

Institution: University of Northampton
Unit of Assessment: Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience (UoA4)
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>1.1 Unit context and structure</p> <p>In 2014, psychological research was spread across a number of schools, research centres and groups. This work has now been refocussed as a result of moving from a school structure to a new faculty structure. Psychology now sits within the Faculty of Health, Education and Society (FHES) with all activity contained within a single Centre for Psychology and Social Sciences (CP&SS). An extensive consultation with research active staff identified three key areas of interest and led to the creation of three research themes: Exceptional Experiences & Consciousness Studies (EECS); Diversity, Community & Equality (DCI); and Health Education & Behaviour Change (HEBC). All research active members of staff within Psychology are affiliated with the Centre and are aligned with one or more of the thematic areas. Theme membership is not exclusive; staff are encouraged to align with other groups and work with colleagues from other disciplines across the university depending on research interest and expertise. Researchers are supported in establishing national and international networks that can lead to collaborations across HEIs.</p> <p>Psychology has experienced a significant change in the staffing profile of the unit over the current REF cycle with only 2 of the 8 staff submitted to REF2014 still with the unit. Targeted recruitment and staff development have, however, led to a substantial increase in the number of staff eligible to be returned as part of this submission (19). The consequent growth in depth and breadth of research activity has allowed us to establish a viable and authentic research community that is able to support the aspirations of its members in all stages of their career.</p> <p>A professorial level member of UoN staff, Roe, serves as centre lead, and four experienced researchers, Prokopiou, Gulliford, Hill and Chen-Wilson (jointly) serve as theme leads for DCI, EECS and HEBC respectively. The roles and responsibilities were co-created by the centre and theme leads. The Centre is responsible for the strategic direction of research activity, including alignment with the University's strategic plan, and ensuring that institutional targets are met. The Centre acts as a focal point for gathering and reporting on information that maps against key performance indicators, and through which resources are deployed to support research initiatives. Operational matters are devolved to theme level, with each theme running regular workshops and meetings to develop staff and help progress ongoing research projects.</p> <p>Research is managed by the Centre via a clear organisational structure and a regular programme of events that affords top-down dissemination of information and bottom-up discussion of challenges and opportunities. Research in the Centre has been developed to align with the university's <i>Strategic Plan 2015-2020</i>, specifically to focus on research that can have local, national and international impact upon people's health and wellbeing. Given the growth of research activity over the review period, and in response to the adoption of the <i>Research Plan 2020-2025</i>, this brief has been expanded to emphasise Equality & Inclusion, Collaboration & Internationalisation (including an increase in the number of Visiting Professor and Visiting Fellow), and Open Research.</p> <p>The theme leads maintain routine contact with all colleagues aligned to their theme and are responsible for reporting back on local issues at regular operational meetings with the Centre Lead. In turn, CP&SS are accountable to the Faculty Research & Enterprise Committee (FREC), which is responsible for regulation and quality assurance. FREC sets annual performance targets and provides an overarching framework for the Centre's strategic direction and research development support. The Centre manages Psychology research in the Faculty by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. organising and hosting research workshops, seminars and events, including arrangement

- for external speakers to give talks at the university and meet with colleagues;
- 2. disseminating, and consulting with colleagues in relation to research-related updates, opportunities and events;
- 3. representing the centre at Faculty and institutional events and committees, and attending meetings, committees and staff development events with course teams;
- 4. signposting and developing opportunities for research skills-development;
- 5. supporting staff in the preparation of bids, and assembling expert teams, when opportunities for research, evaluation and consultation arise;
- 6. mentoring early career researchers (ECRs) and would-be researchers in Psychology and cognate disciplines;
- 7. providing a collective identity, and a locus of discipline-based training, for postgraduate researchers in Psychology;
- 8. providing peer-review for colleagues' nascent research bids, publications, strategies and impacts and
- 9. providing a home and an identity for Visiting Professors/Fellows.

Over the current REF period the Centre's priorities have been:

1. **Diversity, community and identity.** The DCI group led by **Prokopiou** is dedicated to undertaking interdisciplinary applied research which promotes social change and social justice. Their research foci span social and cultural identities, immigration and refugee studies, ethnicity, class, critical feminist perspectives, human geographies, queer studies, online spaces, deviance, professional identities, education, sexual harassment and build and space.
2. **Exceptional experience and consciousness studies.** The EECS group led by **Gulliford** is dedicated to the study of exceptional experiences from a variety of perspectives ranging from parapsychology and anomalistic psychology to transpersonal psychology. Their research foci span anomalous experiences, religious experiences, spirituality, sleep & dreams, mindfulness, mental health, wellbeing, cognition and the nature of consciousness.
3. **Health, Education, & behaviour change.** The HEBC research theme led by **Chen-Wilson** and **Hill** draws on cross-disciplinary expertise from researchers within the Faculty of Health and Society to understand behaviour change and address real world problems in the areas of health and education. HEBC researchers are inter-disciplinary and utilise a range of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches to conduct applied research and advance existing knowledge within this area.

1.2 Unit research objectives and impact strategy

For REF 2014 the following objectives were set:

1. **Ensure each group achieves a critical mass and generates sufficient income to provide a resource platform for ongoing research activity that is self-sustaining and impactful**

In 2014 there were 4 research groupings within Psychology: Cognitive & Experimental Research Team (CERT); Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes (CSAPP); Mental Health & Counselling (MHaC); and Social & Cultural Research in Psychology Group (SCRIP). Staff changes and restructuring led to a shift in the profile of research expertise and a new structure was developed to fit with the existing expertise and research interests, with larger numbers of staff aligned to each theme that enhances their sustainability. The Centre for Psychology and Social Sciences now serves as a focal point for co-ordinating research activity and providing research active staff with an identity. The Centre's operational plan ensures that local activity aligns with the Faculty's strategic aims.

Since 2014 there has been considerable investment in the recruitment and development of staff. Metrics (e.g. research income, peer reviewed research outputs, PGR supervisions) that are returned periodically demonstrate steady and sustainable progress in the amount of research funding won, and in diversifying the sources of funding. Growth in staff numbers and targeted appointments ensures that each theme now has a critical mass of researchers with a shared vision that creates momentum and protects the group from any effects of staff turnover.

2. Maintain/enhance specialist areas to achieve international recognition in our research groups

We have managed to achieve a steady and sustainable expansion in the international reach of our research. Judicious appointments to strengthen areas of established expertise have enabled significant growth in the number of international research collaborations (as described in §4.1) and funding partnerships (described in §3.1). Outputs are published in a much wider range of international peer-reviewed journals, enhancing the profile of the unit. Nevertheless, many staff are ECRs and supporting them to develop their own research networks remains a priority.

3. Develop collaborative research projects with divisional colleagues, staff from other disciplines around the university and with external researchers

Reorganising research activity under the umbrella of the CP&SS has enabled us to broaden the scope of the centre's activities and encourage colleagues who would not have identified with the specialisms of CERT, CSAPP, MHaC, SCRIP to feel that their research ambitions can be realised within the new structure. An extensive mapping exercise has ensured that the new framework is a much better fit for the expertise and interests of members. Themes have been designed to encourage cross-disciplinary work, and to facilitate collaborations across traditional silos. PGR supervision has provided further opportunities for staff to work closely with colleagues from other disciplines (§4.1). Support mechanisms have been established to enable networking opportunities (§2.1) and this is evident in the range of national and international partners that staff have collaborated with (§4.1)

In the next research cycle, we will continue our commitment to conduct research that can have positive consequences for health and wellbeing. Going forward, this will be enhanced by the University of Northampton's pledge to align our impact work with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS), and our undertaking to make our first submission to the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings in 2021. Future Psychology work will be positioned with respect to SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing, and will be achieved by strengthening our relationships with key stakeholders, including Northamptonshire County Council, Age UK, the PSHE Association and Confederation of Healing Organisations to ensure that our work has real impact for real people.

Additionally, in order to meet the challenges of the University's Research Plan 2020-2025, Psychology will be focused on the following objectives over the next five years:

1. **Equality and inclusion.** We will aim to use our research to advance issues of equality, inclusion and social mobility. Numbers of projects and outputs across these areas will increase with research carried out being to the highest ethical standards.
2. **Internationalisation.** We have taken a strategic decision to broaden the international scope of Psychological research within UoN. This will enhance our ability to contribute to our wider discipline and will enhance our research-led teaching offer. Future staffing appointments will be directed towards this objective.
3. **Impact and collaboration.** We will enhance our social impact by focusing on public engagement. UoN is the first UK member of the Ashoka U network of socially-impactful universities. It has an institution-wide Changemaker Challenge that focuses on 'Culture,

Heritage and Environment', and Psychology will continue to take a leading role on this theme.

4. **Accessibility.** We will increase the accessibility of our research ensuring it is available to both Psychology professionals and academics as well as the wider public.

1.3 Open access

Recognising the difficulties in replicating research studies within the field of Psychology, in addition to receiving training and support in open access and copyright, staff have been trained in research data management paying particular attention to the preservation and reproducibility of research. Datasets are now required to be uploaded to the Universities CRIS (Current Research Information System) on submission, where it is checked for replicability and long-term digital preservation. Staff adhere to the FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable and reasonable) sharing of data, striving to be as open as possible, but understanding when necessary restrictions are required. Staff have been provided with training in the selection of places for publication and use tools such as Sherpa/Romeo to check funder requirements and conditions relating to copyright. Where appropriate, staff are encouraged to use copyright addendums, tailored support for this is provided by Library and Learning Services. The University of Northampton has an institutional fund to cover the cost of open access where the green route is either not applicable, or the length of the embargo period is too lengthy.

1.4 Research integrity

Psychology supports a culture of research integrity. It works within the University of Northampton's Research Integrity Policy, which seeks to: maintain the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research; ensure that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards; support a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers; use transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise; and work together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly. Researchers work within the ethical guidelines provided by the British Psychological Society (BPS) and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), and all activity is overseen by a dedicated Faculty level research ethics panel (PGR projects are scrutinised by a university level Research Ethics Committee).

2. People

2.1 Staffing strategy and staff development

An essential factor in the appointment of new staff has been their capacity to contribute to the strategic priorities of the research themes. Since 2014, person specifications for all Psychology roles (excluding Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) and roles that require practitioner qualifications and experience) have included criteria relating to research expertise and previous track record. Candidates' experience of (and capacity to develop) research outputs, funding bids and postgraduate supervision are assessed during shortlisting and interviews. Practising counsellors and psychotherapists who have joined us to contribute to our undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes have been encouraged to undertake advanced degrees as part of their professional development so that scientific good practice can complement their extensive professional experience (e.g., **Harrison-Breed, Evenden**).

New appointments have been targeted to build on the strengths in DCI, EECS and HEBC. All new staff are research active (having completed or being registered for a PhD or equivalent) and contribute to research activity. However, many are ECRs, and so considerable efforts have been made to support their research aspirations and enable professional development. The Research

Leader, **Roe**, meets with all new appointments to introduce Research Centre themes, identify staff with overlapping interests and facilitate introductions, signpost support mechanisms, and set research-related milestones for the probationary period and beyond.

A significant aspect of professional development has been the growth in capacity to supervise PhD projects, with Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) numbers increasing from 22 in 2013 to 32 (22 current, 10 awarded), which has created opportunities for staff collaborations and foci for research group activity. The groups have established significant international reputations for their work, evidenced by their key involvement in collaborative projects that have been awarded over GBP5,000,000 in external funding since 2014 (of which GBP1,250,000 comes to the University of Northampton), by invitations to give addresses at international conferences and to contribute to edited book projects (outlined in §4.1).

Staff participate in a Performance and Development Review (PDR) annual cycle that must include at least one objective that is research/scholarship related. Line managers meet regularly with staff to review progress against targets, and to identify any challenges or resource needs that might hinder successful completion. The PDR is also the process through which individual research training needs are identified staff are allocated scholarly hours per annum that can be set against their PDR research objectives and progress is monitored as part of their PDR process. In 2020 the university introduced a teaching and research contract to formally recognise research hours for research active staff (220 hours) which was additional to the hours already provided to them in workload planning for scholarly activity.

Research activity is facilitated at Faculty level by seedcorn funding initiatives to pump prime promising research projects. For example, **Cooper**, **Saunders** and **Hitchman** were given funding for a proof of principle pilot study that later resulted in a publication and a successful funding bid to the Society for Psychical Research (see §3.1), **da Silva** completed a Quantitative Electroencephalography accreditation to complete work that resulted in outputs included in this submission, **Volkovskaya** and **Jivraj** received funds to enable a collaboration with St Andrew's Hospital in Northampton that provides specialist mental healthcare, and **Prokopiou** and **Hill** were able to appoint research assistants to complete additional transcription of material mapping impact of ongoing projects.

We provide additional support by allocating staff development funds to enable individuals to attend conferences and professional meetings in order to disseminate research findings and to network with colleagues both nationally and internationally. In applying for staff development funds, colleagues are asked to identify the outcomes that would be realised from that activity in terms of publications, collaborations, and funding bids. We have several examples of this investment in staff developmental funds leading to externally funded projects such as **Prokopiou's** Horizon 2020 project, **Yarrum's** NIHR funded project, **Gulliford's** Templeton project.

Within the Faculty of Health, Education & Society, members also have access to an extensive offer of interdisciplinary researcher-development training, workshops and seminars delivered through the Faculty's Research and Innovation Development programme. This programme of events was directly indexed to the four domains of the Vitae (2015) Researcher Development Framework but has since been updated to align with the obligations of the Vitae (2019) Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. The programme is reviewed annually through consultation with the Faculty's multidisciplinary research community, and sessions are explicitly tailored for 'Beginner', 'PGR', 'ECR' or 'Mid-career+' audiences. The Faculty Research and Innovation Development programme includes more than 20 core focused workshops (e.g., 'building partnerships for research', 'researcher well-being', and 'navigating peer review').

Staff at all stages of career development are expected to participate in weekly Psychology-specific seminars and workshops, with responsibility for session content rotating among the Centre and themes on a regular 4-week cycle. Recent examples of Centre workshops include: 'Writing for publication: Sharing hints and tips for good practice'; 'How to cost a bid: A practical guide to costing a grant application and getting university approval'; 'Researching for impact',

'Secondary analysis of summary statistics', and 'PhD examining'. Theme meetings are more intimate and topic-specific but include 'shut up and write' sessions where staff work individually but in a supportive collective environment, and informal 'show and tell' sessions in which staff can pitch research ideas, provide updates on ongoing projects, or practise conference presentations.

Staff with PhDs are encouraged to supervise PGRs. In Psychology, a mentorship model has been adopted so as to strategically increase and augment the supervisory capacity within the unit. This involves the creation of supervisory teams that comprise a Director of Studies, a First Supervisor and a Second Supervisor (one of the two supervisors may serve as the DoS, to create a team of two). A DoS is expected to have experience of supervising to successful completion, and to be familiar with UoN processes and procedures. In this way, inexperienced staff can join supervision teams under the mentorship of a more senior colleague. For REF2014 we had two members of staff who had sufficient supervision experience to qualify as DoS; for REF 2021 this has increased to eleven (with a further four staff currently working towards this). A further twelve Psychology staff have been involved in PhD supervision for the first time.

Many projects are inter-disciplinary, and supervisory teams are not restricted to staff with psychology-specific expertise, so that members have benefited from the opportunity to work closely with colleagues from a wide range of related subject areas, including sociology, education, health, nursing, media Studies, computing and human geography. All staff appointed to supervisory teams are required to complete a Supervisor Development Programme that is run centrally by the Graduate School. Staff can achieve a PG Cert award by topping up this programme with an additional placement module (e.g., **Cooper, Hill, Maunder, L.A. Smith**). Supervisors are expected to undertake continuing professional development in respect of their supervision duties. The Graduate School runs regular refresher and update workshops ('Supervising the early stages of a research degree', 'Maintaining your research degree student's momentum', 'Supervising the end game', 'Being a research degree examiner') and hosts an annual event that explores key issues. Several Psychology colleagues have contributed to this programme and run regular events on behalf of the Graduate School (e.g., **Bartos, Callaghan, Collings, Maunder, Pourseied, Roe**).

For more experienced staff, the university have awarded the title of Associate Professor to recognise significant contributions in the areas of Learning and Teaching, Professional Practice, and Enterprise, and Research. Members who are awarded the title of Associate Professor work with a senior Professorial colleague, internal or external, from their discipline and have opportunities to participate in Faculty and Institutional committees relating to research governance, strategy, ethics and excellence. Each Associate Professor works with their mentor to identify appropriate objectives and set out a pathway for their achievement that would enable them to meet the criteria for full professor status. The Psychology unit has 3 Associate Professors (**Gulliford, Hill, and Maunder**).

Faculty leaders have made a number of strategic investments in Visiting Fellows / Visiting Professors with strong, international reputations in subdisciplines aligned to the three centre themes. These appointments are designed to provide additional, subject-specific leadership, mentoring and guidance. For example, Fiona **Warner-Gale** is a core member of national networks concerned with child and adolescent mental health and supports the IAPT team. Erica **Bowen** is Professor at the University of Worcester, and leads the research strategy for the Centre for Violence Prevention. She has advised on research supervision and has served as a mentor to mid-career staff. Richard **Broughton** is a past Director of the Rhine Research Centre, Durham, North Carolina, and has supported EECS staff. Leo **Ruickbie** is a sociologist/historian and an experienced book and journal editor who provides support for qualitative projects and to those who are new to publishing. Paul **Rogers** has particular expertise with multivariate statistical analysis and supports staff conducting quantitative research.

2.2 Postgraduate researchers

In the current REF period, 46 PGRs (32 attributed to Psychology) have been supervised by

members of this unit, continuing a steady and sustainable growth in Psychology supervision across a range of disciplines. Given the multidisciplinary nature of Psychology, some PGRs supervised by Psychology staff are not based in Psychology but in allied disciplines, such as Computing, Education, Health, Human Geography, Media Studies, Nursing, and Sociology. The majority of PGRs are self-funding home/EU students who are registered part-time, but the cohort also includes eight students who have received bursaries from externally funded projects won by staff, from the Fundação Bial, Porto, the Fondation Salvia, Geneva, the Confederation of Healing Organisations, UK, and the Indian Government. Additionally, the Faculty has invested in a successful strategy to create 4-year Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) positions that include a fee waiver to register for PhD study. To date, three GTAs have been awarded their PhDs, a further three are close to completion, and two have recently been created from Templeton and Bial Foundation awards. PGRs thus form a large, vibrant, and active part of the Psychology research community.

PGR students are assigned to a research centre upon entry based on their research topic and proposed methods. They are expected to participate in centre events as part of their discipline-based training as outlined in the university's *Framework for Postgraduate Researcher Development*. All PGRs are supervised by a team of 2-3 subject or methodology specialists. In Psychology, the sustainable growth in supervisory capacity has enabled supervisory teams to be increasingly tailored to PGRs' interests and needs. Supervisory teams are allocated at the initial application stage and are designed to offer a balance of subject expertise, methodological background and supervisory experience. Supervisory teams meet regularly with PGRs, and work closely with them to support and monitor the development of their project, research skills and professional-academic development.

All PGRs receive an extensive package of induction and generic researcher-development training from the University's Graduate School. For example, in the academic year 2019-20 over 40 workshops and seminars were scheduled that focused on practical matters (e.g., 'Developing academic writing skills'; 'How to conduct a literature review'; 'Editing and finishing your thesis'), methodological matters (e.g., introductory and intermediate classes on quantitative and qualitative analysis methods; use of software packages such as SPSS and NVivo), operational matters (e.g., how to deal with key QU stages such as initial project approval, transfer, the mock viva, and preparing for the viva itself), and also personal wellbeing (self-care). Many of these sessions are accessible online for students who are not based locally, via a dedicated Gateway platform. This provision has expanded greatly during lockdown as a consequence of the Covid pandemic. Additional workshops and drop-in sessions have been organised to help students cope with the peculiar demands of working during social isolation. This is complemented by discipline-based training delivered by the Faculty's induction programme (co-presented by the CP&SS lead), which includes an introduction to the research centre and themes, and to Psychology's research facilities and software.

The University implements a milestone model to monitor and support PGR progression. Following an initial probationary period, PGRs submit an initial project proposal to a Social Sciences Research Degrees Board (SSRDB). **Roe** is Chair of the SSRDB and **Maunder** and **Chen-Wilson** are board members, ensuring that issues and examples of good practice that are identified there can be disseminated appropriately to colleagues in Psychology. After 12 months (full time, 18 months part time), PGRs are expected to have completed a number of quality assurance stages: they must secure ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee, complete a research seminar that overviews the project and considers the implications of their empirical strategy, submit a 'substantial piece of work' (typically a draft literature review and a critically reflexive account of their chosen methodology) for review by the supervisory team, and to have successfully defended their research plans at a transfer viva chaired by an academic who is independent of the supervisory team. These elements allow the team to make a judgement about the candidate's capacity to work at an appropriate level, and provide them with practical experience of justifying their reading of the literature and its implications for their own work, both in writing and orally. Subsequently, the supervisory team is required to submit an annual report, in consultation with the PGR, which provides an opportunity to review progress, identify challenges and agree plans to enable the PGR to work towards submission. Additional support is also available from the University's central Assist,

Learning Development and Educational Linguistics teams (see §2.3).

The university provides project funds of GBP300 per annum for part-time and GBP500 for fulltime students that can be used to cover research expenses. The university also offers a number of competitive Bursaries, scholarships and awards that are available annually or biannually, such as the Chancellors fund, the Dr Mike Daniel Research Degree Scholarship, and the T. D. Lewis Scholarship. Psychology PGRs have used such awards to acquire additional laboratory equipment, underwrite participant costs in attending research sessions, attend national and international conferences, and enable data collection to take place in China. Since 2019, PGRs have been able to apply to a Research Environment Enhancement Fund (REEF) designed to help them develop employability skills, in preparation for a career in academia or in industry. One of the successful applicants to the REEF from Psychology (**Nangare**) now has an academic appointment at Coventry University. UoN is a member of the East Midlands Doctoral Network (EMDoc) and the Midlands Doctoral Researcher Forum (MDRF) giving access to an annual conference involving the collaboration of nine universities in the East Midlands region allows our PGR and their supervisors the opportunity for networking, presenting and wider support.

The University of Northampton has scored strongly in Advance HE's Postgraduate Researcher Experience Survey (PRES). The University as a whole was ranked 4th overall in 2018, and in 2019 ranked in the top ten nationally [across 103 HEIs] for 5 of 8 parameters. In 2020 we were ranked in the first quartile for all 8 key parameters (Supervision, Resources, Research culture, Progression, Responsibilities, Research skills, Professional development, and Overall) and ranked number 1 overall in global comparisons with all participating HEIs. At a subject level, Psychology recorded a PRES overall satisfaction of 88%, ahead of the national average of 84% for the same period consistently scoring better than the national average for 7 of 8 key parameters, and better than averages for Post-92 HEIs on all 8 parameters.

2.3 Equality and diversity

Psychology have a strong research tradition around critical and inclusive practice, and so is especially committed to excellence in terms of equality and inclusion in research practice. The University has arrangements that support flexible and/or remote working that is sensitive to individual needs. In response to occupational health assessments, specialist office equipment is provided, and staff are supported through periods of sick leave and parental leave with phased returns to work and flexible working patterns. In practice, colleagues advance this aim through sustained, routine activities including, but not limited to:

1. Ensuring that all local research policies and strategic plans undergo formal Equality Impact Assessment; supporting disciplinary colleagues to extend this practice to diverse aspects of research, innovation, policy, practice, learning and teaching within the institution; and leading collegiate discussions and the enhancement of practice via this process
2. Leading and supporting regularly-refreshed institutional training on equalities and diversities in the workplace, and convening workshops and development on equalities and inclusion within diverse educational settings
3. Constituting a disciplinary ethics committee to offer specialist guidance and development regarding equality and inclusion issues staff, PGR and undergraduate research
4. Working with the Faculty lead on community-building and inclusion to co-develop discipline-specific opportunities for colleagues to maintain a community of collaboration around inclusion issues and research at local, national and international levels
5. Enhancing annual Centre reporting processes to evidence the ways in which Psychology research demonstrates positive impacts with respect to issues of equality, inclusion, and social mobility

6. Continuing to develop discipline-specific training and mentoring processes for social change through innovative and impactful research activities and outputs that take account of protected characteristics, sociodemographic factors and intersectional identities

In addition, colleagues participate in a growing number of colleague-led support and advocacy groups such as the BAME Staff Network, LGBTQ+ group, and Staff Disability Network. Colleagues have also benefited from the University's Navigator (men and transmasculine) and 'Springboard+' (women, trans and non-binary) staff development programmes for colleagues in academic or professional services roles, which enable staff to undertake personal and professional development and support for leadership, goal-setting and strategic visioning skills.

Psychology has a specific and enduring interest in equality and diversity. One of the core themes within the CP&SS is a Diversity, Community, Identity group that is actively involved in representation and fairness, as reflected, for example, in ESRC and Horizon 2020 funded projects that respectively explore the experiences of migrant children (**Prokopiou & Farini**) and develop bespoke approaches to supporting adolescents' mental health (**Yarrum**).

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3.1 Income

Since the last REF cycle, and despite a competitive external funding environment, the Psychology team have increased the number of externally funded projects and the amount of funding they have generated for the university. Colleagues are PIs or co-PIs on collaborative projects that have been awarded over GBP5,000,000 in external funding since 2014, of which GBP1,343,169 has come to UoN. This includes prestigious international awards (Bial Foundation, Horizon 2020, Salvia Foundation, and Templeton) and significant national awards (ESRC, NIHR, Trinity College Cambridge). These are substantial achievements for a modestly sized discipline with many ECRs, and includes a number of colleagues who have bid for and won funding for the first time.

There have been several faculty and university support mechanisms that have led to an increase in numbers of successful bids and income for Psychology. The central Research and Innovation Funding Support (RIFS) team provides pre-award support in identifying opportunities, meeting application conditions, bid writing, and post award training in project management. The university has licensed *GRANTfinder* and *Funding Institutional* to help staff identify opportunities that are suitable for their level of career experience. Structured support for progressing and monitoring bidding activity and post-award support are managed through our current research information system (CRIS).

We have improved our success rate in bidding for both Faculty and University-wide funds (Big Ideas Fund, Innovation Fund, URB@N Bursaries, and Seedcorn Funding) that can be used to develop new lines of research, establish networks, curate evidence of impact, and support further research bidding. These pump priming opportunities form part of a strategy to build proof of principle empirical work that provide the foundation for more substantial external grant bids. For example, in 2019 **Cooper**, **Saunders** and **Hitchman** were awarded GBP4,950 to procure a flotation tank for use in sensory habituation research that has led to a publication and successful bids for continuation funding from the Society for Psychical Research (GBP5,382), and the Perrott-Warrick Fund, Trinity College Cambridge (GBP60,000). We particularly celebrate that more funding successes have come from ECRs bidding for the first time, including from funding sources with whom we have not previously been successful. In the last cycle, all major awards were won by two professorial level members of staff. Some of the awards in the current cycle, while less lucrative, are extremely valuable to us in broadening the research base and diversifying funding streams, so that further growth is more sustainable. These have been distributed across the three themes of the CP&SS, demonstrating the sustainability of these groups:

DCI: **Prokopiou** secured an ESRC multi-site project to explore Separated child migrants' care relationships and caring practices (GBP1,000,000 with GBP30,000 to UoN); **Prokopiou** won a joint bid with **Farini** (Sociology) funding a Horizon 2020 project, Child-Up migrant children's

integration through social participation (GBP170,000).

HEBC: **Yarrum** is delivering an NIHR project testing early intervention for depression and anxiety in 16-18 year olds (GBP1,600,000 with GBP158,000 coming to UoN); **Gulliford** is a co-researcher for the Oxford character project that aims to develop sustainable, scalable, sector-specific programmes for postgraduate character virtue formation (GBP23,000); **Gulliford** is PI/co-PI on a Templeton project investigating the role of exemplar narratives in cultivating character (USD1,700,000 with GBP158,000 to UoN).

EECS: **Roe & Cooper** formed a collaboration with the Scientific and Medical Network and a colleague in Geneva to work on a funded project investigating the phenomenology and impact of perceived direct and spontaneous after-death communications (GBP61,000, with GBP15,000 to UoN, follow-up funding from the Society for Psychical Research, London of GBP15,000), and a further bid to the Bial Foundation, Portugal (EUR41,000) successful in November 2020; **Roe** is principal investigator for a Research Programme to explore the psychology of mediumship, Salvia Foundation, Geneva (GBP174,000k); **Roe** was appointed in 2015 as Perrott-Warrick Senior Researcher, a 5-year position funded by Trinity College, University of Cambridge, to deliver a project on Extrasensory perception and altered states of consciousness (GBP235,000); **Roe & Saunders** secured funding in 2018 from the Bial Foundation, Portugal, for an experimental programme that tests whether Ganzfeld stimulation elicits a shift away from normal waking consciousness (€46k); **Roe & Sonnex**, were awarded funding in 2016 from the Bial Foundation, for the project, Extending the spiritual healing paradigm to explore distant mental interaction effects with Wiccan healers (€33k).

3.2 Infrastructure and facilities

The University has recently invested heavily in its facilities, having completed the move to the purpose-built Waterside Campus in 2018 at a total cost of GBP330,000,000. The campus has been heralded as the cutting edge of university infrastructure, winning the 2019 Royal Institute for Chartered Surveyors' 'Design Through Innovation' award. While it is not possible to attribute a precise portion of this investment to Psychology, the department has benefitted from the new working environment with state-of-the-art IT infrastructure, new office space and a new library. This investment in institutional infrastructure and facilities has been important in the following ways:

1. Colleagues work within flexible academic workspaces that have been purpose-built to foster collaborative dialogue and facilitate community-building. Whereas researchers previously occupied a silo-like Psychology building, they now share spaces with colleagues within the multidisciplinary Faculty of Health, Education & Society. There is evidence of dialogue, bid-development and strategic collaborations between the CP&SS and colleagues doing cognate work in Sociology, Education, Health, Nursing, Media Studies, Computing and Human Geography, supporting an interdisciplinary drive and the co-development of a shared strategic vision for research.
2. The new campus is founded on an award-winning digital technology infrastructure and incorporates flexible learning spaces that have improved the learning and research experience. More flexible working arrangements have helped staff to protect time set aside for research activities such as writing papers or constructing grant bids. Staff were consulted during the planning phase of campus construction and specialist research spaces have been included that are tailored to the needs of Psychology, including: a suite of 8 research cubicles, a sound-attenuated perception laboratory, a psychophysiology 'wet room' and an interview room that incorporates video recording facilities. A booking scheme is managed by a Psychology technician so that facilities are available to all staff and research students as needed. The perception labs are equipped with Biopac MP150 Pro with Acqknowledge 4.2 software enabling EDA, ECG, and Biopac MP30 and MP36 student versions, enabling EEG, EDA, plethysmograph, respiration, and blood pressure data collection. Two psychology technicians have particular expertise in IT enabling the production of bespoke hardware and

software to support research projects. A third technician is a Psychology graduate with responsibility for maintaining a repository of licensed and licence-free psychometric measures. We have a university licence for Onlinesurveys (formerly Bristol Online Surveys) and Psychology has further invested in Qualtrics as a platform for bespoke research delivered online.

3. Staff have access via the library to a wide range of published journals and e-books that are searchable using the University's own search tool, Northampton Electronic Library Search Online (NELSON) including materials provided via subscription to the Dawsonera e-book provision service. Most materials can be accessed off campus using a University of Northampton login. This comprises over 4,000 print titles relating to psychology topics. Key resources purchased in support of Psychology, include: CINAHL Plus with Full Text (the world's most comprehensive nursing and allied health research database, providing full text for more than 770 journals); PsycNET (a key resource for psychology, which brings together both PsycInfo and PsycArticles to provide a range of abstracts dating back to the 1800s and full-text articles from 63 APA journals); Sage resources, including Sage Journals Online and Sage Research Methods; Sage Knowledge eBooks, including collections for psychology, counselling and psychotherapy; ScienceDirect, a full-text database of over 1,000 journal titles from Elsevier.
4. The PGR community benefits from its own dedicated open office space, which is intended to foster a sense of community and belonging. This space has been particularly valued by colleagues who also have teaching responsibilities (e.g., GTAs and practitioner staff who have registered for L8 qualifications) who can more effectively separate their teaching and research responsibilities in a way that protects time for the latter. While the new campus has evidently been hugely positive for Psychology PGRs who work on site, we recognize the need to have a strategic focus on enhancing the experience of our growing community of off-site and international PGR colleagues.

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

4.1 Research collaborations, networks and partnerships

Colleagues have contributed to a substantial expansion of Psychology's research base that has resulted in high quality collaborations with multidisciplinary colleagues both nationally and internationally allowing us to deliver the research activities and income highlighted in §1.1 and §3.1. A key objective over this REF period has been to extend — and particularly internationalise — our networks of research collaborators and beneficiaries. This can be seen in our funding and publication portfolio, which includes partnerships with regional and national service providers (Age UK; Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Kettering; CAMHS, South Essex Partnership Trust; Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust; National Union of Students; Northampton Borough Council; Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust,) and collaborations with colleagues at other UK HEIs (e.g., Lancaster University; Loughborough University; Middlesex University; Open University; University College London; University of Birmingham; University of Stirling; University of York), and international HEIs (e.g., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; Bahcesehir University, Istanbul; California State University; Charles University, Prague; Chongqing University of Arts and Sciences; El Bosque University, Bogotá; Leiden University; Northeastern University, Boston; North Sichuan Medical University; Saybrook University, California; Shenzen University; Sofia University, California; Southwest University; University of Adelaide; University of Bergamo; University of Hong Kong; University of Iceland; University of Nebraska-Lincoln; University of New England, NSW; University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital; University of Padova; Xinxiang Medical University. Major research funding successes also reflect international outreach with a number of awards (e.g., Templeton, NIHR, ESRC, Horizon 2020, Salvia and Bial) reflecting growth and diversification in our international networks.

Where appropriate, staff are affiliated with relevant professional organisations (e.g., BPS and BACP) and are actively involved in their management and strategic direction. **Roe** is currently President of

the Society for Psychical Research (2018-present), International Affiliate for England for the Parapsychology Foundation, New York, and sits on the Scientific Board for the Bial Foundation, Porto. In the review period he has served as President of the Parapsychological Association 2015-2017; Chair of the British Psychological Society Transpersonal Psychology Section, 2015-2018, and was a Member of the BPS Research Board and General Assembly (2013-2019). **Hitchman** is on the Board of the Parapsychological Association. **Hill** is a member of the European Society for Prevention Research Award Board, and the BPS Social Psychology Section Committee. **Maunder** is a member of the BPS Psychology of Education Section Committee. **Dann** is a committee member of the British Psychological Society's Psychology of Women & Equalities Section. **Cooper** is a Council Member of the Society for Psychical Research, and sits on the Scientific Advisory Board for the Forever Family Foundation (New York, USA), and the Windbridge Research Center (Tucson, USA).

Staff have taken leading roles related to research dissemination. **Roe** is Associate Editor of the *Journal of Parapsychology*, Editorial Consultant for the *Transpersonal Psychology Review*, was Editor of the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 2003-2018, and Guest Editor for *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*. **Gulliford** served as guest editor for a special issue for the bilingual journal *Zeitschrift für Ethik und Moralphilosophie / Journal for Ethics and Moral Philosophy* on 'The Shadow Side of Gratitude'. **Hill** is a member of the BPS Psychologist and Research Digest Editorial Advisory Board and sits on advisory committees for Pearson Education and McGraw Hill. **Dann** is co-editor for the upcoming Talking Bodies Volume III. **Maunder** is a member of the editorial board for *Cogent Education*. **Dann** is the editorial assistant for the BPS *Psychology of Women & Equalities Review*. **Cooper** is on the Review Board for the *Journal of Exceptional Experiences and Psychology*.

Members of the psychology team also have formal involvement with stakeholder organisations. **Gulliford** is the Psychology Consultant for the Oxford Character Project, and has been a consultant for the National Liberty Museum in Philadelphia. She is an Expert Reviewer for John Templeton Foundation (JTF). **Dann** has served as a director for the Northamptonshire Rights & Equalities Council. **Roe** is a grant application reviewer for the Bial Foundation, Porto, and has reviewed for the ESRC.

Staff have given a broad range of national and international keynote addresses, including the following: The AZIRE Foundation, New York; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Society, Edinburgh; Alister Hardy Research Experience Centre, University of Wales, Lampeter; International Interdisciplinary Symposium, Philosophy of Media: Mythology and Imagination, Cres Croatia; The Norwegian Society for Psychical Research, Oslo; MEDNESP – Congresso da Associação Médico-Espírita do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro; British Congress on Medicine and Spirituality, London; BPS Consciousness & Experiential Section Conference, Regent's University; The Open University Psychology Society, Warwick University; The Wilberforce Club, University of Oxford; Parapsychological Association, Boulder Colorado; Parapsychological Association, Athens, Greece; the Swedish Society for Psychical Research, Stockholm.

A significant proportion of staff are early career researchers so that expectations about involvement in the committee structures of professional bodies may be premature. As an initial step in that direction, however, staff are actively encouraged to participate in conference and journal quality assurance processes.

4.2 Contributions to research base, economy and society

Our mission sets out an agenda to participate in research that has an applied orientation to real-world issues around health and wellbeing. A key focus has been on understanding contextual determinants for health promotion and health-risk prevention.

For example, **Hill** has led a project that has focused on staff and students perceptions of on-campus spaces with respect to sexual violence and safety. Project findings have informed the University's new Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Violence Policy, and led to the development of new resources for prevention, reporting, supporting and disclosure of sexual harassment,

assault and other forms of sexual violence, including revised disclosure processes and campaigns (e.g., I [heart] Consent campaign; #neverok campaign). This evidence-based work contributed to a briefing presented to the UK Parliament's Women and Equalities Select Committee. Additionally, **Hill** leads a participatory project in collaboration with Age UK for Northampton Borough Council was designed to inform town centre regeneration plans and lead to a Future High Street Funding bid to central government. A third strand focuses on the functional significance of certain contexts for alcohol-related behaviours and related harms. This work has contributed to a report commissioned by the EU Drugs Agency (The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, EMCDDA), which focused on environmental prevention measures to limit unhealthy and risky substance use behaviours.

A second strand of research (led by **Maunder**) draws on existing expertise in mapping and responding to the challenges of bullying in the school setting and responds to Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance to schools for relationships education (RE) to be taught as part of Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE). Guidance for primary schools stipulates that this should cover 'Caring Friendships', in which pupils learn the importance of friendships to feelings of wellbeing and security, the characteristics of caring and healthy friendships, how to recognise unhealthy friendships, and how to deal with conflict within friendships. **Maunder's** project concerns educating teachers and support workers about the variety of forms that bullying can take, and what steps can be taken to resolve them. In collaboration with the PSHE Association, KS2-appropriate materials have been developed, including story boards and video material via a dedicated YouTube channel, that enable teachers to meet the PSHE syllabus requirements in a way that is intended to reduce (particularly subtle) forms of bullying.

A third strand (led by **Roe**) concerns the wellbeing impacts of spontaneous anomalous experiences, which can be frightening in the short term and existentially challenging in the longer term. These effects can be exacerbated by the attributions of others, which suggest they are a consequence of (at best) credulity or (at worst) pathology. Building on over 20 years of research, Psychologists at Northampton have built collaborative relationships with practitioner communities such as the Confederation of Healing Organisations and the Spiritualists' National Union, to educate them in scientific standards of evidence. These collaborations have led directly to policy changes within the practitioner organisations. Complementing this, they have worked with mental health organisations to ensure that they have a balanced, evidence-based understanding of the nature and consequences of such experiences. Details of this work have been presented to the Parliamentary Group for Integrated Health, to the BPS Professional Practice Board and the End of Life Care Working Party.

Northampton Psychologists regularly comment on contemporary issues in the media. **Cooper** has given an expert opinion on a range of reports of anomalous experiences, including for the Channel 4 magazine programme, *Steph's packed lunch*. Research led by **Roe** features heavily in a documentary, *Até ao Fim do Mundo*, for Portuguese television produced by Imagens e Comunicação, Lda, and in a 6-part Netflix documentary series, *Surviving Death*. **Pourseied** is a regular contributor to ITV News Anglia on matters related to psychological health and wellbeing.