

<b>Institution: University of Hertfordshire</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 27 English Language and Literature</b>
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>Context and Structure</b></p> <p>The Unit consists of 15 members of staff (13.8 FTE) and draws together colleagues working in the cognate disciplines of English Literature, Creative Writing and Film within the School of Humanities. The School is divided for administrative and teaching purposes into subject groups, and the Unit draws members from three of these: English Literature and Creative Writing; Media (including Film); and Languages. Each of these subject groups has a Head of Subject, who line-manages and appraises staff within their group, but the Unit has a single Research Leader who co-ordinates and supports the Unit's research activities and is responsible for the strategic allocation of QR funds. Researchers within the Unit are situated in adjoining offices, enabling collaborative work on aspects of their research, and facilitating the interdisciplinary exchange of ideas.</p> <p>The nature of much of the research undertaken by staff reflects their willingness to collaborate with peers and colleagues both within the School and University and beyond it. Such collaboration lies at the heart of the University's overall research strategy. The University has adopted six interdisciplinary Research Themes and the work of this Unit is a lynchpin of the 'Heritage, Cultures and Communities' theme, enhancing opportunities for dissemination and for generating and fostering cross-disciplinary collaborations. An example of this has been the central part played by the Unit's researchers in the AHRC-funded '<i>Everyday Lives in War</i>' Co-ordinating Centre for Community Research and Engagement to Commemorate the Centenary of the First World War.</p> <p>Notable achievements for the Unit over the period in comparison with REF 2014 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved vitality and equality of staffing: 20% senior researchers and 53% lecturers (of which 20% are early career researchers) together with an increase to 47% women overall.</li> <li>• 488% increase in average research income per annum when including all sources.</li> <li>• 300% increase in PhD awards.</li> <li>• 87% overall satisfaction in the 2019 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) with 88% for supervision and for progress and assessment, and 87% for research skills.</li> <li>• Unit staff winners of the 2018 Poetry Society's National Poetry Competition (Holloway-Smith) and 2014 <i>Granta</i> International Memoir Prize (Gibb).</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategy</b></p> <p>The Unit's strategic plan in the REF 2014 Environment statement had three areas of focus: expansion of staffing, fostering close ties with the local region, and expanding the postgraduate research student community. An additional target has been to grow research strength in Creative Writing and Film to complement the Unit's established expertise in English Literature in order to create a truly multi-disciplinary unit of assessment, allowing colleagues to identify thematic connections between areas of research which cut across traditional disciplinary boundaries, and bring fresh perspectives to bear on their areas of specialism. The achievement of these goals is evidenced by an increase in the overall staff FTE submitted to REF2021 of 79%, particularly from Creative Writing; an impressive track record of public engagement; and a 300% increase in the number of PhD awards.</p> <p>In the build-up to REF 2014, control of QR funds allocated against approved research delivery plans, was handled at School level. Following REF2014, the strategic decision was made by the School of Humanities to devolve control of QR income to Units. This has meant that for most of</p>

this REF cycle the Unit has had significant independence in directing its QR income towards the delivery plan in support of its research culture.

### **1) Expansion of staffing**

The Unit is expanding its staff numbers in line with its long-term strategic goals. The 13.8 FTE (15 individuals) of this submission compares favourably with 8.0 FTE in REF 2014, and 6.0 FTE in RAE 2008 – clearly indicating the accelerating growth of the Unit over the last decade. Creative Writing and Film were identified as areas of the Unit which could be developed through investment and strategic planning, reflected in the enlarged number of staff being submitted from these areas, and the diverse scope of research activities in this Unit.

There have been two retirements in English Literature (Budge and Holderness), which have been balanced by the appointments of Lloyd (1.0 FTE) and Sausman (1.0 FTE). Young left to become Head of Writing and Journalism at Falmouth University, and has been replaced by Gibb (1.0 FTE). Creative Writing has been further expanded with the appointment of three new members of staff, to provide expertise across varied genres of writing: Vinnicombe (0.8 FTE), a playwright; Holloway-Smith (1.0 FTE), a poet; and Thomas (1.0 FTE), a novelist. Elliott-Smith took up a post as Senior Lecturer in Film at the University of Stirling and has been replaced by Lanckman (1.0 FTE), while O'Neill (1.0 FTE) has been additionally recruited in Film.

Further additional growth has been achieved by fostering the research potential of existing staff in Creative Writing and Film who did not submit work to REF 2014: Rico-Albero (1.0 FTE), who writes on Spanish cinema, has been financially supported to present his developing research at major conferences in Spain, the USA and the UK; while Gordon (0.5 FTE), a novelist and creative non-fiction writer, has received QR funding of £2,215 for major research trips to the USA and Scotland.

Many staff have diverse and overlapping research specialisms. In recognition of this, existing areas of research strength have been complemented in early modern literature (Pritchard, George), Victorian and Edwardian literature (Maunder, Norwood, Sausman), and Contemporary Literature and Culture (Lloyd, Sausman, Rico-Albero), by widening some of these categories to incorporate cognate research specialisms in theatre, performance and reception studies (Norwood, Maunder and Lanckman), American Literature (Hughes and Lloyd), life-writing (Gibb and Maunder), class studies (Holloway-Smith and O'Neill) and Gothic (George, Sausman and Lloyd). These 'clusters' encourage staff to consider ways in which their research intersects; they foster collaboration and provide support via mentoring and peer feedback on work.

New appointments have been made strategically to bolster and diversify existing areas of research strength. They each have specialisms which allow them to make valuable contributions to more than one 'cluster' of research within the Unit. The appointments of Lloyd and Lanckman contribute to the Unit's research strength in American literature and culture; their twentieth- and twenty-first century research interests complement the specialism of Hughes in early American and nineteenth-century American literature. Lloyd's interdisciplinary focus (for instance, in literature and photography) dovetails with the research of Rico-Albero, Lanckman and O'Neill in visual media. Lanckman's research into screen melodrama overlaps productively with Norwood's interest in stage melodrama, while her work on World War 1-era magazines intersects with Maunder's WW1 theatre project. Sausman's appointment bolsters existing strengths in late Victorian and Edwardian literature (complementing the work of Maunder and Norwood). Lanckman, Lloyd, Sausman and Gibb all have research interests in different aspects of the Gothic or supernatural, enabling them to contribute to the Unit's burgeoning status as a centre for Gothic studies, established by George's Open Graves Open Minds (OGOM) project.

### **2) Connecting with the local region**

The fostering of close connections with non-academic audiences (particularly but not exclusively in the local region of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and London), remains a key strategic aim of the Unit, and a priority for many of the Unit staff, who disseminate their research through public

engagement as a matter of course. The effort to translate specialist research for non-academic audiences is mutually beneficial. As well as providing cultural enrichment for the audiences the Unit engages with, working with local communities acknowledges that non-academic audiences possess knowledge and insight that enhances the Unit's work and enables it to co-produce research that might have been impossible to achieve in isolation. Working under the aegis of the University's 'Heritage, Cultures and Communities' Research Theme encourages the Unit to embed its research in local communities in this way, and to consider the reciprocal nature of this relationship: society produces heritage and culture of which academia is a part. For example, staff have worked with schools, and presented their research to local history groups, at bookshops and literary festivals, on the radio, and in the media (both local and national). Staff within the group participate in the activities of the University's Heritage Hub, the goal of which is to provide cross-disciplinary engagement with local and regional heritage initiatives (see Institutional Environment Statement).

### 3) Expansion of the postgraduate research community

During this REF cycle the Unit introduced student bursaries (fees plus £1,000 per year for a full-time student) funded from the Unit's QR. This led to the recruitment of six PhD students (two FT, four PT). Four of these work on aspects of the Gothic and were attached to the OGOM research project, helping to contribute to its development. The others work on diverse areas of twentieth century and contemporary writing (contemporary Asian British fiction, Native American young adult fiction, and women's historical fiction), enriching the Unit's research strengths in these areas. Both full-time students and three part-time students have now successfully completed since 2014. Additionally, two self-funded PhD students in Creative Writing have completed in 2018-19. This means that the Unit has had a 300% increase in PhD completions during this REF cycle (eight compared to two last time). It currently also has seven self-funded PhD students, including four in Creative Writing.

### 4) Expansion of Creative Writing

A major strategic development since 2014 has been the support, through recruitment strategy and the allocation of QR funding, of the Unit's Creative Writers. This is reflected in the submission of five Creative Writers, compared to only one in REF 2014.

The Unit has established a Poetry Hub within the School of Humanities, curated by Holloway-Smith. Funded from the Unit's existing QR fund, two Creative Writing Fellows have been appointed, Mark Waldron (2017-2019) and Rachel Long (2018-2020). As well as working with both undergraduate and postgraduate Creative Writing students, the Fellows help to facilitate the Unit's links with external organizations and/or practitioners, providing public talks and readings, and an open 'poetry surgery' in which they provide one-to-one feedback and writing advice to aspiring poets. These initiatives are open to the public, as part of a wider effort to popularise poetry and break down barriers between the academic and non-academic worlds. Collaborations with poets such as Long (leader of Octavia Poetry Collective for Women of Colour) are intended to celebrate diversity and support efforts to give prominence to BAME voices. In 2018, the Poetry Hub launched the annual University of Hertfordshire Single Poem Prize. Judged by Holloway-Smith and the Poetry Fellows, the prize is open to anyone living in the UK, and free to enter in the interests of fairness and inclusivity. It reflects the Unit's ambition to become recognised as a centre of excellence in the creation and promotion of poetry. In its first year, the Prize attracted more than 600 entries from both established and aspiring poets across the UK and is now an annual fixture.

As a further indication of the vitality of the Unit's burgeoning Creative Writing community, several of its writers have been the recipients of (or shortlisted for) prestigious national and international awards. Holloway-Smith has emerged as a significant contemporary voice in UK poetry over the last few years. He won the Poetry Society's National Poetry Competition in 2018 for his poem 'The Posh Mums are Boxing in the Square'; and won the Poetry Society's Geoffrey Dearmer Prize, awarded to the best poem in *The Poetry Review* in 2016, for his poem 'Short'. His first

collection, *Alarum*, was shortlisted for the Seamus Heaney Centre's First Collection Poetry Prize in 2018, and for the Roehampton Poetry Prize in 2017. Gibb won the *Granta* International Memoir Prize in 2014 for her memoir 'Two Gardens'.

### **Impact Strategy**

One of the distinctive features of much research conducted by the Unit is an interest in popular culture and the recovery of forgotten cultural products. Members of the Unit study or produce work in genres such as melodrama and propaganda on stage and screen, gothic fiction, young adult fiction, romantic historical fiction, crime fiction and queer horror films. The Unit recognises that such work on the 'popular' often provides a crucial bridge between academia and the public, helping the dissemination of its work in non-traditional ways and to achieve impact beyond academia.

The fruits of this approach are embodied by the Unit's impact case studies: '*Rediscovering World War 1 Theatre: Changing Perceptions of Wartime Era Entertainment*' (led by Maunder) and '*Open Graves, Open Minds: Promoting empathy and interrogating difference through public engagement with Gothic narratives*' (led by George).

Maunder's First World War Theatre project has recovered once popular but since-forgotten plays which were submitted to the Lord Chamberlain's Office for licensing between 1913 and 1919, introducing modern audiences to a largely unknown dimension of cultural life on the WWI Home Front through new performances staged between 2011 and 2019. These have allowed school-age and adult audiences to think well beyond the 'war poets' and to reappraise their understanding of the war and its culture.

George's work on the ethical Gothic seeks to demonstrate how a popular genre like the Gothic can directly intervene in contemporary ethical debates. The Gothic has become an area of notable research strength, centred on the OGOM project, a research network involving other researchers from within the Unit (including PGRs), elsewhere in the University, and at other national and international institutions. It now has many outputs and spin-offs, and a notably high media profile.

The Unit's approach to impact has four key strands exemplified by these long-standing projects:

- **Public engagement with school-aged children.** Working with schools is an excellent means of effecting meaningful shifts in opinion, helping to offer alternative ways of thinking about subjects such as WW1 or the human-animal relationship before ideas have become fixed in this audience's minds. Both submitted impact case studies have used public engagement activities as a springboard for the achievement of impact, with a focus on school-aged children, and an interest in the co-production of research through public engagement.
- **Use of social media to engage with a wider audience.** The OGOM project is an exemplar of this approach. The project's [website](#) hosts an active blog, while also acting as a co-ordinating hub for the many activities and members of OGOM, and an archive of media coverage and past events. OGOM has its own Twitter feed which has over 7,000 followers and connects the project with a diverse worldwide audience, in academia and beyond.
- **Organisation of public outreach events and exhibitions.** Alongside theatrical performances, the WW1 Theatre project has hosted a number of related exhibitions including: *Performing Centenaries - Community, Performance, and Commemoration* (2017-18), an AHRC-funded project supporting diverse community groups in their explorations of the First World War through writing, art and performance; *After Tipperary: Theatrical entertainment and the First World War in Richmond* (2015-16), a joint research project with Orleans Gallery in Richmond and Twickenham Academy, which resulted in an exhibition, a booklet co-authored with members of the local history society, schools study days and education pack, and two stage productions; and *Shakespeare and the*



*First World War*, an exhibition created in partnership with the Shakespeare Institute, Birmingham and King Edward IV School, Stratford, and displayed at the World Shakespeare Congress (Stratford-upon-Avon, 31 July – 4 August 2016); and at Voices of the Home Front (National Archives, Kew, 8-10 September 2016). Similarly, OGOM hosted a free public event entitled '*Redeeming the Wolf: A Story of Persecution, Loss and Rediscovery*' as part of the 2017 Being Human Festival, sponsored by the AHRC and British Academy.

- **Working with collaborators as part of a larger research centre.** The First World War Theatre project has flourished as part of a dedicated research centre (the AHRC-funded Everyday Lives in War Centre, one of five public engagement centres set up in 2014 to mark the centenary of the First World War) which co-ordinates its activities with colleagues working in related areas, encourages collaboration both with other academics (often across disciplines) and the public, and provides a platform for further income generation.

The implementation of these four key strands has been supported by the Unit's QR funding and other internal awards. Maunder's WW1 Theatre project received £12,331 from the Unit's QR and a total of £7,332 in internal impact development grants. Similarly, George's OGOM project also received internal impact development grants totalling £4,680, while the Unit's QR funding has helped to finance OGOM conferences by providing a total of £1,602 financial support. Hughes and Norwood also received small grants to support impact development, totalling £1,740.

### **Open Research Environment and Integrity**

The Unit is committed to making its research openly available in line with the Concordat on Open Research Data. The Unit's Open Access strategy is in line with that of the University as a whole. The University has a long-standing requirement that all new research outputs by staff are deposited in its Research Archive (UHRA). This is in fulfilment of its commitment, as set out in the University's policies and regulations which can be summarised as the mandatory 'green' open access deposit of all research outputs in the UHRA by the author via upload to the University's Research Information System (RIS) at the time the research output is accepted for publication.

Several of the Unit's Creative Writers have published work in venues which are entirely open access. Gibb's short fiction and non-fiction has appeared in journals such as *Granta*, *Luna Luna* and the *Popular Culture Review*; while Gordon has published long-form journalism in *The Economist's 1843 Magazine*, and *Wired* and in the Wellcome Institute's *Mosaic* magazine. Several Holloway-Smith's poems have been published on open-access forums such as poetryfoundation.org and poems.poetrysociety.org.uk.

The University is a signatory to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, and one member of the Unit (Hughes) sat on a working group to oversee the implementation of the revised Concordat. Research Integrity awareness is embedded in the mandatory researcher development training for PGRs, without which they will not be able to progress. The success of this approach is reflected in the high awareness of research integrity shown in PRES 2019, with 94% of research students agreeing that their understanding of research integrity had developed during their programme.

### **Future Strategy**

The Unit's strategic aims are:

- to increase the volume of internationally excellent and world-leading research by growing the Unit through continued investment of QR in areas of demonstrable strength such as Creative Writing, Gothic Studies, Theatre History, Early Modern Literature, and 20th /21st Century Literature, Film and Culture; and further enhancing interdisciplinary collaborations by increasingly integrating the work of the School's researchers in English Language and Linguistics (submitted in UoA23), with that of the Unit. This will overlap

productively with existing research strengths and interests within the Unit, such as identity formation (particularly in relation to gender and class). Methodologies employed in Linguistics such as narrative inquiry speak directly to the interests of the rest of the Unit in how people use narratives to create meaning in their lives;

- to enhance the health and vibrancy of the postgraduate community by growing the number of PhD students and increasing the diversity of this PGR student population. These goals will be achieved by investing QR funding in student bursaries and studentships to attract high-quality applicants, and through positive action – for instance, a fully-funded full time BAME PhD studentship was awarded in February 2021;
- to build sufficient critical mass of research to establish a new interdisciplinary Research Centre focused on *Gothic and Magical Narratives in Fiction and Folklore* to be approved by the University Research Committee, to conduct research into the cultural and material significance of narratives concerning magical creatures that transcend human limits. The centre will particularly encourage interdisciplinary collaboration with researchers in the University History Unit, and nurture postgraduate recruitment by building on the dual successes of OGOM and the new History MA in Folklore Studies, one of only two in the UK.

## 2. People

The Unit currently has three researchers at Reader / Associate Professor level (20%). Of the remainder, three are Principal Lecturers (20%), one is a Senior Lecturer (7%), and eight are Lecturers (53%), of which three qualify as ECRs at the census date (20%). This distribution shows a healthy balance and evidences the Unit's vitality particularly through investment in dynamic early and mid-career researchers with the demonstrated potential to become leaders in their fields.

All submitted staff are on permanent contracts, indicating the long-term stability and sustainability of the research environment. Where fixed-term contracts have been used, in all cases those contracts have been translated into permanent positions. For example, Lloyd was initially appointed on a three-year 1.0 FTE contract which has been converted into a permanent appointment; and Lanckman was appointed on a fixed-term 1.0 FTE contract in 2019-20 which has now become permanent. Fractional appointments have also been gradually increased wherever possible to reward excellence and combat precarity: Sausman was appointed on a permanent 0.2 FTE teaching contract in 2015-16, rising to a 0.5 FTE teaching and research contract in 2016-17 and 1.0 FTE in 2019-20.

### **Staff Development**

Central to supporting the vitality of the Unit's research has been the introduction, in this REF cycle, of a one-semester research sabbatical scheme. All staff with significant responsibility for research within the Unit are eligible. Staff embarking on research leave are required to have clear and achievable goals and must submit a report subsequently to the Research Leader, outlining what they have achieved. The scheme is managed jointly by the Research Leader and Head of Subject(s), who facilitate the leave by carefully planning teaching loads; and it is supported by all members of the Unit who reciprocally cover each other's teaching for the scheme to function. The introduction of this scheme has been notably productive, particularly in enabling members of staff to develop and complete longer-term projects such as monographs (Pritchard's *Before Crusoe*, Norwood's *Victorian Touring Actresses*), international conferences and symposia (George's various OGOM events), and research grant applications. This sabbatical scheme has also been complemented by a University Early Career Research Grant of £2,991 for Sausman, to provide teaching relief for one semester.

The research culture of the group is also sustained by a programme of research seminars spanning the strategic priorities of the Unit, featuring both the work of Unit staff, and visiting speakers. Postgraduate students and staff form the typical audience for such talks, though

undergraduates are also encouraged to attend. There have been four residential weekends at Cumberland Lodge, in Windsor Great Park, to which undergraduate and postgraduate students have been invited, and which feature a research-rich programme of activities designed to build community while modelling best practice in the dissemination of research findings for the benefit of postgraduate researchers.

Researchers are supported not only in their individual research projects, but also in the development of a research career trajectory. The Research Leader arranges regular one-to-one research-focused appraisals, while all researchers are assigned a mentor from within the School. A university-wide Researcher Development Group (RDG) meets termly and has responsibility for promoting and monitoring the professional development provision for researchers across the University, in line with the Concordat for their career development. The RDG is attended by the Associate Dean Research (ADR) and a school representative, both of whom are members of this Unit, ensuring that researcher support and development opportunities have a high profile within the Unit.

### **Research Students**

The introduction of PGR student bursaries and the expansion of staff supervisory experience has led to a significant increase in PhD student recruitment and awards. The Unit currently has a group of nine PhD students, the profile of which demonstrates its commitment to encouraging researchers from different backgrounds and via different pathways. Five are female and four are male; seven are full-time and two are part-time; seven are white British and two are BAME; and five are mature students.

Beyond the financial assistance of bursaries, PGRs are supported variously over the course of their programmes of research. Each PGR student has at least two supervisors. Over the course of their studies, PGRs must pass two progression reviews involving the submission of a substantive piece of work and a panel interview involving an experienced academic from outside the supervisory team. An annual monitoring process using the University's online Research Student Management System records that both supervisors and the student are satisfied with the project's progress. The School Research Tutor is available for additional support whenever needed. Staff must attend the Doctoral College supervisor training programme before joining a doctoral team. PGRs are tasked to attend appropriate sessions on the University's extensive Researcher Development Programme (RDP).

New PhD students are also encouraged to attend sessions selected from the research methods seminars on the taught MA programmes in English Literature, Creative Writing and Media, as a means of refreshing or consolidating their research skills, as well as adding to the research culture in the Unit. All PhD students have access to networked computers and printers in a large, open-plan, postgraduate office in the School of Humanities.

The 2019 PRES ranked the University 21st for overall student satisfaction, 15th for supervision and 4th from 103 for research culture. The University participation rate was 62%, compared to 42% across the sector as a whole. At the Unit level, 88% of students were satisfied with their supervision and with their progress and assessment, and 87% with the development of their research skills, with satisfaction rated at 87% overall.

The Unit provides students with the experience they will need to progress in a career in academia – in particular, oral presentation of their work to audiences of their peers, opportunities for teaching, and conference organisation. A regular postgraduate mini conference is convened at the start of each year, in which existing research students present their work in progress to a new intake. Students also receive funds from the Unit's QR for conference presentation. PhD students in the School can apply to undertake undergraduate teaching from their second year, and one recently completed PhD student has been employed as a Visiting Lecturer. Most valuable of all – to supervisors, students and the research culture – have been instances of collaboration in the organisation of conferences (e.g. the Company of Wolves conference in 2015, co-organised by George and her PhD student Kaja Franck, at which Franck also

presented a paper). As a long-standing, ongoing research activity, the OGOM project has had several PhD students attached to it, affording them valuable experience to develop their research profiles. Postgraduate research students have also been important to the success of the residential weekends at Cumberland Lodge, and are also invited to attend the 'writing retreat' days (see Section 3).

### ***Equality and Diversity***

The Unit remains a supportive, non-judgemental place to work, accepting of difference, as evidenced by the nature of much of the research produced, which is often informed by contemporary and historical debates about gender, sexuality and ethnicity. It contributes to a broader effort within the School of Humanities to address gender inequality. Under the guidance of a School Self-Assessment Team (including one representative of the Unit), the School was awarded the Athena Swan bronze award in 2017, and continues with initiatives such as a regular 'Talking Space' for all staff, designed to create a relaxed forum in which staff can compare experiences and offer each other counsel and support (as well as getting to know one another better). In recognition of the gender gap in research attainment, the Athena Swan team held a workshop in November 2016 entitled 'Academic Progression: Tackling the Gender Gap in the Arts and Humanities'. In both 2018 and 2019, the School has marked international Women's Day with a programme of talks in which members of the Unit prominently featured and designed to challenge entrenched inequalities. The career development of women researchers is a focus of discussion at appraisal and researcher-development meetings, and the success of all of these measures within the Unit is evidenced by two key factors: the appointment of Gibb to Reader and George to Associate Professor (Research) (alternative titles of equivalent standing in the University); and the marked improvement in the gender balance of the Unit (47% women) since 2014, when the submission included just 30% women.

The Unit has provided diverse role models for undergraduate and postgraduate students through the appointment of its Poetry Fellows – we are proud to celebrate Rachel Long's work with the Octavia Poetry Collective for Women of Colour, who themselves performed at the University's Festival of Ideas online event in July 2020. The University of Hertfordshire is one of only seventeen institutions to have been awarded the Bronze award for the Race Equality Charter Mark, and the Unit has a representative (Lloyd) on the Race Equality Charter Working Group which co-ordinates the University's efforts to effect systemic changes that will benefit ethnic minority staff and students. The Unit is also well represented on the School's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team.

A commitment to equality and diversity underpins the recruitment process of staff with significant responsibility for research, and all job adverts are explicitly worded to encourage applications from women and BAME applicants. Applicants with declared disabilities who meet the essential criteria for posts are automatically shortlisted, in line with University's commitment to the government's Disability Confident scheme. Recruitment procedures – and the selection process of outputs for the REF – always follow the University's equality and diversity policy, but the Unit is aware that bias may be deep-rooted and not always consciously deployed. To combat this, all staff are required to undertake unconscious bias training.

### **3. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

For REF 2021 the Unit has attracted external research income totalling £92,435, a near sevenfold increase on REF 2014, when total research income was £13, 826.

- From 2014-2020 Maunder was Co-Investigator for the AHRC-funded First World War Engagement Centre and its second phase, Connected Communities, for which the Unit received £58,633. In 2016 he was awarded an additional £20,000 from the AHRC, through the Centre, to support a community project entitled 'After Tipperary', in partnership with Orleans Gallery, Richmond. In 2017-18 Maunder was also Co-Investigator – with colleagues from Queens University Belfast and the University of Kent



on the AHRC project 'Performing Communities', for which the Unit received £3,350. He was also awarded £500 by Santander to support a touring exhibition on Shakespeare and WW1.

- In 2014-15, Young was awarded £8,000 from the Ashley Foundation for '*Patterning Hitchin Lives*', a community project bringing different generations together to capture the meaning of clothing through oral histories and creative writing.
- In 2019, Elliott-Smith was awarded £300 from the British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies to support the symposium, '*Queer Fears*'.

However, income is higher (£128,170) if additional £35,735 in awards made to individuals (rather than the University) by funders such as arts councils is included, as itemised below:

- Holloway-Smith won £3,500 from the Society of Authors in 2015, and £10,000 from the Arts Council in 2018, to support his ongoing research into representations of working-class masculinity.
- In 2019, Lanckman was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund Public Engagement with Research award of £8,200 for a digitization project focusing on the WW1-era magazine *The War Illustrated*.
- George's OGOM project won £2,000 from the AHRC and British Academy to sponsor its participation in the national Being Human Festival in 2017.
- Norwood received £500 from the Society of Theatre Research to part-fund her trip to archives in New York and Washington while researching her monograph *Victorian Touring Actresses*. She also received funding totalling £1770 from the Australian National University (Canberra) to attend a symposium on international touring actresses, which has generated an edited volume of essays to which she is contributing.
- Gibb has received Erasmus mobility grants totalling £3,765 to facilitate collaborations with colleagues in Cyprus, Poland and Lithuania.
- In 2018, Thomas was awarded £6,000 by the Society of Authors and K. Blundell Trust, for his novel *Playboy*.

In addition, QR funding has been reinvested to support the development of external research funding bids, the publication of high-quality outputs, and the generation of research impact. The Unit has invested QR funding, and also been supported by additional central university QR funding to drive these goals, which has resulted in more income from external sources. The University's Research Grants Team ensures awareness of external funding opportunities, and supports researchers closely throughout the bid process, including providing full costings for projects. This support – both financial and administrative – has enabled a greater number of projects to be established, and more bids to be submitted, resulting in the above successes drawn from a diverse range of funders.

### **Infrastructure and Facilities**

All staff and research students within the Unit have access to the University's library and digital resources, including electronic journals accessed through platforms such as JSTOR and Project Muse. The University subscribes to Zetoc, enabling staff to receive regular alerts on new publications in their field. There are several subscriptions to specialist databases which underpin the research of staff: for instance, subscriptions to *Early English Books Online*, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* and the *Burney Collection* are crucial for the Unit's early modernist researchers, while the *British Periodicals*, *British Library Newspapers* and *19th Century Periodicals* databases support the research of the nineteenth-century specialists. Research staff and students can utilise an efficient inter-library loan system to access material, both physical and electronic. University computers have useful specialist software for supporting research – such as Endnote bibliography (students can register for Endnote Online). Staff are supplied with an up-to-date laptop or desktop computer by the School.

The School hosts regular 'writing retreat' days at the University's Bayfordbury campus, to which both staff and postgraduate researchers are invited. Participants in the retreats come from

across different research areas within the school, fostering a sense of research community, and providing an informal setting in which interesting cross-disciplinary connections between research specialisms may be discovered. These retreats have continued successfully online since the lockdown due to COVID-19 in March 2020.

Early in the REF cycle, the School ADR organised School-wide 'Impact workshops' to help staff further develop their understanding of impact, how to achieve it, and how to capture evidence. These were supplemented by University training sessions run by Impact facilitators from the Research Office and by external experts such as Fast Track Impact, an international training company working in Higher Education. Attendees at the workshop received ongoing subscriptions to Fast Track Impact's extensive online resources to support the development of impactful research, paid for by the University.

In addition, approximately £8,500 of QR funds allocated per annum to the Unit have been committed to helping staff to develop or disseminate research; or to engage with academic and non-academic communities through organising and delivering events. Besides travel and conference fees, QR funding has purchased recording equipment, hired theatrical venues, paid performers and poets, and covered the costs of printing promotional material. It has been a valuable resource to facilitate the expansion and diversification of both the research delivery and culture of the Unit.

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

##### ***Research Collaborations and User Partnerships***

At the heart of the Unit's strategic development since the last REF has been collaboration and interaction with a range of non-academic organisations such as schools, theatres, galleries, museums, prisons, local history societies, libraries, bookshops, literary and film festivals, and botanic gardens, as evidenced below. Staff are encouraged and facilitated to bring their work to public audiences, and the examples which follow demonstrate the ways in which they seek audiences beyond academia, as a means of increasing the accessibility of literature and film and enhancing the societal perception of their relevance and value.

In most of these instances, financial support has been provided from the Unit's QR funds, when required. Staff also willingly share their experiences of successful collaborations, initiatives and events with other colleagues, creating a broad base of experience and expertise within the Unit.

Researchers in the Unit have worked closely with arts and heritage organisations based within the University, UHArts and the Heritage Hub. UHArts is a £300,000 per annum University-funded organisation designed to share research in the arts within the community and has a track record of being an effective conduit for bringing the Unit's research to the public. For example, performances of World War I plays have taken place in its theatre, the Weston Auditorium, while George was an invited speaker at the UHArts 'Bloodlust' film season in October 2016, introducing Murnau's *Nosferatu*. The Heritage Hub similarly helps staff with an interest in heritage to engage with local communities. In 2016, the Heritage Hub collaborated with UHArts to fund and organise the '*Sparks Might Fly*' initiative, which invited theatre companies to work with researchers at the University to interpret their research in new ways and to use the power of theatre to make academic research accessible to all. Norwood's Victorian Actresses research was selected and developed into a collaborative theatrical/ dance performance entitled '*Ghost Papers*', performed in July 2016.

Unit members have led in the creation, administration and promotion of a new fiction prize, Comedy Women in Print (CWIP), awarded for the first time in 2019, and developed in collaboration with comedian, actress and University alumnus Helen Lederer. The prize (with awards for published and unpublished work) is designed to celebrate and support female comedy writers. Gordon and Young were central to the shortlisting and judging process; the

judging panel for the awards also included successful comic writers such as Kathy Lette, Jenny Éclair, Katy Brand, Susan Calman and Marian Keyes.

George has collaborated internationally with the Australian Research Council (with whom she is submitting a funding bid to work on Young Adult literature); and the New York Botanical Gardens, for whom she contributed to the 'Poetic Botany' Exhibition in 2016 <http://www.nybg.org/poetic-botany/contributors/>. She has also had UK-based collaborations with the Sheffield Centre for History of Gothic (Gothic Networking Day, February 2016); and the Science Museum, London (archival collaboration).

Hughes has worked closely with University of Hertfordshire Press in the publication of his edition of the 1944 novel *Life and Death of the Wicked Lady Skelton*, by Magdalen King-Hall, based on a prominent Hertfordshire legend. This research project was conceived as a means of connecting with a local audience. In 2016, he gave a popular series of public talks around Hertfordshire to promote the book and the research from which it emerged. The talks attracted a total audience of three hundred, and are ongoing, with further requests to visit local history groups around the county being received (and accepted) regularly. UH Press promoted the publication with a competition and by hosting supporting material on their website, including discussion questions for reading groups, written by Hughes.

Maunder's ongoing First World War Theatre research project is built around instances of collaboration with theatre companies. Recent examples include: *A Well-Remembered Voice* by J.M. Barrie [1918], with Io Theatre (Hatfield 2014; OSO, Barnes, October 2016; Richmond 2016; Arts Theatre, London 2016); *After Tipperary* (with Dramatic Edge, Twickenham and Twickenham Academy - a schools' production created with Richmond Arts service 2016); *Hallam* (with Behind the Lines company, Brighton 2017); *But It Still Goes On* by Robert Graves [1928] (Finborough Theatre, London, 10 July – 4 August 2018); *Jane Clegg* by St John Ervine [1913] (Finborough Theatre, London 23 April – 18 May 2019). Maunder also appeared as an expert on First World War theatrical performance on BBC television's popular *Who Do You Think You Are?* (BBC1 – July 2018).

Norwood's research on Victorian theatre has led to several opportunities to build strong connections with local public audiences. For example, she delivered a talk on '*East End Theatre in the Nineteenth Century*' at Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives in February 2017. She also participated in a workshop with People's Company at Southwark Playhouse in September 2017 and was interviewed and filmed as part of the same project.

In 2019, Lanckman was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund Public Engagement with Research award of £8,200 for a digitization project focusing on the WW1-era magazine *The War Illustrated*, as one of the co-founders of NoRMMA – the Network of Research: Movies, Magazines and Audiences. This built on public engagement activities which were conducted between April and June 2017. Over the course of three workshops, open to the public, participants were encouraged to focus on the representation of women in the World War I weekly magazine, *The War Illustrated*.

Other members of the Unit regularly engage in activities and participate in events which seek to cross the divide between academia and the wider public, both locally and further afield in the UK:

- Holloway-Smith has given public readings of his poetry at literary festivals, bookshops and libraries in Birmingham, Cheltenham, Newcastle, Swindon and Glasgow. He has appeared three times on Radio 4, once on Radio 3, and is a regular contributor to BBC Radio London's Robert Elms Show, on which he speaks about the value of poetry and poetic craft.
- Gibb's public engagement record is extensive, with an international dimension. Since 2015 she has spoken about her work at the York Festival of Ideas, the Primadonna Festival, the Cambridge Literary Festival, North Lanarkshire Literary Festival, Edinburgh

International Festival, Wilderness Festival, the Clapham Omnibus Literary Festival and the Aye Write Festival in Glasgow; she has been interviewed on BBC Radio (including Radio 4's *Front Row*), BBC Radio Scotland, Talk Radio, Newstalk Radio (Ireland) and European Talk Radio (Spain); spoken at Waterstones, Tottenham Court Road; and been interviewed for the Italian literary magazine *Menabo*.

- To tie in with the launch of her popular book *Being a Writer*, Gordon has spoken at the Essex Literary festival; at various bookshops and libraries in London (for example, the London Library); on Radio 4's *Open Book* programme, and Monocle 24 radio station. She has written short pieces on writers and the craft of writing for a variety of websites, such as the Literary Consultancy and the Writers and Artists Yearbook and is a contributing editor at the literary magazine *Ambit*. She has run workshops and masterclasses for the wider public – for example, for the Collage Writing Room (formerly Haringey Literature Live).
- Pritchard spoke at a philosophical debate entitled '*Does Literature Matter*' held at the Bloomsbury Institute, London in May 2017 along with Howard Jacobson and Sir Roger Scruton. Pritchard has also brought her work to a public audience at an invited talk to the Friends of Saffron Walden Library.

### **Contributions to Economy and Society**

Unit members produce work intended to comment on, and intervene in, pressing social and economic questions as indicated below.

O'Neill's work as a filmmaker directly addresses urgent social issues centering on inequality and class. Her ongoing involvement in the *Inside Film* project exemplifies this approach. *Inside Film* began in August 2006 in HMP Wandsworth with the aim of using film as a means of creative expression and as an educational tool for traditionally marginalised groups. In 2017, the project produced *The Foodbank Film*, a film about using food banks made by the food bank users themselves. The film was an official selection for the Workers Unite Film Festival in 2017 and the Respect Human Rights Film Festival 2017.

O'Neill also directed the 2017 documentary film *The Acting Class*, which won the National Feature Documentary award at the 2017 Labour Film Festival. This film talks to struggling working class actors about the difficulties they face in the industry.

In 2014, Vinnicombe contributed a play called *Tomorrow* to the National Theatre's annual Connections festival of new plays for youth theatres and schools. Connections gives young people experience of professional theatre-making: they create marketing campaigns, design sets and costumes, operate lighting and sound boards, and stage-manage their performances. Vinnicombe was commissioned to write specifically for the festival, and the play's setting and themes (focusing on a group of friends on their last day at school) was intended to connect with both its youthful performers and audience, enthusing them for the experience of theatre. His work has specialized in writing for young people, being commissioned by the National Youth Theatre, Islington Community Theatre, The Bush and National Theatre. *Year 10* (2005), *Cradle Me* (2008), *Tomorrow* (2014) and *Turf* (2015) all explored what it is to be a teenager on the cusp of adulthood. These works are also focused on London and the rising gap between the rich and the poor in the UK.

Thomas's São Paulo novels blend real testimony with a fictional narrative to highlight social inequalities in the city of São Paulo. In recognition of his work, in 2018 Thomas was awarded £6,000 by the Society of Authors and K. Blundell Trust, a grant for writers under the age of 40 whose work 'contributes to the greater understanding of existing social and economic organisations'.

### **Contributions to Sustainability of Discipline**

Unit members make wide-ranging contributions to the research community within their fields and sub-fields in a range of other ways, as evidenced below:



**Journal editing**

Holderness is the General Editor of *Critical Survey*, of which he has also been the co-editor since 2015. Maunder was the previous editor of *Critical Survey*, from 2003-2015. He is also on the editorial board for the *Wilkie Collins Society Journal* and the book series *Key Popular Women Writers* and *New Paths in Victorian Popular Literature and Culture*, published by Edward Everett Root Publishers. Lloyd is Reviews Editor of the *European Journal of American Culture*. Norwood is Co-editor of the journal *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* and a member of the editorial board of the *Gaskell Journal*.

**Work for Learned Societies**

Holderness is on the advisory board for the MIT Global Shakespeares Video & Performance Archive, a collaborative project providing online access to performances of Shakespeare from many parts of the world as well as essays and metadata provided by scholars and educators in the field. Pritchard is on the committee of the British Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies. She acts as the Conference Academic Programme Organiser for the annual BSECS conference.

Up to May 2016, Norwood was Annual Lecture Programme Co-ordinator for the Society for Theatre Research. Norwood was mentor for the TaPRA (Theatre and Performance Research Association) Fellowship 2016-17 (mentoring an ECR project). Lanckman co-founded NoRMMA – the Network of Research: Media, Magazines and Audiences, in 2014. Lloyd was on the committee for the 2019 Rubin Prize, given to the best article in the field of Southern Studies, by the Society for the Study of Southern Literature.

**Peer-reviewing**

Unit members have peer-reviewed articles for journals including *Twentieth-Century Literature*, *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*, *African-American Review*, *Early American Literature* and the *Journal of British Studies*. They have peer-reviewed manuscript and book proposals for publishers including Routledge, Broadview, Manchester University Press, and Edinburgh University Press.

**Conference organisation**

The Unit is active in organising and hosting academic conferences to establish and maintain academic networks and disseminate research, both for staff and PGR students.

- Maunder, 2019, '*Out of the Doll's House: Women, the Arts, War and Work 1910-1930*', in collaboration with the Women's Library, LSE, London; and 2018, '*Spies and the spy threat 1914-1918*', at the National Archives, Kew.
- George, 2019, '"Some curious disquiet": Polidori, the Byronic vampire, and its progeny', at the Keats House, Hampstead; 2017, '*The Urban Weird*', in collaboration with the University of Portsmouth's '*Supernatural Cities*' project; and 2015, '*The Company of Wolves: Sociality, Animality and Subjectivity in Literary and Cultural Narratives - Werewolves, Shapeshifters and Feral Humans*' at the University. These conferences received a total of £1,650 in external funding, from the International Gothic Association, the British Association of Romantic Studies, and the University of Portsmouth's Urban Weird project.
- Lloyd, 2017, *Southern Studies in the UK Network* colloquium at UH; and 2016, '*American Topographics*', Goldsmiths.
- Hughes, Maunder, and Norwood, 2014, '*Victorian and Edwardian Lives and Letters*', at the University and Knebworth House.

**External examining**

Unit members have been PhD external examiners at various institutions in the UK and overseas, including the universities of Bradford, Lancaster, Northampton, Sheffield, Sussex and Valencia.