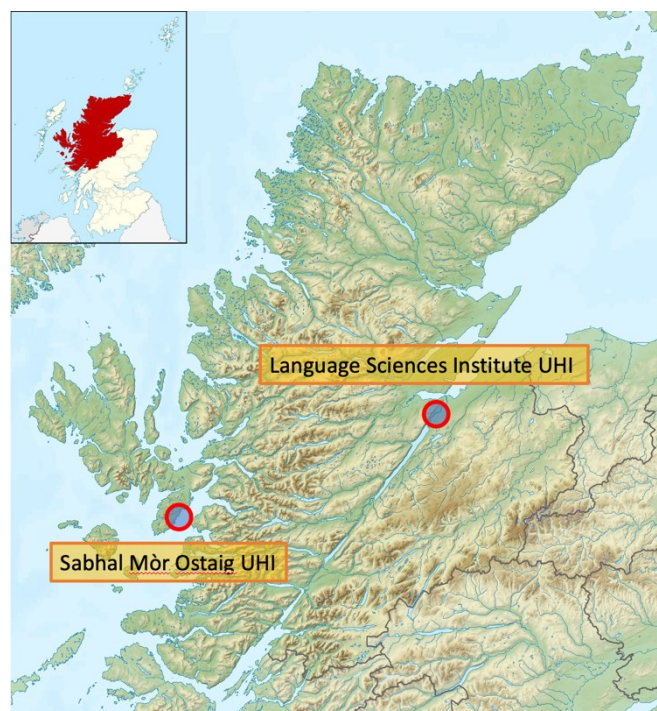


Institution: UHI

8000 words

Unit of Assessment: 26**1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy****1.1 Unit context**

The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI)'s Modern Languages and Linguistics Unit of Assessment 26 (UoA 26) brings together the significant body and breadth of research expertise of colleagues based at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO), the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture in the Isle of Skye, and at the Language Sciences Institute in Inverness (LSI). Sharing an overall research strategy and vision, staff collaborate through joint research projects and research interest groups. Based in the heart of the Highlands, our purpose is to sustain and develop a leading research community making major contributions to the support and understanding of Gaelic language, culture, and history, and working in close collaboration with communities of interest. We achieve this through outstanding research and knowledge exchange across our three key themes of **Gaelic language policy and planning, Gaelic linguistics, and Gaelic literature, culture and history.**



Sabhal Mòr Ostaig plays a pivotal role in the linguistic and cultural renaissance of Gaelic in Scotland. It enjoys an international reputation for the study of Gaelic history and literature, past and present; for research into political, educational, and community aspects of minority language maintenance and revitalisation; and for its engagement with Gaelic creative arts and with broadcast and online media. SMO is home to several of Gaeldom's major strategic projects and associated programmes of resource development and outreach. It is the lead partner in SOILLSE, the National Research Network for the Maintenance and Revitalisation of Gaelic Language and Culture. It hosts the inter-university project Faclair na Gàidhlig (Dictionary of the Scottish Gaelic Language); Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba, the national resource centre for Gaelic place-name research; and Tobar an Dualchais, the digital education and research resource for the heritage, languages and culture of Scotland, making available over 40,000 sound recordings (from the archives of the School of Scottish Studies University of Edinburgh, BBC Scotland, and the National Trust for Scotland's Canna Collection). SMO is a participating partner in a number of significant national and international projects focusing on minority language development, computer-assisted language learning, community development, and minority language arts. SMO works in partnership with the new Language Sciences Institute, a centre for research and learning focused on understanding the dynamic linkages between L1 and L2 Gaelic communities and aiming to develop the capacity of the UHI academic partnership to address a sociolinguistic challenge with both national and international implications.

1.2 Strategic aims for research and impact during the assessment period

Our research and impact strategy aims to build on the existing high level of recognition of our research and to continue to take a leading role in research activities which develop understanding and awareness of Gaelic language, culture, heritage; act upon the needs of Gaelic communities; and respond to and anticipate the challenges for Gaelic in the twenty-first century. The strategy is built on three main priorities: 1) to nurture existing strengths and growth areas, securing continued funding for and further developing research outputs from existing research and knowledge exchange projects; maintaining and developing collaborations; and working on new research projects; 2) to produce demonstrable impact, public engagement and knowledge exchange, with particular attention to the distinct needs of Gaelic communities; and 3) to enhance our research capacity by developing research infrastructure and strengthening staff and postgraduate development strategies and structures for research and impact, including the development of Gaelic-medium research projects and publications.

The success of this strategy as outlined in 2014 is reflected in the current submission. Key evidence for our achievements includes:

- Sustained research income from diverse funding sources, including major contributions from the National Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Funding Council, Bòrd na Gàidhlig (the public body leading national Gaelic developments in Scotland), Erasmus+, the Global Challenge Research Fund, and the European Social Fund.
- Significant achievements in public engagement and knowledge exchange, with partners including councils, community groups, national and international government and public bodies, and the National Museums of Scotland.
- Expansion of research staff, and strengthened provision of research support for research and teaching staff including the creation of a new role of Head of Research (2019) and provision of new degree pathways and research training opportunities for postgraduate students.

1.2.1: Gaelic language policy and planning

In relation to our key theme of **Gaelic language policy and planning**, we have enhanced our standing through a series of strategic appointments and investments.

Securing continued funding for SOILLSE has supported a series of important projects and publications of major significance for KE and public policy impact. The appointment of **Ó Giollagáin** as Research Professor (2014) has led to the establishment of the new UHI Language Sciences Institute, supported by significant investment from the Scottish Funding Council. Additional project funding for the LSI has been secured from the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) which supported a series of Mediating Multilingualism Projects. These GCRF projects, in partnership with Gurgaon University, New Delhi, and seven centres for endangered languages throughout India, have sponsored conferences, plans for joint research publications, fieldwork, and ethnographic retrieval projects. Other LSI research and project collaborations include the *Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal* initiative with the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, funded jointly by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Foras na Gaeilge, to record, archive, and publish ethnolinguistic narratives of exemplary speakers of threatened Gaelic dialects. LSI staff continue to work on the public engagement aspects of SOILLSE's key *Pròiseact Rannsachaidh Gàidhlig nan Eilean/Isles Gaelic Research Project*, which led to the major publication *The Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community* (2020) and a series of significant public policy recommendations and KE

activities. **Smith-Christmas**, SOILLSE Research Fellow, made important contributions to the sociolinguistic subfield of Family Language Policy, completing work on three generations of a Gaelic-speaking family on the Isle of Skye for her monograph *Family Language Policy: Maintaining an Endangered Language in the Home* (2016).

The appointment of **Armstrong** (previously a PhD student at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and an ECR with SOILLSE at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig) as a Senior Lecturer and Course Leader (2015) reflects the success of our staff development strategy. This enabled him to complete the significant sociolinguistic monograph, *Às na Freumhan* (2020), launched in Edinburgh by Deputy First Minister John Swinney and nominated for the Donald Meek Prize for best Gaelic non-fiction book of the year.

The European Social Fund has supported two dedicated PhD studentships to support PhD research on socioeconomic aspects of minority language revitalisation, one based at SMO under the auspices of SOILLSE, the other based at LSI (2017–22).

1.2.2: Gaelic linguistics

In the area of **Gaelic linguistics** major funding awards have enabled the continuation and significant development of lexicographical and onomastic project work based at SMO. Awards from the Scottish Funding Council and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to the *Faclair* project (£1.273m of £2.99m) have supported significant investments in staff development and new staffing, including a new Chief Lexicographer (2018), Project Manager (2019), and Trainee Lexicographers (2018, 2019, 2020), as well as two research fellows (2017, 2018) working on a dedicated manuscript transcription programme to generate new corpora for the older language. Major lexicographical, corpus development, and systems development milestones have been met, with more than 30 million tokens now online, and project staff have contributed to publication and outreach programmes for both peer and public audiences.

Awards from Bòrd na Gàidhlig (£400K) have supported the recognition of Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba as the national resource for research on Gaelic placenames, enabling the project to provide vital strategic direction and guidance to public partners as placenames develop increasing importance and visibility in national planning and policy. Major milestones include the completion of 3,573 database entries publicly available through the project website, with research completed on 15,124 in total. New direct funding from the Scottish Government has supported the delivery of a new project website (£7K), while additional research funding from Bòrd na Gàidhlig has supported investment in two other initiatives: the *Gaelic Awareness Prioritisation Exercise: Evidence for where Gaelic was spoken according to placenames* (£8K, 2017–18) worked directly to inform government policy on Gaelic development strategy; the *Field and Transcription Project* (£16K, 2017–18) aims to build research capacity and scope new research directions by working directly with community-based partners in Skye and the Western Isles to record local toponymic forms. Additional partnership projects have included work with Scottish National Heritage to produce area-based placename booklets for Strath (2015), Colonsay and Oronsay (2017), and Eriskay (2019); and with Historic Environment Scotland to produce definitive Gaelic forms for Scottish battlefield names. AÀA also supported the publication of project researcher Dr Jake King's *Scottish Gaelic Place-Names: The Collected Works of Charles M. Robertson* (2019), a ground-breaking contribution to historiographical aspects of Gaelic placename research.

Also within the key theme of Gaelic linguistics, **Cox's** *Geàrr-Ghràmar na Gàidhlig* (2017) represents a milestone in the provision of scholarly linguistic resource in the medium of Gaelic. **Cheape's** ongoing series of publications (2016, 2019, 2020) investigating collections of Gaelic material culture terminology compiled in the early twentieth century, a time of anxiety concerning perceived failings in British scientific and technical education, has opened up fresh perspectives on Scottish Gaelic historical lexicography.

In the area of computer-assisted language learning, SMO has made a significant contribution to a series of collaborative European projects, developing resources and guidance for Content and Language Integrated Learning. SMO worked as part of the POOLs project during 2013–16, and is now participating in its successor, the pan-European partnership COOL (Content and Integrated Learning Online Open Learning Project), led by the University of Valencia and funded by Erasmus+.

1.2.3: Gaelic literature, culture, and history

In the area of **Gaelic literature, culture, and history**, SMO has enhanced its standing through a number of nationally and internationally significant partnerships and collaborations. A key knowledge exchange collaboration between National Museums Scotland and SMO enabled the work of **Cheape** and **Stiùbhart** to make a major contribution not just to the shaping, curation, and content of the 2019 exhibition *Fiadhaich Glòrmhor: Seallaidhean Romansach de dh'Alba/Wild and Majestic: Romantic Visions of Scotland*, but also to significant changes in future museum policy regarding the use of Gaelic texts, voices, and perspectives in relevant exhibitions, interpretation, and educational provision. The exhibition's success with curators, reviewers, and visitors alike has inspired other Scottish museums and galleries to seek their input, bringing themselves into line with international standards for best practice in bilingual interpretation and formalising appropriate – and long overdue – institutional recognition for the role of Gaelic language, history, and culture. **Stiùbhart** contributed interpretation and advised on the redesign of the permanent exhibition at the Museum of the Isles, Armadale. **Cheape** and **Stiùbhart** have advised on redispays of the Kilmartin Museum in Argyll and the Clan Macpherson Museum in Badenoch, as well as advising *Ar Dualchas*, a new network for Gaelic-speakers working in the heritage sector.

Cheape has continued his pioneering interdisciplinary work on the organology and repertoire of the bagpipe, recovering an iconic national instrument from the 'condescension of posterity' and an orthodox musical scholarship focused upon a nineteenth-century militarised, sentimental-romantic tradition. His research complicates the received picture of a single, indigenous 'Great Highland Bagpipe' stereotype, presenting multiple, changing varieties of an international instrument much of whose 'light' repertoire at least is traceable to an early modern 'Western European Neo-Baroque piping tradition'. Together, **Purser** and **Cheape** have made perhaps the most significant contemporary contributions to scholarly re-evaluation of Scotland's musical history. They have demonstrated a readiness to question and go beyond conventional wisdoms and orthodox interpretations, in particular established but ahistorical distinctions between folk and classical instruments, styles, and repertoires, in order to situate and reassess Scotland's music in dynamic European and world contexts, and to stress the reach of the influence of Gaelic song and tradition. They have also made the fruits of their scholarship available to the widest possible audiences, through collaboration with contemporary artists, and their own creative compositions and performances.

Purser's musicological research has been showcased in prestigious research-led commissions, including his script and scenario for *Guthan Aosda/Ancient Voices*, a dance, musical and poetry

production featuring the trombonist John Kenny performing on a number of prehistoric lip-reed instruments in the spectacular Neolithic Hagar Qim temple complex for the 2019 Malta International Arts Festival, and his composition, *An Grianan*, for the National Piping Centre (2019). He has also written a regular series of popular essays on Scottish music, visual arts, and culture for *The National* (2018–20). **Cheape** has most notably collaborated with Galician ‘rock star piper’ Carlos Nuñez on the libretto – with accompanying research paper – for Nuñez’s sell-out ‘Atlantic Corridor’ Celtic Connections concert *Miorbhail nam Beann/Wonders of the Mountains* (2015), as well as for the official Edinburgh New Year piping concert in 2019. The first concert received further exposure as the subject of a *Pipeline* special on BBC Radio Scotland and an article by Cheape for the ‘performer community’ readership of the *Piping Times*.

Ongoing funding has been secured for Tobar an Dualchais, the digital educational and research audio resource for the heritage, languages, and culture of Scotland. This has supported the delivery of a new web interface and website; a programme of community-based KE events in the Western Isles and at national events throughout Scotland; and collaborative work with Stòrlann, the national producer of Gaelic-language educational resources, to produce educational materials for Gaelic-medium schools. The appointment of the new Director of TaD (2019) has facilitated significant media recognition, including the BBC radio series *Flòraidh a’ dol dhan Tobair* (2019) and a monthly feature in the *West Highland Free Press* (2019 to present) in which SMO and visiting researchers (including **Cheape**, **Purser**, and **Stiùbhart**) showcase current work on Gaelic cultural topics drawing upon online materials available through TaD.

Strategic appointments in the area of Gaelic literature (**Mac a’ Phearsain**, 2017; **Ní Annracháin**, 2019) have strengthened our reputation for research in this area. **Mac a’ Phearsain**’s *An Leabhar Liath* (2016) received significant national media coverage as well as the Donald Meek Prize for best Gaelic book of the year in 2016 and the Saltire Society’s Research Book of the Year prize in 2017; it was the subject of invited events at Glasgow’s Aye Write festival and the Edinburgh International Book Festival in 2017. In collaboration with the Royal Irish Academy, **Ní Annracháin** delivered masterclasses on the topic of *Perspective and Empathy in Literature* for postgraduate students, both at the RIA (April 2019) and at the National University of Ireland Galway’s annual Irish Language and Culture conference (October 2019).

Bateman’s work as literary critic and poet has been recognised in significant national and international contexts. Her poems have been brought to public attention in new commissions, translations and anthologies, including contributions for the Imperial War Museum’s 14–18 NOW exhibition and the 2016 National Poetry Day postcard series. Since 2016 she has been the Gaelic judge of the Edwin Morgan Poetry Award, and she has taken part in numerous invited events and readings, including at the StAnza Poetry Festival (2016), the Ledbury Poetry Festival (2016) and the Leipzig Book Fair (2020).

Stiùbhart’s work on Ossianic ballads contributed to an innovative collaborative project commissioning a reconstruction and performances of the Gaelic ballad and tale *Bàs Chonnlaoidh* by internationally renowned Gaelic artists, supported by grants from the Hope Scott Trust (£1500) and the Royal Celtic Society (£1100), staged at the Scottish Storytelling Centre as part of the Scottish International Storytelling Festival (2018). Public engagement with Stiùbhart’s pioneering historical research, integrating Gaelic sources and Highland history with broader British, European, and world historiographies, has been expedited by regular community lectures and media appearances. These include expert interviews for MacTV’s *Taighean* (‘Houses’, 2016); BBC Scotland’s *Rise of the Clans* (2018, 2019); Sky Arts’ *Boswell and Johnson* (2020); and numerous radio interviews including a regular morning slot discussing influential but unrecognised Gaelic

speakers for BBC Radio nan Gàidheal, *Dìomhair an Eachdraidh* ('The Secret History of Gaeldom', 2017–19).

Knowledge exchange and resource provision for Gaelic communities also informs other key SMO contributions to the Gaelic media environment, including regular contributions to news and current affairs (**Mac a' Phearsain** making some 75 contributions annually to BBC Gaelic reporting on the Middle East), and programming at the heart of the BBC Radio nan Gàidheal schedule, such as the regular literature review *Leugh an Leabhar* ('Read the Book') and the *Beag air Bheag* ('Little by Little') programme for Gaelic learners.

1.3: Future planning

Our future planning will draw on these key themes in order to demonstrate the continuing value of Gaelic research, teaching, scholarship, and historical and cultural perspectives in an increasingly globalised world, working alongside and on behalf of Gaelic communities, and creating connections and dialogue with other minoritised and peripheralised languages and cultures worldwide.

Key objectives across our research themes include:

Strengthening and supporting research capacity within our staff and postgraduate cohorts, enhancing our existing research community and enabling colleagues to produce research outputs of the highest quality in Gaelic, English, and other languages where appropriate. We aim to increase recruitment and funding at Master's and PhD levels in order to secure pathways into a thriving Gaelic research culture, and will work to foster a new generation of Gaelic scholars skilled in engaging with and developing Scottish Gaelic academic registers, confident in adopting Gaelic perspectives in their research, and able to make significant contributions both at Gaelic community level and within the wider context of international Celtic Studies and academia more broadly.

Strengthening existing collaborative partnerships and develop new ones, working across academic, industry and community partnerships to create beneficial impact for

- Gaelic-speaking communities;
- regional and national institutions, including governing bodies, whose remit involves the language, people, culture, history, and environment of the Scottish Highlands;
- the wider international community of Celtic scholarship;
- audiences worldwide with an interest in the language, culture, and history of Gaels at home or in the diaspora.

We will continue to foster and develop our relationships with Gaelic community organisations, building collaborations through research and knowledge exchange and working to help nurture Gaelic culture and heritage and to highlight its continuing relevance and value for younger generations. We will work with institutions to develop their awareness of and engagement with Gaelic language, culture and history, demonstrating the important role that Gaelic perspectives can play both in understanding and interpreting the past, and in developing strategies through which to address the environmental, demographic, and economic uncertainties of the future. We will work to strengthen our engagement with and contribution to the wider world of Celtic scholarship, supporting our researchers and postgraduates to participate in national and international Gaelic and Celtic Studies partnerships, events and networks, and, capitalising on our unique position working within the Scottish Highlands, to attract national and international participation in residencies, networks, scholarly activities, and events based at SMO.

Securing continuation funding for, and developing research outputs from, existing research and KE projects; and developing new research projects, ensuring ongoing sustainability for SOILLSE, TaD, Faclair na Gàidhlig, and AÀA; seeking to develop the potential for collaborative studentships and research in association with the projects; and extending the participation of project research staff in the academic community of the unit. We will work to support collaborative initiatives and project activities to ensure that project outputs and research findings reach the widest possible audiences, and, where appropriate, can be used as part of KE programming with community and school groups, media, and arts practitioners.

Capitalising on our unique research and archival resources, developing research themes, project work and studentships that build on our rich and growing bibliographical, musical and material culture collections, and encouraging the use of our collections both by the local, national and international scholarly community, and by arts practitioners through residencies and collaborative KE activities. We will work to secure studentship and project funding in order further to unlock our collections for wider scholarship, and will foster research partnerships building upon synergies between our own collections and other archives, in the Highlands and beyond.

Placing Gaelic communities at the heart of our research. Our relationships with local Gaelic-speaking communities, based on long-standing trust and mutual respect, are foundational to our research and our self-identity. We shall continue to draw upon, learn from, and contribute to community experiences and expertise, as well as responding to, and acting for, community needs.

2. People

2.1 Staff profile

Across Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture, and the Language Sciences Institute, the unit draws together a wide range of staff whose work reflects the diversity of research and teaching required to deliver our objectives. Since 2014 we have made substantial investment in staffing. Overall numbers of Category A staff should be seen in the context of the promotion of one senior member of staff to the role of Principal (2018) and two new appointments into senior academic management roles (Vice Principal and Director of Studies (2018); Head of Research (2019)). This means that overall numbers of Category A staff have seen only slight growth, rising from eight to nine, but strategic appointments (Ó Giollagáin (2014); Mac a' Phearsain (2017); Ní Annracháin (2020)) have added significant new strengths and capacity in the key areas of Gaelic sociolinguistics and Gaelic literary studies that will make an important contribution to our intentions to develop postgraduate numbers. We have retained the expertise and mentoring capacity of senior staff approaching retirement through the use of part-time contracts, and have seen 25% growth in numbers of Category C research staff associated with the work of the unit's research projects. Two members of staff have left, one retiring, another taking up a prestigious Marie Curie research fellowship. Recruitment of replacements and additional investment have allowed us to meet our overriding research objectives and enhance our research capacity across our key research themes.

Current Category A staffing includes four Professors, two full-time (Bateman, Ó Giollagáin) and two part-time (Cheape, Cox); two full-time Senior Lecturers (Armstrong, Stiùbhart); one full-time Lecturer (Mac a' Phearsain); and two part-time Senior Research Fellows (Ní Annracháin, Purser). The gender balance of Category A researchers in the current submission is weighted towards male (7M, 2F, with one additional F Category B researcher); this should be seen in the context of recent

female appointments at senior level (Principal (2018); Vice Principal (2019); Head of Research (2019)), ensuring a 50:50 gender balance amongst the Senior Management Team, and by the promotion of Bateman to Professor (2016), the first woman appointed to a professorial position in the field of Scottish Gaelic Studies. These attest our commitment to career development for female members of staff; future planning commits us to working towards developing our cohort of female researchers. PhD students during the census period have been 2M, 6F.

2.2 Staffing strategy

Investment in staff is of critical importance if they are to reach their potential. SMO and UHI staff development strategies aim to create stability and sustainability in staffing levels, build research experience in order to produce research of the highest standard, develop research mentoring skills, and plan for succession. At SMO, virtually all academics are recruited to permanent contracts, and their performance is monitored and subject to annual appraisal. Access to training, funding, and relief from other duties for research activities which contribute to improved research skills is facilitated through the free, biennial UHI Research Conference, the UHI Conference and Travel Fund (up to 80% support for one event per year), the SMO Staff Development Fund (up to 100% support for travel and conference/training costs for one or more events per year), and the UHI Sabbatical Scheme (IES, p. 9). Four SMO staff members (**Bateman, Cheape, Cox, Stiùbhart**) were awarded sabbaticals of 4–6 months in the census period.

The census period has seen significant investment in E&D development at both UHI and SMO levels; SMO helped to develop and adopted UHI's EDI policy (2018–19), and can draw on the support provided by UHI's E&D advisor and committee (IES, p. 10). UHI achieved bronze Athena SWAN accreditation in 2017. The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers is incorporated into the UHI and SMO Research Strategies and supporting policies, and implemented through SMO's annual appraisal system. Additionally, all staff are eligible to apply for flexible working, and for statutory entitlements to maternity, paternity, and adoption leave, Keeping in Touch days (with full pay), and a childcare voucher scheme. SMO's 2019 Progress on Equality Outcomes report records significant progress towards meeting staff experience-related equalities targets, most notably in relation to the gender pay gap and work force segregation. Over the census period parental leave has been taken up by two of our researchers, and flexible working patterns have been agreed for two others.

Researchers' annual appraisals review research achievements (peer-reviewed publications, invited plenaries and lectures, conference participation, grant applications and outcomes, research income), research plans, and training and support requirements. During the census period **Mac a' Phearsain** has been supported to finalise and submit his PhD (University of Ulster, 2020). Appraisals also help to identify potential cases for salary increases and promotions. Academic promotions in the census period include **Bateman** (Professor, 2016) and **Armstrong** (Senior Lecturer, 2015).

Research culture at SMO has been strengthened by the creation of regular lunchtime seminar and workshop sessions (6–8 sessions per semester) at which both our own and visiting staff and postgraduate students present their work; these are both onsite and online, via videoconferencing to staff and students across the world. Online research seminars, during the Covid-19 lockdown, were opened to the wider academic community, encouraging the participation of national and international Gaelic and Celtic Studies scholars as both speakers and audience, and attracting regular attendance of 70–90 participants.

SOILLSE coordinates research seminars for research staff and PhD students in participating universities (three per year). Seminars have been held in Glasgow Caledonian University (Gaelic and the Media, 2018); Colaisde Bheinn na Faoghla/Lews Castle College UHI Benbecula Campus (Gaelic and Language Planning, 2019); the University of Edinburgh (Bilingualism, 2019); and the University of Glasgow (Gaelic and Technology, 2019). Postgraduate students' attendance costs are met by SOILLSE. Optional attendance by videoconference was taken up in the 2019 Benbecula session by remote participants in Stornoway and Edinburgh.

2.3 Postgraduate students

The most significant step for UHI Celtic and Gaelic Studies during the census period was the attainment of Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAPs) in 2017 (IES, p. 10); research degrees had previously been validated by the University of Aberdeen. The current PhD cohort includes students who began their studies under this arrangement.

FTEs at PhD level grew from three in 2012/13 to eight across the census period, with four successful completions, one due in 2020, two in 2021, and one in 2022. Two current PhD students (SOILLSE, LSI) are funded through a European Social Fund studentship. The 2019/20 cohort includes eight students at Master's level (all part-time), demonstrating significant growth from three in 2012/13.

UHI is a partner in the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Centre for Doctoral Training (AHRC CDT) in Celtic Studies (2014–20), and PhD students have benefited from the CDT's annual CLARSACH postgraduate training events. From 2019 onwards, AHRC funding and training for Celtic and Gaelic Studies is delivered through the Scottish Graduate School of Arts and Humanities (SGSAH). SMO's Head of Research represents UHI as part of SGSAH's Modern Languages Discipline+ Catalyst, and has contributed to the development of Gaelic and Celtic training strands for the SGSAH summer school (2020).

SMO is committed to building its postgraduate cohort and to creating opportunities for students to develop their research careers through the medium of Gaelic. We have developed our pathways to research by adding a new MRes (2019) to the existing MSc in Material Culture and Gàidhealtachd History. For the 2020/21 session SMO has invested in the research pipeline by making two full-time Research Masters' scholarships available to promising students aspiring to a research career. We are committed to increasing our number of applications to SGSAH and other PhD funding schemes, and have developed comprehensive support, aligned with UHI's Graduate School provision (IES, pp. 9,10) to help prospective students navigate the challenging application processes.

Potential students approach SMO or LSI to discuss proposed research topics with prospective supervisors before applying formally through the UHI Graduate School. This assesses applications according to the applicant's academic qualifications, the quality of the research proposal, and the availability of a strong supervisory team, as well as monitoring ethics, equal opportunities, progress, training and development plans, and supervisory support (IES, p. 9).

Every student is paired with at least two senior academics in their research area. Ensuring the quality of supervisory expertise and monitoring student supervision is supported by mandatory training for supervisors and through supervisory team selection criteria. Co-supervisors can be recruited from across Academic Partners in the UHI network, where this will ensure that students

receive the best supervision, and SMO researchers (**Bateman, Cheape, Stiùbhart**) play an active role in PhD co-supervision in other UHI Academic Partners. Students meet with their supervisors on a weekly or fortnightly basis at the beginning of their studies and thereafter at least monthly. Induction, ongoing training opportunities, and student support are provided through both SMO and UHI Graduate School-led programmes (IES, p. 9).

Postgraduates are supplied with an individual computer, filing cabinet, bookshelves, free printing and copying facilities, and access to a shared telephone. They have full access to SMO Library and its specialist bibliographic and archival collections, as well as library resources across UHI including an extensive and expanding range of electronic databases, online digital resources, and e-journals.

The unit places strong emphasis on high quality postgraduate training. Training requirements and the necessary resources are identified in collaboration with supervisors and monitored through UHI's Postgraduate Structured Management Framework. UHI provision includes annual training opportunities in core postgraduate research skills such as time management, career planning, and writing for an academic audience.

In 2019, in response to student feedback, SMO extended the provision of additional Gaelic-medium training tailored to the particular needs of Gaelic-speaking postgraduates. As well as discipline-specific methodological and bibliographical advice, and research design and implementation, training sessions now offer guidance on conducting culturally sensitive interviews in Gaelic communities; delivering Gaelic-medium seminars and conference papers; developing appropriate, accessible academic registers and an authoritative, professional scholarly persona in Gaelic; and planning a career as a self-confident, self-reflexive, critical, and empowered scholar representing a minoritised language and culture.

Uniquely among higher education institutions, SMO is entirely Gaelic-speaking. We offer our students a close-knit, sociable scholarly community of experienced researchers, postgraduates, and arts practitioners. As a recognised centre of expertise in Gaelic literature, history, folklore, music, and sociolinguistics, SMO's research environment provides an exceptionally supportive context in which students can explore and bring to fruition their projects, and mature as Gaelic scholars. Feedback indicates how highly our students value this aspect of our provision, also reflected at UHI level in the outstanding satisfaction rates recorded in the 2019 PRES survey (IES, p. 9).

Postgraduate students are supported to contribute to UHI's biennial PGR student conference; at SMO they take part in an annual PG research mini-conference scheduled as part of the spring research seminar programme. UHI provides 50% funding for one external conference/training event per postgraduate each year; SMO also offers 100% funding for one additional event

Chan e a h-uile cùrsa acaideamaigeach a bheir ort a ràdh gun do dh'atharraich e do bheatha ach 's e sin a rinn an cùrsa mhaighstearachd Cultar Dùthchasach agus Eachdraidh na Gàidhealtachd. Tha an rannsachadh a rinn mi an cois a' chùrsa air toirt orm sealltainn air mo choimhearsnachd agus a' chultar againn fhìn le sùilean ùra.

Not every academic course could make you say that it changed your life, but that's what the Masters in Material Culture and Gàidhealtachd History did. The research I undertook for the course has made me look through new eyes at my community and our culture.

Clìr. Calum Munro (MSc, 2020)

'S e urram a th' ann gun d' fhuair mi cothrom a bhith ag ionnsachadh bho shàr sgioba-stiùiridh den leithid sin, is iad an-còmhnaidh taiceil, brosnachail agus deònach an cuid comhairle agus an cuid eòlais a thairgse dhomh.

It's an honour that I've been able to learn from an outstanding supervisory team, always supportive, encouraging, and ready to share their advice and knowledge with me.

John Howieson (PhD, 2020)

annually. Both PhD and MSc students have participated in and taken organisational roles in the annual conference organised by the Celtic Students of Ireland and Scotland, and have held committee positions in the society itself. Our students have also received assistance to participate in the biennial Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig conferences and, in 2019, in the quadrennial International Congress of Celtic Studies. They are encouraged and supported to play a part in research seminars and postgraduate-focused discussion groups, and are represented formally by a postgraduate member on SMO's Research Committee. Our postgraduates benefit from studying in a fully Gaelic-speaking scholarly environment enjoying close, long-standing relationships with surrounding Gaelic communities, set in a breathtaking landscape rich in Gaelic culture and history.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

During the REF period 2013–20, UHI Gaelic and Celtic Studies has continued to attract significant funding for its longitudinal national projects as well as for specific research projects, totalling nearly £7.9m for the period. The principal funding sources for SMO-based activities have been Scottish government sources (74%), EU Government bodies (14%), UK charities (4%), and other UK organisations (6%).

Faclair na Gàidhlig continues to be SMO's largest project, attracting £3,469K funding for the REF period. Of this funding, £1,837K has been transferred to Glasgow University during the REF period for their work on this project. The current funding agreement with SFC for £2.5m runs for the 5 years to July 2023 and is match-funded from Bòrd na Gàidhlig, with a commitment of £225K to March 2022. TaD has received £984K for the REF census period, and continues to raise funds from both Bòrd na Gàidhlig and other charitable sources including the Paulsen Foundation, whilst AÀA has received £470K, again primarily from Bòrd na Gàidhlig. SOILLSE has received £638K for the REF period. After the completion of the initial funding period for SOILLSE of 2009–2017 (during which SMO received £1,309K of external funding), SMO and UHI have secured the continuation of the research project with a six-year grant for 2017–23 of £562K from SFC, supported by additional investment from UHI and SMO of £270K.

The EU have continued to support projects such as Connect G in 2013–14 (£267K); Ceangal G in 2013–15 (£444K); and the POOLs project in 2013–16 (£155K). SMO is now working as part of a pan-European partnership COOL (Content and Integrated Learning Online Open Learning Project), led by the University of Valencia, funded by Erasmus+ in 2018–21 (€409K total budget, of which €65K will come to SMO).

The establishment of the LSI has been supported by a grant from the Scottish Funding Council of £350,000 over the five years 2017–22 (£175K over the REF reporting period), with additional project funding including £70K (£33K over the REF reporting period) from the Global Challenge Research Fund supporting the Mediating Multilingualism collaborative project series, and £60K from Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Foras na Gaeilge to support the *Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal* initiative.

Two PhD studentships on socioeconomic aspects of minority language revitalisation have been funded by the European Social Fund, totalling £150K in 2017–22 (£99K over the reporting period).

Infrastructure and facilities

Infrastructure developments over the census period have included the housing of the majority of teaching and research staff and postgraduate students within new administrative, research, and

knowledge exchange premises (Ionad Iain Nobail) on the Ostaig Campus, enhancing the research environment. SMO's library continues to grow in extent and reputation as an internationally important Gaelic and Celtic Studies research collection and has acquired significant new accessions over the census period.



Top: Àrainn Chalum Cille. Left: ACC showing library and atrium. Right: Ionad Iain Noble

SMO and LSI are inspiring places for Gaelic and Celtic Studies research. SMO's location in its beautiful campus setting on the Isle of Skye and LSI's in the Highland capital of Inverness place our researchers and facilities in powerful symbolic locations for Gaelic research initiatives, helping to attract and secure ongoing investment in national projects and collaborative research partnerships. The SMO campus is well situated to facilitate research and KE engagement with the strongest Gaelic-speaking communities, in Skye and the Western Isles.

SMO's Research Library sits at the heart of the campus and its research community, housing a uniquely focused collection of library and archival materials with significance for the study of Gaelic language and culture. The internationally important MacCormaig and Celtica special collections, the foundation of the library's antiquarian holdings, have been augmented by a number of important recent acquisitions and donations, including significant manuscript and archival collections covering musicology, onomastics, and Gaelic development. Newly acquired specialist collections include the Magne Oftedal linguistic and onomastic research collection (2018, 1,500+ items); the poet Sorley Maclean's personal library (2018, 1,800+ items); and the Roderick Cannon and Major Powell collections (2018 and 2019, encompassing over two hundred years of published material on piping).

SMO's longitudinal research projects, FnaG, TaD, AÀA, and SOILLSE, are housed in the neighbouring Fàs Building. In October 2015 SMO completed the Ionad Iain Noble (IIN) building (referred to previously as the Administration, Research, and Knowledge Exchange (ARKE)

building). This attracted £6.2m of investment from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Scottish Funding Council, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), and has enabled dedicated office space for five research staff as well as providing room for up to five PhD students or visiting academics to have their own office and research space. The proximity allows for greater collegiate working alongside other academic teaching staff and SMO senior management, as well as student teaching rooms and two businesses.

The Research Committee meets at least three times each academic year to develop research strategy, to support researchers, and to administer internal funds. The Head of Research is a member of the SMO Management Team and chairs the SMO committee; other committee members include representatives from across the research community including the Head Librarian, professorial and lecturing staff (including Ó Giollagáin as Director of SOILLSE and LSI), and PhD students. Research and Knowledge Exchange development work is supported by UHI's Research Office, Dean of Research, and the Vice Principal for Research and Impact, who manage development of UHI research policy and structures and UHI's research and KE support functions (including grants support and a European office).

SMO maintains its own scholarly imprint, Clò Ostaig, which is key to our ability to support academic publication through the medium of Gaelic. It is managed by the Head of Research with the support of Cox, who is primarily responsible for associated editorial and publishing duties.

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

Gaelic and Celtic Studies at UHI is unique in its close relationship to Gaelic communities, enabling our researchers to centre Gaelic communities, past and present, in their research and as partners and stakeholders in its creation. An impact study carried out by Biggar Economics estimated that the combined impact of the quantifiable research and knowledge exchange activity at SMO generated £2m GVA and supported fifty jobs in the Highlands and Islands study area in 2019.

Building on SMO's long tradition of work rooted in community experience and responding to community needs, projects during the census period have included several landmark studies under the auspices of SMO and SOILLSE, working in and with communities to explore Gaelic language abilities, usage, and attitudes. These have shaped significant interventions at community, regional, and national government levels, resulting in major shifts in the direction of planning and the framing of public discourse around Gaelic revitalisation and development.

We place a high value on research collaboration, both to build Gaelic and Celtic Studies research capacity across our areas of focus, and in the work of individual researchers. SMO and LSI researchers participate in UHI's interdisciplinary HARC and SILK research clusters (IES, p. 5). Research and teaching agreements are in place with University College Dublin, NUI Galway; and St Francis Xavier, Antigonish. In the UK, SMO works closely with other Scottish institutions. SMO hosted the biannual Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig conference in 2016, publishing the proceedings through Clò Ostaig (2019), and in 2018 collaborated with Celtic Studies colleagues in the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow to host Ulidia Finn 2018, the first joint meeting of the regular international Ulster Cycle and Finn Cycle conferences. SMO has MOUs with the National Piping Centre (NPC) and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS), working closely with both in research and teaching on piping, collaborating with the RCS to deliver the prestigious *Musica Scotica* symposium on the eighteenth-century Eliza Ross manuscript of Highland music

(2017), and with the NPC on organological and musicological research for an innovative new 3D printed small-pipes design.

Research collaborations play an important part in the work of both SMO and LSI as part of the infrastructure of interinstitutional project-based work. SMO continues to play a leading role in the development and sustainability of important interinstitutional collaborative research projects such as SOILLSE, FnaG, and TaD, all managed and run at the College. The presence of such prestigious national projects on campus contributes greatly to the research environment; SMO researchers draw on their resources and work closely with their staff, and have contributed to many of their significant KE activity streams. LSI's international collaborations have been at the core of its project work, including the Global Challenge Research Fund supported Mediating Multilingualism Projects in partnership with Gurgaon University, New Delhi, and other Indian centres for endangered languages, and a partnership with the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies School of Celtic Studies to deliver the *Stòras Beò nan Gàidheal* project. **Ó Giollagáin** has contributed as an external advisor to help develop the University of Valencia's Centre for Language Rights.

Over the census period, staff members have achieved national and international recognition from peers for their research. **Ní Annracháin** has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Irish Academy (2020), and is a member of the Royal Irish Academy's Committee for Irish Studies, Irish Literature and Celtic Cultures. She is also a member of the Irish Placenames Commission (Coimisiún Logainmneacha), of the Irish Bishops' Advisory Committee on Irish language liturgy, and of the Board of the Irish Folklore Collection. **Cheape** was awarded an MBE in recognition of his services to Scottish Cultural Education and Traditional Music (2018), is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, and is a Research Fellow of the National Museums of Scotland. He is academic adviser to the Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, an Advisory Committee member for DASG (Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic), and a Steering Committee member for Faclair na Gàidhlig. **Stiùbhart** has been awarded a Research Fellowship at the University of Glasgow Library (2020), and is an Editorial Board member of the Scottish Gaelic Texts Society; he is a network member of the Rev. James McLagan Project, Celtic and Gaelic, University of Glasgow (2016–20) and Advisory Board member of the AHRC-funded research project 'Curious Travellers: Thomas Pennant and the Welsh and Scottish Tour, 1760–1820', CAWCS University of Wales, and University of Glasgow (2014–18). Together, **Cheape** and **Stiùbhart** are historical advisers to National Museums Scotland, their work on the 2019 exhibition *Wild and Majestic* having laid the ground for ongoing collaboration between the NMS and SMO. In other editorial and advisory roles, **Cox** was co-editor of *The Journal of Scottish Name Studies* (to 2019), and referee and/or reader for *Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba*; the Icelandic Research Fund; the Gaelic Books Council; the journal *Scottish Gaelic Studies*; the *Journal of Scottish Name Studies*; and the onomastics journal *Ainm*. **Bateman** was academic adviser to the Leverhulme Trust-funded research project 'Women's Poetry in Ireland, Scotland & Wales 1400–1800', Department of English & Creative Writing, Aberystwyth University, and Scottish Gaelic editor of *Irish Pages: A Journal of Contemporary Writing*, 10 (2018).

Three Category A staff members have been external examiners for PhDs: **Ní Annracháin** (Trinity College, Dublin, 2020); **Ó Giollagáin** (Dublin City University, 2015); and **Cheape** (Edinburgh, 2015).

Staff are regularly invited to deliver guest lectures at national and international conferences and events: **Armstrong** gave plenary lectures at the Foundation for Endangered Languages Annual Conference, University College London (2020) and the Celtic Sociolinguistics Conference, Trinity

College Dublin (2016); **Stiùbhart** delivered a series of lectures drawing on his British Academy funded project on Martin Martin for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and the British Academy in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Stornoway (2014) as well as plenary lectures at the Second International Finn Cycle Conference, University of Glasgow (2014); the Celtic Revival in Scotland conference, University of Edinburgh/National Galleries Scotland (2014); and the Sex and Sexualities in Celtic Cultures conference, University of Edinburgh (2013); he also delivered the Greyfriars Highland Lecture in 2015. **Ní Annracháin** gave the Ó Buachalla Annual Lecture for the Irish Texts Society (2020); **Bateman** and **Purser** delivered a joint plenary lecture for the Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig conference (2014); **Cheape** also gave a plenary lecture for the same RnaG conference (2014); a plenary to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and Royal Society of Edinburgh 'Ethnology Crossroads' conference (2014); a plenary at the 'European Revivals: Cultural Mythologies Around 1900' conference at the National Galleries of Scotland (2017); as well as the annual Canna Lecture at the University of Aberdeen (2019). **Ó Giollagáin** gave plenary lectures at the MIME conference on Interdisciplinarity and the Future of Multilingualism Research, Humboldt University (2018) and the National Conference on Indigenous and Lesser Studied Languages, Tezpur University (2019).

Other invitations to deliver guest lectures have included: **Stiùbhart**, to the Saltire Society (2019); the 'Curious Travellers' symposium, Burlington House, London (2018); comainn eachdraidh (local history societies) in Sleat, Isle of Skye, and Back, Isle of Lewis (2018, 2019); the 'Wörter und Sachen: Modern studies of the material culture of the Celtic-speaking peoples' symposium at the University of Tübingen (2017); the 'Supernatural in early modern Scotland' symposium, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh (2017); the 'Rencontre Bretagne et Écosse', Université de Bretagne Occidentale, Brest (2016); the Island Castles Conference, Barra (2015); the 'Thomas Pennant and Enlightenment Networks' workshop, University of Glasgow (2015); the 'New Approaches to Ossian' symposium, Royal Irish Academy (2015); and the Centre for Eighteenth-Century Studies, University of York (2013); **Ní Annracháin**, to the Máirtín Ó Cadhain Memorial Conference, Trinity College Dublin (2020), the Modern Irish Research Seminar, NUI Maynooth (2020); Dept of Welsh, University of Wales, Aberystwyth (2018); Conference in honour of Alan Titley, University of Notre Dame and University of Toronto (2018); Irish Folklore Research Seminar, University College Dublin (2018); Conference in honour of Eilís Ní Dhuibhne, University College Dublin (2018); Institute for Modern Languages Research, University of London (2016); and Sean Ó Ríordáin conference, University College Cork (2016); **Mac a' Phearsain** to the Modern Irish Research Seminar, NUI Maynooth (2018); **Bateman**, to the RSE-funded Loch Computer seminar, University of St Andrews (2015); the French Institute, Edinburgh (2015); and the Celtic and Scottish Studies Research Seminar, University of Edinburgh (2019); **Cheape**, to the Piobaireachd Society (2018); the National Piping Centre Piping Live Festival (2014); and Ceòlas (2017); **Ó Giollagáin** to the Mediating Multilingualism Colloquium, Amity University Harayana (2019); the Language Policy Workshop, University of Stockholm (2017); Comann na Gàidhlig (2017); University of Aberdeen May Festival (2016); University of Leiden (2016).

In conclusion, UHI Gaelic and Celtic Studies is proud of the contribution that its research and knowledge exchange activity make to the visibility, vitality, and understanding of Gaelic in Scotland and beyond. Our staff and students contribute to a research culture that is both outward looking and deeply rooted in its communities of interest. Our researchers are engaged in innovative research which creates beneficial, sustainable impact and influence on Gaelic policy and practice across multiple fields, reaffirming SMO's status as Scotland's National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture.