

**Institution:** Royal Holloway, University of London

**Unit of Assessment:** 19: Politics and International Studies

## 1 Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

Politics, International Relations and Philosophy (PIRP, established 2004) is a dynamic and ambitious department. In REF2014, the proportion of our research classified as world-leading or internationally excellent grew from 30% to 72%. Since 2014 the number of researchers in the department has increased from 23 to 37, supporting submissions to two related units of assessment (29 members of staff in UoA 19 and 8 in UoA 30 [Philosophy]). Anchored in a commitment to pluralist research in all subfields, the politics and international relations (PIR) unit specializes in the study of elections, representation and international security, and has expanded its expertise in the political economy of development, political communication, and gender and politics. These areas of special expertise are supported by four research centres which act as a source of financial, intellectual and moral support, with a particular remit to foster early-stage collaborative research between early-career and more experienced researchers.

During this REF period, we've been animated by a vision of the department as a methodologically sophisticated community of researchers. We take quantitative and qualitative methods seriously—not just for their own sake. By linking our decade-long investment in methodology to substantive expertise, our research addresses core questions of political science in new ways that address real world challenges, whether that's matching refugees to Swedish municipalities (*Jones*), improving food security in Ethiopia (*Petrikova*), or finding out how Westminster constituencies voted in the EU referendum (*Hanretty*). Motivated by our desire to improve popular and elite understandings of society, research in PIR benefits marginalized and at-risk groups nationally, internationally and transnationally.

### 1.1 The structures supporting our research

**A new school-based structure.** In 2014, PIRP was one of six departments in a Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences where politics was the only social science. In 2019, the faculty system was replaced by Schools. PIRP formed part of the new School of Law and Social Sciences. This reorganized structure better reflects shared research interests with Law and Economics, and has led to greater joint provision of research training and collaboration on large grant bids.

**Research centres.** Growth in staff meant that the research centres we described in REF2014 no longer reflected our key areas of research. In 2016, we reviewed these research centres, re-focusing some existing research centres. PIR now houses four research centres which reflect established specialisms and strategic investments:

1 The **Democracy and Elections Centre** brings together researchers interested in electoral behaviour and its consequences, and how elections shape public policy (*Allen, Benedetto, Childs, Collignon, Hanretty, Hackett, Heath, Prosser, Shrimankar, Sloam, Smets, van Spanje*)

2 The **New Political Communications Unit** (newpolcom) carries out research into new media and communications technologies, and how these shape behaviour and institutions at domestic and international levels (*Collignon, Galai, O'Loughlin, Sloam, van Spanje*).

3 The **Centre for International Security** studies how wars are waged and how people are made insecure; how ethnicity, environment and natural resources provoke or ameliorate conflict, and how international institutions build or maintain peace (*Janina Beiser-McGrath, Liam Beiser-McGrath, Bentley, Cianetti, Dyson, Jones, Lai, Lerner, O'Loughlin, Petrikova, Sjoberg, Stubbs*)

4 The **Global Politics and Development Centre** combines our long-standing commitment to area studies in the non-Western world with an analysis of policy challenges in the developing world, specialising in migration, economic and social development, conflict resolution, and climate change (*Kalantari, Galai, Heath, Jones, Lai, Lerner, Petrikova, Schwartz, Shrimankar, Stubbs*).

The unit also supports two interdisciplinary research groupings: the **Gender Institute**, directed by *Sjoberg*, and established in 2020 as an interdisciplinary cross-university hub for research, teaching, and activism; and the **Contemporary Political Theory Reading Group**, which brings together political theorists and philosophers to work on areas of overlapping research.

Our Centres are the means to nurture individual and collaborative research, develop new research agendas, and produce diverse and impactful outputs. Two centres (the Democracy and Elections Centre and newpolcom) host leading journals (*Electoral Studies* (2016-present) and *Media, War and Conflict* (2010-present)). The Global Politics and Development Centre is in the process of establishing its reputation, and has received additional funding to enhance its capacity and further its national and international profile. Research centres are sustained through strategic resourcing: established colleagues lead each centre together with early-career researcher (ECR) co-directors (*Jones, Lerner, Prosser, Petrikova, Stubbs* and *Schwartz*). Annual centre budgets of £5,000 fund, amongst other things, workshops, conferences and reading groups. Post-graduate taught programmes run by each centre provide additional funds, greater staff cohesion, and additional opportunities for ESRC 1+3 PhD studentships capable of growing further our PhD community.

## **1.2 Our strategic objectives 2014-2020**

In our REF2014 submission, we listed three strategic objectives: 1) build strategic narratives, international security and quantitative political science; 2) to exploit links between political theory and philosophy; 3) develop collaborations and funding initiatives. We met our objectives by aligning department structures with staff specialisms and staff growth, and by bringing in both senior and future leadership by hiring at the professorial and ECR level. The steps we've taken to achieve these strategic objectives have transformed our capacity to support all colleagues (including mid-career), undertake more collaborative research, attract greater and more diverse funding, and extend and deepen relationships with non-academic beneficiaries.

### **1. Building strategic narratives, international security and quantitative political science.**

Identified in 2014 as core research strengths that warranted additional resources, these three subfields continue to animate our research centres, but also help realize PIR's overarching commitments to methodological pluralism and research that benefits at-risk groups:

- *Strategic narratives.* *O'Loughlin's* research, highlighted in our REF2014 submission, continues to anchor the work of newpolcom, and features as a continuing impact case study in 2021. Three new staff members complement and extend this work with research on: memory and narrative in IR (*Galai*, appointed 2018); narratives of victimhood and trauma (*Lerner*, appointed 2019); and ostracism (*van Spanje*, appointed 2020).
- *International security.* Enhanced capacity through new hires has transformed how PIR organizes its research in international security. Sustained investment began with two ECR appointments at the beginning of the REF period. *Jones*, appointed in 2016, was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 2018. His research on matching refugees has led to collaboration with international immigration aid societies and government bodies (see ICS XXX). *Petrikova*, also appointed in 2016, was made Senior Lecturer in 2019. Her research on food security has led to grant success (she is co-I on a £900k Global Challenges Research Fund grant),

and collaboration with biologists/food technologists. Three subsequent ECR hires since 2018 have added expertise in visual politics (*Galai*), quantitative conflict studies (*Janina Beiser-McGrath*) and transitional justice (*Lai*). *Sjoberg's* BA Global Professorship, awarded in 2019/20, provided internationally recognized academic leadership in this subfield, whilst also adding expertise in gender and sexuality.

- *Quantitative political science*. New hires at both ECR and Professorial level have augmented existing research skills, and strengthened methods across several different research centres. Hanretty, appointed at professorial level in 2017 to provide intellectual leadership, bolstered established strengths in electoral behaviour (*Smets, Heath*), a subfield strengthened further by the appointment of *Prosser* in 2020. Our commitment to quantitative political science is not restricted to electoral behaviour, but operates across multiple subfields: *Schwartz*, appointed in 2017, brought substantive and methodological contributions through her work on protest in Latin America and through her ESRC-funded combination of agent-based simulation and field experimentation. Most recently, *Janina Beiser-McGrath* and *Liam Beiser-McGrath* were appointed (2020) to bring expertise in quantitative IR. Quantitative political science has also benefitted from greater cooperation with Economics as part of the School of Law and Social Sciences.
- Growth also enabled the identification of a new priority area - gender and politics - with two professorial appointments in 2019/20. *Sjoberg* and *Childs* will lead research on gender and sexuality within PIR (working with *Collignon* and *Smets*), and through interdisciplinary College level initiatives. The Gender Institute directed by *Sjoberg* was established in 2020 as an interdisciplinary cross-university hub for research, teaching, and activism. Current projects - which involve colleagues from PIR together researchers from ten other departments - include gender-sensitive responses to Covid-19, the gendered effects of access to credit in Cambodia and South India, and *Sjoberg's* British Academy funded project on "Sexual relations as International Relations".

**2. Exploiting links between political theory and philosophy.** Close research relationships between the department's political theorists and philosophers have been maintained notwithstanding the separate REF2021 submission in UoA 30. Five new staff members in philosophy benefit PIR's political theorists (*Bacon, Seglow*) through an increase in the number of jointly supervised PhD students, greater participation in the cross-unit Contemporary Political Theory Reading Group, and the emergence of a cluster of researchers working at the intersection of political theory, ethics and public affairs: *Seglow's* research on hate speech relates to *Roache's* research on the ethics of swearing, and *Bacon* co-authors with *Gascoigne* on American pragmatism as both political philosophy and epistemological position.

**3. Developing collaborations and funding initiatives.** PIR has succeeded in diversifying sources of funding, thereby increasing our financial resilience. Researchers have secured funding from the ERC, the EPSRC, and the BBSRC, as well as more traditional sources such as the ESRC, the British Academy, and the Leverhulme Trust. We have also increased research income from commercial sources, notably Survation. Much of this research has involved collaboration with policy users and other beneficiaries - from work that has been carried out on a consultancy basis to fully co-produced research. Within the UK, researchers in PIR have worked with charities, local and national governmental bodies, and industry. Internationally, we have worked with EU bodies and NATO. Transnationally, we have worked with a range of international development organisations on issues relating to migration and global health policy (see also Section 4 below).

### **1.3 Distinguishing characteristics of our research**

Throughout the period 2014 - 2020 we have demonstrated our commitment to research that is interdisciplinary, characterised by openness and integrity. These characteristics are present in our published (textual and para-textual) outputs and working practices.

Our commitment to **interdisciplinarity** is evident in our published research. To assess the interdisciplinarity of our published work, we matched information on our published outputs (deposited at pure.rhul.ac.uk) with information from the last REF. For each journal publication, we identified the single most common UoA for the same journal in the 2014 REF. We then calculated the percentage of our published outputs falling in each of these UoAs. Almost half (44%) of our published journal articles appeared in journals more common in other units of assessment than in politics and IR. Significant shares of our published output were published in journals common in communications (9%), social work and social policy (8%), sociology (5%), law (4%), and a “long tail” of journals from other disciplines.

Our commitment to interdisciplinarity is supported by the structures that organize our work. The formation of a School of Law and Social Sciences brought together researchers in different fields with shared interests. We share with researchers in Economics an interest in conflict deaths (*Spagat* from Economics together with *Sjoberg*) and development economics (*Rud* from Economics together with *Stubbs* and *Petrikova*). With colleagues in Law we share an interest in public law and judicial behaviour (*Yuratich* from Law together with *Hanretty*), and human rights and emotions (*Marshall* from Law together with *Jones* and *Seglow*). At the level of the research centre, we work with colleagues from across the university. This is particularly true for the Gender Institute, which brings together researchers from ten different departments.

We display a commitment to the **integrity** of our work by making our research procedures transparent and by reflecting on the processes involved in our research. Replication data and code (in both *R* and *Stata*) for all quantitative REF outputs are available through the Harvard Dataverse. Where replication data or code is stored in a proprietary format, code is given to import the data using open-source software. This replication archive was made possible by a department-organised introduction to R for Stata users, delivered to researchers in Economics and PIRP. Additionally, we empower “sound research” (LERU, “Towards a Research Integrity Culture at Universities”) by valuing replication studies (*Stubbs*, *Liam Beiser-McGrath*), null findings (*Hanretty*, *Liam Beiser-McGrath*), and systematic reviews (*Smets*, *Stubbs*). We also recognise the obligations we as researchers owe to our interviewees, particularly those in post-conflict settings (*Lai*) and women in political life (*Childs*; *Collignon*).

The steps we’ve taken to demonstrate the integrity of our work also speak to the **openness** of our work. Our work is discoverable via the pure.rhul.ac.uk repository, which also contains links to non-paywalled versions of our research. Because we recognise that the openness of our research is enhanced when user-friendly summaries are made available, we’ve made efforts to write short blog-posts for a general audience: collectively, we’ve written 62 articles for *The Conversation* (which Royal Holloway supports financially), totalling almost 60,000 words. These articles - which have either been summaries of published research or have applied the knowledge we’ve acquired in producing that research - have been read by more than half a million users.

#### **1.4 The impact of our work**

PIR’s impact strategy is underpinned by our desire for our research to change the distribution of political power (and attendant opportunities and resources). The ultimate *beneficiaries* of our research impact are varied, but our research pays particular attention to marginalised and at-risk

groups nationally, internationally and transnationally. Within the UK, our research looks at groups which are marginalised or disconnected from politics, such as working class (*Heath, Benedetto*) or young (*Sloam, Smets*) voters. We also look at particular elite groups which, though not marginalised in the same way, are at risk of discrimination or violence (online or offline), such as women candidates (*Collignon, Childs*). Internationally, our research addresses sources of insecurity such as ethnic conflict (*Janina Beiser-McGrath*) and food insecurity (*Petrikova*). Transnationally, our research on migration flows and settlement regimes allows policy-makers to understand likely consequences of their policies and identifies ways to match migrants to welcoming, safe communities (*Jones, Schwartz*).

To benefit these groups, we've formed sustained partnerships with external agencies, and in particular public or quasi-public organisations which are in a position to change policies. These partnerships have involved different forms of collaboration, from the provision of evidence (*Collignon, Hanretty, Heath, Jones, O'Loughlin, Childs*) or presentations at internal seminars or conferences (*Bentley, Dyson, Hackett*), through to the provision of research-informed training (*Benedetto*) and bespoke research (for example, *Schwartz's* work for USAID and the Department for International Development on migration flows).

These beneficiary groups and partner organisations are heterogeneous, and our impact strategy has been premised on broad-based financial support for impact activities. Seed funding for impact work, including partnership formation, comes from the university's Research Strategy Fund (which also provides seed funding for grant applications). Sustained impact has been recognised throughout this REF period by a long-list of potential impact case study authors, who have benefitted from additional financial support and reductions in workload. From our long-list of five potential case studies, we have selected case studies which reflect priority areas from our 2014 REF submission (international security, through *Jones'* case study of refugee policy; strategic narratives, through *O'Loughlin's* case study; and quantitative social science, through the case study featuring *Sloam* and *Heath*), and which represent a blend of continuing (*O'Loughlin*) and new impact (*Jones, Sloam* and *Heath*).

### **1.5 Research objectives 2021 - 2026**

We have set the following research and impact objectives for the 2021 - 2026 period:

- 1 *To consolidate growth and thereby enable the unit to tackle research questions that are bigger in scope.* We've grown considerably over the REF period. We have four new professors offering intellectual leadership in their subfields, and a dozen ECRs with future leadership potential. Co-authorship is increasing in the social sciences as authors tackle research questions which are bigger in scope or require substantive and technical knowledge. Our growth over this REF period makes it more likely that researchers in the unit will be able to find colleagues with complementary research interests and skillsets. Tackling research questions which are bigger in scope often requires greater resources, so this objective also brings with it a subsidiary objective to increase our grant capture per annum by 40% (from £216k/p.a. to £300k/p.a.), comparable to the increase between REF2014 and REF2021.
- 2 *To develop multiple, diverse and sustainable pathways to engagement and impact.* Achieving either engagement or impact requires maintaining relationships developed over the course of several years. The profile of our department means that the large number of ECRs in the department will be in a position to use such relationships, developing during

their probationary period, to achieve impact over the coming REF period. To support researchers in developing impact, we will ask centre directors to consider how teams of researchers can be included in collective plans for achieving impact, and create a new departmental administrative role in Research Engagement. These steps, together with increased grant income (1), will help us achieve a broader dissemination of our research. We'll assess our success by tracking media mentions, with particular regard not just to the number of mentions but to the number of staff involved in any media work.

- 3 *To channel more research through our centres.* Thanks to our 2016 centre review, we do not envisage major changes to the structure our research centres. With mixed leadership teams involving more experienced and early-career researchers, our centres are well poised to develop multi-annual plans reflecting centre-specific goals and respecting unit-wide commitments to pluralism and interdisciplinarity. We will maintain our existing level of funding for centres, and try to exploit efficiencies by purchasing from the same research service provider (computing, opinion polling) and employing administrators where multiple researchers within the same centre hold grants. We'll recognize success in this objective by tracking the proportion of outputs of all kinds which result from co-authorship between individuals in the same centres and the number of large-value (>£500k) grant applications originating in a centre.
- 4 *To achieve objectives (1) - (3) whilst maintaining our commitment to interdisciplinarity and research that benefits marginalized and/or at-risk groups.* The structural changes associated with the move to a School of Law and Social Sciences bring us closer to other cognate disciplines and create new possibilities for inter- or multi-disciplinary work, and we'll continue to support training and knowledge exchange events which bring together researchers from across the School. We'll track our success in maintaining interdisciplinarity by continuing to compile information on the proportion of our work published in outlets typically associated with other disciplines. We expect our investment in a new area of specialism (gender and politics) will produce both research and impact that addresses the marginalization of different genders, but our success in this objective depends in part on our ability to achieve the sustainable pathways to engagement and impact described in (2).

## 2 People

The unit has grown considerably between 2014 and 2020. We now have 29 staff on full-time teaching and research contracts, an increase of nine since 2014. We have increased our staff numbers by hiring staff to newly created positions at Lecturer and Professorial levels. Recruitment has been a significant part of our overall people strategy, but our record on staff promotions is also testament to the ambitions we have for existing staff at all levels. We've recruited and promoted approximately equal numbers of men and women, and we've taken care to protect ECRs and develop staff careers at all levels of seniority.

### 2.1 Staffing strategy

#### **Staffing strategy: Recruitment**

Over the past six years, we have hired eighteen staff on open-ended research and teaching contracts. In hiring this many staff, we have balanced three competing objectives which relate to expertise; specialism (and how it relates to the development of our research centres); and methodological focus.

In relation to **expertise**, we sought to strike a balance between hiring ECRs as Lecturers, and recruiting mid-career researchers as Professors. Given that PIRP as a department has at times had a low proportion of professors compared to the sector average, five of eighteen appointments were made at the professorial level. Presently (and as a result of our conscious recruitment and promotions strategy) eight of thirty staff in PIRP are professors, higher than the average for politics departments (27% v. 17.5%; HESA data). Three of eight professors were hired in the academic year 2019/20; two staff members were promoted to professor in that same year. The appointments were a departure from the normal practice of replacing departing members of staff with appointments at Lecturer level, and were supported centrally in recognition of the need for breadth of intellectual leadership in the unit.

In relation to **specialism**, we sought to strike a balance between making open calls that would attract the most qualified field regardless of specialisation, and more targeted calls that strengthened the subfields identified in our 2014-2020 research strategy. Striking this balance was made easier by clustering appointments in 2015/16 (six appointments) and 2019/20 (seven appointments). Twelve out of eighteen appointments were made as a result of open calls (“Lecturer in Politics”/ “Lecturer in International Relations”). We made more targeted calls where we felt it was necessary to bolster an existing area of specialism (*Collignon-Delmar* and *Galai* were recruited to strengthen newpolcom); to develop a new area of specialisation (the call for a Professor of Politics and Gender [taken up by *Childs*], launched at the same time as *Sjoberg*’s British Academy Fellowship started); to strengthen our methodological expertise (*Schwartz* and *Janina Beiser-McGrath* were hired as Lecturers in Politics (Quantitative Methods)); and to ensure broad geographical coverage (*Lerner* was hired as a Lecturer in Politics and International Relations (South Asia)).

In relation to **methodology**, we have balanced (and at times combined) substantive and methodological appointments, and prioritised recruitment in quantitative political science. Prioritising hires in quantitative political science has not meant sacrificing expertise in qualitative methodologies: *Galai*, for example, was appointed as a Lecturer in Political Communication after a previous career in photojournalism, and researches visual representations of national myths; *Lai* was appointed as a Lecturer in International Relations on the basis of her extensive fieldwork experience in post-conflict societies.

#### **Staffing strategy: developing staff**

**Management of workloads.** We recognize that the “effective management of workload” is a part of “excellent people management” (Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers), and we’ve taken steps to track and allocate workload more equitably. In April 2015, we replaced our existing workload tracking model with a new one that allocated points for different teaching and engagement related activities. As part of this model, workload points were assigned to impact case study authors. At different points in the REF cycle, workload points have been allocated to four different case study authors. Points are also allocated to directors of research centres, and to journal editors. In this way, we ensure that activities designed to make a contribution to the profession more generally are properly recognised as additional work.

**Giving ECRs time.** We recognise the particular value of research time for ECRs establishing a research agenda, and the extra work required to prepare teaching materials for the first time. For these reasons, we ensure that our ECRs have substantially reduced teaching and administrative loads. Staff appointed at the rank of lecturer or senior lecturer are appointed on a probationary basis. During this probation period, colleagues are allocated 70% of the teaching load of non-

probationary staff on the basis of the workload allocation model described above. Probation gives staff the opportunity to establish their research agendas and make their first grant applications. During their probation, staff are paired with a probation mentor, who is able to provide career guidance as well as research skills development. In this way, we provide the “structured support” called for in the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. Although ECRs are not normally expected to take on significant administrative roles during the period of their probation, we encourage ECRs to take a role in our research centres, and all research centres feature an ECR in a key role.

**Regular appraisal.** We “actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers” (Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers). Non-probationary staff meet with line managers or their delegates for annual appraisal meetings. (Staff on probation meet instead with their probation advisers). These appraisal meetings provide an opportunity to set annual objectives for research and engagement, to evaluate past progress, and to discuss these achievements in the light of longer-term (3 to 5 year) objectives. Staff value these conversations: a 2018 survey conducted by Capita found that 100% of researchers who had had an appraisal within the last 12 months agreed that their appraisal was useful for them.

**Mentorship at all career stages.** *Childs* has established department-wide mentoring groups for ECRs and mid-career women, which collectively identify and create a program of mentoring sessions. These mentoring sessions - which reflect *Childs*' experience at the University of Bristol - explore strategic career planning, academic leadership, constructing the successful CV, saying 'no', and a reasonable work/life balance. *Childs*' role is to facilitate discussion; where appropriate, invited internal and external speakers will be brought into the group sessions. The ECR mentoring group is more directed, although remaining responsive to colleagues' stated needs/interests. It aims to ensure that ECRs can successfully negotiate the responsibilities of the contemporary academic, in teaching, research, dissemination and impact, and administration/good citizenship.

Our sabbatical leave policy is generous and takes into account individual characteristics. We ordinarily give two terms of sabbatical leave to non-probationary staff who have completed twelve terms' service. Our scheme (adopted 2015) derogates from, and is more generous than, the university policy of one term for every nine terms' service. Sabbatical leave can be brought forward or postponed where members of staff can show that earlier (later) sabbatical would bring substantially greater benefits for research or teaching. Staff are required to use sabbatical leave to read themselves into new areas of research or work on major grant applications. A specific additional sabbatical scheme (adopted 2019) exists for staff returning from maternity, adoption, shared parental and caring leave. Two members of staff (*Smets*, *Schwartz*) benefitted from this policy in the 2020/21 academic year.

### **Promotion and reward**

**Promotion.** Over the REF period, thirteen staff members have been promoted. Promotions were approximately gender balanced: seven men and six women were promoted. For staff appointed as Lecturers during this REF period, promotion was rapid: the average time to promotion was 28 months (counting from date of appointment to decision date). This is substantially quicker than the average amongst UK academics. All of the Lecturers hired between 2015 and 2017 (*Hackett*, *Petrikova*, *Jones*, *Stubbs*) have now been promoted to Senior Lecturer. This rapid promotion reflects our ability to hire exceptional ECRs over this period, coupled with the protection afforded those researchers.



We have also promoted to senior positions colleagues who started their career at Royal Holloway. Between 2017 and 2020, four individuals who had taken up their first permanent lectureship at Royal Holloway were promoted to Professor: *Heath* (appointed 2008); *Gallagher* (appointed 2010); *Allen* (appointed 2009) and *Sloam* (2005). We celebrate these promotions as examples of how colleagues have been able to develop their careers to the highest level whilst at Royal Holloway.

## **2.2 Equality, diversity and inclusion**

We have implemented a number of policies designed to foster inclusion of individuals with a variety of protected characteristics across our work. In our hiring, we've ensured all panel members have completed unconscious bias within the past two years, provided by the Department or the College. All our hiring panels included both men and women, and we have structures in place to assure future panel diversity. Royal Holloway is an institutional member of the Disability Confident Employer scheme, so all disabled applicants who meet core criteria for posts are automatically interviewed.

In the promotion and development of our own staff we've worked proactively to address inequalities. In response to research showing a gendered citation gap, we commissioned a PhD student to email academics cited in recent articles by female members of staff, highlighting these publications. To improve recognition of the work of our female and minority staff, we have been promoting it on social media. As part of an institution-level commitment to staff development, female members of staff and ethnic minority members of staff have benefitted from targeted leadership development programmes (the Aurora and Mandala schemes respectively, and previously the Women's Encouragement Programme, attended by *Smets*, *Hackett* and *Bentley*).

To improve the accessibility of our work to individuals with different protected characteristics we've reorganised it. We have, for example, moved the time of our seminars from the early evening to a caring-friendly lunchtime slot. Our regular meetings now all fall within the normal working day. Several staff within the unit benefit from the institution's flexible working policy, and the unit has worked with the Estates and timetabling teams to ensure that room allocations and times respect different staff characteristics. In addition to these logistical changes, we have made several changes to how our meetings work to be more inclusive. These include an active chairing style to improve the diversity of staff recognized at meetings and questions recognized at seminars, a series of trainings on diversification of our work and working environment, and increasing recognition of research collaboration with colleagues in the Global South (including India, South Africa, and China). Our Department has put together a working group for minority staff to identify targets for improving work environment. Members of our unit are also leaders in the Gender Institute's subcommittee on the College's work environment.

Measures like these have been championed by the department equality and diversity committee (from 2016) and the School equality and diversity committee (from 2019). Work carried out in the department between 2016 and 2019 in preparation for an Athena SWAN application continues at the school level, where a Silver Athena SWAN application is in preparation. Members of the department equality and diversity committee have, over the past year, produced reports and organised training events on unconscious bias and curriculum diversification. These events originated in, and responded to, concerns from our student body, which is one of the most diverse politics and international relations student bodies in the UK (approaching 50% BAME). Our students and staff have inspired us to reflect not just on how we teach but also how we research. We have incorporated what we have learned from our equality and diversity work into our hiring priorities.

The gender diversity of our staff exceeds that of the average UK politics department on gender diversity (41% women, compared to the average 36% nationally (Pflaeger Young et al., “Women in the Profession”, 2020). Appointments (50% female) and promotions (46% female) during this period have been roughly gender-equal. A lack of available data from other departments makes it difficult to see how our staff minority representation (14%) measures against peer departments. Our aspiration is that through hiring and development our staff profile will come to resemble more closely our diverse student body.

### **2.3 Research students**

**Our PhD community continues to grow.** The average number of doctoral degrees awarded per member of staff over the period has increased from 0.7 (2008 RAE) to 3.8 (2014 REF) to 4.7 in this submission. We’ve been able to increase the number of PhD students thanks to new sources of funding detailed in section 3, and the ESRC SeNSS 1+3 programme which facilitates MSc students feeding into the PhD programme. The increase in PhD students has gone hand-in-hand with a decision to move to dual supervision. Dual supervision ensures that doctoral students are provided with a range of substantive and methodological experience that they can call upon, and allows continuation of supervision upon staff absence. This change moreover permits a broader range of colleagues to undertake PhD supervision, and in particular allows ECRs the chance to gain experience of doctoral supervision. Our 29 current doctoral students (12 female, 16 male) are supervised by 21 different members of staff. Our PGR community is highly diverse and international, comprising students from the UK, EU and overseas.

**Our PhD students and employability.** We’ve supported our PhD students by emphasising employability from their very first year, as part of our compulsory departmental-level first year skills training. The institution’s Doctoral School, in addition, provides face-to-face and online courses for developing generic and transferable skills (e.g., time management, academic writing, presentation skills, media awareness). Doctoral students graduating in this period have gone on to work in a variety of tertiary education institutions in the UK and abroad, including the LSE, Manchester, Imperial College London, and indeed Royal Holloway. Employment outside of the academy is also something we discuss with our students, and an increasing number of students have gone on to work in the institutions that they studied, particularly students who studied the European Commission and European Parliament.

**A strong PhD research community.** We create opportunities for our PhD students to be embedded into the research culture in diverse ways. Our generous conference fund (£250 by right, with further funds available on application) encourages students to attend professional conferences, and many find this an excellent way to disseminate their work and to cultivate new contacts. Our students can also freely attend specialist training courses offered at universities that are part of the SeNSS Doctoral Training Centre. SeNSS students, finally, have their own additional funding for training, conference attendance, etc.. Finally, students in the last year of writing-up are encouraged to present their work to the department in our PGR seminar series.

**A rigorous annual review and upgrade process.** All students have annual reviews where they have to present their work to two members of staff not involved in their day-to-day supervision. Annual review deadlines are tracked closely to make sure all students are regularly assessed. Annual reviews feed in to a formal upgrade process that takes place between twelve and twenty months in to the programme. Students first submit their material to an advisory annual review panel. During the annual review, upgrade materials are discussed and advice is given on how to improve the submission. Annual review materials are submitted

appropriately six weeks before the upgrade, to allow students to revise their material before submitting it for the upgrade. Upgrade panels consist of 4-5 members of academic staff not involved in the supervision of the student. Thanks to the careful scheduling of review and upgrade meetings, and through the inclusion of academic staff from disparate subfields, students in the early part of their PhD are now better able to make an argument for the general importance of their research at an earlier stage in the process.

**Our practices as a source of best practice.** The changes we've introduced have been recognised as best practice by other departments in the university. The format of our weekly departmental-level Postgraduate Research Professional Development and Research Seminar series has been adopted by other departments, and our PGR Charter (on the responsibilities of supervisors and supervisees) has been rolled out across the university to complement the institutional Code of Practice.

### 3 Income, infrastructure and facilities

The material and physical conditions supporting research into politics and international relations at Royal Holloway have changed significantly. Over the past six years, PIR has multiplied its annual grant income by 40%, with more to come; moved into a custom-refurbished building, and gained access to new technologies and resources for collaborative working and research provision.

These positive outcomes are due in part to the structures that support our research income generation. Researchers within the unit are encouraged to bid for research income; their grant success makes possible the continued growth of our unit, and contributes to colleagues' professional advancement. In submitting grants, staff are supported by department and university-level structures. Within the department, the Director of Research administers an internal review scheme. All grant applications, no matter their size, are reviewed by two colleagues. Medium-sized grants also receive feedback from the department research committee, which comprises the Director of Research, the REF leads for politics and international relations and philosophy, the director of postgraduate research, the current and former heads of department, and two additional ECRs. For large grant applications, we also solicit external reviews. At the university level, we benefit from services provided by Royal Holloway's Research and Innovation (R&I) team, who have met collectively and individually with researchers in the department to understand better our areas of specialism, and who have provided information on funding opportunities and grant applications together with more bespoke guidance on research consultancy and intellectual property. R&I also administer a university-level scheme providing internal seed funding.

Staff are encouraged to bid for research grant income at all stages of their career, and our strategy for grant capture is related to our staffing strategy. ECRs on probationary contracts are required to submit a grant bid as a condition of their probation. One successful application which resulted from this requirement was *Collignon-Delmar's* application to the British Academy/Leverhulme Trust to study the harassment and intimidation of candidates in local elections, research which has gone on to inform parliamentary debates. Researchers who qualify for sabbatical leave are also encouraged to submit a grant application during their period of sabbatical. Researchers at all stages of their career are encouraged to reflect on opportunities for grant capture through the annual appraisal process. Often, this is linked to promotion, and our revised promotion criteria include explicit recognition of the importance of grant capture. Successful applicants benefit from policies that return partial overheads to principal investigators.

We've seen success come from early seed funding, both for ECRs and for established members of staff. Through its Research Strategy Fund (RSF), Royal Holloway provides internal funding of up to £5000 for projects likely to lead to future grant applications or future impact. Funding is provided on a matched basis: the department contributes £1 for every £3 from central university funds. Researchers from PIR have been successful in winning RSF funding, and this internal funding has led to significant external funding and impact. Of the ten different projects funded (total value of internal funding: £31k), two led to successful large grant applications. *Julia Gallagher* was able to get funding to help her prepare her successful ERC grant bid. *Petrikova* was able to get funding to build networks with colleagues in Nigeria and India, networks that led to an unsuccessful ESRC grant bid but also to the successful BBSRC bid described below. For ECRs (three of eight awardees), this source of internal funding can make collaborative research bids possible.

**Increases in grant income.** As a result of internal support schemes like the RSF and our ability to attract external holders of competitively-awarded funding, we've increased our grant income over the period, with more to come. Total income from all sources for the six reporting years of this REF period was £1.3m, or £216k/year. This represents an increase of 40% on the annualized grant income over the previous REF period (total grant income for 2008 to 2013: £774k / £155k per year). Because these figures reflect grant expenditure over this period rather than grant capture, they are a lagging indicator of grant success, and underestimate the significant steps forward that we have made over this period. Based on grants captured but for which no or limited expenditure has been made (*van Spanje's* ERC Consolidator grant [£1.8m], *Sjoberg's* British Academy Project [£587k]), we estimate that our grant expenditure over the next five years will outstrip all the grant expenditure reported in the REF submissions of 2014 and 2008 combined.

We have also diversified our sources of funding, and in doing so, we've celebrated notable firsts. In 2018, *Gallagher* (a former staff member, now Professor of African Politics at SOAS), was awarded a grant from the European Research Council (ERC) to research architecture and statehood in Africa, the first ERC success for PIR. We were able to attract our second holder of an ERC award, *van Spanje*, in June 2020. *Van Spanje's* five-year Consolidator grant investigates how new(s) media and new parties shape attention and electoral support for political ideas.

We have also been able to attract funding from UK research councils that do not traditionally fund research in politics. Together with other colleagues in RHUL, *Petrikova* is part of the £1m BBSRC grant Nutrifood, which explores production and promotion of nutrient rich foodstuffs, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The BBSRC application was the result of seed funding from the RSF for work on food security governance in Nigeria and Ethiopia. Together with Lizzie Coles-Kemp in Royal Holloway's Information Security Group, *Jones* won £370k from the EPSRC to research "People Powered Algorithms for Desirable Social Outcomes", a grant application which built on Jones' existing work on matching algorithms for refugee settlement. These grants are our first awards from these research councils, and our success in these applications reflects the talent of our ECRs (both *Jones* and *Petrikova* were hired in 2016/17) and the strong links they have already built across the Royal Holloway community.

We have also secured our first research funding from industry, and increased our income from commercial consultancy. Polling company Survation paid for PhD studentships for Ben Lobo and Laura Serra to work on public opinion and electoral behaviour. Funding from Survation was matched by funding from Royal Holloway, demonstrating an institution-level commitment to industry partnerships.

**Our built environment has changed.** For much of the REF period, PIR was located in the Founder's Building in Royal Holloway, a C19 building originally designed for mixed residential, teaching and office use. In 2019, we moved to the McCrea building, a building centrally located on the campus, which brought us closer to the other departments which form the School of Law and Social Sciences. The McCrea building was refurbished to the department's specification at a cost of £5m. The original intent behind the relocation and the design of multiple shared spaces in the building (including a staff-room, a break-out area, and a hot-desking area for PhD students) was to promote physical proximity between researchers within the department and within the School of Law and Social Sciences more broadly. With Covid-19, that intent has had to be re-thought, and the building has now been altered for a second time to reduce contamination risks, with bookable desks for PhD students and reduced activity in staff break-out areas.

**We've made home working easier.** Due to Covid-19, all staff have spent significant amounts of time working from home from March 2020 onwards. We purchased laptops for six staff members who lacked a laptop or webcam-equipped computer; research students were able to borrow laptops from the university. At the end of the summer term (June 2020) the department also made a decision to give each member of staff £500 to spend on equipment to improve their home working environment. Purchases under this scheme have been varied, but loan laptops and purchased webcams have made it possible for staff to attend virtual conferences that they would otherwise have missed out on.

Even before Covid-19, we had moved to ensure that all offline and online departmental activities take place within "core hours" (10am-4pm). Our research seminar series, departmental meetings, and reading groups have all switched to lunchtime or pre-lunchtime slots, save in exceptional circumstances (for example: due to the participation of speakers in different time zones).

**Investment in estates and home working equipment has been matched by investment in research-relevant facilities.** One example is the continued investment in library stock relevant to researchers in politics and international relations. The library budget for politics and international relations has increased from £32k in 2014/5 to £46k in 2019/20. This increase has made possible an increase in the number of books we have access to. Between 2014 and 2019, the number of books in Dewey Decimal ranges 320-329 (political science) and 350-359 (public administration) has increased by 8%; all staff purchase requests for research monographs over this period were granted.

We have also ensured that staff have access to the software they need to carry out their researches. Thanks to university-level provision, researchers across the unit have access to Dropbox for Business, allowing staff and PhD students to share project files and acting as a means of backup. Figshare is used for larger persistent file storage. Quantitative researchers in the unit who use Stata have department-provided licences for the latest version of the software (version 16), though our commitment to reproducibility means we encourage and train staff to move to the free and open-source equivalent R. Quantitative researchers in the unit who use high performance computing (*Hanretty, Schwartz*) have used cloud computing services purchased from Amazon, either funded by PIR or by our polling industry partners Survation.

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

Researchers in the unit have contributed to the provision of public goods for research, both within their own subfields and for the profession as a whole. Our research has also changed the way industry partners and governmental organisations go about their work. This research has been recognised by prizes and fellowships awarded by national and international academies.

##### 4.1 Contribution to the research base

One form of public good provision is the provision of reusable data. Researchers in PIR maintain qualitative and quantitative sources of data that are widely used by other researchers.

- *Cianetti* works with Freedom House as an area expert on Central/Eastern Europe. Freedom House reports are used as source materials for qualitative and quantitative research on democratic backsliding across the region.
- *Hanretty* produced estimates of how Westminster constituencies voted in the 2016 EU membership referendum. These estimates have subsequently been incorporated into materials produced by the House of Commons Library and the *Times* guides to the 2017 and 2019 parliaments. *Hanretty* has followed this up by producing estimates of how the 2019 European Parliament elections would have looked on Westminster boundaries.
- *Stubbs* maintains [imfmonitor.org](http://imfmonitor.org), a website that tracks conditions imposed on governments by the IMF. The conditionality data-set and other data-sets hosted on the site have been used by researchers to investigate why the IMF imposes greater conditions on some countries but not others

Researchers in PIR also provide public goods by organising subfield networks of researchers. *Benedetto* is vice-president of Eurosci, a Jean Monnet funded network of university lecturers in EU Studies. *Hanretty* convened the ECPR's Standing Group on Law and Courts. *Seglow* is chair of the Association for Social and Political Philosophy. This work contributes to the vitality of research life in these subfields.

We also contribute through national and international professional associations. In this REF period, *Bentley* and *Sjoberg* have sat on the governing board of the British International Studies Association and the International Studies Association respectively. Through the Political Studies Association, we've shaped the present REF exercise itself: *Bacon* and *Hanretty* both served on the joint PSA/BISA working group that provided input into the REF 2020 process. *Heath* serves on the advisory board of the Q-Step programme. At the intersection of politics and international relations and UK academia more generally, *Bentley* is an assessor for Athena SWAN.

**Editorial contributions.** Colleagues currently edit two journals: *Electoral Studies* (*Smets* and *Heath*) and *Media, War and Conflict* (*O'Loughlin*). We support these journals by providing funding for editorial assistants and by recognising editorial contributions in our workload model. During the REF period, three more journals (*International Feminist Journal of Politics*; *International Studies Review*; *European Journal of Politics & Gender*) were also edited by researchers in the unit. Staff also sit on the editorial boards of 16 journals, making a sustained contribution to peer review.

##### 4.2 Contribution to economy and society

We've worked with industry to help partners understand political trends. We have a three-year

exclusive partnership with the polling company Survation, who provide funding for PhD students. As part of this partnership, Survation has forecast seat-level outcomes in the Westminster elections of 2017 and 2019 and provided on-the-night estimates of election outcomes for private clients. We also help industry understand different regions of the world: Schwartz is scheduled to present research on taxation in Latin America to Canning House, the UK's leading forum for debate on Latin American politics and economy (date TBC due to Covid-19).

Our work with industry partners also has cultural elements: between 2016 and 2017, *Heath* acted as a consultant to the stage performance *The Majority* (National Theatre, August 2017), where audience members used voting handsets to indicate their responses at key points in the performance. Heath was consulted to check that the audience questions were true to life and were likely to divide the audience and heighten narrative tension. Also playing a role in ensuring verisimilitude was Nick Allen, who acted as a political script consultant to a US remake of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (Hulu, 2019).

Our engagement with governments and governmental bodies spans several different levels. Locally, *Sloam* has worked with the Greater London Assembly to identify young people's priorities regarding sustainability, work that led to a collaborative booklet with the charity Bite the Ballot. Nationally, we've presented policy relevant work to the Department for International Development, the Home Office (*Schwartz*), the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (*Bentley*), the Foreign Office (*Hackett*), and the Cabinet Office (*Hanretty*). Internationally, we've worked with governmental bodies in other countries and with transnational organisations. *Schwartz* has written two policy reports for USAID and will be writing further reports for the International Organisation for Migration. *Benedetto* has run workshops on EU budgetary processes for staff within the Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Investment Bank. *Childs* authored the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Gender Sensitizing Parliaments Guidelines. *Dyson* is in regular contact with "lessons learned" branch heads in EU militaries and militaries in the Five Eyes countries, and has presented at NATO conferences. The work carried out by *Schwartz* and *Benedetto* has combined engagement with specially commissioned consultancy, showing that our research and expertise meets a real commercial need.

Like other departments of politics, much of our engagement has been engagement with Parliament. We've contributed written and oral evidence to UK parliamentary committees on political candidacy (*Collignon*), polling (*Hanretty*, *Heath*), irregular migration (*Jones*) and soft power (*O'Loughlin*). *Childs* in particular has made extended contributions to parliamentary reform through her work on gender-sensitive parliaments. Though much of that work was carried out before her arrival at Royal Holloway, this work is ongoing, and involves parliamentary authorities in the UK, Jersey, and Wales, the Women's Parliamentary Labour Party, and the Centenary Action Group.

We've engaged with broader society on a consistent basis at local, national and international levels. This varied activity has involved organising public-facing events to understand issues before and after the EU membership referendum (*Benedetto*, funded through his Jean Monnet chair); working with national groups to explain complex issues relating to nuclear weapons (*Bentley's* work with the Nuclear Information Service), and organizing gallery installations (*Galai's* 2019 installation "You May Not See It", part of the Belgrade Triennial of Expanded Media). Our most common form of engagement with the public is through the media. We've

written articles that have appeared in the *Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Observer*, *Prospect*, and several other print publications. Our most common channel is *The Conversation*, which Royal Holloway supports financially. During this REF period, fourteen staff members have contributed 62 articles totalling 60,000 words read by half a million users.

**4.3 Recognition of our work.** Our colleagues have won significant national prizes. *Hackett's* doctoral thesis won the Political Studies Association's Walter Bagehot Prize in 2014. The PSA awarded *Allen* the 2018 Richard Rose prize for a "distinctive contribution to the study of British politics", and awarded *Hanretty* the same prize the year later, when he also won a Philip Leverhulme Prize. The PSA also recognized *Childs*, who won the Special Recognition Award in 2016 for her work on gender and politics. Internationally, *Sjoberg* was awarded the ISA's Susan Strange Award (for "innovative thinkers in the field of international studies"), and *O'Loughlin* was appointed Thinker in Residence at the Flemish Royal Academy. Newer hires have come to Royal Holloway after prestigious competitively awarded fellowships (*Hackett* and *Sjoberg* through the British Academy's Post-doctoral Fellowship and Global Professorship schemes respectively; *Prosser* after a Presidential fellowship at Manchester; *Janina Beiser-McGrath* after a Marie Curie post-doctoral fellowship).