We have also benefited from the ESRC Impact Acceleration funds. Both Staehler and Booth received awards (£1,600 and £1,500 respectively) when their respective projects were at an early stage of development.

**2. People****Appointment Strategy**

The appointment and recruitment strategy of the department is:

- To achieve a balance of interests across philosophical traditions by appointing excellent philosophers sympathetic to our multi-traditional ethos. O'Brien's versatile ('analytic') expertise on Heidegger strongly complements Staehler's expertise in phenomenology, for example, while at the same time enhancing the vitality of the unit as a whole.
- To achieve a balance of genders and levels of seniority.

- To enable early and mid-career philosophers to succeed in the profession by giving them the necessary training and support, career flexibility, and fostering an inclusive research environment that enables minority groups to flourish.

There are 12 permanent faculty in the department: five Professors (Morris, Stock, Staehler, Sawyer; Clark); four Readers (Booth, Finlayson, Davies, Deligiorgi); and three Senior Lecturers (O'Brien, Chitty, Besson). Moving forward, our recruitment strategy is to strengthen our vitality and sustainability through the appointment of early career researchers (ECRs). Booth is currently Head of Department (2017 –2020); Staehler served as Head of Department from 2014 – 2017.

There have been two departures in the census period. Allais (a Kant specialist) who arrived in 2008 as a Lecturer, left in 2014 for the prestigious Henry Allison endowed chair at the University of California, San Diego. Ganieri, who left Sussex in 2014, was elected as a Fellow of the British Academy the following year, and currently holds the Bimal Matilal Distinguished Professorship in Philosophy at the University of Toronto.

These departures prompted us to pivot towards our strengths in Philosophy of Mind and Post-Kantian Philosophy by hiring Clark. Though Allais also worked on Philosophy of Mind, her work, along with Ganieri's, was mainly in the History of Philosophy whereas Clark's is much less historical. This strategic decision was taken to exploit our connections with the Sussex Centre for Cognitive Science, and the Sackler Centre for Consciousness Science (who, respectively, house Chrisely (a philosopher) and Seth (a neuroscientist with philosophical interests)). Clark's reputation was established while a Sussex ECR, and his return is very much a home-coming. Further, Booth's reputation in Medieval Islamic Philosophy, as well as O'Brien's establishment as a senior scholar, allows us to sustain strengths in History of Philosophy (O'Brien, who was with us as an early career temporary lecturer in REF 2014, was hired as a permanent faculty member to replace Allais).

We ensure that all Philosophy researchers are fully integrated into the unit. For example, Katherine Cuccuru joined us in September 2019, having won a British Society for Aesthetics Postdoctoral Fellowship (value £20,000) for her project, 'The Problem with the History of Aesthetics Before Aesthetics' (mentored by Morris). Miller is a postdoc with Clark's *Expecting Ourselves* ERC project. His research investigates the implications of a leading new perspective on cognition, which conceptualizes the mind as an engine of knowledge-driven predictions. He works to integrate this body of work with the so called '4E cognition' view, which emphasizes the role of embodied processes in constituting what we call a mind.

During most of this REF cycle we have had 5 female faculty members in a department of 12, making the unit one of the most well-balanced in the UK in terms of gender. All faculty undertake recruitment training (involving unconscious bias training) before participating in hiring committees. Three women have been promoted to Professor (Staehler, Stock, Sawyer) and one to Senior Lecturer (Besson). Besson, an early career researcher at REF 2014, has flourished while at Sussex and has strongly consolidated her reputation as a rising star in logic and epistemology, receiving the 2014 Swiss Learner Prize for 'up and coming Philosopher'.

### **Staff Professional Development and Equalities**

Our staffing policy supports faculty research and teaching careers, as well as facilitating general professional development. Departmental research is managed by a School Research Committee, whose remit is to make connections between existing research projects, and to encourage the development of fundable projects and other border-breaking activity. It also plans research leave schedules over a rolling five-year period, applying School-set criteria. The Committee has broad representation across all subject areas, including ECR representation. Leave allocation is designed to actively support departmental research strategies; to respond to the needs of faculty at different career points; to support the creation of high quality publications, funding applications, and work that addresses social, economic, cultural and environmental outcomes and impacts; to mitigate the impact on research activity for those taking significant

administrative roles; to create space for innovation and 'blue skies' thinking; and to be mindful of the importance of equalities and transparency.

Research mentoring takes place in the context of: i) weekly research seminars, approximately half of which are given by faculty on current research; ii) annual, closed work-in-progress sessions in the summer term; iii) twice-yearly away-days, which contain a research component; and iv) informal reading of and comment on each other's' work. Staff appraisals, including the appraisal of research progress, grant-making and plans for the future are carried out annually. Since 2015 each member of faculty has maintained a five-year research plan, amended and discussed annually with the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange (currently Langhamer).

Staff are encouraged to enhance their skills via specialist training provided through University-wide and School-specific structures. Our Research Development Officer (currently Bowyer) enables strategic alignment with funder opportunities and helps to translate colleagues' research aspirations into well-targeted funding bids. A School Ethics Officer retains oversight whilst support funds provide resources for conference attendance and other research expenses. A separate fund supports activity with an impact or knowledge exchange dimension and our impact consultant (currently Lee) provides practical support for the development of meaningful partnerships with non-academic actors. The development of the Financial Inclusion Research Network was a particular beneficiary of our targeted support for non-HEI collaborations.

The department's commitment towards EDI is evident in the provision of support for women faculty. There are supportive links between women academics both within the School and the wider University: regular lunch-time peer mentoring meetings are held for women in both contexts. HAHP invested in a bespoke coaching programme for senior women between 2017-19. A departmental Equalities Officer role was introduced in 2016, and we have embraced recommendations from the Society for Women in Philosophy towards creating a working space supportive of under-represented groups. These have often taken the form of small, but significant, changes in our working practice and research culture, such as ensuring that all voices are heard in meetings and research seminars through clear communication etiquette. Mentoring and sustained consideration of how we might amend our everyday practices to enhance EDI have been supported by improved structures and processes, including HAHP's work towards an Athena SWAN submission in Autumn 2020.

Within HAHP the School's EDI officer sat on the Senior Management Team and the University's Equalities and Diversity Forum acting as a conduit between university initiatives and School/Departmental initiatives. Within MAH, an Equalities Officer works alongside a Director for Race Equality and two Deputy Directors for Race Equality (one staff-focused and one student-focused). Diversifying our student and faculty base is a core goal for the department. A new undergraduate module on 'Philosophy of Race and Racialization' is one aspect of our strategy here; the future articulated strategic aim of hiring a scholar in the Philosophy of Race is its most critical aspect.

The unit manages workloads according to family friendly policies as set out in the 'Flexible Sussex Working Procedure' at institutional level. Two faculty members currently work on family friendly hours. As a unit, it is now policy that no departmental meeting takes place after 15.00 to facilitate school pick-ups. We believe integrating EDI concerns into our everyday research practices in a way that is responsive to individual circumstance can be as transformative as the implementation of top-down policy.

We also endeavor to support new starters with a reduced teaching load and no substantial administrative responsibilities during their first three years. Alongside the mandatory development of personal research plans, early career stage colleagues are also mentored by a senior faculty member who provides advice on career development, including publication and the preparation of internal and external grant applications. At department level we provide small teams of senior researchers to support the development of new research projects, and to work intensely with PIs in the final stages of grant preparation. Substantial teaching remission is

offered to faculty taking on management positions in order to promote career progression, to recognise the importance of service, and to ensure that such faculty continue to be research active.

Research support for Teaching Fellows and Research Fellows is important for their career progression. All such staff, including on teaching-only contracts, are invited to deliver work in our research seminar series and are thus integrated into departmental research culture. They are entitled to apply to the Teaching Excellence Fund for support, and are mentored by a senior faculty member. Furthermore, the University has a process for internally moving from 'Teaching Track' to 'Research Track' appointments, further enabling career flexibility and EDI alignment. Several people have worked in such roles during this REF period - for instance O'Shiel (phenomenology), Molto and De Asis (philosophy of language and epistemology), Dunphy (Hegel and epistemology), Ivanov (perception and epistemology), Leckie (philosophy of language). Their energy and enthusiasm have been an invaluable contribution to our research environment, and we supported them to produce peer reviewed outputs during their time with us to ensure their continued career development.

Our REF submission has been EDI audited and adheres to the university's *REF2021: Code of Practice*. The provisional scoring of work remained confidential to the author (if they chose), the HoS, the UoA Lead, and the university REF team, with the contextual nature of judgements emphasised throughout.

### **Post-Graduate Recruitment and Training**

PGRs lie at the heart of our research strategy and are critical to the vitality of our research culture. Supporting their intellectual development, well-being, and progression towards early career status is a key priority. We have maintained an ethical approach to recruitment at PGR level, recognising the currently saturated market for academic jobs but acknowledging that the skill sets of Philosophy PGRs equip them for jobs beyond the academy. We ensure that candidates are selected equitably, and that they have a realistic sense of career prospects in the profession. To ensure that EDI concerns permeate all aspects of our work with PGRs, selectors are trained in unconscious bias. As members of CHASE (Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts in the South East) we have hosted 8 AHRC funded studentships since 2014, including such projects as: 'Revolutionary Epistemology'; 'An Enquiry into the Nature and Limits of Normativity'; 'Marx's Concept of Alienation and Collective Intentionality'; 'The Importance of Social Factors to Psychopathology'. We have also secured several competitive University of Sussex Chancellor's International Awards (providing full scholarships to International Doctoral candidates) and currently have two students funded by that scheme: Johnbosco Nwogbo, from South Africa, working on African communitarianism and the concept of a minimum basic income; and Tamaz Tokhadze, from Georgia, working on epistemic permissiveness and disagreement.

Supervisory workloads are shared across the department to ensure equal standards of care and support. The Research Committee monitors student progress through an annual system of review that includes interviews and the evaluation of research plans and supervisors' reports. The HAHP Director of Doctoral Studies, and now the MAH Doctoral Studies Committee, ensure that departmental provisions are consistent with University standards.

The department and school offer thorough skills training and career development. The University Doctoral School provides mentoring, one to one coaching, skills training and personal development workshops for our PGRs. They actively contribute to our research culture, the focus of which is the weekly Work-in-Progress seminar that provides a forum for discussion of new research not only by outside speakers but also by the students themselves. Postgraduates also actively contribute to the student-run Minorities in Philosophy Sussex chapter (established in 2018).

Doctoral researchers present their research in the constructive environment of workshops and forums, including an annual department postgraduate conference. The Philosophy Graduate Convenor organises bespoke training sessions (e.g. on 'how to publish articles in Philosophy



journals' and 'how to ask questions in a Philosophy seminar'). Our graduate students have been successful in placing articles in prestigious journals such as *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, *Synthese*, *Mind & Language*, *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* and *Review of Metaphysics*; they have obtained prestigious post-doctoral and permanent faculty positions: for example Duff (Assistant Professor at Nottingham University from 2018), Dunphy (IRC funded post-doc at University College Dublin from 2019), and Lee (Juan de le Cierva post-doc at University of Murcia from 2020).

Graduate students working in Political Philosophy and Ethics benefit from the presence of the Centre for Social and Political Thought; often organising conferences through its remit and serving on the editorial board of *Studies in Social and Political Thought*, which gives them vital training for a career in the profession. Graduate students working in epistemology and ethics are encouraged to engage in the Southern Normativity Group network, where all research events have reserved places for graduate student presentations, thus fostering graduate student engagement in the research life of the unit.

Clark and Sawyer are named researchers on the Leverhulme Doctoral Training programme, 'Sensation and Perception in Awareness', one of twelve DSPs starting in 2018, funded in part by a £1M grant from the Leverhulme Trust. The programme brings together researchers and doctoral students from across neuroscience, robotics, psychology, and the arts, with the ultimate aim of advancing our understanding of interactions between sensing, perceiving, and awareness in humans, animal, and machines. For the next three years, we will recruit a cohort of up to seven doctoral scholars through this programme. We encourage undergraduates to apply for the university-wide funded, summer Junior Research Assistantships which give doctoral and early career researchers supervisory experience. JRA projects have included "Shame and Emotional Responses to Art: A Feminist Approach"; "Eliminativism about the Manifest and Common-sense Realism" and "Beyond Associationism: The Coleridgean Transition from Hartley to Kant". Our success with this scheme has encouraged us to go further and open our departmental research seminars to undergraduates.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### Income Generation

We have been awarded grants worth a total of £883,546 since the last REF. The unit's income-generation strategy is to prioritise the preparation of funding applications that promote our open borders agenda, and bring together researchers from more than one academic domain – or philosophers with non-academic users – providing impact opportunities in line with institutional and research council priorities. Our strategy is paying off, and we have increased our research income substantially from the £199,851 that we recorded in REF2014.

Clark's appointment has brought greater expertise on successfully applying for and managing large grants within Philosophy. Clark's million-plus ERC starting grant - 'Expecting Ourselves: Embodied Prediction and the Construction of Conscious Experience' - was one of very few such grants awarded to philosophers in Europe over this REF-cycle, and is fully embedded into the department, giving us the requisite experience for such projects to emerge from within other topics of expertise. It leverages recent work on the predictive brain as a way of illuminating the nature and possibility of conscious experience. A secondary, but crucial, aim is to relate the resulting story to existing conjectures concerning the neural correlates of conscious experience. The project invites regular speakers, events to which all faculty and post-docs are invited, alongside those working at The Sussex Centre for Cognitive Science and the Sackler Centre for Consciousness. This has created a vibrant place for the exchange of ideas across faculties and has led to the success in November 2020 of another very large ERC €10.3 million grant bid with Clark as P.I. (Sussex's share is 1.7m). Called XSCAPE, this project is thought to be the largest ecological experiment on embodied visual perception ever attempted. It explores how the material structures of human settlements such as buildings, roads and artefacts change fundamental patterns of thought and attention and the way that minds process information.

This research income builds on an upwards trajectory which includes Booth's £1.2 million on *Trusting Banks* (which ended at the start of this REF cycle) and Besson's more recent £257,499 on the *Sources of Epistemic Normativity*, which investigates semantic, metaphysical, and epistemological questions that arise from the hypothesis that Epistemology is normative. The project demonstrates how seemingly very abstract questions in Epistemology and the Philosophy of Language can speak to contemporary concerns (as in the conference on Epistemic Norms and Post Truth). This has allowed us to bring scholars in Ethics and Political Philosophy and Mind, Language, World into fruitful dialogue.

Alongside these substantial grants we have acquired smaller grants to facilitate particular projects and research stages. In 2020, the Philosophy Department received a £50,000 donation from an alumnus – supported by the University's Development and Alumni office – to support a PhD project on Metaphysics (either from the 'Continental' or 'Analytic' tradition) and Katherine Cucurru was awarded a British Society of Aesthetics postdoctoral fellowship. We have also been successful in applications to the ESRC Impact Acceleration Scheme (for *The Philosophy of Money Advice*); and the Mind Association (for O'Brien's *To Be Born*).

An increase in sums awarded of well over 300% reflects our upward trajectory and developing expertise. We have also benefitted from University investment in facilities and infrastructure. These include an expansion of the Sussex University Library provision for specialist research, including a substantial expansion of its electronic holdings and a £3.25M investment in the Sussex Humanities Lab (of which Clark is an active member), which connects those working on digital technology and computational culture across the university. Our new location within MAH offers enhanced opportunities for the development and support of collaborative grant applications and projects. MAH has an accrued research grant income of £11,619,000 and well-developed plans to enhance income generating activities. Its Peer Review College will encompass research mentoring, application development, and post-outcome support. It offers Philosophy access to a much-enhanced pool of expertise and support in this area.

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

Our collaborative activities are framed around our commitment to pursuing philosophy with and for the public. Our aim is to embed public engagement in *all* of our research activities whilst continuing to intervene decisively within the discipline itself.

We actively encourage research that lends itself to impact, opening up our work to the local community and building relationships that provide the context and opportunity for knowledge exchange. We conceptualise our public engagement activities in the following four ways: (i) presenting to the public; (ii) engaging young people; (iii) contributing to Philosophy in new media; and (iv) working together with the public to inform policy. We have systematically progressed through each component, with the expectation that activities falling under (iv) will develop from earlier elements naturally and organically. We believe this last point to be extremely important: we do not want to force public engagement; rather we want it to emerge organically out of faculty research such that the connections made are meaningful and sustainable.

##### (i) Presenting to the Public

The department has been proactive in presenting research to the public as a stepping-stone to further connections. Davies' public talks culminated in a partnership with the Fabrica Gallery in Brighton in conjunction with The End of Life Commission, a five-year project involving artists, health professionals, and academics, including Davies. Key events included roundtable discussions and conversations designed to reflect a two-way approach to public engagement (**philosophy for and with the public**) and located in public fora around Brighton. A particularly successful example was 'A Consciousness of Finitude: a conversation between Davies and Raymond Tallis' (Brighton, July 2015). This event accompanied Elpida Hadji-Vasileva's, 'Fragility', installation at Fabrica and Davies' essay 'On Lingering with Beauty' was available in the gallery to accompany the installation. Other works that emerged from this collaboration

included Stephen Eastwood's, 'The Interval and the Instant', exhibition (Fabrica, 2017) and Stephen Eastwood's 'Island', a film premiered at the London Film Festival in November 2017.

We also use public presentations as a catalyst, and springboard, for collaborations with non-HEI professionals in other fields. Both Stock's and Staehler's impact case studies, and collaborations with Baroness Emma Nicolson at the House of Lords, and the Royal College of Midwives respectively, were kick-started by a series of public talks. For instance, Staehler organised a panel at the 2017 Brighton Fringe Festival under the heading 'Sussex Birth Day: Talking about Birth Matters'; Kathleen Stock spoke at a *Woman's Place* meeting in Brighton July 16th 2018. Stock has gone on to make presentations with broader reach on local and national radio - from BBC Sussex to BBC Scotland - and on the television (BBC's *Newsnight* and *Politics Live* and ITV's *Good Morning Britain*). Responding to the pandemic situation as it was emerging in March 2020, Booth gave an interview on 'Ethics and Coronavirus' for BBC Radio 4's *The Moral Maze*.

We are keen to draw diverse publics into the university: the department's research seminars (PhilSoc) are funded by the Royal Institute of Philosophy, and hence open to all. But we also endeavour to speak in venues that facilitate attendance from the public (e.g. at Brighton Waterstones or The Friends' Meeting House) and are advertised in local publications (e.g. *Viva Brighton*) and through our social media channels. Further, we use this strategy to scope out new projects which have then led to further connections. Chitty, Booth, and Deligiorgi's co-founding of the Financial Inclusion Research Network was the product of an initial roundtable discussion on Financial Ethics at the Philosophy Society in 2015; O'Brien's 2019 research presentation at the Philosophy Society on horses and pain has become an ethics report for the British Horse Racing Association.

In order to further increase reach, we are increasingly engaging with different constituencies on a more international level. For example, Finlayson gave a presentation on the philosophy of Jurgen Habermas at the *Feria Internacional del Libro* (Guadalajara, Mexico) in 2019, and Booth gave a presentation on Liberalism and Political Islam to a public audience at the *Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz* (Casablanca, Morocco) in 2018.

## (ii) Engaging Young People

Developing our commitment to outreach to young people from REF2014 (where we developed the online *Philosophy Resource* for A-level teachers of Philosophy and which constituted an impact case study) we have diversified the kinds of engagement we carry out in this domain. We organise and host an annual conference for Sixth Form teachers in Philosophy (which has continued to be hugely popular, often hosting over 70 delegates from Schools all over the UK). But we have gone further, often with the assistance of Sussex's Widening Participation programme:

- We go out to schools to deliver presentations: (e.g. O'Brien and Booth at Leighton Park School in 2016, Staehler to Hurstpierpoint College in 2019).
- We invite schools and colleges onto campus (e.g. Brighton College in 2019, BHASVIC in 2015).
- We engage with philosophical leaning beyond traditional educational contexts (e.g. Booth hosted a delegation from Haywards Heath University of the Third Age in 2019; Morris has given regular talks within this REF period at the *Sceptics in the Pub, Brighton*; and Finlayson works with Stoicon-X - an initiative that uses Stoic Philosophy to improve mental health among young people).
- We take part in initiatives to encourage students from non-traditional backgrounds onto campus: (e.g. O'Brien and Booth were part of the *Sussex Stars* scheme in 2015, where students from non-traditional backgrounds were invited to conduct a small research project in philosophy on campus over the summer, and then participate in a mini-graduation ceremony).

These are part of our wider strategic objectives: to increase the number of minority groups that engage with philosophical research with the aim of sustaining the future of the discipline and extending its reach. The fact that Sussex Philosophy's 'value added' score measuring non-traditional intake to University has continued to improve over this REF cycle demonstrates our commitment here. We aim to make our research more visible to the public at large, and to engage 6<sup>th</sup> Form teachers in particular with our unique model and vision for Philosophy, with the aim of informing their teaching practice.

### **(iii) Contributing to Philosophy in New Media**

Extending the reach of our work has led us to explore the utility of new media and to find new ways of engaging diverse audiences. Clark's appointment was particularly significant in this regard as he brought extensive expertise and experience of engaging the public with philosophical ideas. He has been prolific in giving public TEDx talks, the most recent of which has been in TEDx Lambeth in December 2019 on 'Extended You' (viewed over 2,000 times). Other members of the department have communicated their ideas through different media. In 2017, Besson discussed the 'Limits of Reason' with a Theologian and a Buddhist teacher at an Institute of Art and Ideas event (it remains available on the [IAI Player](#)). Stock's presentation at a *Woman's Place UK* meeting in Brighton in 2018 has generated over 22k views and she has been interviewed about her research for the well-known podcast *Philosophy Bites*. O'Brien has recently been interviewed by The Forum for European Philosophy, whilst Sawyer appeared on a panel that they organised and filmed on the work of Hilary Putnam (available as a podcast).

The department has also been experimenting with the use of social media channels for disseminating research. We now have an active Twitter feed (with 5,000 followers) managed by Booth. Stock's work on the Gender Recognition Act has attracted significant attention on Twitter as have her public articles on *Wordpress*. We have also sought to communicate our research to a wider public through non-academic publications. For example, Clark has written in *Nature* magazine and *edge.com* on consciousness as controlled hallucination; Booth has published pieces on curiosity for *Viva Brighton* magazine and on extremism for *The Conversation*, and Stock has written for *The Economist*, *The Conversation*, *Quillette*, *Standpoint*, and *The Article*, has been interviewed in *The Daily Telegraph*, *Times Higher Education*, the German magazine *Cicero*, and the Danish daily newspaper *Berlinske* and her work has been reported or discussed in the *Guardian*, *Times*, *Sunday Times*, *Daily Mail*, *The Spectator*, and the *New York Times*.

### **(iv) Working together with the Public to Inform Policy**

As a result of these activities we have begun to see the emergence of authentic collaboration between researchers and the public to inform policy. Two of these are detailed in our impact case studies: Stock's work ensured due process and that missing voices are heard in the debate about the Gender Recognition Act; Staehler's used Philosophy as a tool to inform changes to healthcare policy. Furthermore, O'Brien's work on horses' experience of pain led to his ethics report and invitation to serve as a member of the British Horse Racing Association's ethics committee. Booth and Chitty's collaboration with Money Advice Plus has led to the development of an illustrated book showcasing the ethical challenges faced by financial advice workers. The aim is for it to be an appendix to the national manual for training money advisors. Finlayson's work with Brighton and Hove Council commemorating one-time local resident, and anarchist thinker Prince Petr Krotopkin continues with plans for an exhibition at Brighton Sea Life Centre.

### **Contributions to the Discipline**

We have also played key roles in some of the UK's most prestigious and long-standing UK philosophical organisations. For example, Morris was elected President of the Mind Association from 2019, the longest-established and most prestigious professional body in Philosophy. He gave the inaugural address of the Joint Session of the Mind Association and Aristotelian Society in July 2020 remotely (due to Covid-19), and his lecture was watched by 450 people. Sawyer

has been a member of the Executive Committee of the Mind Association since 2014, and from 2016 on the Executive Committee and Council of the Royal Institute of Philosophy.

Our **Open Borders: Multi Traditions** agenda ensures that we are naturally orientated towards the philosophy of other cultures and countries. Our traditional expertise in 'Continental Philosophy' has been orientated, of course, towards work in Continental Europe. Our mission to challenge further boundaries than the 'Anglo-American vs. Continental' means we look beyond Western Europe too, especially towards countries whose philosophical traditions that have been overlooked in the dominant Anglo-American philosophical world.

The Research Committee has prioritised funding projects that further our strategic international connections, such as Finlayson's research trip to Wuhan University in China. This culminated in a memorandum of understanding between Sussex and Wuhan through which we have developed increased academic exchange, collaborative projects, and our journal, *Studies in Social and Political Thought (New Series)*. Through the agreement: 'Wuhan Philosophy will fund short term visits by student members of the SSPT editorial team, with a view to exchange of materials, ideas and expertise related to the journal.' The scheme is open to faculty members and graduate students to visit (up to two per year funded by Wuhan) to present seminars, or participate in other conferences or workshops.

During this REF cycle we have received in total over 100 invitations to speak internationally, in such places as Harvard (Finlayson, December 2014), Tokyo (Sawyer, September 2018), Barcelona (Stock, May 2016), Venice (Morris, July 2019), Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates (Booth, April 2019), Paris (O'Brien, January 2015), Leiden (Staehler, June 2019), Istanbul (Chitty, March 2018), Stanford (Besson, March 2019), and Dublin (Deligiorgi, October 2015). Our research has been translated into 8 other languages (including Albanian, Arabic, Turkish, Spanish, and German), and we are on the editorial boards of several international journals including: *Fronteras de la Filosofia Practica*, Argentina (Booth); *Baghdad Journal of Philosophy*, Iraq (Booth); *British Journal of Aesthetics* (Stock). Sawyer is Associate Editor of the Australasian Journal of Philosophy and the Publications Officer of the *Mind* occasional series.

While we especially prioritise engagements outside of the Anglo-American mainstream, we nonetheless have strong ties with institutions in the USA as evidenced by large numbers of speaker invitations there. Stock was a trustee of the American Society for Aesthetics until 2015, and has collaborated closely with colleagues at Claremont McKenna College, California, during this REF-cycle. Our international engagement activities have culminated in co-operation in successful international funding bids, such as Besson's grant with the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond in Sweden.

\*\*\*

Sussex Philosophy has done more than sustain its long-established reputation for innovation over the last seven years; it has re-invigorated it. Whilst in 2006 Glendinning lauded the 'new shape' of a department that was 'not readily identifiable as either analytic or Continental', in 2020 we transcend many more distinctions. These include those between 'Western' and 'non-Western' philosophy, and between 'practical' and 'theoretical' scholarship. We are an inclusive, public-facing and intellectually open department that embraces the challenge of practicing philosophy in a changing world. We actively seek to engage diverse publics with philosophical ideas because Philosophy matters - not just within the university - but beyond.