

Institution: University of Reading
Unit of Assessment: UOA30 – Philosophy
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>Philosophy at the University of Reading is a small Unit which provides a supportive and lively environment, enabling researchers to work with a range of academic and non-academic partners to address fundamental issues, often of immediate and significant import for society. Although we are small in terms of staff numbers, we aim to maximise the ambition, scale and reach of our work. Our research vision is focused on tackling important questions through developing new ways of collaborative working, with research in this REF cycle supported by a greater range of interdisciplinary activity and international engagement, plus an increased range and intensity of work with non-academic partners. The features presented here demonstrate both that we have achieved our aims in relation to this vision and that we have credible structures and plans in place to ensure our ambitious level of research activity continues into the future.</p> <p>1.1. Unit context and place within University structures</p> <p>The Philosophy Department is made up of 11 academic staff (5 professors, 2 associate professors and 4 lecturers), two of whom are on teaching-intensive contracts and four are on fractional contracts (=7.5 FTE submitted to REF). We have an active research environment, supporting on average 25 PhD students at any one time and hosting a range of other researchers (postdoctoral students and visiting scholars), addressing a wide spectrum of philosophical areas and issues, with significant clusters in moral philosophy, philosophy of language, and Wittgenstein.</p> <p>Our research is primarily focused around two research centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Cognition Research (CCR), inaugurated in 2012 (Director: Borg). CCR focuses on the understanding of human intelligence. It brings together researchers from disciplines including Philosophy, Psychology, Cybernetics, Engineering, Linguistics, in the belief that progress on the fundamental issues involved in understanding the mind will be enhanced by the input of scholars from a range of cognate fields. • Reading Ethics and Political Philosophy (REAPP), inaugurated in 2013 (Co-Directors: Elson and Jubb, Politics). REAPP brings together moral and political philosophers who share a commitment to the methods of analytical philosophy. REAPP's members work across a range of issues in moral and political philosophy, in particular fairness; politics and violence; intergenerational justice; ethics and uncertainty. REAPP acts as a hub for individual scholars to exchange ideas, develop projects, and organise events and also offers joint supervision of PhD students. <p>As described in the Institutional Environment Statement (IES, section 1), since 2015 the University's research activity has been structured around Research Divisions, under four broad and interacting Research Themes. Philosophy is one of nine Divisions that sit within the Heritage & Creativity Theme (H&C). Each Theme is led by a Research Dean who facilitates interaction and best practice and encourages interdisciplinarity, providing seed-funding for pilot studies and collaborative activities. Each Division has a Research Division Lead (RDL) supported by an academic impact lead from within the Division and the Impact Development Manager for H&C (a member of Research and Enterprise Services, RES).</p> <p>A broad interdisciplinarity perspective is achieved via interactions across the University made operational via ten Interdisciplinary Research Centres, including the Centre for Cognition Research (CCR) (see IES section 2.1.1). As well as leading CCR, Philosophy is well-integrated in University research networks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with the Centre for Neuroscience and Neurodynamics (led out of Psychology) have been important for a number of CCR projects, especially Hansen's work on scalar adjectives and Borg and Hansen's work on chronic pain.

- Links with the School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences and with Biomedical Sciences have been important for **Oderberg's** work on mistakes and corrections in living systems, **Borg** and **Hansen's** work on pain, and **Hansen's** work on the experimental basis of philosophical thought experiments.
- Links with English Literature and the Samuel Beckett Research Centre have been important for **De Gaynesford's** work on philosophy and poetry, together with early career researcher work on the philosophy of humour and insinuation.
- **REAPP** which is co-led by Philosophy and Politics and International Relations.

1.2. Research strategy

The aim of our research strategy in REF2014 was to maintain excellence over a broad range of areas in analytic philosophy, while emphasising departmental strengths in ethics, philosophy of language and philosophy of mind. Our 2014 submission noted the founding of CCR and REAPP, as mechanisms for meeting this latter aim, and they have shaped our strategy around the core value of collaboration (with both academic and non-academic partners). For, while we recognise and value the contributions of individual scholars, it is clear to us that progress on many of the most intractable philosophical and societal problems will depend on combining the expertise and understanding of multiple perspectives from a range of backgrounds.

Our strategy during the period has thus been to support and nurture collaborative working, in order to maximise the strength, relevance and reach of our research. The move to more collaborative working has allowed us to maintain and enhance our collective research output during a time of staff change (including one retirement, one semi-retirement, and voluntary moves to part-time work), mitigating the impact of staff reduction through creative use of shared expertise and resources.

The mechanisms we use to support collaborative research are:

- a) The Philosophy Collaborative Research Fund (PCRF): a departmental fund of approximately £30k to support collaborative research initiatives. This has supported conferences, workshops and research meetings hosted at Reading (with c.20 external academics visiting under this scheme, often over a number of days/events), as well as more than 10 visits by Reading researchers to other institutions and conferences, in the UK and abroad. Examples of events we have hosted include a workshop on 'Meaning, truth and polysemy' with ten invited UK and European experts in philosophy of language; a workshop on 'The 'polyeidic' theory of pain' with invited UK and Canadian experts, and a three-day meeting with two experts (from Universidad del Norte, Barranquilla, Colombia, and University of Hertfordshire) discussing a book manuscript on Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics. This targeted resource has helped to create new and on-going research partnerships (eg. **Borg** and **Hansen's** work with Tim Salomons (Queens University, Canada, and **Hansen's** link with Julia Zakkou at the Free University in Berlin), contributing to a vibrant and distinctive research environment, accessible to and enjoyed by philosophers across all career stages.
- b) The Philosophy Research Strategy Group (PRSG): is a committee of all staff introduced in 2015, which meets at least once a term. The PRSG agrees research and impact priorities, and is an important venue for support and feedback, sharing of best practice, and discussing grant applications at an early stage.
- c) The embedding and growth of our two interdisciplinary research centres which have supported a range of exciting and innovative research projects.



Our strategic focus on collaboration is already resulting in significant changes to our profile. During the REF2014 period just four outputs were co-authored, while in the current assessment period this has risen to a total of 17. There has also been a significant shift toward collaborative and/or interdisciplinary research grants:

- **Hansen's** 2017-19 Leverhulme Research Project Grant, 'The Psychology of Philosophical Thought Experiments' (over £100k, held jointly with Beaman, Psychology).
- two AHRC Research Network awards, on 'The Action-based Brain', (£31k held by **Stazicker** jointly with Glennerster, Psychology), and on 'Pervasive context' (£26k, held by **Borg** and **Hansen** with researchers at Peking University).
- joint University of Reading/NHS funding (£46k, **Borg** and **Hansen** with staff in Psychology and from the Pain Management Unit of the Royal Berkshire Hospital, for work on understanding chronic pain; secured 2019, project running 2020-21).
- Heritage & Creativity funding secured by **Borg** to run a two-day multidisciplinary conference on Pain and Belief (June 2018).
- **Borg's** 2020-23 Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship (£65k) for work on the philosophical implications of findings in social psychology.

1.3 Impact strategy

The growth in academic collaborative working has been matched by a growth in non-academic collaboration, with external partners contributing to, and making greater use of, our research. As part of our strategy planning we identified two key audiences – business and healthcare – for whom our research was particularly relevant. We thus adopted the strategic priority to enhance the reach and value of our research within these sectors and we have worked hard to grow partnerships in these areas. CCR has become a focal point for work with the Royal Berkshire Hospital; we have developed a department-level relationship with the world-leading Henley Business School; and have built a close working relationship with a social enterprise organisation, Ethical Reading.

To coordinate our work with partner organisations, and grow the value of these relationships, we appointed an Impact Lead and put in place mechanisms to support network development (e.g. external collaboration is a standing item for PRSG meetings which has facilitated department-wide engagement with partners). University-level support mechanisms (including an Impact Manager for the H&C theme, the new research communications team, training programmes, and Theme-level forums for sharing best practice) have been crucial for shaping our impact strategy. The integration of all these support structures has enabled us to meet both our research and impact collaborative aims in this period.

1.4 Forward planning

Using our two research centres, the networks we have cultivated, and the structures and funding put in place to support collaborative working, the Unit will continue to provide a robust platform for individual scholars to take forward their own research interests by embedding individual work in a collaborative framework. We will draw in expertise and insight from across career levels, from academic partner institutions, across disciplines, and from our non-academic partnerships, to ensure researchers continue to produce high-quality work that is of relevance, significance and use, both for Philosophy as a discipline and for wider society.

Work in **REAPP** will be supported through planned publications (e.g. a forthcoming edited volume on Hooker's contribution to moral philosophy and those associated with **Borg's** British Academy grant 'Reshaping Relations between the State and the Private Sector post-COVID-19'), and by the further growth of collaborative work with Henley Business School. To enhance our research-led teaching in this area, we are at the approval stage of launching a new degree programme in Philosophy and Business. Greater interaction between Philosophy and Henley will open up new research opportunities and enhance our work on business ethics. Connections with Henley will also drive wider dissemination, providing opportunities to engage with new stakeholder groups. Finally, connections with local firms, established through work with Ethical Reading, will be utilised to enhance the value of our moral and political research for the local community, particularly on questions related to the social role and responsibilities of business.

Work in **CCR** will be supported through the contribution of staff to international networks (e.g. **Borg** and **Hansen's** contribution to a new research network exploring communication on social media) and publications such as those associated with **Borg's** Leverhulme Major Research

Fellowship on philosophy and social psychology. The Royal Berkshire Hospital remains a key stakeholder and we will further strengthen this partnership with the aim and mutual benefit of (a) informing our research through knowledge exchange with practitioners and patients and (b) enhancing the role and reach of philosophical ideas in informing healthcare debates. We will strengthen these connections through, for example, further grant applications stemming from work on chronic pain, and support for **Newey's** research on the use of 'fairness' in the NHS constitution. We are deepening these links through small, highly focused discussion sessions involving Philosophy researchers, clinicians and patients on topics of mutual relevance. We will also grow our connections with other healthcare stakeholders, e.g. through **Borg's** supervision of an AHRC-funded doctoral student on a collaborative project with Powys NHS Teaching Health Board and a researcher at Aberystwyth University (2020-23).

We aim to further enhance our work on increasing the representation of non-Western philosophy and non-Western partnerships, in order to extend diversity of thought in our discipline. For instance, Sinha is part of a two-year international project (2019-21) on 'Impersonal Idealism: Buddhist-Platonist Philosophical Dialogues' coordinated by Yale-NUS College and involving academics from Europe, Singapore, the UK and USA. We will also consolidate and grow our links with researchers in China, including grant applications, hosting visiting fellows, and with further publications in this area (e.g. **Preston** and Craddock's 2020 paper on roles and representations of women in early Chinese philosophy).

1.5 Open access

We are fully committed to open research to ensure our work is accessible and replicable. We have made good use of funding support for Gold OA, through research grants, institutional arrangements with publishers, or University funding for journal article processing charges (e.g. **Hansen**, 2017; 2020).

1.6 Research integrity

A School ethics committee reviews all relevant people-centred research projects, with any requiring higher scrutiny reviewed at University level (and in accordance with the Hospital where necessary). Our annual Personal Development Review incorporates a strong professional standards aspect which reinforces research integrity and provides an opportunity to review training needs. We have strong internal peer review processes, providing critical but supportive feedback on each other's work, which invariably strengthens our research outputs, and grant applications.

2. People

2.1 Staffing strategy

The aim of our staffing strategy has been to maintain an agile Unit, able to deliver a wide-ranging, research-informed undergraduate curriculum, while also undertaking high-level philosophical research within an energetic collaborative research environment. We have done this by focusing and expanding in areas of existing strength. During the current assessment period we have been delighted to welcome a number of new staff to strengthen important research themes.

Philosophy at Reading has traditionally been known for its excellence in moral philosophy and we have aimed to maintain this expertise. Luke **Elson** (an ECR at time of hiring) was appointed in 2014 to replace Bart Streumer and maintain our strength in metaethics, with a focus on ethics and rationality. **Elson** has made an outstanding contribution in this area (winning a Marie Curie award and publishing in top journals). Charlotte **Newey** (ECR) was appointed in 2018 to replace **Stazicker** and to develop our expertise on fairness and reinforce our strength in political philosophy, to grow the strength of REAPP.

To maintain our strength in philosophy of mind and language we appointed Jumbly **Grindrod** (ECR) to embed work on philosophy of language in the undergraduate curriculum. Grindrod joined us initially on a Teaching Intensive contract and we are fully committed to supporting him

to develop his research profile. For instance, like all TI staff he is entitled to sabbatical leave, and he has received funding from the PCRF to organise a workshop on 'Truth, Meaning and Polysemy', funding from the H&C Research Theme for research into new methodologies in the philosophy of language, and support through collaborative research and publication:

- Grindrod, J., Andow, J., and Hansen, N. (2019) *Third-person Knowledge Ascriptions: A crucial experiment for contextualism*. *Mind and Language*, 34 (2).
- Grindrod, J. and Borg, E. (2019) *Questions under Discussion and the Semantics/Pragmatics Divide* *Philosophical Quarterly*, 69 (275).

Finally, Shalini **Sinha** was a strategic appointment to further our aim of raising the profile of non-Western philosophy within our undergraduate teaching and the sharing of ideas and understanding across the traditions of Western and non-Western philosophy. Both Grindrod and Sinha have been given full support for their research, to enable them to move to research-inclusive roles in future (if they wish to). Sinha has received PCRF funding and was supported to run the successful Ratio 2017 one-day conference.

2.2 Equality and diversity

We are fully committed to equality and diversity in the recruitment and support of staff and research students from a wide cross-section of society. The appointment of two female philosophers during the period (50% of new appointments), together with the BAME background of one, demonstrates this commitment, which is also evidenced by our receptivity to part-time working arrangements to encourage those with caring commitments to remain in the profession. We engage actively with University initiatives on E&D and **Elson** and **De Gaynesford** have both taken a leading role in the School of Humanities planning for Athena SWAN accreditation.

We are working to create a step-change in visibility for non-Western philosophy by growing our links with non-Western philosophers, particularly those working in China, and making significant changes to our undergraduate teaching programme. Several activities have promoted diversity of thought beyond the Anglophone world, including hosting a dedicated *Ratio* conference and journal on 'Self and Attention: Cross-cultural perspectives' in 2017 (the first *Ratio* conference and special journal issue dedicated to non-Western philosophy), and a Royal Institute of Philosophy public lecture on Learning from Chinese Philosophy (delivered by Professor van Norden, Yale-NUS Singapore).

Other support

We take full advantage of the support policies set out by the University (IES, section 3), supplemented by departmental policies where appropriate. For example:

- **Study leave:** All academic staff, including Teaching Intensive, temporary (with a three-year contract or longer), and part-time staff are entitled to a sabbatical after seven terms of teaching. This is above the University norm of nine terms, which we are able to facilitate as a small, flexible and collegial team.
- **Flexible and/or remote working:** A number of staff have requested part-time working for personal reasons, which we have facilitated through flexible working arrangements.
- **Career development:** All staff have access to development funds via the PCRF and Research Division Leader's research fund. Teaching Intensive staff are encouraged to work towards Teaching and Research status (where wished) via the annual Performance Development Review process. They are also encouraged to apply for Heritage & Creativity Theme funds aimed at ECRs to enable them to complete research projects.
- **Accessibility:** We have made anticipatory adjustments for staff and students with disabilities. For example, a PhD student with a serious speech impediment is given extra time for research presentations and additional supervision. We have been proactive in shaping University policy on support for staff with caring responsibilities, in particular a recent change to the policy on expenses for ad hoc childcare to attend conferences or other research events, which **Borg** brought to the University's attention in 2020.
- **COVID-19:** During the recent lockdowns, we quickly moved PhD supervision, seminars, staff meetings and line management online to enable home-working. Subsequent

communications from the Head of Department ensured important information was shared quickly, including advice on well-being and creating an effective and safe home-working environment. The University allowed essential equipment and furniture to be taken home if required.

2.3 Staff development

Mechanisms of research support for staff (including ECR and Teaching Intensive staff) include:

- an active mentoring scheme with regular meetings to advise on journal selection, grant applications, University support, etc. and to discuss career progression.
- annual Performance Development reviews with the Head of Department and Personal Research Planning meetings with the Research Division Leader.
- a weekly Philosophy Research Seminar, with both external visiting speakers and Work in Progress presentations from staff.
- regular REAP Work in Progress seminars.
- our sabbatical leave system that applies to all academic staff on 0.2 FTE and a three-year contract or above.

We have also refined and enhanced support for staff at all levels to facilitate collaboration, for instance:

- weekly Informal Research Presentations, in addition to our more formal Work in Progress sessions, to allow on-going and iterative feedback on research ideas.
- a new grant support system (in addition to the H&C Grant Development College) where staff receive feedback on applications from colleagues prior to submission.
- a new system where staff can receive peer feedback on draft papers.

As noted above, the PCRF has been a vital element in our staff development strategy, supporting a number of events that have increased the vibrancy of our research environment and raised the career profiles of staff and PhD students. We also support staff by providing 'light terms' (with reduced teaching or administrative duties) for staff working on important collaborations, and support staff in taking up roles outside the Unit to increase their experience of University administration and aid their career development.

Staff benefit from a wide range of centrally provided professional development opportunities (e.g. research-relevant IT skills, research communications, publishing and open research, and a Grant Development College). Staff have also benefitted from University financial support from the Reserch Endowment Trust fund and seed-funding for pilot projects from the Dean for Heritage & Creativity.

2.4 Postgraduate research students

We have benefitted from our participation in the AHRC-funded South, West and Wales DTP (Phase 1 for students commencing between 2014 and 2018, and with renewed funding in Phase 2 for students commencing from October 2019 to October 2023). The DTP has funded 12 Philosophy PhD students to date and provide additional training, networking and development opportunities. We also work alongside colleagues from Agriculture, Economics, Geography, Law, Meteorology and Politics & International Relations to deliver the Leverhulme Climate Justice DTP (which has funded 3 students since 2016). Two students have received University funding for their PhD studies, and we have funded one other from departmental, teaching-related resource.

In total, 56 students have been registered for PhD supervision during the assessment period (this figure includes current and past students, visiting students, and SWW DTP students based at institutions other than Reading) – with approximately 25 students studying with us in any one year. Among our current students, 14% of our UK and 56% of non-UK PhD students are BAME, and 8% have a registered disability.

A crucial part of our development programme for this large cohort has involved building collaborative working within our PhD cohort, to enhance the transfer of the skills and knowledge

needed to pursue future careers. This collaborative working ethos is facilitated by regular graduate events (each c.2 hours per week):

- the Graduate Research Seminar allows students to present their work to their peers, and to comment on the work of other students, honing their presentational and argumentation skills and gaining knowledge across a wide sweep of philosophical areas. It is convened by a staff member, with all supervisors in attendance.
- the Graduate Class is led by a different staff member each term and analyses a staff manuscript, an important book, or a collection of themed papers, providing graduate students with enhanced skills training and a wider philosophical knowledge base.

Graduate students also benefit from the departmental Research Seminars and reading groups, which enhance their subject-specific knowledge and hone their group interaction skills. Finally the Wittgenstein Seminar welcomes three or four external speakers each term to discuss core issues in Wittgenstein's work, and all students and staff are welcome to attend.

The current period has seen a significant increase in interdisciplinary graduate development, primarily through activities undertaken in REAPP and CCR. These provide an opportunity for graduate students to learn about work at the interface of philosophy and other cognate subjects, extending their methodological skills and allowing them to network beyond the discipline. Students participating in CCR are able to learn distinctive methodological practices (e.g. an appreciation of experimental design and statistical analysis). Joint University and Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust funding is currently supporting Sarah Fisher, a postdoctoral researcher working within the Pain Management Unit at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, aiding cross-institution learning. Students in REAPP gain an important cross-disciplinary perspective on topics such as freedom, justice and the rule of law. Furthermore, the Centres have increased the amount of cross-disciplinary supervision for students, with eight students formally having one supervisor from Philosophy together with a second from a different discipline, and many others benefitting from informal cross-disciplinary arrangements.

Many students approaching completion have also benefitted from the PCRFF, using awards to travel to meet with relevant experts or to host external experts (including some from abroad) for dedicated one-to-one sessions discussing thesis work. We believe this level of financial support for graduate research to be unusual.

All PhD students are members of the University's Graduate School, which provides computer facilities and study space as well as networking and social opportunities to meet with students across disciplines. The Graduate School coordinates University bursaries for PGR students and also provides financial support for conference attendance. It coordinates a full graduate training programme, covering research skills, communication skills, teaching skills (where relevant) and other modules designed to improve study outcomes and employability. Full-time students are expected to complete 11 modules over 3 years, and part-time students 9 modules over 4 years.



The success of our PhD development is evidenced by the number of completions in the period (29, an average of 4 per staff FTE) and by our full-time submission rate within 48 months (95% for 2010/11 – 2014/15 cohorts). Over the REF period, 42% achieved their doctorate at first attempt, i.e. passing without corrections, and 84% passed with either no corrections or minor corrections. A high number of our PhD and postdoctoral students have gone on to academic roles, including postdoctoral positions at Antwerp, Bern, Cambridge, Lisbon, Reading, Stanford and Stockholm; temporary positions

at Bristol, Cardiff, LSE, Warwick and York; and permanent positions at Bradford, Leeds, Liverpool, the Open University, Reading, the American University of Cairo, Hokkai Gakuen University, Japan and the University of Zambia. Finally, one PhD student who completed in this period is now Dean at the Central European University.



18
publications by
PhD students and
post-docs

The strength of our PhD programme is also evidenced by the successful publication record of our students. While at Reading, our postgraduate and postdoctoral students published 18 papers, 8 of which were written collaboratively with staff, a marked change from zero such papers in the last assessment period, indicating the shift towards greater collaboration in our research culture. Papers cover a broad range of topics, including 'Implicatures in judicial opinions'; 'A corpus study of "know"'; 'The repeatability argument and the non-extensional bundle theory'; 'Nietzsche on human greatness'; and 'Virtual morality:

transitioning from moral judgement to moral action?', and were published in a broad range of well-respected journals, e.g. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, *Mind and Language*, *Philosophical Studies*, *Synthese*, *Theoria*.

The vitality of our graduate body is also evidenced by awards they have received, including:

- Winner of the *Crítica* essay competition on 'empirically informed philosophy' 2020
- Winner of the Australasian Society of Legal Philosophy Essay Competition 2020
- Winner of the University of Reading open research award 2019
- Best Poster award, European Society for Philosophy and Psychology annual conference 2017
- Award of an *Analysis* studentship (1 year)
- Award of an Aristotelian Society PhD Bursary (1 year)
- Award of an Applied Philosophy Doctoral Scholarship (1 year)
- An International Association for the Philosophy of Time Prize Bursary 2017.

Other awards include stipends to attend summer workshops (multiple awards from the University of Oslo, and two from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem). Our AHRC-funded students have also made use of the opportunity to undertake work experience secondments (e.g. a prestigious 3-month European Commission Traineeship in Brussels, and a 3-month placement at City University New York), and we hosted a PhD student from Sheffield for a 3-month AHRC-funded placement. Finally, we note the role graduate students have played in bringing research income and activity through running successful workshops and conferences (e.g. the successful *Ratio* 2019 conference on Applied Philosophy of Language, and the 2016 British Postgraduate Philosophical Association annual conference), while the REAPP annual conference is organised by graduate students every year.

We would also like to note that our inclusive approach encourages important contributions from our undergraduates. A primary mechanism for this is the University's Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP), which provides second-year undergraduate students with a 6-week summer research placement. We have been successful in securing UROP funding for nine projects across a wide range of areas, e.g. Implementing Wittgenstein's mesh analogy with a software solution; Climate change and rational choice; and Roles and representations of women in Chinese philosophy. Findings from the latter were published in *Frontiers Chinese Philosophy*, in a joint article by **Preston** and the undergraduate. These collaborative projects, crossing traditional divides in academic career stages, have served to reinforce our collaborative research aims and helped build a truly inclusive research environment.

2.5 REF submission

Equality and Diversity has played a crucial role in constructing this submission, following the University's Code of Practice. Staff were kept informed of deadlines and the process of assessing independent researcher status. All submitted staff were asked to provide assessments of their most suitable outputs, and periodically to update them. Assessments were subject to an internal peer review, with each output graded by two staff, and at an earlier stage by two external assessors. These grades, along with self-assessment and appropriate use of bibliographic metrics, informed final selection. The internal peer review process was more inclusive than previous assessment exercises; all submitted staff participated (not just senior

staff). The University’s interim Equality Impact Assessment (2020) and bias analysis (2021) identified no statistically significant differences for protected characteristics in our selection.

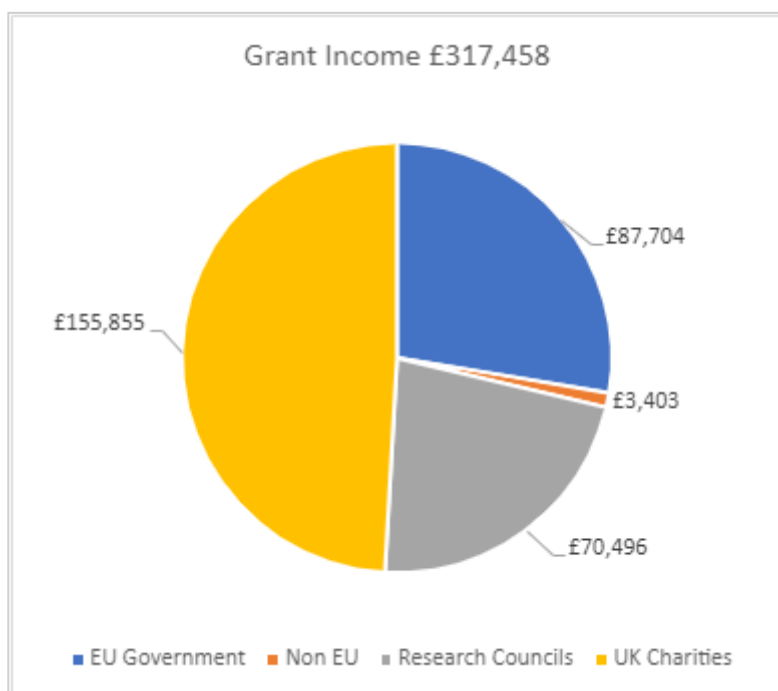
3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3.1 Research income

The Unit’s recorded research income in the period was £262,029 with the value of grants awarded at £317,458. This is a considerable increase since REF 2014.

Table 1. Income per year

	REF2014	REF2021	Increase
Income	£131,343	£262,029	99%
Per Year	£26,269	£37,433	42%
Per Year and FTE	£2,345	£5,163	120%



We note also that Philosophy has benefitted significantly from external funding not recorded in this figure:

- US\$100,000 from Stanford University (Hansen, to support one year’s research leave)
- c.£46k award from a joint University/Berkshire NHS funding board
- £14k Analysis Studentship (paid directly to a one-year postdoc)
- c.£11k in conference support from external bodies including the Analysis Trust, Aristotelian Society, Guarantors of the Brain and Mind Association.

Support from internal sources has totalled over £60k, including:

- £30k departmental-level PCRF funding
- a University Research Fellowship to carry out underpinning research for a monograph on Experimenting on social meaning (Hansen, £10k)
- a Research Dean’s Award and Interdisciplinary Research Centre award to support preliminary work on pain (Borg, £6.5k)
- Research Endowment Trust Fund awards (Oderberg, £2k; Stratton-Lake, £2k), to support work on a policy monograph and two papers respectively
- £13k from the University’s Building Impact Support Programme (BOISP).

Our total research income from all sources is thus almost £470k (£262,029 recorded REF spend plus £207,500 in other awards). Looking forward, funding beyond 2020 is already beginning to

accrue (including **Borg's** Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship and Hansen's Humboldt Research Fellowship for Experienced Researchers, both 2020-23, and Borg's British Academy Special Research Grants: COVID-19 award, 2020-21).

3.2 Infrastructure and facilities

We have enhanced our research structures in a number of ways, for instance introducing the Philosophy Research Strategy Group and weekly Informal Research Presentations. However, it is our two interdisciplinary centres, REAPP and CCR, that provide the core structural support for meeting our aim of increasing interdisciplinary collaborative research.

[Reading Ethics and Political Philosophy](#) provides the main forum for interaction between Philosophy, Law and Politics. In this assessment period, REAPP has run three two-day conferences (on 'New Directions in Realist Political Theory' and on 'New Directions in Legitimacy'); a two-day workshop on moral and rational uncertainty (with Liz Harman, Princeton, as keynote speaker); three two-day Graduate/Early Career Research Conferences. Philosophy Graduate students have also taken the lead in organising regular REAPP Reading Groups on key recent publications.

The [Centre for Cognition Research](#) receives ring-fenced funding, administrative and communications support as one of the ten University-level Interdisciplinary Research Centres. One of its main activities is the CCR Summer Seminar Series which has run continuously for 8 years (2013-20). This takes the form of high-level seminars (typically 2 hours per week for 8 weeks), involving external speakers as well as speakers from different departments within the University. Past topics have included: experimental philosophy, representation in nature, the role of mirror neurons in understanding other minds, and the interdisciplinary understanding of pain. Most of these seminar series have been funded externally, including from the AHRC, Leverhulme Trust, the Reading Centre for Integrative Neuroscience and Neurodynamics, and the Templeton Foundation. In conjunction with *Ratio*, CCR has also run:

- an inaugural two-day conference on experimental approaches to meaning (2014), with associated publication edited by Borg and Hansen
- a two-day conference on 'Experimental Philosophy as Applied Philosophy' (2016) with associated publication
- with Reading Emotions, a two-day conference on 'Pain and Belief: From meaning to modulation' (2018).

In 2019 CCR hosted a special seminar series on the work of Daniel Dennett, in advance of Dennett's week-long visit to Reading (events during his visit included a public lecture, dedicated meetings with graduate students, and a two-day symposium, where **Borg** was also a speaker). CCR also hosts overseas researchers for extended visits, including from Australia, Mexico (with one Mexican visitor funded by a British Academy Newton Mobility Grant), the USA, and multiple visitors from China (often in receipt of Chinese Government funding), again enriching the collaborative research environment of the Department.



in joint University of Reading/Berkshire NHS funding, to support a Philosophy Research Assistant working in the Royal Berkshire Hospital's Pain Management Unit

CCR provides the key infrastructure for leveraging the University's partnership with the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Collaborative work with the Hospital is supported in a number of ways. University pump-priming resources supported a series of CCR seminars and a patient workshop exploring the understanding of pain, with follow-up funding enabling us to run a two-day conference. A joint postdoctoral researcher (Sarah Fisher), based at the University and the Hospital's Pain Management Clinic, is currently funded by the Joint

Academic Board of the two institutions. Contacts between CCR and RBH have been instrumental in a number of researchers taking forward research projects on issues in healthcare, including two clinicians from the Pain Management Unit (Dr Deepak Ravindran, the Director and Harriet Wilkinson, a physiotherapist).

Infrastructure beyond the Unit has also been important. The University has recently invested £42m on a refurbishment of the main library. Support within the Heritage & Creativity Research Theme has provided training, communities of practice and financial support through seed funding. The impact support programme, BOISP, funds an Impact Manager for H&C who provides planning support, advice and small amounts of funding for stakeholder events or teaching buy-out. Work with the University Communications Team has underpinned a growth in public engagement, taking the benefits of research to a wider audience.

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

Our research has achieved a material effect beyond academia, on society, culture, and public policy. Early in the REF period we identified two key audiences for our research – healthcare and business – and have worked with these two groups to influence attitudes, understanding and awareness, and impact on behaviour and policy change. We have also worked to raise public understanding in a range of further areas.

4.1 Collaborations, networks and partnerships outside academia

Healthcare

A significant amount of the research we undertake has direct implications for issues in healthcare and we have developed a number of new partnerships to translate the benefit of our work to this sector. An example of this is **Oderberg's** project on Conscientious Objection in Healthcare, which has involved working with advocates, policymakers and legislators to improve the understanding of freedom of conscience in medicine and to develop policy proposals (see Impact Case Study). To support this, **Oderberg** also gave evidence to the Nuffield Council on Bioethics inquiry into Genome Editing and Human Reproduction (2018).

Oderberg's work has involved national and international collaboration, and we have also sought to grow our engagement with local healthcare providers and users to seek mutual benefit from our work within our community. A core strand of this work has involved a multidisciplinary team, led by **Borg**, working to develop a novel theory of the concept of pain (the 'polyeidic'/many ideas' approach) and explore its implications for treatment. The team comprises: **Borg, Hansen, Stazicker** (Philosophy); two academics from Psychology; pain patients, including from the RBH Pain Management Unit and networks such as the Berkshire Fibromyalgia support group; and clinicians from the Royal Berkshire Hospital (primarily Dr Deepak Ravindran, Director of the Pain Management Unit, and Dr Atul Kapila, Consultant Anaesthetist).

Our aim has been to show how a more nuanced understanding of the concept of, and our language for, pain could improve outcomes from psychological pain management programmes, thereby improving the lives of chronic pain sufferers. The team has advanced understanding beyond academia in a number of ways. These have included running a 2-day conference attended by over 100 pain practitioners and academics; devising and running a series of 'citizen science' experiments to clarify the ways in which ordinary people think and talk about pain; and hosting a consultation workshop with chronic pain patients. Preliminary findings have been delivered to clinical practitioners (e.g. **Borg's** delivery of a Sowerby Lecture for medical students at King's College London) and we are now trialling the clinical dimensions of this research (led by postdoctoral researcher, Fisher, working across the Hospital and the University). Our aim is to contribute to the stratification of patients pre-treatment and to the delivery of psychological interventions, helping to improve both the use of limited NHS resources and outcomes for patients. The team have also contributed to public understanding by explaining the ideas behind the science (e.g. **Borg's** talks at the *Bath Taps Into Science* festival of ideas (2019) and articles published in [The Conversation](#) and [The Independent](#)).

Other staff have also been active in exploring issues in healthcare. **Newey** has published on fair allocations of healthcare resources for children and how this might inform fair allocations of

resources for adults, and this has led her to a more general interest on the use of the word 'fairness' within the NHS Constitution, work she is undertaking with the help of University funding). **Elson** has worked on the ethical issues raised by privatisation of healthcare provision. In all these areas, we have been able to translate sometimes abstract philosophical research into tangible benefits for the healthcare sector, by working alongside clinical colleagues and patients.

Business ethics

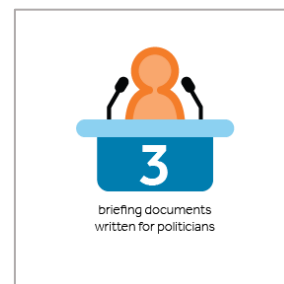
A range of systemic scandals have rocked the business world since the financial crisis of 2008 and these have brought questions about the nature of the relationship between society and the private sector to public and political prominence. It was clear to us that a significant amount of our research was directly relevant to these questions and we have seen a step-change in our work to engage with this sector. A focus of our collaboration with Ethical Reading has been 'doing business better', using social contract theory to ask what a 'social purpose' is, and whether companies should specify and fulfil such a purpose to earn their place in society (summarised in a [well-attended public lecture](#)).

The benefits this integrated working have brought are outlined in **Borg** and **Hooker's** Impact Case Study on Philosophy and Fair Business, which has had a material impact on business thinking and practice, helping to raise ethical standards across the Reading Borough area. However, collaborations with the business sector have also been important for other researchers in the Unit, who have used our partnership with Ethical Reading to reach out to a wider business audience. **Elson, Hansen, Newey, Oderberg, and Stratton-Lake** have all delivered webinars for Ethical Reading's business partners and/or presented at Ethical Reading's public events.

Elson has also worked with other non-academic partners to explore the ethical dimensions of carbon off-setting, culminating in an appearance (2019) as an invited contributor to a public panel discussion on 'Offsetting: A useful strategy in meeting net zero carbon targets?', organised by the Happold Foundation and Ngenuity, with support from The Built Environment Trust in their City Conversations series of thought-leadership discussions. His work has also informed public understanding of these issues (e.g. through an article in [The Conversation](#)).

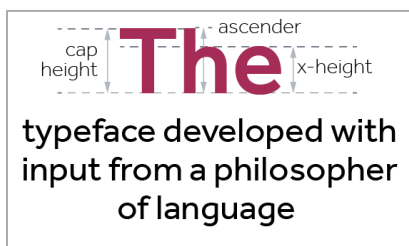
Finally, **Borg** and **Hooker** have written the following three briefing documents:

- a briefing for the banking standards board (October 2015)
- a briefing document for Max von Thum, at the time Chief Economic Advisor for the Liberal Democrats (autumn 2018)
- a briefing document for the Social Liberal Forum, a sub-group within the Lib Dems particularly concerned with economic policies (autumn 2018).



Borg is building on this work for her British Academy-funded research on reshaping relations between the state and the private sector post-COVID-19, and has already published a [consultation document on social licences for business](#) and submitted evidence to [European Commission enquiries](#) and UK Treasury enquiries on [taxation](#) and [greening the post-COVID recovery](#).

Other stakeholders



Depending on the focus on their work, staff have also engaged with a range of other partners, demonstrating the applicability of philosophical research. For instance, conversations with **Hansen** about his research on the context-sensitivity of colour has been cited as an influence on the way works were exhibited by a modern jewellery gallery in San Francisco (Sienna Patti Gallery, [A Color-Curated Pop-Up](#), Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture). Discussions with partners at the New York graphic design firm LABOUR about the nature of

context-sensitivity in communication (**Hansen**) inspired the designers to produce a new context-sensitive typeface, Visage, which was used on catalogues for Yale University's art gallery, and on a range of clothing for the company 2k by Gingham (2006-2009, [Visage typeface](#), LABOUR).

Informing public understanding

We have engaged in a number of public debates through a variety of formats. **De Gaynesford** was an invited guest on the Radio 3 programme 'Freethinking' (2020) to discuss film and imagination, and **Oderberg** appeared on Radio 4's 'The Moral Maze' (2016) to discuss the psychology of morality. Both **Oderberg** and **Hooker** appeared on Radio 4's 'In Our Time' (2017, 2015), **Hooker** participated in a panel discussion on fairness on Radio 3 (2015), and **Borg** spoke on BBC Radio Berkshire (2014) discussing animal cognition. **Borg** was also interviewed about her research for the arts magazine [3AM](#) (2018) and has spoken at a number of public festivals, including How the Light Gets In (2015) and Being Human (2014). **Preston's** [website](#) and Facebook feed (Wittgenstein Day-by-Day) has received significant public interest, with some posts to the latter seen by more than 3,000 people. His article in [The Conversation](#) (2018), has been read by 13,900 people and shared 1215 times. Finally, our graduate students are also encouraged to get involved in engagement activities and have written for mainstream media including *The Conversation* and *The Independent*.

4.2 Research collaborations, partnerships and networks

Our view is that progress on problems in philosophy is enhanced by critical engagement with



ideas from diverse audiences, and we have therefore sought to create knowledge exchange networks with a broad range of collaborators. International collaborations are of particular interest and we have worked to develop and grow our academic networks and partnerships, in particular our research connections with China as part of our aim of growing the representation of non-Western researchers in UK Philosophy. Activity in this area has included:

- Two joint conferences (one hosted in Beijing and one in Reading, as part of **Borg** and Hansen's AHRC Research Network Award, held jointly with Peking University).
- **Preston** has been an Academic Visitor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Director of the Oxford University Summer Institute in Philosophy at Huaqiao University, Xiamen, China (2015). He was subsequently a visiting professor at Huaqiao (2015-18).
- We are members of the UK-China Scholarship scheme, bringing Philosophy PhD students from universities in mainland China to study for one year in the Departments of Philosophy at King's College London, Oxford and Reading (coordinator: **Preston**).
- **Preston** and **De Gaynesford** gave papers at the 2015 International Wittgenstein Conference at Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou.
- Two temporary members of staff were supported to present papers at the Reading/Huaqiao/Wuhan conference in Xiamen, 2017.
- 17 visiting academics from China (PhD students and academic staff) have spent time at Reading (with visits ranging from one week to one year), with many in receipt of Chinese Government funding for their visit.

Other international connections have also helped to ensure the reach of our ideas beyond the UK. For instance, **Borg** served as an Associate Investigator (invited), at the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence in Cognition and its Disorders, Macquarie University (2015-19); **Hansen** is an Affiliate Member of a major new project in Sweden, Knowledge Resistance (2019-25); **Hansen** has also been awarded a prestigious Humboldt Research Fellowship for Experienced Researchers which will involve three extended periods at the Freie Universität in Berlin (2020-23); Schroeder established an Erasmus link with the University of Grenoble (funding four week-long visits during the assessment period to give seminars and talks, with Professor Clot-Goudard visiting Reading in return).

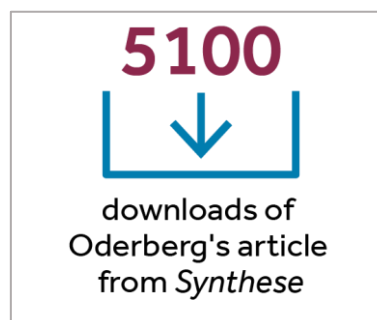


40
external faculty and PhD
students hosted for
extended periods

Overall we have hosted over 40 faculty and PhD students for extended research visits. This is a significant number of visitors for a small department and contributes to the vibrancy of our international collaborations and the knowledge-transfer networks and critical engagement they support.

4.3 Contributions to the research base

Publications



During the period we have produced 156 publications (including in leading journals such as *Ethics* and *Nous*), with many having demonstrably wide reach across the research base. While acknowledging the limitations of metrics, we note that:

- **Oderberg's** paper 'Finality Revived: Powers and Intentionality' (2016) was recorded in 2016 as the most downloaded article ever published in *Synthese*. To date it has been accessed over 5100 times and is in the top 12% of 264,340 tracked articles of a similar age in all journals scored by Altmetric.
- **Oderberg's** paper 'Further Clarity on Cooperation and Morality' (2017) was a Feature Article with peer commentary in the *Journal of Medical Ethics* and is ranked in the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric.
- **Borg's** 2018 paper 'Millikan, Meaning and Minimalism', in *Theoria* was one of the top 20 most downloaded papers from that journal in 2019.
- A paper on 'Simulating Moral Actions' by Kathryn Frances (postdoctoral student employed on the Leverhulme project on The Philosophy and Psychology of Philosophical Thought Experiments), was recognised by *Scientific Reports* in their Top 100 most widely read papers of 2017, from a field of over 24,000 articles, and has an Altmetric score of 240 (with an Attention Score in the 99th percentile for articles of a similar age).

Editorships and peer review

Philosophy at Reading has made significant contributions to the research base. It is home to the international journal *Ratio* (Editor: **Oderberg**, with all research-active staff serving on the editorial board) and runs the annual *Ratio* conference. In addition, we have contributed staff to serve on the Editorial Boards of 10 international philosophy journals: *Ethics*, *Revista de filosofía*, *International Review of Pragmatics*, *Linguistics and Philosophy*, *Metaphysica*, *Mind and Language*, *Philosophical Investigations*, *Politics, Philosophy, and Economics*, *Recherches sur la philosophie et le langage*, *Studia Neoaristotelica*, *Theoria*; and the book series 'Studies in Philosophy of Language and Linguistics', Peter Lang.

Staff have acted as manuscript reviewers for most major presses and journals, and as reviewers for a wide range of grant applications (including for international panels), and **Borg** currently sits on the Leverhulme Trust Advisory Panel. Staff have served as examiners for higher degrees at many institutions, at home and abroad (including Barcelona, Bristol, the Central European

University, Colorado, London, Oxford, Vanderbilt). **Borg** served on the Mind Association Executive Committee (2013-19), and Hooker will be President of the Mind Association (2021-22). Hooker played a key role in the successful application to the AHRC for the South, West and Wales Doctoral Training Partnership (2014-18, £14m).

Conferences and keynotes



Staff have given over 50 talks at international conferences/workshops (with 13 keynote addresses, including at important interdisciplinary events such as the 'Ninth International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Modeling and Using Context', Cyprus, 2015, and 'The Origins of Thought: Early Cognitive Abilities' conference, Spain, 2015), helping to maximise the reach of our ideas. We have also run 15 conferences and workshops at Reading, helping to advance understanding and knowledge transfer within the profession.

Our contribution to Philosophy's research base is indicative of the vibrancy of our research environment. Alongside our work with academic and non-academic partners, it demonstrates how our shift towards more collaborative working, and the partnerships this has given rise to, have enabled Philosophy at Reading to make a sustained and valuable contribution to our discipline and to public debate. During this period we have created and sustained an active, agile and collaborative research environment, which has enabled researchers at all levels to tackle important questions through cross-disciplinary and international working. We remain focused on continuing to build on this ethos and our areas of strength into the future to ensure the on-going value and reach of our research.