

Institution: University of Wolverhampton
Unit of Assessment: 25 Area Studies
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Area Studies (AS) is an internationally focused, interdisciplinary research group in the Faculty of Arts, Business and Social Sciences, comprising 12 members of staff (11.3 FTEs; 7 women, 5 men; 7 ethnic minority, 5 white British) across a range of humanities and social science subject areas. The team specialises in empirically-informed socially engaged philosophy and lived religion; applied linguistics; migration studies; political culture and media; and political/economic change, in the geo-cultural context of Europe, South Asia, South America, and related diasporas.</p> <p>AS was first entered as a Unit of Assessment (UoA) in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, building on a long-established tradition of interdisciplinary research at the University of Wolverhampton (UoW), which began with the submission of the UoA European Studies (ES) in RAE1992. This submission builds on the heritage of high standing but also testifies to a sustained broadening of staff expertise, an upward trajectory in research quality, and an increased emphasis on collaborative endeavour.</p> <p><u>a) How Research is Structured across the Unit</u></p> <p>AS staff fit into one of two broadly defined interdisciplinary sub-groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially-Engaged Philosophy and Lived Religion (comprising Dhanda, Gregg, Jacobs, Pawlett, Satne, Takhar) • Europe and Its Influence Beyond (Dangerfield, Dickins, Galasińska, Moore, Radziwinowiczówna, Urbina). <p>Most of the developmental work and external activities of AS take place under the auspices of the research group Language, Power and Society (LPS) formed in 2018-19 – one of four faculty-based interdisciplinary research groups managed by the Centre for Transnational and Transcultural Research (CTTR).</p> <p>LPS brings into conversation practitioners of social theory and of philosophical, linguistic and discourse analysis, to understand the construction and manifestation of power relations in society. The research group is led by Dhanda, with deputies Dickins until September 2020, and Galasińska thereafter.</p> <p>LPS boasts 23 members, including, 9 postgraduate research students, 3 Honorary Research Fellows and 2 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellows. Two members of AS also participate in the Centre for Media, Film, Discourse and Culture and Takhar (MBE) is leading the development of the newly instituted Centre for Sikh and Panjabi Studies (CSPS), including 5 postgraduate research students and an Honorary Research Fellow, with support from Dhanda.</p> <p>Various members of the AS team from both major sub-groups (Dhanda, Dickins, Galasińska, Hambrook, Moore, Pawlett, Radziwinowiczówna, Takhar) share an interest in language and power, hence the establishment of the research group LPS. For instance, Pawlett and Dhanda's research develops the theme that power, or social control, go beyond discourse, beyond the uses to which words are put, and are manifest in social practices, hierarchies and topologies.</p> <p>Much of Dickins's recent work focuses on how 'authoritative discourse' is created through a series of rhetorical devices, whose aim is not just to influence and cajole, but also to dissemble. (See also part d) for interdisciplinary research of the unit).</p>

b) Research Objectives Past and Future and Performance

Objectives set in REF5 2014:

- i. to increase the number of REF-eligible staff with higher quality outputs, increased collaborative research with distinct internationalisation, and enhanced impact through other-sector engagement;
- ii. to initiate a postdoctoral research cadre through supporting postdoctoral grant/fellowship applications;
- iii. to extend the scope of collaborations beyond Europe to include Asia and the Americas;
- iv. to support the emergence of research clusters harnessing subject-specific expertise for interdisciplinary research;
- v. to develop, *Wolverhampton Cosmopolis*, an outreach initiative exploring links with our singularly diverse local and regional community.

Performance:

- i. AS has achieved its goal of expanding research capacity through material and practical support. The team took advantage of numerous institutional initiatives, such as the University's 'Research Investment Fund RIF2', to secure research time for staff. The number of AS researchers entered in REF2021 has increased by five since REF2014 through new appointments.
- ii. AS boasts two EU Horizon2020 funded research fellows Radziwinowiczówna (2018 - 2020) and Manoharan (2020 -2022) with their appointment as Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Individual Fellows (MSCA-IF): Radziwinowiczówna, in 2018 to work under the supervision of Galasińska on the two-year project 'Brexit and Deportations: Towards a Comprehensive and Transnational Understanding of a New System Targeting EU Citizens' (#BRAD) and Manoharan, in 2020 to work under the supervision of Dhanda on the two-year EU Horizon2020 project 'Freedom from Caste: The political thought of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy' (#CASTEFREE).
- iii. Links between the UoA and cognate groups in Europe and Asia, such as with the Centre for Migration Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland and Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta, India, have also continued to develop. Furthermore, AS now has two new appointments with specialisms in South America (Satne, Urbina) who are developing links with researchers in Argentina and Chile, recovering Latin American research of our Cuba Studies Forum in the late 90s.
- iv. AS has also made substantive progress on establishing clusters of subject-specific expertise (as indicated in 1a above and developed in 1d below).
- v. Although, *Wolverhampton Cosmopolis* did not take off, due to staff changes, there is a vibrant development of local and regional community links through the outreach activities of LPS, CTTR and CSPS as illustrated below.

The AS team has five major objectives for the next five years (which build on the objectives outlined for 2014-2020):

- 1) to expand the size of the AS community, and further develop support mechanisms for research-active staff, thereby maximising the opportunities to produce more world-leading publications;
- 2) to submit a greater number of strategically targeted grant applications, with the aim of becoming more outward-focused and less dependent on University and QR funding;
- 3) to promote and incentivise research with the potential for socially transformative impact, especially in relation to disadvantaged minority groups;
- 4) to consolidate and extend existing collaborative research practice with new partners in Europe, Asia and America to enhance interdisciplinarity with global reach;
- 5) to increase the size, dynamism, and ethnic and social diversity of the postgraduate research community, and to encourage more dissemination of their research.

All five objectives are underpinned by a commitment to challenging the increasing Anglocentrism of academia (in terms both of its over-dependence on English-language sources, and the dominance of Anglophone scholarship, cultural traditions and theoretical models). Changes to the research environment since 2014, especially the increased emphasis on the role of the research centres and collaboration with foreign partners, have already made a tangible difference to the work of AS staff. Successful fulfilment of these objectives would raise the research profile of UoA 25 internally and externally.

c) Impact from the research and the link to Impact Case Studies

Researchers in AS are committed to using a variety of pathways to disseminate research outputs in national and international forums with a view to address the needs of specific stakeholders and for the betterment of society more generally. It is now routine to include impact as an agenda item in all AS and research group meetings and to invite external stakeholders to events relevant to AS (see 4d below).

Key beneficiaries of AS research have included four main groups: vulnerable people seeking protection against caste discrimination, human rights activists lobbying for policy change, EU immigrants facing deportation, and members of the public seeking a better grasp of the means to address discrimination and prejudice linked to the axes of race, caste, gender, disability, religion and nationality.

From the starting point of writing research bids, designing research questions to dissemination of research outputs, impact is integrally built into the research processes followed by AS researchers. The sought-after impact, relating especially to policy change, and change in public perceptions, is carefully inscribed into every funding bid (see section 3) and is predicated on active engagement with policy makers. In both the EU Horizon 2020 funded MSCA-IF projects, BRAD completed in October 2020 and CASTEFREE commenced in October 2020, impact was knit into the design of the projects.

An example of impact-led project participation is Galasinska's work in the EU Horizon 2020 MinD project (2016-2020), including extensive interaction with consortium partner organisations. The mission of the project encompassed promotion of design as a beneficial tool to improve health and wellbeing in society, with relation to dementia and to transfer lessons learned and approaches to other stakeholder groups (e.g. people with other long-term conditions). Her research expertise in discourse analysis was utilised in framing methodological tools to enhance co-production of project outputs with stakeholders.

A further example that stands out is the EHRC funded research on 'Caste in Britain' which was shared widely with stakeholders through various media and used by government in its follow-on research and public consultation. This research has directly led to government guidance on caste discrimination and contributed to the success of the claimant's case heard by the Employment Tribunal in July 2015. *Tirkey* marked a legal turning point, leading to a shift in policy, and as the legal counsel, Chris Milsom corroborates, Dhanda 'contributed very significantly to Ms Tirkey's success by advising on matters of anthropological and sociological understanding on crucial points during the hearing'.

The authors of both impact case studies, Dhanda (*Tackling Caste Discrimination*) and Takhar (*British Sikhs*), present their research to All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPG) and charities campaigning for changes in public policy. They are invited as expert consultants for widely disseminated public interest documentaries (e.g. BBC) in their respective research foci of caste discrimination and Sikh Studies. Research dissemination also takes place through workshops targeted at professionals, and conferences supported by postgraduate researchers, a post-doc HRF and MSCA research fellows.

d) Supporting Interdisciplinary Research

One of the principal aims of AS has been to create an environment that increases interdisciplinary exchanges. From postgraduate research students to professorial level, the unit fosters dialogues between different subject disciplines. Research funding awarded to AS staff (see 3a below) is evidence of the high quality of interdisciplinary research undertaken by the unit.

The meetings of the AS group (often under the umbrella of LPS) have reinforced the links within, between and across the intellectual boundaries of the team, and have led to closer collaboration between colleagues (see, for instance, the Being Human Festival, below). Interdisciplinary research is encouraged and enhanced by a range of outward-facing and internal initiatives, including postgraduate presentations; the organisation of public and in-house seminars and lectures. LPS hosts research events with participation from AS staff and invited guests to underpin ongoing development of interdisciplinary work. For example, a research workshop 'Marriage & Mating: Norms and Deviations' in February 2020 featured speakers: Dr Lotika Singha (sociologist, HRF, UoW); Professor Samita Sen (historian, Cambridge); Dr Shalini Grover, (anthropologist, Greenwich); Karen Mooney, (Association of British Introduction Agencies); Pawlett, (media theorist, UoW) and was attended by 44 participants (of whom 23 were BAME and 28 were external to the University).

Book launches have been used to provide a platform for networking across disciplines and encouraging cross-fertilisation of ideas to generate interdisciplinary research questions.

In both the sub-groups of the AS unit, interdisciplinary research is the norm.

i. Socially-Engaged Philosophy and Lived Religion

Dhanda's research focuses on empirically informed, socially engaged, moral and political philosophy, relating particularly to caste, race and gender. She led a national consortium of researchers from five universities for a high-profile interdisciplinary project 'Caste in Britain' funded by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, UK (see 3a below). Her promotion as Professor of Philosophy and Cultural Politics is recognition of the accomplished interdisciplinarity in her research evident from many of her publications addressing caste, identity and discrimination, which necessarily straddle the traditional disciplinary boundaries of philosophy, sociology, politics, law and anthropology.

Likewise, Pawlett's research expertise is fundamentally interdisciplinary, spanning media and cultural theory, continental philosophy, sociology, social anthropology and comparative mythology. His latest work is on profanation and filth, which has links to work on Indian religions by other AS colleagues. Satne's latest socially engaged philosophical research (including a recent co-authored book, due early 2021) uses the example of Argentina as a case study for reflections on the relations between memory and forgiveness, thus straddling philosophy, psychology and politics.

Gregg specialises in lived religion, new religious movements, religion comedy and performance, and more recently, on ethnography of a Welsh syncretic religious community. Relatedly, Jacobs specialises in ethnographic of contemporary Hinduism, with a particular focus on how religious ideas are communicated, and the role of new media on beliefs and practices. Jacobs' recent focus has been on environmental sustainability for which he has been recently awarded a Leverhulme Research Fellowship.

Takhar has focused on questions relating to identity, with a special emphasis on Sikh Studies, including caste and gender issues amongst Sikhs. Her research on religion and public discourse; young British Sikhs; multiculturalism and superdiversity; and Sikh political activism crosses the boundaries of religion, sociology and politics.

ii. Europe and Its Influence Beyond

Dangerfield (Professor of European Integration and Jean Monnet Chair in the European Integration of Central and East Europe) specialises in the history and evolution of the European Union; EU security policy and European economic integration, with recent work focussing on the UK's new relationship with the EU, in the light of Brexit negotiations.

Dickins's research interests relate to different aspects of applied Slavonic linguistics and political discourse under Communism. Recent publications relating to political slogans; folk-spectrum music as an expression of alterity in 'normalization' Czechoslovakia; the linguistic and rhetorical legacy of the Prague Spring, also feature interdisciplinarity.

Galasińska's work on the relationship between discourse/society and social identities, and more especially on ethnographic and discursive aspects of the lived experience of post-Communism, with particular reference to changing meta-narratives of Polish migration to the UK is evidently interdisciplinary.

Radziwinowiczówna, a social anthropologist, with a specialist interest in how people experience immigration and deportation regimes; the public debate that accompanies changes in migration policies and their implementation; the migrants who become deportable; return migrants, and the stayers who remain in the sending countries, uses sociology, politics and cultural theory in a cross-disciplinary way.

Moore's research interests span across comparative psycholinguistics; linguistic landscaping and language policies; and medical humanities. The significance of her recent work on linguistic landscaping in Lithuania resides in its interdisciplinary approach and strong theoretical underpinning.

Urbina combines her past professional experience focused on online media, corporate communications and international journalism with her academic specialisms including political culture and media; multimedia journalism in the global south; and nationalism and race in the Chilean social media.

e) Progress towards an Open Research Environment

As part of its Open Access Strategy (2014-2021), the AS team makes as much of its research as possible available on the Wolverhampton Intellectual Repository and E-Theses (WIRE) – above and beyond the compliance requirements for REF. This has been facilitated by the introduction of the University's new Current Research Information System (Elements by Symplectic), and the University's Green Open Access policy. For example, Dhanda and Satne have published outputs in journals without any embargoes.

Where appropriate, research outputs are also disseminated electronically via other external social networking/publicly accessible research sites, such as ResearchGate and Academia.edu. The team likewise announces and promotes its events on its publicly accessible blog: <http://transculturewolves.wordpress.com/> and on Twitter (e.g. @CasteFreeH2020). Recordings of research events are shared on CTRR YouTube channel (e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k26YfPE6LJ8&t=123s>).

Galasińska and Radziwinowiczówna (BRAD project) implemented the open data management principle, allowing free access of the project data via Zenodo repository.

f) Supporting a Culture of Research Integrity

The very nature of AS at UoW – with its diverse, multilingual and socially committed team, with specialisms grouped around overlapping and cognate areas – supports a culture of probity and reflexivity. The preoccupation of AS staff (especially Dhanda, Dickins, Galasińska, Moore,

Radziwinowiczówna, Takhar) with cultural, social and political inequalities serves to reinforce the imperative of inclusiveness and critical self-examination. The emphasis on social engagement further underlines our commitment to ethical standards whereby research is conducted truly for the benefit of society and with a responsibility to be answerable to stakeholders. Thus, research integrity for AS staff means going beyond mechanically following stipulated institutional norms.

Two members of AS are members of the Faculty's ethics committee and Jacobs has been Chair of the committee for a number of years. The AS team systematically applies established ethical procedures (as overseen by the Faculty Ethics Committee) to ensure that staff research activities and doctoral projects are conducted according to approved standards of ethical principles. Mentoring process includes reflection on robustness, humility, transparency, diversity and reflexivity, in line with the responsible use of research indicators policy. Unit 2 of the Early Career Researcher (ECR) Development Programme also includes a workshop on philosophical positioning, ethics and research integrity, which reinforces the importance of the established academic and professional frameworks. Research Fellows have attended these programmes and AS staff have contributed to the delivery. (Also see 2b below). The processes are rigorously followed at all levels, from postgraduate researchers to professors.

Robustness is also ensured through the introduction of a panel of critical readers for publication drafts and grant applications; and the provision of one-to-one feedback on the CTRR's biannual Research Activity Forms. The quality of research outputs is also monitored by the AS mentoring group and reading panel (Dhanda, Dickins and Galasińska).

2. People

a) Staffing Strategy and Staff Development

In keeping with AS's research plans outlined in REF2014, several research management responsibilities have been devolved to team members. Dickins (Senior Lecturer, now retired), and Galasińska (full-time Reader since 2014) took over coordination of the UoA from Hambrook (Reader, now retired) until September 2020. The unit is presently coordinated by Galasińska and Dhanda (full-time Professor since 2018).

There have been changes to the composition of the AS team in the last few years. Two female (Urbina, Satne) and two male colleagues (Gregg, Pippa) were recruited in the last five years, although Pippa has now taken up a full-time research post in his native Italy. The recruitments have complemented existing research strengths in socially engaged philosophy and diasporic studies and have broadened the international dimension of AS's work. In the light of recruitment trends and Covid-19, staff numbers are not predicted to expand for the foreseeable future, but nor are job losses envisaged.

All the AS group members are on permanent contracts, with the exception of the externally-funded researchers, Radziwinowiczówna and Manoharan. Based on the staff contract level HESA, all FTEs in AS are at the time of submission Category A. The AS staff who have been promoted (Dhanda, Galasińska, Takhar) are female and ethnic minority.

Staff development is central to AS's and UoW's research strategy. In recognition of its achievements in promoting staff at all levels, the University was awarded in 2012 the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research Award, with re-accreditation successfully achieved in 2016. Progress against UoW targets is actioned and monitored by the Concordat Working Group, a sub-committee of the URC, which is chaired by the Dean of Research and includes representatives from faculties and research institutes, HR and careers services.

Research Concordat initiatives from which AS has benefitted directly since 2014 include an increase in financial support for research and research staff, and the creation of 20 new posts, including Dhanda's aforementioned professorship. In response to feedback from the bi-annual

Principal Investigators and Research Leaders' Survey, research leaders in AS (Dhanda, Galasińska) have also received support for their own development, via sessions of the 'Managers Toolkit' and the University Research Mentoring Scheme.

Two members of the AS team (Moore, Urbina) have been beneficiaries of the UoW's Early Researcher Award Scheme (ERAS) and have built a solid research profile on the opportunities afforded to them. ERAS comprises two elements: 1) an individual research project (with funding of up to GBP5,000) that will yield outputs in terms of publications, further research and/or development of funding opportunities; 2) a support programme to develop and enhance wider research-related skills through workshops, action learning, mentoring and progress reports. Urbina is also part of a team that was awarded funding of up to GBP3,500 by the University's QR Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) 2019-20 for a joint project with the University of Guyana on Mitigation and Resilience in water supplies and community responses.

A further four AS staff (Dickins, Moore, Pawlett, Takhar) have been awarded, in the current REF cycle, faculty-funded semester-long sabbaticals, for which colleagues can apply every five years, with two further (Galasińska, Gregg) being awarded month-long mini-sabbaticals, courtesy of CTTR. This has led, inter alia, to a substantial increase in the number of major publications in AS, which now exceeds 60 for this assessment cycle. Faculties are encouraged to offer one-semester sabbaticals, and the CTTR is committed to supplementing these with more mini-sabbaticals in order to free up time for specific projects (such as book completions). All such awards are made on a competitive basis, with applications open to all members of the AS team. Outputs and other contributions to research resulting from sabbaticals are supported and monitored by the AS mentoring team.

b) Research Students

UoW and the Faculty both have longstanding and robust procedures relating the recruitment, development and supervision of postgraduate students, as specified in the institutional environment statement. Amongst the contributors to the Faculty's annual programme of subject-based research training and events are several members of the AS team (Dhanda, Dickins, Galasińska, Hambrook, Jacobs, Pawlett). Faculty of Arts, Business and Social Sciences doctoral training sessions are live streamed for all PhD students in the faculty.

All research students are members of a research institute and/or research group(s), especially LPS in the case of AS researchers, whose meetings include slots for PhD student presentations. AS research students are supported by CTTR, which provides financial assistance for conference attendance, and other research-related activities, including library and archive visits. CTTR also lobbies on behalf of researchers for infrastructural changes and has overseen numerous improvements in facilities for postgraduates since 2018.

Since 2017, the number of students enrolled on PhDs attributed to the AS UoA has risen from 4 to 14, buttressed by initiatives such as the setting up of CSPA in 2018. AS staff now occupy 29 doctoral supervisory roles (3.5 per FTE) and 14 positions as Director of Studies (1.3 per FTE), sometimes in conjunction with colleagues from other UoAs; with all AS team members contributing to PhD supervision.

Most of the AS postgraduate research students are local and female and come from a variety of (often less-privileged) backgrounds, hence an important part of AS's mission is to provide value-added support. Frequent themes of student feedback include their approval of the diversity of the staff body, and the emancipatory aspects of undertaking research with us. After the successful award of her PhD, Dr Roma Soni wrote:

"In her supervisory role, Dr Dhanda provided me with continued understanding and support through my 4.5-year doctoral journey on a part-time basis. She adjusted to my supervisory needs, carefully reading everything I wrote, guiding me intellectually, encouraging me and putting faith in my ability, simply bringing out the best in me." (Letter, 14 June 2018).

Dhanda is not the lone recipient of such commendation by a PGR. The researchers uniformly appreciate their supervisors, and also comment positively on the variety of forums in which they can present their work, including the afore-mentioned Postgraduate Researchers' Development Programme, faculty research days, research group meetings, and research centre conferences.

Majority of the PGRs are self-funded and that does create difficulties, in that they switch between F/T and P/T mode to balance conflicting demands of personal circumstances with academic commitments. A university-wide robust system of Annual Progress Reviews (APR) managed by research administrators at the Faculty level, with independent assessment of progress by two reviewers outside the supervisory team, ensures early identification of problems. The Faculty Research Student Board, of which Dhanda (deputised by Satne) is a member, scrutinises all decisions from recruitment to APR to nomination of examiners for the PGRs. From 2016-2018, Dhanda was the Post Graduate Research Tutor for the Faculty of Arts and in that capacity oversaw the process of admission and induction of a majority of the present PGRs linked to AS. Previously, Hambrook was PG Support Tutor; together their accessibility, is demonstrated in the enthusiastic participation of PGRs in LPS and CTTR events.

c) Equality and Diversity

AS is strongly supportive of the University's mission to maximise opportunity for all, irrespective of class, ethnicity, gender/sexuality and age. UoW invests heavily in support to tackle the under-representation of women and BAME staff in research, especially senior research positions, and has won numerous awards which testify to this (including the Guardian Higher Education Award for Equality and Diversity, in 2017, for its BAME Steps to Leadership Programme; and a Midlands Stonewall Award, in 2017). Female researchers are sponsored to participate in the Leadership Foundation's Aurora Programme, and are encouraged and funded to attend each of the workshops as role models. The BAME Steps to Leadership Programme is delivered internally in collaboration with consultants from the Black Leadership Initiative. All staff are also entitled to take a career break, and parental or long-term medical leave, but no member of the AS team has so far chosen or been obliged to take an extended period of absence.

At least in part because of the University's progressive policies on equality and investment in diversity, AS boasts an extremely healthy gender and ethnic balance, with women and staff of non-British heritage, including two (Dhanda, Takhar) classed as BAME, constituting a majority in both categories. Three of the four members of AS with status above Senior Lecturer (Dhanda, Galasińska, Takhar) are female and non-British; of the two MSC Fellows one is a woman and the other BAME; both the beneficiaries of ERAS are female; and sabbaticals have equitably distributed between women and men.

Equality concerns have been particularly salient in the present conditions under the pandemic. AS activities have been adjusted to ensure that members with parental responsibilities are able to participate. A planned conference was postponed, and shortened events have been substituted for the convenience of those with additional caring responsibilities.

AS members participate locally and nationally in strategy and implementation of special measures to address equality concerns. From 2014 to 2016, Dhanda served as Chair of the BAME Staff Network of UoW and continues to support the work of the Network through attendance at meetings.

Radziwinowiczówna was invited as a migration specialist to a University of Wolverhampton meeting on Race Equality Charter (REC) Student Sub-committee. The Sub-committee identified the needs of students from migrant / refugee populations to be different from those of BAME students in the local area, hence its stress on improving the academic and social experience of these groups of students, including their sense of belonging. UoW has recently been awarded the Bronze Award for their REC submission.

In terms of future developments, the AS team seeks to ensure that the expansion of the AS community envisaged in the strategic objectives, 2021-2028, places equality and diversity at its core. It also intends to prioritise socially transformative research relating to minority groups, and to increase the ethnic and social diversity of the postgraduate community – both of which are also specified as strategic objectives for the next REF cycle.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

a) Research Funding and Strategies for Generating Research Income

Our priority from 2014 onwards has been to move away from dependence on internal funding, and to submit more strategically targeted grant applications, as specified in the strategic objectives.

Since 2014, AS staff have made six successful major joint and individual applications for external funding, bringing in GBP178,473 (in the REF accounting cycle, ending July 2020), which is a growth of 150% from the previous assessment cycle. Two of the grants awarded, and a portion of a continuing one, will be counted in the next REF cycle. We include them below to mark our success in bidding for funds.

Most notably, Galasińska was awarded €195,455 (GBP172,000) (of which GBP142,973 is counted in this cycle, and the remainder carried over to the next cycle) for EUHorizon2020 project BRAD. Dhanda attracted in excess of GBP20,000 from the EHRC (out of a grant of c. GBP45,000 shared with consortium partners), and €224,933 (around GBP200,662) for EUH2020 project CASTEFREE (grant agreement 895514) to be counted in the next REF cycle. In February 2020, Dhanda and Satne made successful internal bids (GBP2,300 and GBP3,000 respectively) for research development on their future project bids.

Galasińska has also been involved as an invited collaborator and expert in other international projects and networks, supported by external funding: 1) 2016-2020: 'MinD – Designing for People with Dementia', Horizon 2020 RISE project number 691001; 2) Network member: 2016-2018: EU Migrants in the UK: Perceptions and Challenges of Belonging, Centre for Research on Communities, Identities and Differences, Kingston University, project supported by The British Academy and The Leverhulme Trust; 3) 2013-2015: ReMIG: Remigrations and Transformations in post-socialist European regions, ERSTE Foundation.

In March 2020, Jacobs was awarded an 18-month research fellowship with The Leverhulme Trust, starting from July 2020, with GBP53,305 of funding (to be counted in the next REF cycle), for a project entitled 'How Green is Your Valley? Everyday Life at the Centre for Alternative Technology'. He has also received funding to organise a colloquium at the Centre for Alternative Technology on 'Living in Harmony with the Environment', beginning in September 2020.

Satne received financial support from the Royal Institute of Philosophy and the Mind Association to organise the 'Forgiveness, Apology and Reconciliation Conference', May 2017, when she was not in employment at UoW.

Other staff engaged with externally-funded international consortia include Dangerfield and Hambrook. Amongst the joint projects started in the previous REF cycle which have come to an end in 2014 is ALTERAE, The Linguistic Representation of the Other, funded by Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación (Spain) (€25,000), which involved four collaborating Institutions: CTTR, University of Wolverhampton (UK); Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain); Universidade de Coruna (Spain); University of Regensburg (Germany).

b) Organisational Infrastructure Supporting Research and Impact

The AS team has put on numerous research seminars and inaugural and public lectures for CTTR, which have stimulated considerable interest within its own and the wider research

community, as well as outside academia. The success of these activities led to LPS being granted its own devolved budget to organise and host events, and to pay for guest speakers, and this has resulted in several LPS-sponsored events since February 2019, including a series of PhD students' presentations.

There is support available for travel costs for impact related events (Dhanda, Takhar for liaison with APPG). Takhar's public-facing activities organised by CSPA with wide public engagement have received administrative support.

Members of the AS team work closely with the University's Project Support Office (PSO) that help with external funding applications, and have played a crucial role in the securement of AS grants, including BRAD and CASTEFREE (above). AS staff benefitted from the expertise of the European Business and Research Development Manager, Tatiana Panteli, who assisted in several successful grant applications until 2019. We also received hands on support from the faculty-based Research Development and Income Generation Manager, Francesco Paradiso, who has played a crucial role in securing the AS collaborative grants, including BRAD (with University of Warsaw, Poland). Development of ICSs has been supported by meetings on demand and advice from two dedicated Research Impact Officers. Designated project support officers assist in the achievement of research project deliverables through efficient administrative support.

Dhanda and Galasińska are members of the Steering Group of CTTR with responsibility for review of funding and sabbatical applications and strategic direction and planning. CTTR mentors, including AS staff offer timely and intensive support to new applicants and Galasińska, as one of the university peer reviewers, gives feedback on grant applications across the University.

c) Equality and Diversity

Dhanda is serving on the UKRI AHRC COVID-19 expert peer review group, and was part of the ESRC COVID-19 BAME Highlight - Panel Meeting (21 Oct 2020). She is a member of the Decolonising and Inclusivity Group of the British Philosophical Association tasked with organising research into the ways in which BAME staff and students, including PGRs can be better included in Philosophy.

Support for research funding applications through AS mentoring teams and opportunities to develop grant writing skills, such as participation in the Grant Academy are provided uniformly to all members. AS coordinators have actively negotiated research training time with line managers of Early Career Researchers. We have a balance of gender and BAME recipients in awards of grants thus addressing their traditional under-representation in higher tiers of academia.

Office space is shared non-hierarchically by MSCA Fellows and their respective supervisors (Reader and Professor).

d) Research Infrastructure

Human capital is key to the scholarly infrastructure supporting AS research, especially in terms of international collaboration. AS staff bring to the UoA established associations with networks, institutions and individuals that facilitate collaborative activity, and collectively constitute a hub of substantial transcultural/intercultural and linguistic expertise.

Investment in people has been accompanied by a moderate, but proportionate investment in physical infrastructure. All postgraduate students now have their own work places in MK block, with IT equipment appropriate to their needs. In February 2020, Radziwinowiczówna and Galasińska were allocated new office space for their research team.

The AS team have a dedicated open access meeting place, housing a selection of donated books, and providing a valuable resource facility for researchers, visiting scholars and international partners. Space has also been made available in the Harrison Library to accommodate several significant Indian artefacts and rare handwritten manuscripts donated to the CSPS in recognition of the Takhar's contribution to Sikh studies.

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

AS members are involved in multiple forms of collaboration, from major international networks (Dangerfield, Dickins, Hambrook, Radziwinowiczówna), through to regional events and festivals (Dhanda, Dickins, Moore), to local community groups (Dangerfield, Dhanda, Takhar). Collaborations embrace a broad range of cultural realities, from the religious to socio-economic, as per AS's interdisciplinary remit, with many supporting the UoA's goal of fostering awareness of other people's perceptions and realities. AS staff collaborate with over 30 national and international institutions. (See also 3a above)

a) Arrangements and Support for, and Effectiveness of, Research Collaborations, Networks and Partnerships

Team members are strongly encouraged by an internal team of research mentors to attend networking opportunities. Some examples comprise Grants Academy training in 2017-18, which included a networking trip to the EC in Brussels (April 2018, Dhanda), and Ell Mex-Connect event (June 2018) to facilitate collaboration with Latin America Universities (Galasińska, Urbina).

Galasińska has benefitted directly from participation in the MSCA RISE project (total funding: €2,000,000; see section 3 above) interacting with 50 visiting researchers from both academic and non-academic sectors, comprising seven universities, five professional dementia care and policy partners, and three design companies.

Radziwinowiczówna has collaborated extensively with the international community of researchers specialising in her areas: deportation studies, Latin American migration and aging and migration studies. Her work with Agnieszka Martynowicz (Edge Hill University) has resulted in a joint blog post on the Border Criminologies Blog, and her long-established collaboration with Anna Rosinska (Ca'Foscari University of Venice) and Weronika Kloc-Nowak (University of Warsaw) has led to the joint publication of 'Envisaging Post-Brexit Immobility: Polish Migrants' Care Intentions Concerning Their Elderly Parents' (2020) and a CMR Spotlight information bulletin 'Care Beliefs, Arrangements and Intentions – Aging in Transnational Families' (2020).

Two other examples of engagement with networking are Moore's role, since 2012, as Honorary Visiting Lecturer at the Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Kazakhstan, and as team leader of a group of EU experts on the evaluation and development of the PhD, MA and BA curricula in Linguistics, Translation Studies and foreign languages in the Baltic States. Dangerfield engaged with the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Chisinau, where he was invited in December 2015 to present a paper to the Civil Society Trade Seminar EU trade Policy: Looking East.

Dhanda's EHRC research was an intense collaboration of researchers from 5 universities (MMU, SOAS, Goldsmiths' University of London and Middlesex), in a consortium led by UoW. Two of the partners - Prof David Mosse (SOAS) and Dr Annapurna Waughray (MMU) have continued to collaborate with Dhanda in impact work, joint publications, panel contributions, conference presentations and workshops.

Dhanda was recently invited by Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad, Pakistan to collaborate with experts on caste from India, UK and Pakistan, initiated in an online roundtable discussion hosted by IPS on 'Minority Rights in Neo-communal South Asia settings: Implications for Social Democracy' (21 August, 2020) exploring public policy-oriented research on South Asia.

b) Relationships with Key Research Users, Beneficiaries or Audiences

The AS team has actively sought to facilitate dialogue and exchanges with public and third sector bodies (see especially Dhanda's and Takhar's case studies), including through the participation of non-academic stakeholders in research events, with a view to increasing its impact beyond academia and outside the UK.

Besides her research dissemination in academia, Dhanda is actively engaged with community groups, e.g. Dalit Solidarity Network (UK), CasteWatch UK, Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance, Federation of Ambedkar and Buddhist Organisations and Ambedkar International Mission, attending AGMs and delivering invited lectures to them.

Relationship with stakeholders was extended through Dhanda's research project funded by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), resulting in two research reports on 'Caste in Britain', in 2014, which included two events in Oct/Nov 2013: an experts' seminar, to which Takhar also contributed, and a stakeholders' workshop reaching out to 60 organisations. Further, Dhanda conducted workshops on 'Caste in the UK' at the Methodist Women in Britain conference 'Caste Out?' (18 Oct 2014) and on 'Overlooked Overlookers', Being Human Festival (Wolverhampton Art Gallery, 20 Nov 2019). In these workshops she shared her research findings with non-academic audiences. In 2018, she gave a talk (by invitation of the Chair of APPG for Dalits, Lord Harries) to Peers and MPs in Parliament on Non-Statutory Guidance for informing public bodies about caste discrimination. Black History Month talks (2015), documentary screenings (Caste Aside, 2018), amongst other avenues, were used to engage with beneficiaries.

Takhar is heavily involved in interfaith dialogue and is a Board Member of the Inter Faith Regeneration Network, Wolverhampton. She has also worked closely with numerous governmental bodies, including the Office for National Statistics (ONS) which, at her suggestion, considered adding a Sikh tick box to the ethnicity section of the ONS2021 Census.

c) Wider Contributions to Economy and Society

Both Dhanda and Takhar have taken part in numerous radio and television interviews and discussions. For example, in August 2018, Takhar appeared as the guest of Del Singh, host of the Sikh Channel show Late Night Banter, and in May 2020, she shared her 'Sikh Reflections' on BBC Sounds.

In October 2015, Dhanda was interviewed about caste discrimination live on radio (with Dr P. Shah, Reader in Law, QMUL) on the BBC Asian Network; in January 2019, she was interviewed (in Punjabi) on Kanshi TV in a two-hour programme with the screening of a caste-related documentary; and in February 2019, she was a panelist in a 2-hour live discussion (in Punjabi) on 'Punjab: Past Present and Future', "Panth Di Aawaz", Akaal TV Channel. In October 2019, Dhanda was a credited consultant on the BBC1 documentary Hindus: Do we have a caste problem? ("our viewing figures were over 1 million, which for 10.30pm on a Sunday is fantastic" – email from producer, Mel McCowan). An interview/comment was solicited for an article on opposition to the Gandhi's statue in The Guardian and Dhanda gave a live interview/discussion on this topic on BBC Radio 4's Sunday Live. In February 2020, Dhanda took part in a conversation with the author Jon Bloomfield – 'Our City: Migrants and the Making of Modern Birmingham', Wolverhampton Art Gallery, and she was an invited panelist on The Big Questions, BBC1, 10-11am, to discuss 'Is Race the legacy of Empire?' (live from Newcastle).

Gregg appeared on BBC 1 Sunday Morning Live in March 2014, and has undertaken pre-broadcast consultancy work for two radio programmes (BBC Scotland & LBC) looking at the place of Scientology in modern Britain. Similarly, Radziwinowiczówna has made numerous media appearances in international media outlets. She has represented the University of Wolverhampton and the BRAD project in both Polish and Spanish. She has appeared on Radar FM radio station (Mexico) and Polskie Radio Czwórka and, on numerous occasions, on Tok FM

radio (Poland). She has also published the results of one of the Work Packages of her research on a news portal Londynek.net, popular among Polish citizens who live in the UK.

d) Engaging with Diverse Communities and Publics

Dhanda's public engagement has reached large audiences beyond the UK, to USA, India and Pakistan through her live streamed webinars on Facebook and YouTube in 2020: 'The Caste nexus and womxn's liberation' (29 June, Wajood Punjab, 4.4K); 'An Unnameable Injustice: the Caste problem in the UK' (8 Aug, Series Practice of Caste in the USA, Ambedkar King Study Circle (AKSC), California, 450) and 'Casteism Unchecked: the Cost of Dominant Punjabis' Evasiveness' (26 Aug, Lyalpur Young Historian's Club (LYHC), 1.9K). Dhanda's AKSC talk addressed through Q&A the pressing concerns of activists supporting the Dalit victim of alleged caste discrimination in a lawsuit against the multinational company CISCO for alleged violation of the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, and ancestry.

Takhar also drew a large audience to her talk on 'Caste Dynamics in the UK: Ravidassias and Balmikis' (LYHC, 1K). She has developed a high profile which bears witness both to her own research outreach and to the success of capacity building within AS. In spring 2019, Takhar's Centre, CSPA, hosted, in collaboration with the Consulate General of India, a celebration to mark the 550th Anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak, and an event to remember 100 years of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. On the back of these community-based activities, CSPA hosted a major International Sikh Studies Research Conference, 4-6 September 2019 in celebration of the life of Guru Nanak.

Amongst other public research-based engagements, Gregg has been invited to advise the executive board of the Religion Media Centre in London and has likewise been consulted on the redevelopment of the I-Bacc World Religions curriculum, in direct response to his work on Living Religion (which rejects the traditional World Religions Paradigm). In 2016, Gregg was the lead co-ordinator for the British Association for the Study of Religions conference at UoW, 'Religion Beyond the Textbook', which attracted scholars from the UK, US, Europe, Oceania and South America.

Dickins has established contacts between Trevelyan Wright, Chief Executive of the Newhampton Arts Centre (NAC), Whitmore Reans, Groes (Director of CTTR), Takhar and Sojka (Institute for Community Research & Development), with a view to developing more collaborative local ties.

LPS outreach events in 2019 included two public book launches: *Work, Labour and Cleaning: The Social Contexts of Outsourcing Housework* (Singha), and (in conjunction with the Migrant Communities and Wellbeing Research Group in the Faculty of Education, Health and Wellbeing) *Ethnomorality of Care. Migrants and their Ageing Parents*, (Radziwinowiczówna, with Rosińska, Kloc-Nowak), based on the findings of a multi-sited research carried out between 2014 and 2017 in Poland and the UK. A defining feature of the book launches was the attendance and participation of stakeholders from the cleaning industry and the local Polish community.

Radziwinowiczówna has published in the recognised Border Criminologies blog, (April 2019). She co-produced an information bulletin CMR Spotlight 7, '[Care Beliefs, Arrangements and Intentions – Aging in Transnational Families](#)', which explains in an accessible way the main findings of her book.

Other disseminations of our research on modern European critical theory to a wider non-academic audience include presentations on 'Interpreting Fairy Tales' (Pawlett) in Telford (2019) and in Stafford (2020).

e) Contribution to the Sustainability of the Discipline

Under challenging Brexit conditions, AS staff have continued to develop their collaborations with European partners with the earnest intent to consolidate established linkages that will allow us to adapt with agility to a fast-changing research environment.

Dangerfield has worked on a wide range of EU funded academic cooperation projects in Central and Eastern Europe, including TEMPUS, LEONARDO and SOCRATES/ERASMUS. In July/September 2015, he was elected as Rapporteur for 2015 HORIZON 2020 Research Funding Applications.

Hambrook has championed the cause of internationalisation for four decades, chiefly through organization of international multidisciplinary conferences (University of Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria; Universidade do Minho, Portugal; XIII Triennial International Conference of the British Comparative Literature Association (BCLA)).

Two other examples of engagement enabling sustainability of the discipline are Moore's role, since 2012, as Honorary Visiting Lecturer at the Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Kazakhstan, and as team leader of a group of EU experts on the evaluation and development of the PhD, MA and BA curricula in Linguistics, Translation Studies and foreign languages in the Baltic States.

f) Indicators of Wider Influence

Many of the research engagements of AS staff involve international partners and/or contributors. Members of the AS team have been involved in the organisation of 10 major international conferences and 5 conference panels abroad (Zagreb; Stockholm; Luxembourg; Lisbon; Barcelona), as well as various internationally-focused conferences and conference panels in the UK.

In 2018, Takhar was awarded an MBE for services to higher education and the community in Wolverhampton. In November 2019, Takhar was honoured at a ceremony to mark the 550th Gurburab at Birmingham Town Hall by the Chief Minister of Punjab, Captain Amarinder Singh - the only woman to have been thus honoured.

Several members of the UoA have given major addresses and keynote speeches, often with an international dimension. Dhanda's 33 keynotes, plenaries, and guest lectures, and 5 online talks, include 14 abroad (4 in the USA; 2 Pakistan; 6 in India; 1 in Spain; 1 Germany); Dangerfield has addressed 3 international audiences (Croatia; Serbia; Helsinki); Gregg has received 4 keynote invitations (including 2 in Japan).

Other AS staff who have given keynotes and invited talks abroad include Hambrook (Spain); Satne (Spain; Germany); Radziwinowiczówna (Mexico). In November 2017, Takhar gave a keynote address to the APPG Sikhs (Houses of Parliament): 'Celebration of the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the first Guru of the Sikhs' and Dhanda gave a speech on 'Dr Ambedkar on Religion and Morality' at the House of Lords commemoration: 'Dr. Ambedkar - Life and Works' (9 May 2019).

AS has one book series editor (Pawlett, 'Radical Theory', Anthem Press); one co-editorship (Hambrook, *Comparative Critical Studies* (BCLA's journal) [2012-2017]); one guest journal co-editorship (Dhanda, Special Issue of *Religions*, September, 2019); nine positions on editorial/advisory boards/scientific committees: Dhanda, *Caste: A Global Journal of Social Exclusion* (USA); *Journal of Sikh and Punjab Studies* (USA); *Philosophy World Democracy*; Dickins, *Studie z aplikované lingvistiky*; Galasińska, *Onomastica*; Gregg, *The Journal of the British Association for the Study of Religions* (formerly *DISKUS*), and Palgrave MacMillan Book Series 'Lived Religion and Societal Challenges'; Pawlett, *International Journal of Baudrillard Studies*; Moore, *SAGE Open*; Takhar, *The Journal of Understanding Sikhism*.

Radziwinowiczówna received the Award of the Prime Minister of Poland for her doctoral thesis in 2017 and Dhanda's paper 'Philosophical Foundations of Anti-Casteism' (April 2020) was selected in Oxford University Press list of the Best of Philosophy 2020 as one of the 'most read papers' of the year.

Four members of the AS group (Dhanda, Galasińska, Hambrook, Radziwinowiczówna) are involved in peer review colleges for externally funded projects. Dhanda is continuing for a second 4-year term as a member of the AHRC peer review college and serves the UKRI AHRC/ESRC COVID-19 expert peer review group. Galasińska, was the reviewer for ERSTE Foundation Fellowship, for Social Research 2014-16 competition.

All full-time AS lecturing staff are Fellows or Senior Fellows of the Higher Education Academy, and Gregg is also Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society. Three members of the AS team serve on Executive Committees: Dhanda, Society for Women in Philosophy (UK), British Philosophical Association; Gregg, British Association for the Study of Religions (Elected President); National Representative for the UK at the International Board of the International Association for the History of Religions; Hambrook, British Comparative Literature Association.

AS staff have undertaken 19 doctoral external examining engagements in the current REF cycle (6 UK; 10 European; 1 USA; 1 Australia; 1 South Africa).