

<b>Institution:</b> University of Kent
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 23: Education
<p><b>Section 1: Unit Context, Research and Impact Strategy</b></p> <p><b>Context and Structure</b></p> <p>Established in 2011, the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) is a small, but vibrant unit that serves as a hub for education research across the University of Kent. CSHE leads a flourishing and inclusive research culture in education, which has built an international reputation for research in higher, professional, and continuing education. Educational research at Kent, whether led or supported by core staff in CSHE, contributes to enhancing learning and teaching and the professional development of academic staff. Its agenda includes research in three strands:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teaching, learning, assessment, feedback, and student experience;</li> <li>2. Professional development needs of academic staff, particularly those who have been marginalised, such as refugee, part-time, disabled, and immigrant staff (see the impact case study: Supporting Syrian Academia in Exile);</li> <li>3. Subject-specific pedagogies, with expertise across the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. The Centre for Child Protection (CCP)'s impact case study, Keeping Children Safe, included in this submission, exemplifies this discipline-specific focus.</li> </ol> <p>During the REF2021 period, CSHE's operational home was in the University's Education Directorate, where it contributed to research-based educational enhancement across the institution. While based in central administration, it has also benefited from academic affiliations with the Faculty of Social Sciences and, following the University restructure in 2020, the academic Division of Law, Society and Social Justice. CSHE's core staff base comprises 7 FTEs, of which all 5 REF-eligible Category A staff are being submitted to REF2021. As a small, specialist unit on higher, professional, and continuing education, we have not subdivided the team into smaller research groups. Each core researcher is developing their own complementary area of expertise, addressing one or more of our research strands.</p> <p>In addition, there are more than two dozen other CSHE members who hold positions elsewhere in the University, but are interested in educational inquiry, often related to their own teaching. These CSHE members either have research profiles in their own fields, and are being returned in their own disciplines, or are on Education, Scholarship and Professional Practice (ES&amp;P) or professional service contracts, which are not REF-eligible. Nonetheless, they contribute to a vibrant research culture in CSHE, often through collaborative projects with core CSHE staff, through facilitating core staff access to research sites across the University, and through co-supervising doctoral students. CSHE members also include staff in the Centre for Child Protection (CCP), whose ES&amp;P staff develop innovative teaching and learning simulations to train social work, health, and educational professionals, and young people. We focus primarily on core CSHE staff in this environment statement, but reference CCP in relation to impact and other CSHE members regarding strategic contributions.</p> <p>REF2021 is the first occasion on which the University of Kent has returned a REF submission in Education. In previous REF cycles, education-related research was returned in other units of assessment. When CSHE was founded, research on higher education (HE) was taking place both in the precursor to the current Education Directorate and in dispersed locations across the University, covering a wide range of perspectives on HE policy and practice. The original CSHE aim and strategy was to: 1) provide a focus for HE research activities; 2) generate fruitful collaboration in obtaining research funding and in publication; and 3) provide a distinctive academic home for taught and research postgraduate students.</p> <p>By 2014, CSHE had advanced those aims by holding 31 seminars, hosting two visiting scholars, publishing 12 outputs, earning two internal grants, winning one external grant, educating 10 MA</p>

students, enrolling its first part-time doctoral student, and establishing a library collection on education. Janice Malcolm, CSHE's founding director, and Joanna Williams, were already receiving invitations to speak externally. Eighteen staff from other parts of the University were also involved with the Centre either through their co-supervising of PhD students or through engaging in pedagogical research.

### **Review of Progress against Strategic Aims 2014-20**

In 2014, CSHE's strategic aims were to build on those foundations, addressing the following priorities:

- 1) *Stabilise and support a small core staff base, while strengthening a wider network of HE researchers (CSHE members) at Kent*

To achieve this aim, we converted several short-term staff contracts into open-ended contracts and supported those junior staff members in building their research profile in HE. Leigh, Parkinson, and Pitt have passed probationary reviews and been promoted to Senior Lecturer. Malcolm and Williams have left, but Quinlan was hired as a Reader and CSHE's new Director in 2016, and promoted to Professor in 2020. Senior staff in CSHE provide substantial mentoring of junior staff, giving detailed feedback on research proposals, publications, and applications for early career awards, as well as formal, individual meetings on the overall direction of research programmes and agendas (see Section 2 on mentoring).

The Centre hosts an annual seminar series with external and internal speakers, as well as periodic research symposia that attract internal and external audiences of up to 100 people (see Section 4). At annual CSHE Research Festivals, Centre members (staff engaged in HE research from around the University) and research students in HE give short presentations on work-in-progress. Collaboration between CSHE and staff in the Centre for Child Protection (CCP) has helped to support and showcase CCP's simulations for educating social work professionals, educators, and youth about child protection topics.

- 2) *Grow the reputation of Kent's HE research nationally and internationally*

CSHE staff members have become increasingly visible in the field. Two staff members have received SRHE's Newer Researcher Prizes. Research outputs have been increasing. Several research outputs have attracted significant attention amongst the HE research community on Twitter, generating very high Altmetric scores (Brown and Leigh, 2018 = 270; Pitt and Winstone, 2018 = 100; Quinlan, 2019 = 95). Staff are building new international and interdisciplinary research networks, including an international Academic Development for [Post]-Conflict Contexts network and the Women in Supramolecular Chemistry network to combat sexism in STEM subjects, as well as regularly organising research symposia in international research associations (e.g. SRHE, EARLI).

Core staff routinely deliver keynote addresses and invited talks, and review for leading journals in the field (see Section 4). Several staff also serve on committees that provide leadership in key societies, including Beaton's longstanding involvement with the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) and Leigh's membership of the research committee of SRHE.

Meanwhile, the Centre for Child Protection won several national awards for the impact of its research-based educational simulations, including the *Guardian* University Award for Digital Innovation (2016), and AdvanceHE's Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence 2018.

- 3) *Increase external research and/or enterprise funding*

Since 2014, all but one of our core Category A staff have secured external research funding, with funding from, for example, the AHRC, British Academy, the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes, the Higher Education Careers Service Unit, the Quality Assurance Agency,

SRHE, and SEDA. Staff have increasingly shifted from small, individual grant applications to larger collaborative applications by leveraging successes with small grants to seed larger projects, build networks, and attract collaborators. As detailed in Section 3, grants have grown in size from under £10,000 in 2015-18 to more than £200,000 in 2018-20. CSHE staff have led or collaborated on 21 successful external research grants, with funding totalling more than £2.3 million.

The Centre for Child Protection has also secured more than £1.42 million in enterprise funding to support development of high-quality, research-based training simulations in collaboration with key stakeholders. Their work integrates social work and education.

#### 4) *Publish high-quality research outputs*

Both the number and quality of our research outputs have increased since 2014. Prior to 2014, CSHE staff published just 12 outputs; in the period 2014-17, there were 21 outputs; and, in the period 2017-20, there have been more than 50. Staff contribute regularly to leading journals in the field, including *Studies in Higher Education* (5), *Higher Education* (2), and *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* (5), and have edited books with leading publishers, including Routledge.

#### 5) *Identify key research themes where effort and impact will be concentrated*

Core CSHE staff took part in a visioning process in 2017, at which key research themes were identified that reflected emerging strengths, institutional priorities, and areas with the greatest potential impact. Through that exercise, we identified three main strands of education research at Kent, with impact case studies in strands two and three:

1. In strand 1, we research teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment, and student experience in HE and professional education. Pitt and Quinlan are particularly active in this research. Through collaboration with CSHE members, the University offers a living lab for this research (see impact strategy below and Section 3).
2. Strand 2 focuses on understanding the experiences of academics and teachers in HE and supporting their professional development needs. Beaton, Leigh, Malcolm, Parkinson, and Quinlan have contributed in this area. Particular attention has been paid to the needs of refugee staff (especially Syrian refugee academics), which has led to an impact case study on Parkinson's contribution to the Council of At Risk Academics' (CARA) Syria Programme.
3. Research in strand 3 focuses on discipline-specific pedagogical research and design, exemplified by the interactive simulations developed by the Centre for Child Protection, which comprise one of our impact case studies. All core staff collaborate on discipline-specific pedagogical research in various disciplines, typically with Centre members. This research is necessarily interdisciplinary.

### **Research Strategy 2021-26**

By 2026, we plan to have cemented our national and international reputation for high-quality, impactful research as we mature into one of the UK's leading centres for higher education research. Because our ambitions rest particularly on applied research, our research and impact strategies are closely intertwined. Our research aims are:

1. *Contribute world-leading work at the nexus between research and practice.* CSHE and CCP staff are deeply committed to using research to improve practice. Section 4 below gives examples of how research by every core staff member has had an impact on practice. To achieve further impact, we will continue to build and leverage strong relationships with practice communities and research users and beneficiaries (see impact strategy below for more detail).
2. *Engage in innovative, ambitious, interdisciplinary research.* To enhance the quality of our outputs, we will engage in multi-institutional projects, expand our collaborations nationally and

internationally, and continue to seek funding for interdisciplinary initiatives. One approach involves leadership in Kent's new Signature Research Themes and interdisciplinary networks. Specifically, Parkinson will serve as one of the Theme Leads for the Migration and Movement theme, while Leigh and Quinlan will contribute to the Equality and Diversity research network. Many of our successes to date have involved interdisciplinary initiatives, and we expect continued innovation through recently funded interdisciplinary projects by Leigh and Parkinson. Leigh is bringing qualitative social science methods to the study of scientific practices. Parkinson is working across disciplines to ensure that Syrian academics in exile – themselves from various disciplines - are able to contribute to rebuilding war-torn Syria.

*3. Support and collaborate on educational research across the University.* The Centre for Child Protection is a key example of how discipline-specific research in Education is happening at the University. In addition, many of CSHE's postgraduate students are University of Kent staff undertaking research and scholarship specific to their roles. These student colleagues (many of whom are CSHE members) are researching such topics as careers education, disabled student and staff needs, accounting education, art/design education, legal education, physics education, and attainment gaps. CSHE hosts seminars, work-in-progress research festivals, conferences, and symposia for staff across the University to share their pedagogic research. Through these activities and the support described under research students (see Section 2), we are increasing the capacity of these colleagues, which strengthens educational practice, as well as supporting potential innovative interdisciplinary research, as described under our second aim.

*4. Further our national and international collaborations.* We seek to increase cross-institutional collaboration both nationally and internationally. One way in which to achieve this aim is to use smaller grants to build partnerships, as Parkinson has done through internal GCRF funds. Another approach is to assemble a collective of universities to share best practice, as the Centre for Child Protection did with its Erasmus+ collaboration (€4,434,000). We give more examples of how we are growing our collaborations in Section 4 below. Wider collaboration is also key to sustaining our research income and enabling us to tackle projects with wider scope and reach.

*5. Increase grant funding to support multi-institutional and longer-term projects.* Numerous internal grants have been used to pilot ideas, instruments, processes, and materials, and to build partnerships. Several small external grants have provided greater visibility for our work, and ensured an outward-looking focus (see Section 3). We have leveraged these early successes into high-quality outputs, and have built on them to win larger grants in the past year. In the next REF cycle, we will see outputs and impact from larger-scale projects, including those funded in the past year.

### **Impact Strategy**

CSHE research projects address practical problems faced by academics, university students and administrators, which we situate and theorise while working toward solutions. Three main impact strategies support us in achieving our first research aim of contributing at the nexus of research and practice.

*1. Through strong relationships with practice communities, we identify needs, experiences, and challenges that matter to research users and beneficiaries.* By starting with research on the needs of practitioners, and working closely with stakeholder groups to devise solutions that meet those needs, there is a ready-made audience for outputs. For example, the Centre for Child Protection's innovative suite of educational simulations for training professionals and young people themselves about grooming and radicalisation has been funded by a series of tenders from the Home Office, the Office for National Security and Counter-Terrorism, the Office of Education, Kent County Council, Kent Police, and Kent NHS.

2. *Working with academic communities using action research approaches enables us simultaneously to build knowledge and effect change.* For example, Parkinson's work with the CARA Syria Programme uses an action research approach where research and impact are happening in tandem. Workshops with Syrian academic refugees lead to knowledge about needs of displaced academic communities, and how to support education in conflict zones, while also supporting participants. Leigh will facilitate workshops for women scientists and their teams to simultaneously advance their practice and understand their needs and constraints.

3. *By using the University of Kent as a 'research lab', we address local manifestations of larger, sector-wide concerns.* Because CSHE is located within the University's central administration and offers University-wide teaching development courses, we have strong relationships across the institution, which give us access to staff and students at Kent as research participants. Thus, data is collected locally, and Interventions are trialled at our own University. These kinds of projects contribute immediately to local policy and practice, while also leading to internationally excellent outputs. For example, Pitt led a project to investigate students' responses to anonymous marking to inform a local policy decision. His published research has been used by three other universities to shape their policies. Likewise, Quinlan is leading a recently funded evaluation of a Kent-developed intervention for reducing White/BAME attainment gaps. Given the pervasiveness of these attainment gaps across the sector and internationally, these local findings will likely inform practice well beyond the institution.

We aim to support impact across all three strands of our research. We anticipate further impact from the CARA Syria Programme (strand 2), and from simulations developed by the Centre for Child Protection (strand 3), both of which are showcased in our impact case studies. We also expect impact related to teaching and assessment (strand 1) as a result of current projects on feedback policies and an evaluation of the impact of diversifying the social sciences curriculum on the attainment gap.

### **Open Access**

We have a strong commitment to open access, particularly because CSHE research on marginalised academics has highlighted the importance of enabling access to the scholarly community regardless of ability to pay. Therefore, all staff publications are available on the Kent Academic Repository, the University's open access repository. Staff also make pre-prints available through personal websites such as ResearchGate and Academia.edu to facilitate access globally. Many of the simulations and associated training packs developed by the Centre for Child Protection are also available free of charge for educators and young people to use. When appropriate, we encourage staff to use the Kent Data Repository. In future larger-scale applications, bids will include funding for making research data open, in accordance with the Concordat on Open Research Data.

### **Research Integrity**

CSHE has its own research ethics committee, which is tied to a wider Research Ethics Advisory Group and the University's overall research governance infrastructure, as described in the institutional environment statement (REF5a). We have been developing specialist knowledge of ethics, particularly related to researching with marginalised communities, and managing power dynamics in teacher/student relationships that affect students' voluntary participation in practitioner research. Specialised or interdisciplinary projects can be fed through other appropriate ethics committee, as needed.

## **2. People**

### **Staffing Strategy**

Consistent with the first strategic aim outlined in Section 1, our staffing strategy has been explicitly developmental. Since 2014, we have recruited early career staff into fixed-term posts before converting them into permanent positions and supporting them through probation and promotion.

This pathway was followed by two of our current five core CSHE staff members. Promotion strategies (see below) have been aligned with research strategy, supporting the promotion of three of the Centre's five core Category A staff members from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer, and one staff member from Reader to Professor. Thus, research and impact contributions have been recognised formally.

In addition to the Centre's core staff (5.0 FTE: 4 Senior Lecturers, 1 professor), two further FTEs are on Education, Scholarship and Professional Practice contracts (non-Category A) and contribute to the research environment through participation in CSHE's research events and through engaging in educational scholarship. Over the REF period, with the conversion of three fixed-term posts to open-ended contracts, there has been a reduced reliance on fixed-term staff in the overall staffing ratio. This developmental approach extends to CSHE members more broadly, with some colleagues supported in their research through taking a CSHE postgraduate degree in HE.

### **Staff Development**

*Mentoring.* Mentoring is central to our staff development strategy. CSHE staff produce an annual Individual Research Plan (IRP), which is discussed with the Director of Research. Further meetings normally follow throughout the year, in which feedback is provided on grant applications and draft publications, as required. Each staff member is also provided with guidance individually on their progress through the University's career map, through annual performance discussions with a senior colleague ('Reflect, Plan, Develop' meetings). Staff are encouraged to prepare draft applications for promotion early in the cycle, and are provided with informal feedback by their mentor and their line manager, and then by other members of CSHE's Promotions Committee before submitting their applications.

*Research Committee.* All staff participate in the Research Committee, which meets termly. This committee develops and reviews research-related strategy and activities, monitors progress, and serves as a forum for sharing successes and lessons learned. This inclusivity and shared governance model also supports the cultivation of a cooperative team environment, which, in turn, enhances the overall research climate.

*Workload Allocation.* CSHE has a formal workload allocation model (WAM) that ensures equitable distribution of workload across the team, and protects 20% of staff time for research. Workload assignments are negotiated with an eye towards promotion criteria, enabling staff the opportunity to engage in activities that will progress their careers, as well as meet the needs of the unit. Nonetheless, the formal policy is only one component of workload management. The Centre's teaching timetable is flexible, particularly through teaching in intensive formats. Thus, colleagues support each other to enable our researchers to undertake research in sustained periods; for example, by concentrating teaching activity in a single term. Further flexibility is achieved by staff covering each other's teaching, individual tutoring, or marking duties as needed. This flexible and collegial approach is used rather than formal WAM points for contributions to impact activities and writing large grant applications that directly advance the Centre's research strategy.

*Research seminars.* The Centre hosts at least six research seminars each year featuring external speakers. These research seminars have been used as part of an overall staff development strategy, in addition to taking advantage of emerging research trends. For instance, one year, the series focused on research methods, with talks from leading scholars using a variety of qualitative research methods. In another year, racial inequity in HE was the strategic focus. CSHE also holds annual Research Festivals that provide opportunities for feedback on work-in-progress amongst HE researchers at all stages of their career.

*Conference attendance.* As outlined in Section 1, a central part of our research strategy is to become widely known nationally and internationally. To support this goal, CSHE staff are funded to attend one domestic and one international conference each year. Staff regularly present at the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) conference, Assessment in Higher Education

conference, European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI), the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA), and the American Educational Research Association (AERA) conferences.

*Impact support.* CSHE staff regularly participate in University-wide impact events and training. The Centre has contributed funds to support impact activities, as well as supported applications for impact funding from the Faculty and University.

### **Research Students**

We have an explicitly developmental approach to our PGR students, providing support to applicants from the application phase through candidacy to post-completion. Three PhD students have successfully completed in this REF period (2.5 registered through CSHE; one student was co-supervised across Schools); 6 PhD students were enrolled on 31 July 2020. Three students are part-time, holding full-time professional positions. Monitoring and support mechanisms have been tailored for part-time students. We expect three more part-time students to complete in the next 18 months. Our PhD programme is also rapidly growing, with three new students having started in the 2020-21 academic year. In total, two CSHE students have earned the University of Kent's very competitive Vice-Chancellor's Research Scholarships.

Since 2014, 19 students have earned an MA in Higher Education. Most MA students have been University of Kent staff. Their research is usually closely linked to their professional practice, creating research capability across the University, promoting a culture of scholarship in the field of HE, and advancing their individual careers. To grow our PGR programme in the future, we aim to revise our MA to be ESRC-compliant and seek to join the South-East Network for Social Sciences to enable us to benefit from ESRC studentships. We will also shift the MA to a mainly online format to make it more widely accessible. Growing the MA programme will create a pipeline to PhD studies.

*PGR supervision.* Reflecting the interdisciplinarity of much HE research, CSHE members from elsewhere in the University co-supervise our PhD students. Students meet with supervisors at least monthly, and take part in annual progression monitoring meetings with a staff member external to their supervisory panel. We host a fortnightly PhD students' and supervisors' virtual work-in-progress seminar, in which students take turns giving brief presentations on their research and receiving feedback. Supervisory discussions and the work-in-progress group discussions also attend to students' career development.

*PGR training.* Students are helped to identify relevant audiences for their work, such as internal stakeholders or prospective users of the research, and to present to those groups. Doing so helps support research quality, impact, and their own career development. For example, George Mindano and Jacqueline Aldridge have presented at the SRHE conference. Veronica Rovagnati was selected to give a webinar on her research as part of a series of early career talks sponsored by SRHE. Doctoral students routinely take advantage of specialised research training offered through the Graduate and Researcher College (formerly the Graduate School) or elsewhere in the University, and often attend SRHE workshops. Students are supported in publishing their work through ongoing mentorship after their dissertation or thesis is completed, as part of our research-capacity-building strategy. We have an explicit, considered policy regarding co-authorship with our research students, which we discuss with them when they begin their projects.

*Research assistants and interns.* Since 2017, we have hired three research assistants through the University's Work-Study Scheme, which subsidises employment opportunities for widening participation students. We have also supervised nine second-year Psychology students as research interns through the School of Psychology's Research Experience Scheme. Participation in these programmes enriches our research environment, and builds capacity for the future, as these students subsequently pursue research careers.

**Equality and Diversity**

As a small, collegial team, our EDI structures are bespoke and highly flexible, while following University best practices. We have responded to parental leave, staff illness, and caring responsibilities through close adherence to EDI and HR policies, as well as through conscientious teamwork, covering for colleagues' tutoring, teaching, or marking as needed, and promoting flexible working. We also have put in place inclusive practices. For example, seminars and core meetings are held during normal business hours, avoiding late afternoon school- and nursery-run times. Selection panels for both staff and part-time student research assistants adhere to best practices, including interviews based on clear and transparent criteria and a diverse selection panel. To help level the playing field amongst doctoral applicants, we encourage prospective students to liaise with a potential supervisor before formal submission. Doing so enables the potential supervisor to give feedback on draft proposals and share relevant literature with those who may not have current access to library facilities.

All eligible staff have been returned in the REF, and all members of our REF working group have completed the requisite EDI training. Two internal assessors and one external assessor provided detailed feedback on outputs. Our experienced external reviewer also advised on final selections. We have had a reduction in the number of outputs required (13 down to 10) owing to complex staff EDI circumstances for two staff members. Thus, we are returning the single highest-rated output for each staff member, and have selected the next highest-rated outputs to fill out the remainder of the required outputs. Where additional outputs received similar assessments, we sought to spread them across team members to ensure inclusivity. Our impact case studies were selected on the basis of the quality of evidence gathered by an agreed deadline.

CSHE also demonstrates commitment to, and works to improve, equality and diversity at the University of Kent and beyond through its research focus on EDI-related matters. Leigh and Brown's research on ableism in academia has directly influenced the University's new EDI policy, which is now embedded across the institution, and has led to:

- Funding from the Research and Innovation Services department to ensure disabled staff can engage in research dissemination;
- Sensitively crafted communications to staff about declaring disabilities for the REF;
- Revisions to the University promotions policy;
- New training, management, and support for Graduate Teaching Assistants;
- Making staff portals accessible.

**Section 3: Income, Infrastructure and Facilities****External Research Income**

Recognising that we were a young Centre with many promising early career researchers, we have followed a 'stepping stone' funding strategy to address strategic aims 2 and 3. Each staff member was mentored (see Section 2) to focus on obtaining some initial funding to build a foundation for subsequent, larger-scale work. As CSHE staff have quickly matured as researchers, and built names for themselves on the basis of small projects, they have shifted from small grant applications (<£10,000) to collaborating on larger grant applications (>£100,000).

In 2014-17, CSHE staff won five grants, totalling £25,800. In 2017-19, CSHE staff led on eight successful grants, totalling £37,269, plus serving as co-investigator on a £200,000 AHRC project. In 2020, CSHE staff have been PIs on six successful grants from three different funding agencies, totalling £439,000, and have been a Co-I on a UKRI Future Leaders grant worth more than £1.6 million (£50,000 to CSHE). Furthermore, in 2020, three of the five core CSHE staff have led on these successful grants, indicating strength across a small but powerful team, addressing several high-priority research areas.



Since 2014, four of the five current core CSHE staff members (Leigh, Parkinson, Pitt, Quinlan) and both past members (Malcolm and Williams) have led or collaborated on an impressive total of 21 successful external research grant awards, with funding totalling more than £2.25 million. Grants have been won from the AHRC, the British Academy, the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes, the EARLI Assessment and Evaluation Special Interest Group, the Higher Education Careers Advisory Unit, the Quality Assurance Agency, SRHE, SEDA, and UKRI.

### **Other Income Supporting Research-Related Activity and Impact**

Funding for our activities comes from a variety of sources, some of which are not classed as research. Yet, securing funding from a wide range of sources is a vital part of our research and impact strategic goals. Given CSHE's role in supporting research-based teaching enhancement at the University of Kent, we benefit from internal project grants, including Teaching Enhancement Grants (£27,135) and education-related discretionary projects (£16,000) that have been leveraged to produce three high-quality outputs. Staff have also been involved in consultancies (£5,600) with other educational institutions such as the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama. Parkinson has won three grants from internal Global Challenges Research Fund competitions, totalling £26,335. He leads on the academic development strand of the Council for At-Risk Academics' (CARA) Syria Programme, which has funded some of the action research workshops that he has led (see the impact case study on Supporting Syrian Academia in Exile).

Likewise, the Centre for Child Protection has secured more than £1.426 million in enterprise funding, which has supported the development of world-leading simulations on topics related to child protection. These funds have been awarded by the Department of Education, the Home Office, the Office for National Security and Counter-Terrorism, NHS Kent, Surrey, and Sussex, and Kent County Council/Kent Police. These research and development activities have generated significant impact on professionals who work with young people, and on young people themselves, as documented in the Centre for Child Protection impact case study.

### **Infrastructure and Facilities Supporting Research and Impact**

*The University as laboratory.* Through its teaching activities, core Centre staff have built strong networks of colleagues across the University who facilitate access to students as research participants. For example, Quinlan has conducted research with colleagues on students' interests and career development in Biosciences. Pitt has collected case studies on feedback and assessment in performance-based subjects. These collaborations are an important link in our research and impact strategy, in that they may be driven by stakeholder questions, ensuring a ready audience for implementing results. The University's Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience has also funded policy-related projects (£16,000) on students' powerful learning experiences and on the advantages and disadvantages of anonymous marking.

*Estates and facilities.* Core CSHE staff are housed in the Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (UELТ) building, which has office space for each staff member, three hot desk spaces for PGR students or visitors, a state-of-the-art seminar room, a small seminar room that is routinely used for interviews of research participants, and a kitchen space that facilitates informal interaction. The UELТ building is adjacent to the University's newly renovated Templeman Library, which offers café spaces and easy informal access to students as potential research participants, further facilitating our 'University as laboratory' approach. A dedicated annual budget of £6,500 has allowed us to build a special collection of library resources on HE.

*Specialist equipment.* The Centre has invested in five Apple iPads that have been used for in-person survey data collection. As it can be difficult to achieve sufficient response rates to online surveys from students, we have developed methods for collecting data in person in public spaces such as the Templeman Library, which have been facilitated by the use of these iPads. We have also invested in laptops for staff to support flexible working. The University has site licences for REFWorks, Jisc Online Surveys, SPSS, and NVivo, which are used in research across the Centre. Support for learning about relevant packages is provided through central services, including the

Templeman Library, the Graduate and Researcher College, and Research and Innovation Services.

*University-wide support services.* CSHE and CCP rely on the University's central Research and Innovation Services team for identification of suitable research funders, proposal development, and project management, as well as the University's peer-review process for research grants. The Graduate and Researcher College also offers a series of activities across a network of early career researchers, and our staff often take advantage of these learning opportunities. For example, Leigh has become a certified expert user in NVivo through these training opportunities. Our postgraduate students also attend seminars and workshops organised by the Graduate and Researcher College. Involvement enables our students to connect to a larger, interdisciplinary community, and to benefit from a wide range of supplementary professional development resources.

*Social sciences networks and resources.* From 2011 to 2020, CSHE was part of the Faculty of Social Sciences, which provided opportunities to network with Directors of Research in other schools and share best practice in research development. In addition, we have benefited from Faculty of Social Sciences grants for teaching development, matched funding for small projects such as symposia, research grants that support outstanding research outputs and seed external research applications, as well as funding to support impact activities. Following the University's recent restructure into six academic Divisions, CSHE now has an academic affiliation with the Division of Law, Society and Social Justice (LSSJ). LSSJ is supported by a dedicated Research and Innovation team (7.4 FTE Professional Services and 0.6 FTE academic), who support all aspects of research funding applications, in addition to the support provided by the central Research and Innovation Services team. The Divisional and central teams also support REF preparation and post-award processes, including open access requirements.

All colleagues are invited to attend the LSSJ Research and Innovation Committee meeting, held termly and chaired by the Divisional Directors of Research and Innovation and the Research and Innovation Manager. This committee provides space to discuss research and innovation activities in the Division and share best practice. Core members include School Directors of Research, Directors of research centres, REF leads, the Divisional Director of Public Engagement and External Relations, the Divisional Director of Postgraduate Research, and two elected early career researchers. The Divisional Research and Innovation team also develops and co-ordinates training opportunities for staff across the Division on topics such as applying for innovation funding and media skills.

### **Major Benefits in Kind**

As described above under 'Other income' and 'University as laboratory', the most important in-kind benefits we receive are access to research participants and users afforded, in part, by relationships forged through our teaching. We have been able to gather data from thousands of students across at least six different projects. Core staff have collaborated on discipline-specific projects in at least eight subject areas. Teaching enhancement funds and policy/consulting project funds have supported many of those research activities. In addition, the company TurnItIn co-sponsored a symposium on contract cheating that enabled us to invite leading researchers to run training workshops in detecting contract cheating, which were attended by 50 academics.

## **Section 4: Collaboration or contribution to the research base, economy and society**

### **Academic Collaborations**

To further our aim of building a reputation in the field (strategic aim 2), we have initiated national and international collaborations, and hosted visiting scholars.

*National collaborations.* All of our current Category A staff have written collaborative papers with colleagues in the UK or abroad. For example, Leigh has collaborated with a colleague at UCL on the Ableism in Academia conference and related workshops and papers. Malcolm had a fruitful

SRHE-funded collaboration with Miriam Zukas (Birkbeck). Pitt collaborates with colleagues in the Department of Higher Education at the University of Surrey. As a result, he has several co-authored papers in *Assessment and Evaluation Higher Education* and a successful grant from SEDA. Quinlan has initiated collaborations with the University of Kent Student Success project team, leading to a successful £50,000 grant for collaborative work with the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes at King's College London.

*International collaboration.* Parkinson is leading the academic development strand of the Council for At-Risk Academics Syria project, in collaboration with colleagues across the UK and in Turkey (see impact case study). This work has led to six peer-reviewed journal articles, including three with Syrian colleagues, and two successful AHRC grant proposals. Pitt is collaborating with colleagues at the Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE) at Deakin University, Australia, where he was Honorary Visiting Senior Research Associate in October 2017. Quinlan's collaborations with engineering educators at the Université Libre de Bruxelles has led to a co-authored work. Leigh is a co-founder of the Women in Supramolecular Chemistry network, whose members are key collaborators on two large projects funded in 2020.

*Visiting scholars.* To build our research capacity in specialised areas, in this REF period CSHE has hosted visits, and benefited from research seminars and workshops run by: Gerlese Akerlind, Professor Emerita, Australian National University; Yesim Capa-Aydin, Middle East Technical University, Turkey; and Raoul Sommeillier, a PhD student in engineering education at the Université Libre de Bruxelles. To increase impact on marginalised academics, we also hosted three members of the Department of Education from the Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo in Nigeria. These colleagues have learned about educational development through their visit, and, as a result, were inspired to set up Nigeria's first university-based Centre for Teaching and Learning. We also hosted a visit from a participant in the CARA Syria programme, Nidal Alajaj, with whom Parkinson has collaborated on a subsequent funded study.

### **Impact on Research Users and Beneficiaries**

Across all three strands of research identified under strategic aim 5 in Section 1, CSHE research is having an impact beyond what is documented in our two impact case studies. This impact has been facilitated by a) proactive relationships with end users in the design of the research; and b) supervision, mentoring, or collaboration with practitioner researchers.

*Impact on local academic practice.* Leveraging our University as a laboratory, our research is designed to have immediate impact at the University of Kent. For example, Beaton's research on the perceptions of part-time staff contributed to policy change in the structure of part-time teaching contracts (strand 2). Pitt's research on students' attitudes towards anonymously marked vs non-anonymously marked scripts was instrumental in informing Kent's marking policy (strand 1). Quinlan's project on a Framework of Powerful Learning Experiences underpinned a local Teaching and Learning Conference that led to changes in student induction in three different Schools (strand 1). Direct collaboration with practitioners has also led to impacts on students enrolled in their courses. For example, a research project on teaching in Physics led to the adoption of a research-based tool for self- and peer-assessment of group work across the entire cohort of final-year students (strand 3). These impacts have grown out of collaborative relationships within the University, as described in section 3 above.

*Consultancies with impact on academic practice nationally and internationally.* To promote impact beyond Kent, CSHE staff members have also engaged in similar consultancy work elsewhere. For example, Leigh has consulted on projects at the Conservatoire of Dance and Drama that have contributed to advancing the scholarship of practice (strand 3). Quinlan delivered a two-day workshop at Babes-Bolyai University (Romania), drawing, in part, on her research into discipline-specific teaching and learning and educational development practice. Participants were motivated and equipped to adopt new teaching approaches, serve as trainers in their Schools to further disseminate good practice, and create a Teaching Council to advise on policies for the enhancement of teaching across the university (strands 1 and 2).

*Impact through dissemination of publications to educational development practitioners and HE administrators.* Recommendations from published research also have been adopted by other universities, as described below. Staff also regularly write blogs, such as for the British Educational Research Association, and short pieces for practitioner publications, including articles in the SEDA newsletter, *Educational Developments*, and the *Times Higher Education*.

*Further examples of impact.* Here we highlight three further specific examples of impact beyond that which is included in our impact case studies. (See the Equality and Diversity section for examples of impact at Kent in strand 2, drawn from Leigh and Brown's ableism in academia research.) These examples show that all five core staff members are successfully disseminating their research to professionals, who, in turn, are using it to influence HE policy and practice.

1. Beaton's research on the marginalization and professional development needs of part-time staff members (strand 2) has been used to define best practice, formulate policy, and underpin new programmes of professional development for part-time teachers in HE. Her research inspired a project led by Macquarie University and sponsored by the Australian Office for Learning and Teaching that engaged eight Australian and 12 UK participating HE institutions in mapping, evaluating, and developing their provision for part-time staff. Based on Beaton's research, York University in Canada created a professional development framework for over 1,500 part-time staff. Middlesex University piloted a programme of professional development for 75 graduate teaching assistants, resulting in institution-wide implementation from 2015 onwards. In 2016, Queen Mary University of London also created an institution-wide professional development framework for teaching assistants and PhD students who teach. Revised policies that ensure the frameworks are embedded demonstrate a transition from *ad hoc* to sustainable professional development for all part-time teachers, affecting the learning experiences of innumerable HE students. Beaton has built on those networks to facilitate a follow-on project investigating the particular needs of dual professionals: academic staff who are also professional practitioners (e.g. in social work, nursing, journalism). This research was featured in a 2019 SRHE conference symposium that she organised, and in a keynote for a 2019 event on academic career planning hosted by AdvanceHE.
2. There has been a recent trend, supported by the National Union of Students, to institute policies of anonymous marking of assessment scripts in UK universities. However, the evidence base for these policies was weak, with competing theories of practice. Pitt's timely findings (strand 1) contributed to this debate, as evidenced by a high level of attention on academic social media, particularly in the HE research, policy, and practice community (Altmetric Attention Score of 100, in the top 5% of all journal articles). His study offered empirical evidence of students' perceptions of the value of non-anonymous marking, showing that it helped strengthen relationships between students and teachers, and support an ongoing, personalised dialogue on students' performance. This research was cited by Southampton Solent University, the University of Surrey, and Lincoln University as influential in their review of marking policies, informing their decision not to implement anonymous marking.
3. Quinlan's framework for educational leadership for holistic student development is core reading on educational leadership programmes at the University of Helsinki and Stellenbosch University, as well as on leadership development programmes of the former Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (now AdvanceHE) (strand 2). Her 2019 research paper on stimulating interest during lectures has also garnered social media attention among educational developers (Altmetric Attention Score of 95). Colleagues in Turkey and the USA already report adopting the paper in their education courses for prospective HE teachers (strand 1). Building on her research expertise in learning and teaching in higher education, Quinlan served on the UK Government's Teaching Excellence Framework User Group and on the Advisory Group for Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency.

**Invited Talks and Keynotes**

Each core CSHE staff member has been invited to give multiple guest lectures or workshops during this REF period, totalling more than 60 invited talks, including 13 keynote lectures delivered in four countries. Many of these talks have been oriented to practitioner audiences, including keynote talks at teaching and learning conferences at the University of Brighton, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Worcester, and outside the UK at the Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo in Nigeria, the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, and a Summer Institute for Developing Learning and Teaching in Biosciences in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

In addition, CSHE staff are increasingly being sought out to speak to other researchers. For example, Leigh has given well-attended invited workshops on creative methods research for the British Sociological Association, the National Centre for Research Methods, and SRHE, as well as at a research conference on embodied research methods at Canterbury Christ Church University. Malcolm gave a keynote address for the Standing Committee on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults, and Quinlan was invited to give a keynote lecture at the 2020 EARLI Special Interest Groups 1 and 4 Conference. Pitt has been invited to lead a masterclass at the 2021 Assessment in Higher Education international conference.

*Prizes and awards.* Core members have distinguished themselves as leaders in educational enhancement through recognition as a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (Quinlan) and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (Leigh, Parkinson). Two staff members won SRHE Newer Researcher's Prizes (Leigh, 2016; Hope, 2017).

**Contributions to the Disciplinary Community**

*Engagement with research associations and professional societies.* CSHE staff are active in scholarly bodies and conference committees. For instance, Quinlan was a Lead Assessor for the SRHE conference, Leigh serves on the Research Committee of SRHE, and Beaton serves on the steering group for the Standing Committee on Academic Practice and the conference organising committee for the SEDA.

*Peer reviewing and editing.* All submitted staff serve as peer reviewers for various conferences and journals, including regularly providing reviews for leading journals in the field such as *Studies in Higher Education* and *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*. CSHE members have served as editorial board members: Beaton, *Teaching in Higher Education*; Malcolm, *Higher Education Research and Development*; Pitt is book review editor for *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*. Pitt and Quinlan have been invited to edit a special issue of *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy, and Practice*. Pitt has also been invited to edit a special issue of *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*.

*Grant and other research reviewing.* Quinlan has reviewed grant applications for the European Science Foundation, the Singapore Ministry of Education's Tertiary Education Research Fund, and the Netherlands Initiative for Education Research. She also served as a member of the Research Quality Assessment Board for the Department of Science Education at the University of Copenhagen.

**Organising Conferences and Symposia**

To advance our national reputation, CSHE convenes periodic half-day research symposia on timely topics, including academic freedom (2015), assessment and feedback (2018), and contract cheating (2019). These events regularly attract up to 100 participants, including specialised researchers in the topic and academic practitioners. CSHE members in the School of Physical Sciences won a bid to host the national Variety in Chemical Education/Physics Education Group conference. Leigh co-organised an event on Ableism in Academia at the UCL IOE, supported by the Universities of Kent, Leeds, and Nottingham (see the impact case study on Marginalised Academics).

In addition, our staff contribute regularly to national and international conferences in the field. Beaton and Leigh have each organised a symposium for SRHE's annual conference. Parkinson has organised an international roundtable on academic development in post-conflict societies in Istanbul, which has led to the International Consortium of Educational Development establishing a special interest group on HE and Conflict. Quinlan's symposium proposal on supporting students' interest was chosen by the Higher Education Special Interest Group of EARLI to be the SIG's invited symposium in 2019. Pitt organised a symposium for the combined EARLI SIG 1 and 4 conference in 2020. Quinlan organised a symposium for the International Conference on Motivation in 2020. Pitt is organising an EARLI SIG 1 funded Symposium on Educator Feedback Literacy.