Institution: Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

Unit of Assessment: UoA 34 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

Research within this UoA primarily addresses questions emerging from the interrelation between culture, politics, production, and communication with a focus on cultural understanding, social justice, and building an evidence base for policy and practice. In that respect, research conducted during the census period builds on the themes and topics that formed the submission to REF 2014; however, the last six years have seen the research environment for this unit grow and mature. Furthermore, staff development and appointments have seen the interests of the unit expand to include work on audiences, digital media and journalism, adaptation, and world cinema as well as developing a new emergent strand of practice research. This expansion is evident in the increased diversity and range of outputs submitted to REF 2021 in terms of both the type of output and topic of enquiry. In selecting outputs for inclusion, we have included work from each of the four key 'clusters' of activity, which are discussed in more detail below. In so doing, we have included work that speaks to our long-standing strengths alongside work that represents our expanded breadth and interests. However, linking much of this work is an overarching concern with social justice, equity, representation, and inclusion, and it is in regard to these key themes that we strive for our research to have wider impact. This is exemplified in our two impact case studies, one of which has developed from our long running focus on critical dialogue for youth empowerment while the other builds upon work focused on cultural policy and participation, which was a nascent area of enquiry in 2014 but has expanded significantly since then.

As with REF 2014, the research unit is comprised of staff located within the divisions of Media, Communication and Performing Arts (MCPA), Psychology, Sociology, and Education (PSE) and Business, Enterprise and Management (BEAM). However, all staff members within the unit are also members of the multidisciplinary Centre for Communication, Cultural, and Media Studies (CCCMS) that was established in 2015 and hosted within MCPA. CCCMS contains 23 staff (20.5 FTE, 52% Female, 48% Male) and members are grouped into categories of membership based on institution wide guidelines. There are 13 (12.1 FTE) Full Members, 8 (7.2 FTE) Associate Members, and 2 (1.2 FTE) Affiliate Members (not including doctoral candidates). There have been no Contract Research Staff affiliated to CCCMS during the census period. The differing levels of membership allow aspiring researchers who do not have significant responsibility for research to be part of a research cluster alongside more experienced researchers who are able to provide advice and support. The membership categorisation of CCCMS staff members is reviewed once a year and new members of staff are categorised within one month of joining on the basis of previous research activity. Of the 23 staff in CCCMS, 16 were identified through the staff selection process as having significant responsibility for research and, as such, have had outputs submitted to REF 2021.

A Centre Director, at professorial level, leads CCCMS. The Director, in consultation with the members, formulates the strategy for the centre. The School Research and Innovation Board (SRIB) review this strategy. SRIB holds overall responsibility for the strategic development of research within the School of Arts, Social Science and Management (ASSaM) and reports to the School Academic Board (SAB), which is chaired by the Dean. The Centre Director, in collaboration with the relevant Head of Division (HoD), is also responsible for resource allocation and staff development including mentoring. CCCMS is provided with dedicated budget each year to support the development and dissemination of research activity. This money is prioritised into five strands of activity:

- Developing pathways to impact;
- Developing the research environment, in particular supporting staff to host on-campus seminars, screenings, workshops, and colloquiums;
- Seed funding new research projects;

- Presenting at conferences;
- Developing networks that could support future grant applications.

At the start of each financial year, cluster leads are asked to work with the other members to propose a schedule of activity, aligned under each of these five strands, for which they would like to request financial support. The Director of CCCMS collates these proposals into a spending plan that is submitted to the Dean for approval.

Research clusters

Staff members within the Centre are organised into 'clusters', which are aligned to four primary areas of enquiry. A senior member of CCCMS (Senior Lecturer or above) leads each cluster. These clusters are an effective way of encouraging meaningful collaboration and interaction within a multidisciplinary centre that encompasses a range of research interests and activities. Specifically, these clusters are:

Creative and Cultural Industries	This cluster explores the relationships between cultural production and cultural consumption by interrogating the ways in which governments, markets, cultural organisations, traditional media, and digital institutions construct value and meaning from creative processes and products. Members' interests are cross-disciplinary and include, for example, equality and diversity in cultural practices and policymaking; in/exclusion in festival environments; sustainability of cultural organisations; creative industries and cultural value; notions of quality in creative practice; cultural participation; conceptualisations of 'failure' in cultural policy; media policy; mediation of popular music; and broadcast radio.
Dialogue, Participation, and Engagement	This cluster brings together colleagues whose work considers how people communicate in ways that allow them to participate in events, organisations, groups, and communities. Work is founded upon a commitment to dialogue, participation, and engagement, examining how its related methods can question and/or promote notions of diversity, equality and inclusivity with regard to the delivery of social change. Work combines practical interventions, working collaboratively with a range of actors in the health, education and cultural sectors, with a critical approach to theory development in this field.
Film, Television, and Internet Media	This cluster is interested in screen cultures, with a particular focus on film, television, and internet media. The cluster employs a number of methods including: critical textual analysis, political economies of media, qualitative audience research, and production studies. It includes members with various specialisms, for example: adaptation, genre, transmedia storytelling, digital media convergence, and media education. Staff members in the cluster share an interest in key areas of enquiry, for example, changing modes of distribution and consumption, culture and politics, and the changing relationship between theory and practice.
Practice Based Research	The newest of our clusters is focused on the question of what is knowledge-in-doing? The cultural and creative industries often operate in affective, ephemeral, relational and active manners; its unique knowledge lies in the production of cultural work, and such knowledge can be difficult to translate into linear, rationalised and traditional manners. Working across Drama, Theatre, Film, Visual Art as well as other expressive forms of creative practice, staff members in this emergent cluster are focused on the development of practice research within QMU through supporting reflection about, and the development of, creative practice as a research methodology.

Each year, a number of research seminars are arranged at which cluster members can share details of new research activity, seek peer feedback on work in progress, and engage in scholarly debate. Some of these seminars have also been opened to a wider audience, inviting researchers from other institutions to attend and/or present their work as part of our aim to widen staff networks and encourage inter-institutional collaborative research activity.

Pathways to impact, public engagement and dissemination

There is an institutional aim to empower our researchers to act as agents of change, and we have sought to ensure that public participation and civic engagement are integral to a large portion of our work. We are focused on growing the number of high quality, outcome-driven partnerships with the public, private and third sectors, as evident in both of our impact case studies. While one illustrates how an initial commission by Creative Scotland developed into a long-term collaboration with a range of funders and arts organisations, the other demonstrates how a new collaboration with Step Kids Awareness (STEKA) in Malawi not only resulted in the expansion and development of our unique co-produced model of critical dialogue but also led to the establishment of a new UK-based partner charity (discussed in Section 4).

In line with our strategy to 'open up' access to our researchers and their research, the past six years have seen CCCMS significantly expand its public facing activities, adopting a multi-faceted approach to developing pathways to impact that include awareness-raising media activity alongside more targeted dissemination work with key groups and stakeholders. Activities have included public presentations, workshops, screenings, and committee memberships as well as the publication of reports, working papers, and blogs. For example, in 2019, the Scotland Malawi Partnership invited Wood to address 250 people at a plenary of its schools forum to discuss her work. In 2017, Finkel hosted a public seminar on critical event studies & the politics of gender in addition to a public film screening and panel discussion on post-humanism in cultural landscapes. In 2019, Schrag developed public workshops with Culture Perth and Kinross that explored how practice-research might be useful within the context of local authority museums.

Furthermore, there has been an increasing focus on adopting digital means of public engagement. For example, Stevenson's most recent AHRC funded work has resulted in a [dedicated website](#) intended to support the cultural sector in making use of the tools that have been developed through the project. Likewise, Van De Peer's AHRC funded work has resulted in the restoration and global online exhibition of a key Moroccan film, *Door to the Sky* (Farida Benlyazid, 1989) and a curatorial revival of 12 key African films at a number of international festivals. Similarly, throughout 2020, Blanche has been working with Creative Scotland to create digital content that will support more arts organisations to use the toolkit informed by her research. As part of this activity she delivered an online workshop supporting artists to recalibrate participatory arts engagement practice during the pandemic.

Members of CCCMS are encouraged to write blog posts about their research, which are then shared through social media. Members [have blogged](#) on a wide range of topics including: coronavirus and the media; film festival curation; the role of artists in cultural organisations; and cultural participation policies. Additionally, members have been involved in podcasts, such as Finkel's interview on the *Inside Events* podcast about accessibility, inclusion, and gender equality at cultural events and festivals, and Stevenson's interview on the *Artful Conversations* podcast about cultural value and policy failures. Centre members also engage with traditional media outlets, for example both Stevenson ([5 August, 2015](#)) and Wood ([4 January, 2018](#)) have written opinion pieces for the *Scotsman* newspaper, while Finkel has spoken on BBC Radio *5 Live* (11 October, 2018), BBC Scotland *Reporting Scotland* (20 August, 2018), and BBC Scotland Radio *Good Morning Scotland* (19 August, 2018). Furthermore, and as is noted in Section 4, a number of Centre members are directly involved in influencing policy development through participation in working groups and providing civil servants with ad-hoc briefings on particular areas of expertise. Centre members have also been awarded funding to undertake a public exhibition at the COP 26 Climate Change Summit in Glasgow explaining the role of media in communicating climate change (postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19).

Impact development within the UoA is supported by our membership of a number of external networks and partnerships. Most notably, after 10 years of collaboration with the other Edinburgh Universities, the Beltane Public Engagement Partnership continues to thrive following the signing of a new manifesto in 2018. The Beltane allows partner universities to share good practice, builds on reciprocal researcher training arrangements, and supports interdisciplinary pathways to impact. Through Beltane, members of CCCMS have been involved in numerous successful collaborative events including Explorathon, Bright Club, Cabaret of Dangerous Ideas and the hugely successful Beltane Gathering that brings researchers into multidisciplinary groups, focusing on collaboration in public engagement around the Grand Challenges. Future priority will be given to raising the profile of the collaboration, building on the increasing policy priority of regional cohesion through our Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.

QMU is also an active member of the Scottish Parliament Academic Network (SPAN). The network builds upon an existing collaboration established in 2014 between the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICE), Scotland's Futures Forum, Beltane and the Scottish Universities Insight Unit to encourage collaboration and knowledge exchange between the Scottish Parliament and the academic community. This activity is also supported through ASSaM's membership of the new Scottish Policy & Research Exchange (SPRE) established in collaboration with academic and policy institutions across Scotland, including universities, the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and Scottish Government. SPRE aims to increase the diversity of voices from the academy contributing to the evidence base for policy. One particular focus of their work is supporting Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and those who have not engaged with policy before to gain more confidence in pursuing this type of activity. As such, the director of SPRE will be offering group mentoring to a cohort of QMU ECRs throughout 2021.

Knowledge Exchange (KE) Concordat

QMU was one of the first Scottish universities to sign up to the new national agreement committing UK institutions to developing their knowledge exchange activities. The KE Concordat will provide us with a better structure for the sharing and development of research and in-demand skills by outlining good practice and showing what works. This comes at a vital time as the sector responds to COVID-19. Examples of KE collaborations established by members of CCCMS over this census period include:

- Schrag's work with *Perth Museums and Galleries* to develop public engagement strategies within the local authority;
- Stevenson's work with *Arts Council Malta* to support capacity building within the Maltese cultural sector;
- Munro's work with *Screen Scotland* to develop and deliver professional development programmes to existing film education practitioners;
- Finkel's work with *EventScotland* to develop new audience engagement activities

Open research culture

With back office support from the University of St Andrews, QMU introduced a new IP Policy based on the principle of "Easy IP". Aligning much more closely with our institutional vision and commitment to impact and translational research, this refreshed approach has supported the UoA in its aims to increase partnerships with external stakeholders and develop collaborative research.

As Open Research Data and Open Access publishing become firmly integrated into the research environment, we support our researchers in the provision of research support from our library and information services, and provide training and infrastructure to ensure that we fully respond to the Concordat on Open Research Data. We also support our researchers in articulating research outputs to external stakeholders and potential end-users through our institutional e-repository and newly launched working papers section of our website. We welcome the opportunity to promote access to our facilities and equipment, proprietary data, and industry resources and as such

continue to explore ways to make our campus more open and accessible to those who wish to use it to develop their work. For example, in 2020 CCCMS made Kerieva McCormick, choreographer, musician, and artistic director of KAM-RI Dance Theatre, an honorary research fellow providing her with access to our studio spaces to develop her practice.

Research objectives 2014 - 2020

The strategic objectives that have informed the unit's research since 2014 are:

1. To increase participation in collaborative research projects and networks internally and externally to develop research grant applications.
Key Achievements: • Part of the successful £2,500,000 (FEC) consortia bid for the UK Centre for Cultural Value. • Successful collaborative bid with Leeds University for £250,000 (FEC) AHRC grant. • Secured funding for four collaborative doctorates through the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities (SGSAH), collaborating with the University of Glasgow and University of Edinburgh. • Part of an AHRC follow on funding grant of £100,000 (FEC) with the University of Exeter.
2. To develop existing research on culture and policy through a focus on the management of cultural institutions/organisations, and cultural policy in relation to changes in state and government structure and action.
Key Achievements: • Development of a new model of quality in participatory practice, which forms the basis of one of our impact case studies. • Development of new tools to support the cultural sector to talk about failures. • Scholarly work related to this area of enquiry, for example: 0A/01/34; 0K/01/34; 0K/02/34; 0K/03/34; 0C/01/34; 0D/03/34; 0I/01/34.
3. To develop existing research on culture and economy that addresses the characteristics of culture industries and the relations between cultural production and political economy.
Key Achievements: • Scholarly work related to this area of enquiry, for example: 0C/01/34; 0D/01/34; 0D/02/34; 0D/04/34; 0F/01/34; 0G/01/34; 0G/02/34; 0G/04/34; 0J/01/34; 0M/01/34; 0M/02/34; 0M/03/34; 0N/01/34; 0N/03/34.
4. To develop research that engages critically with communications management, including processes of professionalization and the production of expertise and its connections with policy making.
Key Achievements: • Scholarly work related to this area of enquiry, for example: 0H/01/34; 0H/02/34; 0H/03/34; 0E/01/34; 0B/01/34; 0O/01/34. • Commissioned to undertake research for the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR).
5. To continue to support the research activation of established staff, to disseminate research through publications and conferences and to organise and host research events.
Key Achievements: • Hosted nine one day colloquiums including events on cultural policy and the 'local', the value of comedy, adaptation and the nation, the failure of cultural participation, Scotland on screen, and diversity in cultural production. • Hosted an international conference entitled 'Public Relations: critical perspectives, edgework and creative futures' (2015). • Hosted an international conference, co-organised with European Research and Education Association, entitled 'PR and society: The generative power of history in the present and future' (2017). • Hosted an international conference on the media in Scotland entitled 'Becoming Scotland' (2014).

- Established and ran the First Biennial Conference in Food and Communication (2018).
- Hosted the American Association of Arts Administration Educators annual conference, the first time this had been held outside of the USA (2017).
- Hosted the Edinburgh International Film Audiences Conference (2018).
- Successful in being awarded hosts of Association of Adaptation Studies Annual Conference in 2021

Research objectives 2021 - 2026

In reflecting on these previous objectives, it became apparent that while they outlined many of the key areas of enquiry the centre wished to pursue, they overlooked a significant area of established expertise, namely film studies, which has continued to grow (see outputs: 0F/02/34; 0G/04/34; 0L/01/34; 0L/02/34; 0L/03/34; 0N/02/34; 0N/04/34). Furthermore, they were less detailed about our intentions to develop the research environment, our impact activity, and our people. As such, while the Centre's plans for the next five years build on the previous strategy, it includes a broader range of aims that span the full scope of our activities. These plans have been formulated as the following high-level objectives:

1. To publish a wide and diverse range of world-class, internationally excellent research on cultural and creative industries, communication management, public relations, and film and media studies.
2. To continue expanding our research networks in order to support a continued increase in collaborative research projects and major grant applications.
3. To nurture and develop practice research and, in doing so, further diversify the forms of research outputs generated by CCCMS.
4. To expand the scope of our impact activity to encompass research undertaken by all four research clusters in CCCMS.
5. To increase the external visibility, awareness, and profile of CCCMS.
6. To provide more explicit and tailored support for ECRs within CCCMS.
7. To support a greater and more diverse number of staff to have significant responsibility for research through inclusive recruitment, more targeted development activities, and mentorship.
8. To nurture a group of new drama researchers, with a specific focus on practice based/led research in order to support a separate submission to a second UoA.
9. To increase the number of PhD and Professional Doctorate completions, with a specific focus on collaborative doctoral studies.
10. To increase income generated by CCCMS by 25%.

In early 2021, these objectives will be translated into an operational plan with key deliverables and milestones mapped out over the next five years. In delivering these objectives, the research unit will seek to sustain its multidisciplinary and collaborative character evidenced by its research outputs for REF 2021.

2. People

Over the census period, a number of staff retired; however, the retention rate within the unit is high and of the ten staff submitted to REF 2014, seven remain at QMU and are being returned to this REF. Where opportunities for new recruitment have arisen, these have been used to support the development and growth of CCCMS in two key ways. Firstly, consolidating and expanding existing areas of strength, for example strengthening our expertise in Film Studies through the addition of Munro and Van de Peer. Secondly, through the addition of practice-oriented researchers in order to support our longer-term plans, most notably with the addition of Schrag and Henry. Our growth is also notable in the increased headcount being returned to this UoA, which is 60% greater than in 2014.

A new Workload Allocation Model was launched in 2019. This made explicit the commitment that all staff would have 20% of their workload allocated to research and scholarship activities.

Additional time for research can be secured through income generation as the School works on the basis of 'buying out' additional research time rather than 'buying back' the 20% already committed to. Research objectives associated with this allocation of time are agreed between the Centre Director, the staff member and their respective HoD, and recorded as part of the annual Performance Enhancement Review (PER). Although these are optional, a recent PER audit showed that 82% of academic staff, including contract researchers, take part in the PER process. Aligned to the PER process, staff members are able to apply for promotion through the Reward and Recognition programme. During the census period, of the 23 staff in CCCMS, one was promoted to Professor, one was promoted to Reader, and five were promoted to Senior Lecturer.

As a signatory to the 2019 Concordat for Researcher Development, we are committed to ensuring researchers have access to 10 days professional development (pro rata) and in 2019 the PER form was re-designed to encourage all staff to set separate development objectives linked to career progression aspirations. Since then, research staff taking up institutional level training and development opportunities has increased by 41%. These opportunities include a suite of DEVELOP courses, organised by the HR department, and which have included training on research mentoring and coaching, research blogging, media training, and impact development. We are keen to enhance support for institutional level research mentoring and are investing in a number of new initiatives to achieve this. Key to this is our acceptance as a partner in the Teaching, Research & Academic Mentoring Scheme (TRAMS) led by the University of St Andrews and the University of Dundee.

Within QMU, the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) is the widely endorsed framework underpinning professional development for researchers at all levels. Using the RDF supports researcher development and fulfils many of the requirements set out by funders and governments for the support of researchers and researcher careers. Currently, over 30% of researchers make regular use of the RDF, a number we aim to grow over the next five years. We are also committed to offering more explicit and structured support to ECRs, and plans are underway to launch an Early Career Researcher Engagement Academy in partnership with Edinburgh Napier University in 2021. The scheme will support the long-term career, professional development, and wellbeing needs of researchers and will include peer-to-peer mentoring.

Financial support for professional development is available from school-wide staff development funds. These funds are open to all staff members who are free to apply for up to £1000 at one of three calls across the course of the academic year. The School Management Team (SMT) awards funds on the basis of alignment with the School Operational Plan. Activity supported through this route has included research visits, networking events, conference attendance, transcription, research assistance, and writing retreats.

Inter-centre relationships

There are six research centres and one institute at QMU and collaboration between them is encouraged. The size of QMU combined with our collective colocation on a single campus means that staff members regularly collaborate, both formally and informally, with colleagues from other disciplines. For example, Blanche has collaborated with Ross (UoA 17) to undertake a thematic evaluation of the Bank of Scotland's philanthropic grants. Schrag has collaborated with Smith and Kelly (UoA 3) to consider how creative practice might help healthcare practitioners to better understand the lived experience of those with osteoporosis. Munro has worked with Eady (UoA 4) to develop a project that supported probationary primary school teachers gain confidence in using filmmaking and film archives as teaching tools across a range of curriculum. The opportunity for staff to take part in research seminars being run by other research centres has also encouraged the cross fertilisation of ideas; Wood's work in particular has been shaped by intellectual exchange with members of the Public Sociology cluster in the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS).

10 Year HR Excellence Award

QMU is committed to the principles of the new 2019 Concordat to Support the Career

Development of Researchers and was in the first cohort of 5 UK HEIs to submit to the 10 Year HR Excellence in Research Award. Central to this activity is an ethos of co-creation and, importantly, shared ownership between the institution and its research community. As such, we established an institutional Concordat for Researcher Development Working Group structured around these principles. The resultant Concordat for Researcher Development Action Plan 2020 reaffirms our commitment to supporting the Concordat through the provision of unit specific development opportunities underpinned by centralised support for all researchers within the institution. Compliance with the Concordat is monitored at local levels through the research centre annual review process. This exercise takes place in November each year and comprises an annual review panel chaired by the Deputy Principal.

Research Integrity

In 2019, QMU became a member of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and that year delivered a QMU/UKRIO research integrity training workshop. UKRIO training and awareness materials are actively promoted throughout the campus and on our web and intranet sites. UKRIO monthly training webinars are promoted to all staff, research managers, professional services and research students. New QMU whistleblowing procedures were launched in 2020. We are also members of the Scottish Research Integrity Network (SRIN) led by the University of Dundee and University of Edinburgh and regularly attend sector best practice events. Supporting and strengthening understanding of the application of research integrity issues within our UoAs is a key objective in our 2020-2022 Concordat for Researcher Development Action Plan. An annual statement on progress in implementing the Concordat for Research Integrity is provided to University Court and published on our website every Autumn.

Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey (CEDARS)

In 2020, QMU was 1 of only 22 UK HEIs to participate in the first pilot UK biennial CEDARS Survey. This survey gathers anonymous data about working conditions, research culture, career aspirations and career development opportunities for research staff and research leaders in HEIs across the UK. The QMU CEDARS response rate was 31%. This reflects a significant improvement to average participation rates in previous national benchmarking exercises i.e., the Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) (7%) and the Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) (17%). 11 of those who took part in the survey were associated with UoA 34 suggesting a higher response rate than the university average. CEDARS has informed CCCMS reflections about the ways in which we have sought to develop the research environment within the centre over the past six years. This reflective process has been complemented by an institutional research culture health check undertaken in response to the Wellcome Research Culture Report, which involved hosting Wellcome Café Culture events using the Wellcome Trust toolkit to promote discussion with peers on how to develop the research culture at QMU.

Research students

Currently, there are 17 PhD students registered in CCCMS; this compares to a total of 14 at REF 2014. Of these, 6 are being supported through QMU funded studentships or fee waivers and 11 are self-funding. Three additional students are also attached to the Centre through collaborative doctoral studentships, secured from the SGSAH. These involve staff from QMU co-supervising students with academics from Edinburgh University, Edinburgh College of Art, and Glasgow University.

During the census period, 12 candidates have been awarded PhDs; this is over double the total of five for REF 2014. Between 2014 and 2020, QMU has invested in 7 fully funded doctoral studentships in CCCMS, helping to support new research aligned to our key areas of enquiry. Candidates have undertaken research that covers all four of our research clusters, exploring topics such as transmedia adaptation, practice-based research into masculinity and film, communities at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Scottish computer games policy, and Scotland on Film. In addition to PhD students, we also deliver a Professional Doctorate programme with a specific focus on

Cultural Leadership and Cultural Practice, which began in 2018. There are currently four candidates undertaking a Professional Doctorate through CCCMS, all of whom have or have had senior leadership positions within the creative industries. Their involvement in the Centre has helped to further expand our professional networks in the cultural sector and we plan to expand our provision to encompass communications and public relations professionals.

All doctoral candidates are allocated a supervisory team of either two or three staff. A full research proposal and evidence of research activity is submitted to a probationary panel, which interviews the doctoral candidate at the end of the first year of registration. Doctoral candidates and supervisors submit annual progress reports to the Graduate School Academic Board (GSAB), which reports to the University's Research Strategy Committee. All doctoral candidates are affiliated members of CCCMS, which creates a sense of belonging and immersion in an active research environment. A Doctoral Candidates Association (DCA) organises an annual conference and twice monthly research cafes.

Candidates receive research training provided by the Graduate School at tri-annual study weeks. We also provide a 60-credit [Doctoral Certificate in Researcher Enhancement and Development (READ)](#) as part of all Doctoral programmes. READ is based around the Vitae RDF and enables the integration and synthesis of theory with practice to enable the development of transferable research skills, ensure the rigour of academic thinking and promote the achievement of personal and professional goals. As part of their career development, doctoral candidates are encouraged to publish at the earliest suitable opportunity with the help of mentoring from supervisors.

Doctoral candidates in receipt of QMU studentships are allocated a dedicated budget for research expenses and conference attendance. Non-studentship candidates may also apply to CCCMS for conference attendance support. The Graduate School also offers opportunities for candidates to apply for training and development funds to support specific non-core training or skills development. In order to obtain experience, QMU studentship candidates are provided with professional development opportunities that include a requisite two years of teaching experience (90 hours in Yr 1. 180 hours in Yr 2. 90 hours in Yr 3.). Candidates who are not in receipt of a studentship are often provided with paid teaching experience within a relevant division of ASSaM. In preparation for undertaking this activity, all doctoral candidates are required to complete a short course in teaching and learning and should they wish to gain a qualification are able to complete a PGCert in Teaching and Learning free of charge.

The Graduate School also provides a regular development programme for doctoral supervisors. This is supplemented by update sessions on a wide range of topics delivered in facilitated 'communicative spaces' where supervisors can share concerns and issues and engage in constructive dialogue with other supervisors. We are also working to implement the UKCGE Good Supervisory Framework and a member of CCCMS is in the first cohort of staff working towards accreditation. In addition, QMU belongs to the two Scottish Graduate Schools (Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities), both of which provide external training, networking, and learning opportunities for candidates and supervisors.

Equality and diversity

We promote an inclusive culture and have mainstreamed and embedded many of the new processes defined in our REF 2021 Code of Practice. Management information available to the Centre Director and HoD has been enhanced with a greater focus on protected characteristics and monitoring of the equality and diversity profile of our researchers. There is an institutional programme of online equality and diversity training for researchers available to all staff and additional resources have been made available to support the use of Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)**.**

The university was awarded an institutional Athena SWAN Bronze Award in April 2013 and successfully renewed the Bronze Award in 2017. Since then, our Athena SWAN team has continued to progress gender equality across the institution by addressing actions set out in our

action plan. For example, in 2019, a number of our researchers participated in our EntreprenHER event, with our Chancellor Prue Leith, promoting gender and innovation. Furthermore, there is dedicated institutional funding available for female researchers to attend events such as Soapbox Sciences and AcceleratHER. We also have a strategic collaboration and MoU with Women's Enterprise Scotland (WES) to embed Female Entrepreneurship in our research culture. During the current census period, four members of CCCMS have been supported to undertake the Aurora leadership development initiative run by Advance HE. Upon completion of the development programme, these staff can join the QMU Aurora network of previous delegates. This network aims to encourage peer-to-peer support on issues facing QMU female leaders and provides mentorship links for future cohorts. The School of ASSaM is also currently working towards a LGBT Bronze Charter award, which we aim to secure in 2021.

We continue to champion equality and diversity and are developing a leading position in female research leadership with over 70% of QMU REF 2021 eligible staff being female. At the level of UoA 34, 50% of the submitted staff are female, 50% male; 26% identify as LGBTQ; and 6% have had a period of maternity leave during the census period. However, no staff members in the UoA are BAME, which reflects a wider university population in which fewer than 4% of staff are BAME. As such, while the EIA carried out on the final output selection identified no areas of concern and confirmed the selected outputs broadly aligned to the demographic characteristics of the researchers submitted to the UoA, a number of areas were noted for further action by the Centre Director in regard to developing the diversity of staff submitting to this UoA in future. Specifically:

- Develop further support for ECRs, in particular those aged 25-34, to publish academic work;
- Collaborate with the relevant HoDs and HR to actively encourage applications to vacant roles from BAME candidates;
- Collaborate with the Equality and Diversity Committee to highlight the importance of HR holding full and accurate demographic data about all staff;
- Reflect on why LGBTQ staff members are so well represented in this UoA compared to the University as a whole.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Centralised support services

As a relatively small HEI, QMU works on a model of shared centralised support with local adaptation in order to account for disciplinary specificity. As such, activity within CCCMS is supported via the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange Development Unit (RKEDU), which supports the development and implementation of the institutional research policy and strategy. In particular, it supports members of the unit to undertake public engagement, researcher development, research governance, and external collaborations. Support is also available from the Research Grants and Contracts Unit (RGCU), which provides pre- and post-award support for grant submission as well as advice on how best to secure external funding. In addition to an extensive range of online journals, citation research tools, and other dedicated research resources, the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and dedicated Research Support Librarian provide CCCMS members with information retrieval advice and manage the repository of data sets. Staff members also have access to an institutional subscription to Research Professional, the leading sector database of research funding opportunities. A review of research support structures by the Deputy Principal is scheduled for June 2021. This will be informed by an analysis of pilot collaborative activity with other HEIs including the previously mentioned procurement of back office commercialisation/IP support from the University of St Andrews.

External funding

Research and Knowledge Exchange activity has been supported financially from external sources such as the AHRC (Stevenson, Van de Peer), Carnegie Trust (Tominc, Dickson), Creative Scotland (Blanche, Schrag, Munro), Local Authorities (Stevenson, Schrag), the CIPR (Pieczka),

Rachel Carson Centre (Hinde), Santander Research Fund (Finkel) and a range of cultural organisations. In addition to the £227,265 of research income returned as part of this unit-level submission, members of CCCMS through KE, consultancy activity, and other research related work also generated an additional £50,434.

Innovation Fellowships

In 2018, QMU invested in and launched an annual Innovation Fellowship Scheme intended to develop and support research activity that has the potential for significant health, cultural, and/or economic impact and which will help us maximise engagement with the UK Industrial Strategy and Industrial Strategy Challenge Funding. CCCMS members have been successful in gaining three of these awards, which have supported them to:

- Employ action research methods to co-create a unique new degree programme in Creative Enterprise, delivered by Fife College, which will support the growth of the creative industries outside of Scotland's central belt while also widening access to degree level education in this area;
- Initiate a pilot project to develop a Rural Art Network across Scotland to share learnings about participatory art practices within remote and rural contexts. The resultant network has recently gained funding from the Royal Society of Edinburgh to support its continuation;
- Undertake research into how film education can be embedded in initial teacher training programmes.

Production and practices resources

The majority of research undertaken by CCCMS requires little to no specialist equipment or software; however, staff have access to NVivo, SPSS, and Adobe Creative Cloud. Practice based researchers and doctoral candidates in CCCMS also have access to a range of production equipment and spaces, including:

- Black box studio theatre;
- Baby black box studio;
- Four rehearsal studios;
- Scenic workshop and store - stock scenery, staging and rigging equipment;
- Scenography studio;
- Digital production equipment, editing suites, and post-production facilities;
- One of only two 'infinity' green screen facilities in Edinburgh.

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

Inter-institutions relationships

In a bid to expand the scope and scale of the research undertaken by CCCMS we have consciously sought to expand our connections with other HEIs. Some of these have developed into established relationships allowing centre members to work as part of larger research projects. For example: Van De Peer's work with colleagues at the University of Exeter on the AHRC funded project *Building a Transnational Network for Moroccan Cinema: Audiences, Festivals and Talent Development*; Stevenson's work with colleagues at the University of Leeds on the AHRC funded project *Cultural Participation: Stories of Success, Histories of Failure*; and Finkel's work with colleagues at Leeds Beckett University and Manchester Metropolitan University on accessibility, inclusion, and 'doing' gender in events and festival landscapes. Additionally, in 2019, Stevenson become a Co-Director of the new UK Centre for Cultural Value based at the University of Leeds. Furthermore, QMU is a founder member of the Scottish Arts and Humanities Alliance (SAHA), a joint initiative of ten Scottish Higher Education institutions, the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the SGSAH. Stevenson has been part of the steering committee for this new venture that aims to enhance understanding of the intellectual, creative, social, and economic contribution of the arts

and humanities to the wellbeing and advancement of Scottish society.

In 2019, QMU signed a new 3-year Memorandum of Understanding with Glasgow School of Art (GSA) and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) for SHIFT. Recognising the importance of research-led innovation, the SHIFT partnership delivers specialist events and resources aimed at encouraging innovation in the creative industries. Participation in SHIFT was extended to other HEIs in 2020 with plans underway for SHIFT2021. The success of SHIFT is raising the international profile of best practice in collaborative models of entrepreneurial training for researchers in Scotland, with an invite to the three partner institutions to present SHIFT as an exemplar of excellence at the ELIA Biennial Conference 2020, hosted by the Zurich University of the Arts. ELIA is a European network of 250 members in 47 countries that advocates for higher arts education.

International profile

Researchers within the centre are regularly invited to give keynotes or undertake visiting scholarship at international institutions. For example, in 2019, Stevenson was a visiting scholar at MacEwan University, Alberta, Canada. In 2018, Schrag was invited to develop research with the Kentucky College of Art and Design; that same year, Schrag also developed projects in Helsinki and Israel. Finkel has been invited to keynote at five events over the current census period including the final public event of the Horizon 2020 Marie S. Curie Gender & Cultures of Equality (GRACE) Project. She was also invited to be a visiting fellow at Open University of Catalonia in Barcelona, Spain (2017) and a visiting Erasmus+ scholar at Deusto University in Bilbao, Spain (2018). In 2018, Hinde was awarded a Carson Fellowship to research and teach at the Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society in Munich, Germany. Pieczka has been invited to serve as an external reviewer for Örebro University's (Sweden) upcoming evaluation of research quality and appointed a visiting professor (2020/21) by Lund University, Sweden, as part of the University's Council for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities. Finally, Van De Peer has been appointed to the FWO Peer Review College for the next three years. The FWO is the Flanders (Belgian) equivalent of the AHRC.

Reputations established by the research outputs of Centre members have also attracted overseas academics to visit QMU and/or collaborate with CCCMS staff. These have included scholars from Spain (Finkel), Finland (Schrag), Canada (Schrag), South Africa (Schrag), Poland (Pieczka), Slovenia (Tominc) and Denmark (Stevenson). QMU also supports researcher mobility through our long-standing status as a EURAXESS Local Contact Point and are an invited participant on the British Council EURAXESS Steering Group.

Supporting the knowledge base

Over the past six-years members of CCCMS have supported the development of the wider knowledge base by proposing and editing several books and journal special issues, including:

Special Editions

- Jancovich, L. & Stevenson, D. (eds.) (2020). Failures in Cultural Participation. *Conjunctions: Transdisciplinary Journal of Cultural Participation*. Vol. 7, No. 20.
- Cartiere, C., Wingate, J., & Schrag, A. (eds.) (2020). The Failure of Public Art. *Public Art Dialogue*. Vol. 10, No. 2.
- Danby, P., Dashper, K., & Finkel, R. (eds.) (2019). Multispecies Leisure: Human-animal Interactions in Leisure Landscapes. *Leisure Studies*. Vol. 38, No. 3.
- Gilmore, A., Jancovich, L., Stevenson, D., & Durrer, T. (eds.) (2019). Situating the local in global cultural policy. *Cultural Trends*. Vol. 28, No. 4.
- Platt, L. & Finkel, R. (eds.) (2018). Equality & Diversity in the Professional Planned Events Industry. J*ournal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events.* Vol. 10, No. 2.
- Finkel, R., Jones, D., Sang, K., & Russell, D. (eds.) (2016). Diversifying the Creative: Creative Work, Creative Industries, Creative Identities. *Organization*. Vol. 24, No. 3.

- Finkel, R. (ed.) (2015). Social Justice and Events-related Policy. ᴵᴵˢᴱᴺ*Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*. Vol. 7, No. 3.
- Pieczka, M. & Roper, J. (eds.) (2015). Governance through Communication. *Journal of Public Affairs.* Vol. 15, No. 2.
- Stevenson, D. (ed.) (2014). Scottish Cultural Policy. *Cultural Trends*. Vol. 23, No.3.

<u>Edited Collections</u>

- Stewart, M & Munro, R. (eds.) (2020). *Intercultural Screen Adaptation: British and Global Case Studies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Stevenson, D. (ed.) (2018). *Managing Organisational Success in the Arts*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Platt, L. & Finkel, R. (eds.) (2020). *Gendered Violence at International Festivals: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Johnston, J. & Pieczka, M. (eds.) (2019). *Public Interest Communication: Critical Debates and Global Contexts.* Abingdon: Routledge.
- Finkel, R., Sharp, B., Sweeney, M. (eds.) (2018). *Accessibility, Inclusion, and Diversity in Critical Events Studies*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Van de Peer, S. (ed.) (2017). *Animation in the Middle East: Practice and Aesthetics from Baghdad to Casablanca*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Stewart, M. (ed.) (2014) *Melodrama in Contemporary Film and Television.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Of particular note is the edited collection by Van De Peer, which was nominated by the Society for Animation Studies for the award of best scholarly book in animation (2020) and won the British Association for Film, Television and Screen Studies award for best edited collection (2018).

Furthermore, several centre members are editorially involved in internationally recognised journals and book series. Pieczka is a co-editor of *Public Relations Inquiry* and has co-edited the *Journal of Communication Management* (2008–2013). She has also been a member of the editorial boards of *Journal of Public Relations Research*, and *Prim,* an international online journal based at Massey University, New Zealand. Stevenson is a member of the editorial board of *Cultural Trends*, having previously served as the Policy and Book Reviews Editor. Munro is currently an Associate Editor of the *Film Education Journal* and became a member of the Editorial Board in late 2020 with a specific remit to re-work its back catalogue of articles into alternative formats that might reach wider non-academic audiences. Stewart is a member of the editorial board of *Film Criticism*. Van de Peer is an editor of the Edinburgh University Press series *ReFocus: The International Directors*, and a board member of both the *Journal of African Cinemas* and the open-access *MAI: Journal of Feminism and Visual Culture*. Finkel is co-editor of the Routledge Critical Event Studies series and on the editorial boards of *Leisure Studies; Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events; Frontiers in Sport, Leisure, Tourism Journal;* and founding editorial board member and co-editor-in-chief of *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Equality and Diversity: International Journal.*

Social enterprise

In 2017, an award-winning charity, STEKAskills was developed as a result of Wood's work to expand our model of critical dialogue for young people in a way that empowers young Malawians, reduces their donor dependency, provides them with high quality employment and generates sustainable income to support the creation of the STEKA Centre. The charity works in partnership with Malawian Charity STEKA to support their ambition to build a centre for vocational skills and community enterprise in Malawi. So far, STEKAskills has raised in excess of £56,000, including a grant from the Scottish Government.

Policy relationships

Many of the members of CCCMS have longstanding relationships with policymakers and the

Scottish Parliament. Stevenson is a member of the National Partnership for Culture, which advises the Scottish Government on the delivery of their cultural strategy; he also chairs the Measuring Change Group, which is tasked with proposing new national indicators that better represent Scotland's aspirations for culture. Wood's work on voluntourism has led to her being invited to contribute to the Scottish Government's development of a new policy related to Scottish school visits abroad. Both staff members have also been invited speakers at Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Groups (CPGs), which provide an opportunity for MSPs to engage with external stakeholders on particular subjects of interest.

Professional practice and civic engagement

Many of the members of CCCMS are actively involved in the areas of professional practice and civic society to which their research is oriented. This ensures that our research is informed by and responds to the contemporary concerns and interests of the groups, institutions, communities, and sectors we aim to influence and benefit. For example, Van de Peer is a trustee and programmer for the Africa in Motion Film Festival and founded MONA, a festival in Antwerp (Belgium) dedicated to Middle Eastern and North African film; Stevenson is on the Board of Out of the Blue Arts Education Trust; and Schrag is on the Board of both Stills Gallery and Timespan Heritage and Arts.