

Institution: Nottingham Trent University (NTU)
Unit of Assessment: C18 – Law
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p><i>Strategic Context and Structure</i></p> <p>Context</p> <p>Nottingham Law School's (NLS) academic staff strive for excellence across a wide range of legal disciplines and methodologies. Imbued with the distinctive spirit of one of the UK's leading full-service law schools, they work across traditional disciplinary boundaries and effect real-world change.</p> <p>Through sustained leadership, investment and researcher development since REF2014, NLS has forged a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable research environment that draws upon the School's long-standing expertise in legal practice and scholarship.</p> <p>The School has three Research Centres which embody and encapsulate its core research strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre for Rights and Justice; • The Centre for Business and Insolvency Law; and • The Centre for Legal Education. <p>With over 2,800 students and 105 academic staff, NLS offers legal education at all levels: undergraduate; academic postgraduate; professional postgraduate; and CPD. Accordingly, at the very heart of the School's collective identity and culture is a very clear ethos: an unwavering belief in, and commitment to, the symbiosis between academic legal research on the one hand and legal professional practice and pedagogy on the other.</p> <p>Since REF2014 NLS has engineered strong, sustained, and sustainable growth across the key areas of its research environment. It has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • returned outputs from 18.1 FTE compared with 13 in REF2014; • produced a total of 284 research outputs; • increased its research income by a factor of seven, with awards totalling £578,645 as compared with £81,676 in REF2014; • grown its post-graduate-research student (PGR) community from 25 in 2014 to 40 at the time of reporting; • more than doubled its PGR completions from 11 in REF2014 to 28 in the current cycle; and • re-imagined the strategic and day-to-day management of research within the School, with the creation of: the role of Associate Dean for Research (ADR); the Research Steering Group; Individual Research Plans and Mentors; and a competitive sabbatical scheme. In addition, NLS has recalibrated the annual appraisal process to place greater emphasis on support for research. <p>Strategy</p> <p>The 'Valuing Ideas' theme within NTU's strategic plan sets out a determination to '<i>expand [its] research excellence</i>' and to '<i>develop and nurture the next generation of researchers</i>'. NLS has fully embraced, and been a beneficiary of, this vision. It has resulted in considerable investment in research infrastructure, researcher support and development, and staff/PGR recruitment. Research is now central to the School's mission; an inclusive, collegial and supportive research environment has been engendered, carefully nurtured, and continues to grow from strength to</p>

strength. Activity is supported through the School's Strategic Research Fund, targeting in particular the generation of high-quality outputs, the preparation of funding bids, and enhancing the reach and significance of impact (see Sections 2 and 4).

Since REF2014 NLS, underpinned by powerful and sustained institution-level commitment, has pursued a dedicated and clear research strategy with an overarching ambition to create, apply and share new knowledge that changes lives and society. In pursuit of this goal, NLS has sought to invest in three main priorities throughout the current cycle:

1. *To enhance the quality and volume of its research outputs.*
2. *To bolster the significance, reach and impact of its engagement with end-users and external stakeholders.*
3. *To increase external grant capture.*

Priority 1 - To enhance the quality and volume of our research outputs.

Significant progress has been made during this REF period; 284 outputs, including 14 monographs, have been produced. NLS emphasises quality over quantity in terms of individual outputs and prioritises time and resources for colleagues working on outputs that might realistically be regarded as world-leading or internationally excellent. To this end, all research active staff are allocated a formal research mentor who aids in the inception, creation and fine-tuning of outputs in a supportive and collaborative process (see Section 2).

Additionally, published outputs are assessed internally by members of the Research Steering Group, overseen by the ADR, as well as by external assessors chosen for their disciplinary expertise and experience. Feedback and guidance as to quality are then fed back to authors to inform the trajectory of future research. This process has provided useful evidence of improvement in the quality of outputs and helped to promote a culture in which the significance of the contribution to academic debate and real-world impact is viewed as more important than the mere number of outputs produced.

In addition to these research outputs, staff across all pathways (see REF5a) have produced high quality student textbooks, practitioner reference works, commissioned reports and responses to consultations. NLS's broad staff base enables research-active staff to enrich the quality of their outputs through consulting and co-authoring with colleagues on other pathways drawing on their practical or pedagogical expertise (e.g., Ferris and Johnson, 2017).

Priority 2 - To bolster the significance, reach and impact of our engagement with end-users and external stakeholders.

NLS's impact strategy stresses the symbiosis between research, teaching and practice so as to build on partnerships in ways that enable it to have an impact upon lives and society locally, nationally and globally. The School has drawn on its Strategic Research Fund to enable staff propagate their research among national and international stakeholders through hosting conferences and workshops, producing policy briefs and national/international travel (as appropriate). Impact generating activities are driven, supported and tracked by an Impact Champion, a new role created within the School in 2018. Liaising with the Research Development Team, the Impact Champion hosts a range of staff development events and mentors individuals to enable them to identify relevant stakeholders and develop individualised pathways to impact.

NLS encourages staff to disseminate their research not only via academic outputs, but also through pieces for general readership (e.g., traditional media, blogs, and outlets such as *The Conversation*) and – where relevant – through shorter publications in practitioner-facing outlets. During the current period, NLS has established new local, national and international collaborations and partnerships with a range of end-users across the public, private and third sectors. These have included: the College of Policing and the Law Commission, which have enhanced Trickett's impact case study; and the Legal Services Board, the Law Society of Ireland and the IMPACT Justice Caribbean Law Institution, which have enhanced Ching's case study.

One project that paradigmatically illustrates the symbiosis inherent in the School's collective identity is 'The Rule of Law, Human Rights and Anti-Corruption in Armenia' project in collaboration with Yerevan State University and the Republic of Armenia School of Advocates (2018). A grant of US\$200k from the US Department of State enabled the creation and delivery of a suite of courses to practising Armenian lawyers, students and law teachers on human rights, anti-corruption, women and the law, juvenile justice, pre-trial detention and advocates' ethics. This project was only feasible by virtue of the School's unique blend of strengths: research expertise in the fields of human rights, equality law, criminal justice and anti-corruption, allied with long-standing and profound experience of delivering professional legal education nationally and internationally. This initiative has resulted in on-the-ground change in Armenia, equipping the School of Advocates to run the relevant courses in future years. The project has also generated a valuable on-going relationship for the School with colleagues in the law faculty of Yerevan State University (ranked first in that country).

Other projects promising the potential for significant future impact include: Zhao's work on corporate social responsibility in China; Hall and Lewis's work on developing public understandings of human rights and religious tolerance; Doak's work on developing theoretically-informed approaches to best practice in non-adversarial justice; and Berry's work on the reform of partnership law.

Priority 3 - To increase external grant capture.

The School has targeted serious effort on increasing its external income by extending the range, ambition and quality of its funding applications in the current REF period. These efforts have yielded great success: across this cycle NLS has increased its research income seven-fold with NLS researchers securing £578,645 as compared to £81,676 over the previous one.

The School's success has been enabled by encouraging colleagues to develop more ambitious, collaborative funding applications, drawing on cross-disciplinary expertise both within and beyond the University. NLS offers a range of informal and formal support to staff, including pre-submission review of applications. Only strong grant applications are supported, with applicants working on their proposals with support from the University's Pre-Award team.

Opportunities for income generation and grant calls are filtered and circulated on a weekly basis by a member of the professoriate to all research-active staff. All such staff also subscribe to Research Professional. These measures have resulted in colleagues securing awards from UKRI, UK charities and government, as well as awards from international governments, regulators and charities. The awards support research across all the School's Research Centres and reflect a strategic focus to ensure a diverse and sustainable income stream (see Section 3).

The three priorities outlined above are delivered through clear leadership, appointments and promotions, and the investment of resource in developing both the School's research capacity and capability. An annual School Research and Innovation Plan is developed, which reviews achievements and sets objectives for the forthcoming year. Investment is explicitly targeted to support the achievement of objectives and their success is reviewed annually. This Plan supports the work of Research Centres, including the development of quality outputs, funded projects, research impact, and enhancement of the research environment.

The following initiatives during the period have been instrumental in the School having made significant progress across all three priority areas (see further Section 2):

- the creation of the research leadership role of Associate Dean for Research through earmarked funding from the University;
- a reconfiguring of the annual appraisal process to place more emphasis on support for research;
- Individual Research Plans;
- a proactive mentoring system;
- a dedicated research budget to enhance the quality and visibility of its activities;

- the introduction of a competitive sabbatical scheme;
- the augmentation of the existing system of teaching buyout (to allow ring-fenced time for research); and
- the adoption of a strategic approach to staff recruitment, retention and development.

Structure

Research Leadership

Responsibility for strategic and operational oversight is provided by the ADR (Doak) - a specific role created through NTU investment in all eight schools during the current cycle - who sits on the School's Senior Management Team. The ADR works closely with the Executive Dean of the Law School, the Executive Dean (Research) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor - Research and Enterprise. The ADR is also a member of NTU's University Leadership Team, Academic Research Leadership Team and University Research Committee. He is supported by the Unit Coordinator, Funding, and Athena SWAN Champions, the Research Steering Group and the School Research and Innovation Committee.

The ADR acts as chair of the School Research and Innovation Committee, at which all Centre Directors, PGR Tutors, and student representatives are present. The Committee supports the implementation of the University's Research Strategy and aims to promote a strong research culture across the School. Operational research matters are overseen by the Research Steering Group, which comprises members of the research professoriate. The Group monitors Centres' activities, reviews progress on specific research projects, and administers staff research hours, sabbaticals, mentoring and allocation of the School's Strategic Research Fund.

Research Centres

Research in the School is organised under the auspices of three Research Centres: the Centre for Rights and Justice (CRJ); the Centre for Business and Insolvency Law (CBIL); and the Centre for Legal Education (CLE). These provide platforms for collaboration, promotion and dissemination of high-quality research, as well as mentoring and support.

All staff with significant responsibility for research have a primary Research Centre affiliation and are able to join additional Centres according to their interests. Membership of the Centres comprises those staff with significant responsibility for research. Additionally, and in keeping with the School's belief in the symbiotic relation between research, practice and teaching, all academic staff as well as PGR students are welcome to be members of one or more Centres, depending on their interests, and to participate in their events.

The Centres are allocated a budget by the School's Research Steering Group (see below) based on a proposed plan of activities. These budgets are administered by the Centre Directors to enhance the quality of research activities, including workshops, seminars and conferences. The Centres also play a key role in anchoring a sense of identity for PGR students. In addition to the Research Centres, NLS also has two practitioner-facing Centres, the Centre for Mediation and Dispute Resolution and the Centre for Advocacy.

Centre for Rights and Justice

Established in 2013, the CRJ (led by Lewis) comprises 37 members including 6 PGR candidates. The Centre brings together research, practice and scholarship in: human rights (Berry, Doak, Hall, Kemp, Lewis, O'Nions); international humanitarian law (Chadwick); immigration and asylum law (O'Nions); domestic and international criminal law and criminal justice (Chadwick, Doak, Henham, Thornton, Trickett); law and religion (Hall, Lewis); medical law (Garwood-Gowers); and international environmental law (Ong). The CRJ has its own on-line refereed journal, the Journal of Rights and Justice. This wide range of research areas has received funding from a similarly broad range of sources including ESRC, Nuffield Trust, British Arts Council and British Academy.

Trickett's work on the policing of hate crime forms the basis of one of the Unit's impact case studies.

Centre for Business and Insolvency Law

Founded in 2012, CBIL (co-led by Parry and Zhao) has a membership of 28 including 12 PGR candidates whose interests gravitate around corporate regulation and practice. It has particular strengths in: insolvency law (Parry, Walters, Zhao); international investment law (Sahin); banking law (Moffatt and Zharikov); partnership law (Berry); corporate law (Wilson, Zhao); and corporate governance (Zhao). Its membership includes external members from the judiciary and legal practice and members have collaborated with a range of corporations and government organisations based in the UK, China, Canada, Jordan, Germany, Italy and Nigeria. CBIL operated its own online refereed journal, the Nottingham Insolvency and Business Law e-Journal.

The harmonious link between research and practice is exemplified by the fact that several CBIL members have produced some of the leading practitioner-focused texts in their areas; for example: J Aycliffe, R Parry and S Shivji, *Transaction avoidance in insolvencies* (2018 OUP) 3rd ed; and E Berry and R Parry, *Law of insolvent partnerships and limited liability partnerships* (2015 Wildy, Simmonds and Hill). Research activity of the Centre has been funded by a number of national and international bodies including the ESRC, Midlands4Cities DTP, the Norwegian Industrial Patent Office, European Patent Office, and the Society of Legal Scholars.

Centre for Legal Education

The CLE (led by Ching), established in 2012, has a membership of 20 including 3 PGR candidates. It has a national and international reputation in education (including CPD), regulation, and compliance. CLE addresses a range of themes, including professional ethics (Ching, Hudson, Jarman), well-being, motivation and engagement (Ferris, Henderson, Wakelin), and vulnerability from the perspectives of professionals, educators and students (Ching, Ferris). The CLE also works with a visiting professor (Leighton) and two visiting senior fellows (Bone, Curran) with connections in the UK, France and Australia. Its international advisory committee is composed of senior academics and legal practitioners from Australia, Canada, Chile, Egypt, Germany and the USA.

The Centre attracts research students and research income nationally and internationally (see Section 4). Centre members (Ching, Henderson, Jarman) have been commissioned to carry out funded research or consultancy for government, professional bodies or NGOs across some 22 countries, with significant impacts across the UK, the Republic of Ireland, Canada, Hong Kong, Mauritius, Mongolia and the CARICOM nations. Ferris' research focuses on the use of values within legal education.

These projects have generated research funding of from a diverse range of government and professional bodies, including the US Department of State, the Canadian Government (Improved Access to Justice in the Caribbean (IMPACT)), and the Law Society of Alberta. Research by Ching and others underpins the Unit's second impact case study.

Future Ambitions

NLS will continue to build a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable research environment, drawing on its deep expertise in practice and scholarship. NLS' overall strategy will continue to shape and enhance its research and the impact it has on the world beyond academia. In particular it aims to:

- Extend its engagement with disciplinary and cross-cutting developments relating to some of the most significant global challenges, particularly in light of the recent pandemic. Key issues include the rights, safety and security of vulnerable individuals and groups, the accountability of public and private sector bodies, and the financial and environmental sustainability of the public, private and third sectors.

- Enhance its capacity and capability to undertake research with external impact, forging proactive collaborations with national and international partners, both academic and non-academic, in particular through enhancing its partnerships with civil society, corporations, law reform bodies and government institutions/agencies.
- Consolidate its commitment to an open research culture by exploring emerging routes to output dissemination, in particular by building on its public engagement with practitioners, corporations and policymakers through social media, and developing infrastructure to support more open access opportunities.
- Further develop diverse and inclusive research communities and strengthen an environment that supports PGRs and ECRs through: further investment in training/development; increasing time allocated for research in workloads; and creating further opportunities for more members of staff to apply for sabbaticals.

The School's success will be: measured against University targets; overseen by the ADR; assessed through appraisals and Individual Research Plans; and reported to the School Research and Innovation Committee.

2. People

Staffing Strategy

NLS operates an inclusive strategy to recruit and retain leading researchers. The success of this strategy is evidenced by the considerable expansion of its research staff base: 18.1 FTE have been returned to the current exercise compared with 13 in REF2014. Of those 13, the majority (7.4 FTE) have been returned in REF2021, 3.6 FTE have retired, while 2 have moved to other institutions. During the period the School has successfully recruited internationally renowned researchers at professorial level including Doak (from Durham), Kirk (from Dundee), and Zhao (from Leeds). Two of these posts were funded through the University's Strategic Investment Fund. The growth in the School's research power is underscored by the fact that all the outputs returned in REF 2021 are authored by staff who were employed by NLS at the census date.

Recruitment is overseen by the Executive Dean and the Senior Management Team, and whenever an academic vacancy arises, or where new resources are secured to expand, careful consideration is given to the relevant profile and expertise that NLS should look to recruit to ensure that the delivery of the course curriculum aligns with NLS research strategy. The majority of those recruited to teach on academic courses now hold a PhD or are very close to achieving one (with the exception of staff recruited to teach on the portfolio of professional courses). They should also demonstrate a clear research trajectory that aligns with the ambitions and mission of the School.

Staff Development and Progression

NLS aims to develop high-performing and empowered research-active staff at all stages of their career through ensuring a positive, diverse and collaborative working environment. Since REF2014, three staff have been supported through the promotions process to the level of professor (Jarman, Lewis and Moffatt) and six to associate professor (Denoncourt, Hall, Homewood, Jarman, O'Nions, Trickett).

Staff development and investment are resourced through two separate funds (the Strategic Research Fund and the Staff Development Fund). During 2019/20 the total sum allocated from these funds for research-related activity was £87k. This sum facilitated staff-buyout (including sabbaticals), dissemination activities (including national and international conferences) and user-facing engagement activities (including hosting and attendance at practitioner/professional-facing workshops). Funds are awarded through the School's Staff Development request process which ensures fair distribution of the budget across a range of activities and colleagues. The Strategic Research Fund is specifically targeted at activities associated with the generation of high-quality outputs, the preparation of funding bids, and enhancing the reach and significance of impact. Examples include: the funding of six research assistants to support impact activities; the

completion of monographs (Adamidis, Chadwick, O'Neill); assistance with horizon-scanning, engagement and dissemination work (Hall and Lewis's work with schools and museums on toleration and human rights); and furthering the reach of Trickett's work on the policing of hate crime.

The School also provides financial and logistical/time support to staff without higher degrees to pursue PGR study if they wish to register for part-time study either at NTU or at other institutions. During the REF period, 13 staff have been supported in this way to complete PhDs or Professional Doctorates.

In line with the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and the Vitae Researcher Developer Framework, staff development is facilitated through an annual appraisal process. This process includes the submission of an Individual Research Plan which identifies and sets targets for publishing and funding applications and impact and engagement activities over a rolling five-year period.

Inclusivity, Equality and Diversity

NLS is a vibrant place to work, enriched by the diverse perspectives, cultures and backgrounds brought by students, staff, visitors, and local, national and international partners. The School recognises that diverse teams encourage more creative and innovative solutions to major research questions at the interface of academic legal research, professional practice, and pedagogy. The University adopts uniform career progression principles from ECR to Professor to ensure that succession, retention, gender and diversity balance is achieved.

The University was awarded the bronze Athena Swan charter mark in April 2019 (see REF5a) and the School is targeting a submission for a bronze award in 2023. The School's Athena SWAN champion (Ching) leads efforts in addressing local level challenges in relation to gender equality for staff and students. She also coordinates events for International Women's week with other colleagues organising events for Black History month and LGBT+ History month. NLS has supported three members of staff to undertake the Advanced HE Aurora programme.

Recruitment across NLS uses gender decoding of recruitment materials and mixed-gender interview panels, to attract a more diverse staff pool. In line with the research Code of Practice, staff with responsibility for recruitment and research management undertake mandatory unconscious bias training. Across all academic staff in NLS, 67% identify as women and 6% identify as black, Asian or minority ethnic. Representation of staff with a declared disability is 13.7%. The professoriate comprises 4.2 FTE male professors and 3 FTE female professors, a ratio which exceeds the University's Athena SWAN KPI target of a 35% female professoriate by 2022. The Executive Dean of the School is female, and four females and two males sit on the School's Senior Management Team. Of the three members of staff promoted to chair in the current cycle one is male, two are female; and of the six promoted to associate professor one is male and five are female. NLS also monitors PGR equality and diversity through data produced by the Doctoral School; currently 49% of the PGR cohort are BAME, with 27% having widening participation statements.

NLS applies a range of policies for flexible working including NTU's Support for Academic Returners scheme which provides individual awards of £5k to help academics re-establish their research after returning from caring responsibilities. Core meetings are facilitated to take account of the diverse circumstances of staff; for example, NLS follows University policy in avoiding meetings in early morning or late afternoon and staff are welcome to join meetings remotely if they are unable to be on campus. 12% of staff have flexible working arrangements in place.

Staff perception of EDI issues is very positive. The 2018 staff survey showed 87% agreement with *all* statements of equality of opportunity and protected characteristics, including "I believe the University is committed to equality of opportunity for all of its staff" (82%).

Workload balance and planning

All staff with significant responsibility for research are awarded research time as part of their workload allocation. Professors are assigned appropriately balanced workloads to enable them to meet NTU performance criteria. Non-professorial staff with significant responsibility for research have time to enable the writing of high-quality outputs, income generation and external engagement. Through an annual bidding process administered by the Research Steering Group, applicants are awarded an allowance based on the strength of their proposals, their past record, and their research trajectory. NLS has carefully managed the timetables for these staff to ensure they have at least one clear day dedicated for research and appropriate time to progress projects and meet the targets set. The School ensures that, so far as practicable, teaching profiles are closely aligned to research expertise in order to maximise the benefits of research-informed teaching.

NLS's research-hours-award scheme has been the primary vehicle for facilitating the majority of the research achievements and creating the School's vibrant and inclusive research environment. Through this scheme, the School has been able to grow its pool of researchers, which includes those who have come into research from legal practice (Berry, Ferris, Hall, Henham, Lewis, Walters, Wilson). The scheme has served to increase the volume and more importantly, the quality of research-focused activities.

In 2015 the School established a competitive Sabbatical Scheme. Successful applicants are supported to focus their efforts exclusively, for a term, on a major research project. Nine members of staff have been awarded sabbaticals since 2015/16. This investment has resulted in several major research outputs and other accomplishments including Trickett's Impact Case Study, high quality monographs (Adamidis, Chadwick, O'Neill), and substantial articles in peer reviewed journals (Lewis, O'Nions).

Research Community and Culture

The School has a well-established research seminar series, which provides a supportive and collegial atmosphere in which staff and PGR students can 'test-run' ideas for articles or conference papers, at whatever stage of maturity. All academic staff, whatever their focus, are encouraged to attend, facilitating a cross-fertilisation between research, legal practice and scholarship and providing a broad base for feedback. Wide participation also ensures that the curriculum is underpinned by research-informed teaching and that wisdom from legal practice is both learned and transmitted. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the seminar series was reconfigured on a virtual platform which bolstered participation levels among staff and PGR students.

NLS further supports staff through the introduction of an empathic and supportive research mentoring scheme. Mentors are assigned to all staff with significant responsibility for research. All mentors, who are themselves experienced researchers, meet with their mentees on four formal occasions throughout the year, and guidelines are provided as to the type of support that should be provided (e.g. targeting publishers, reading drafts, dissemination, publication strategy, funding applications and developing impact and visibility). Further informal mentoring takes place through various events organised by the Research Centres.

The School holds an annual Research Away Day to which all staff and PGR students are invited. Workshops giving practical advice on writing, research strategy, impact and funding generation are provided. Visiting speakers have given inspirational presentations; e.g. Professor Pat Leighton (University of South Wales) on effective dissemination in 2018 and Dr Suren Gomtsian (University of Leeds) on publishing in US law journals in 2019.

Early Career Researchers and the Postgraduate Research Student Community

NLS has a strong base of ambitious ECRs, many of whom have completed (or are in the process of completing) their doctoral studies. Some already have internationally excellent outputs and have produced monographs with leading publishers (Chadwick, Sahin). Many have had outputs

accepted by world-leading journals (Kemp, Thornton). In addition to the support mechanisms outlined above, further support is provided by the Postgraduate Researcher Community (PGRC) (formerly Early Career Researchers' Forum), a 'ground-up' initiative suggested by the PGR community. Since 2017, the PGRC has met six times during each academic year. Facilitated by an associate professor (Trickett), both early-career staff and PGR students are encouraged to share experiences and wisdom of the first steps in an academic career. Topics of sessions, led by invited speakers, have included: *'What to expect from conferences, target audiences, how to present and network'*; *'Challenges that the PhD students face'*; *'Mindfulness, wellbeing and mental health (how to stay on the top of the research)'*; and *'Development of public speaking skills'*. This support mechanism exists alongside the University's Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (accredited by the HEA) which is compulsory for all new ECR staff.

NLS has grown its PGR community significantly in recent years, from 12 in 2008, 25 in 2014, to 40 at the time of reporting. Its completions rate has more than doubled: from 11 in 2014 to 28 at the date of submission.

PhD and Professional Doctorate completions

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
PhDs	4	3	1	3	4	4	5
Prof Docs			1			2	1
Total	4	3	2	3	4	6	6

PGR students are an integral part of the School research community and the Research Centres of which they are members. The School ring-fences £3k of QR funds for PGR research development activity (e.g. attendance at conferences, specialised training) and also hosts an annual academic poster competition.

Currently, 28 members of staff are involved in PGR supervision, all of whom have undergone University training, with mandatory refresher courses every three years. At least two supervisors are allocated to each project; second or third supervisors may be based in other Schools where a cross-disciplinary perspective might enhance the research. Early career researchers with less experience are often appointed as second or third supervisors to gain supervision experience from a more established Directors of Studies. Candidates meet with their supervision teams on at least a monthly basis. All meetings are minuted and are subject to scrutiny by the School Research Degrees Committee.

NLS staff are encouraged to support PGR development through collaborative research ventures such as co-authored research outputs (e.g., Denoncourt and Szarkiszjan, 2019; Parry and Gwaza, 2020) and by providing opportunities for PGR students to contribute to the three in-house journals and staff-edited collections. The PGR experience has been enhanced significantly in recent years with the introduction of subject-specific research training in empirical legal methods and the development of a poster presentation workshop. Students have been supported in the launch of the PGRC and in the establishment of monthly writing retreats. The Research Centres also act as hubs for the PGR community. The majority attend research seminars regularly and participate in the annual School Research Away Day. In the current academic job market, it is essential that applicants can demonstrate they have teaching and/or academic work experience. Consequently, many PGR students take up posts as hourly paid lecturers or research assistants and we seek to maximise such opportunities to provide career development. These opportunities have had direct benefit to the School's staffing base; eight colleagues (Daniele, Ferris, McTigue, Moffatt, Omer, Patel, Pegg, Strecker) have completed their doctorates in the Law School, with others being in the final stages.

NLS has three visiting and sixteen honorary professors and two senior fellows who support research and scholarship across the School, incorporating providing support and advice to ECRs, reading drafts, and delivering guest seminars. The School's honorary professors are drawn from the legal profession and, in line with the School's overall mission to seek mutuality of interest between research and practice, provide invaluable advice and support to staff where research and scholarship directly engages or impacts upon legal practice. For example, Honorary Professor Paul Bowden, Head of Global Business and Human Rights at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, is currently collaborating with Zhao on project exploring modern slavery in China.

For over four decades the School has been the home of the *Nottingham Law Journal (NottLJ)* (founded as the *Trent Law Journal* in 1977), a peer reviewed general law journal with an international circulation. The *NottLJ* is included on the indicative holding list of the Library Standard published by the Society of Legal Scholars. It publishes the work of notable external scholars and established NTU researchers, but also has provided an outlet for ECRs, PhD, LLM and LLB students (e.g., the 2018 issue published papers by both a current PhD student and a current LLB student).

Research Integrity

Matters relating to research integrity, including research ethics, are overseen centrally and managed locally. The University Research Committee, chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Research and Enterprise, and reporting to Academic Board, is responsible for the development and monitoring of research integrity policies and procedures. The University Research Integrity Committee closely supports it in this regard. In accordance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, the University produces a publicly available annual statement on research integrity, which is presented to Academic Board. A Code of Practice for Research, covering all researchers at NTU, Research Ethics Policy and Procedure and Responsible Metrics Statement are among the arrangements in place which are governed at institutional level. Training resources are available to all staff and students in the form of online modules which cover different aspects of research integrity. This central resource complements training arrangements at local level, which are designed to meet the needs of specific committees. Staff with significant responsibility for research provide annual positive confirmation of their commitment to uphold the standards in the Code of Practice for Research.

Robust systems are in place to ensure research projects requiring ethical enquiry are fully scrutinised. The scrutiny of staff and PGR projects is undertaken by a committee supported by experienced researchers from a number of NTU's Schools. Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught student research is also subject to ethical review, where needed, and this is undertaken by a committee operating at School-level.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

The Unit has been successful in attracting external research funding from a range of sources, including the AHRC Midlands4Cities DTP, ESRC, Nuffield Foundation, British Academy, British Arts Council and US Department of State as well as a range of government bodies, regulators, charities, companies and professional societies. A total research income of £578k during this assessment period represents a more-than seven-fold increase on the £81k achieved for REF2014.

This success can be attributed in part to a sustained effort in the School to encourage and facilitate high quality grant applications through the provision of staff development, mentoring and the central support provided by professional services. The submission of grant applications now forms a central component of annual appraisals and Individual Research Plans. The School has introduced a new 'Grants Champion', an experienced professor with a substantial track-record (Zhao). Working with the ADR, he has co-ordinated a process whereby all proposals for external

funding are peer reviewed, ensuring that the project under consideration fits with the strategic research objectives of the School and University. In addition, the mentoring process ensures that effective support is offered to potential applicants so that they can develop their proposals over a period of time.

The School has the benefit of dedicated support for grant capture in the form of the University's Research Development Team who provide expertise on the writing, pitching and tailoring of bids supported by the research information system Worktribe.

Infrastructure and Facilities

The Unit provides dedicated administrative support for research in the form of a member of administrative staff (0.5 FTE). In addition, all staff have access to a subject-specific research librarian, and state-of-the-art library and information services. They also have access to a range of academic software as well as the full gamut of legal and social science databases such as Westlaw, Lawtel, Hein-on-line and LexisNexis, and to numerous other databases across a wide spectrum of disciplines.

The School supports membership of learned societies, with staff subscriptions to SLS, SLSA, the Law Society and other organisations covered by School funds. The library provides training and support to staff and PGR students to enable them to access these resources effectively. PGR students have access to a large pool of workstations and storage space in the specialist accommodation located within the NTU Doctoral School; this space provides congenial facilities for doctoral students to build an élan, work, mingle, talk about their projects and share ideas. NLS estate also includes two dedicated replica courtrooms and four moot rooms which have been used to provide first-class venues for the Research Centres' conferences and visiting speakers.

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

NLS's recognition of the importance of research collaboration is articulated in the second of its aims: '*to bolster the significance, reach and impact of its engagement with end-users and external stakeholders*'. The School has worked intensively to realise this aim. Over the course of the last five years, the reach of its engagement activities has been worldwide.

Contribution to the Research Base

Academic collaborations have raised the School's profile and reputation, and supported the significance and reach of its impact in tackling the global challenges of the modern world. Of the outputs created in the current cycle, 30 were co-authored with academics from other institutions. Members of the Unit have contributed to their research fields not only by academic journal outputs but by the range of activities such as keynote speeches, conference participation, visiting scholarships/fellowships, acting as reviewers for UK and international funding bodies, and contributing to editorial and peer review activities of academic journals.

NLS symposia, conferences and workshops have brought together UK and international researchers. Since 2015, the CRJ has hosted an annual conference on *Human Rights, Law and Religion* which has attracted international speakers ranging from professors to PhD students. Papers by academics, practitioners and social commentators from its 2015 conference, *Perspectives on the Islamic Veil*, formed the basis of a special edition of the *Nottingham Law Journal* in 2016. Speakers/authors included journalist Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, Felicity Gerry QC and Samantha Knights QC. Likewise, the CLE's biennial international conferences have attracted participants from across the globe, e.g. the 2017 conference on the theme of *Legal Education, Legal Practice and Technology* welcomed delegates from Africa, the Asia-Pacific region and North America. Papers from this conference were also featured in a 2018 special edition of the *Nottingham Law Journal*. In 2019 the CLE hosted an international conference on *Vulnerability and the Organisation of Academic Labour* in collaboration with Emory University featuring a keynote address by Professor Martha Fineman (Emory, USA). The CBIL has hosted four recent

conferences in collaboration with professional organisations and firms. These have included an annual *Conference of the Partnership, LLP and LLC Law Academic Forum*, and the *Secured Transactions Reform Conference* in 2019 (co-hosted with Norton Rose Fulbright LLP and University College London). These events have all continued in on-line format during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (notably: the CLE Conference, 19-20 June; the CBIL Partnership/LLP/LLC Conference, 17 September; and the CRJ Flashpoints Conference, 14 December).

The Unit encourages and supports staff to travel to inform, disseminate and collaborate on their research. During this REF period, staff presented over 100 papers at overseas conferences in five continents, and staff have visited approximately 100 overseas institutions. Aiming to enrich international perspectives, NLS operates a visiting scholars programme and has hosted several international scholars during the period:

- Dr Liz Curran (Australian National University) visited NLS in 2016, 2018 and 2020, delivering a number of papers and assisting in staff development and conference activities;
- Josh Krook (University of Adelaide), visited the CLE in 2017;
- Tim Bryan (York University, Ontario) visited the CRJ in 2017.

NLS devotes substantial time to strengthening and renewing the discipline through its advisory, editorial, and peer-review activities. Staff have co-edited 12 collections, have peer reviewed approximately 100 journal articles for over 40 journals including the *Modern Law Review*, *Legal Studies*, *Journal of Law & Society*, *Hong Kong Law Journal*, *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* and *The Cambridge Law Journal*. Eleven members of staff currently hold editorial roles with, or sit on the advisory boards of, leading international journals. Examples include:

- Doak was Editor of the *International Journal of Evidence and Proof* (2015-2020);
- Maharg was co-editor of the *European Journal of Law and Technology* (2014-2018);
- Pegg is Managing Editor of *Law, Crime & History* (2018-date);
- Henham is series co-editor for the *International and Comparative Criminal Justice Series* published by Routledge.

Staff have acted as reviewers for a number of national and international funding bodies including the ESRC; Irish Research Council; Dutch Research Council; Research Grants Council of Hong Kong; Flanders Research Foundation and the British Academy.

Contributions to the Economy and Society

As set out under Priority 2 in Section 1 (above), NLS has well-developed programmes of research activity that deliver significant societal benefit across a variety of end-users, including national and international policymakers, government bodies, regulatory bodies and third sector groups. The School has completed 14 commissioned reports for public, private and charitable bodies. Staff have made significant contributions to law and policy creation. Berry was invited to give oral and written evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Regulatory Reform on the Government's draft Legislative Reform Order (Private Fund Limited Partnerships) (2017). She was subsequently consulted by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on a number of occasions to provide advice on proposed changes to the legislation, and has been consulted by HM Treasury and HMRC on partnership taxation. Trickett gave oral evidence on tackling hate crime to the Home Affairs Committee (2018) and was also invited to give oral evidence to the Women and Equalities Committee's Antisemitism Inquiry (2018). Further to this, the Government has committed to requiring all police forces across England and Wales to record violent and sexual offences against women, as well as stalking and harassment, as hate crimes where such offences have been motivated by misogyny. McTigue gave written evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on The Equality Act 2010: the impact on disabled people was cited in the Final Report. Moffatt was invited to give expert evidence to EU regulators at the European Securities and Markets Authority in Paris, as part of a review of the rules on asset segregation and custody services (2016). Other notable examples of high-level policy engagement

include: Doak's invitation to attend a closed event hosted by the South Australian Law Reform Institute on vulnerable people in the criminal justice system (2020) and Zhao's invitation to discuss topical issues on 'Law and Finance in China' with judges in Shanghai Financial Court, and legal challenges of eliminating zombie companies through Insolvency Law in China with judges in the High People's Court of Zhejiang Province (2019).

Drawing on its ethos of symbiosis between research and practice, NLS has influenced communities of practice through a diverse range of end-user engagement. In 2019, the practice-facing Centre for Advocacy hosted its Third International Advocacy Conference. The Conference was hosted in conjunction with The Advocate's Gateway, a non-profit organisation which provides aid and support to those practising in criminal and civil proceedings involving vulnerable witnesses. The conference featured a high calibre range of speakers from across the globe, including lawyers, judges, intermediaries and others supporting vulnerable witnesses, and was delighted to welcome the Chairman of the Law Commission, Lord Justice Green, as keynote speaker.

The CLE collaborates extensively with professional and regulatory bodies, for example the Bar Standards Board and the Solicitors Regulation Authority, supporting reviews and fundamental changes to legal education for both students and practitioners. The Centre's contribution to the *Legal Education and Training Review 2013* resulted in a number of its recommendations being implemented by domestic legal regulators and forms the basis of one of the Unit's impact case studies. In addition, the Centre has strong international links, undertaking projects that have had a direct impact on legal education or its regulation for students, educators and practitioners in more than twenty countries worldwide. For example, recommendations from Centre members have contributed to the development of a fourth vocational law school in Guyana, and recommendations for the Law Society of Ireland that have followed through into a recent statutory review in that country.

Other key examples of drawing on research to inform practice include:

- Denoncourt has advised the Canadian Business Development Bank, specialist IP lender *Qantius*, the Norwegian Industrial Property Office and the American Bar Association. Her contribution to the International Accounting Standards Board 38: *Intangibles Review* was cited in the UK Financial Reporting Council's discussion paper on *Business Reporting of Intangibles: Realistic proposals* (February 2019).
- Doak co-hosted a collaborative symposium in 2019 (with the Restorative Justice Council, University of Nottingham and University of Essex), *Restorative Justice: Academic and Practitioner Perspectives*.
- Ireton was a member of the JUSTICE working party on the reform of institutional responses to deaths or other serious incidents where a "systemic pattern of failure" is evident. The report and recommendations, *When Things Go Wrong*, was published in August 2020.
- Moffatt is a member of the Advisory Group of the City of London Law Society's Financial Law Committee on the Secured Transactions Code and has co-organised two conferences (Norton Rose Fulbright and UCL) raising awareness of the Code with the legal profession with the ultimate aim of effecting legislative change.
- Ong has collaborated with the Korea Maritime Institute on the 'Beyond the Joint Development Agreement' research project, bringing together a team of experts to undertake case studies of offshore Joint Development Agreements from around the world (since 2017).
- Patel worked with the legal team representing the athlete Caster Semenya and Athletics South Africa in preparing the case for her hearing at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (2019). In 2020 she was invited, and duly contributed, to a private seminar on sport and recreation policy for the House of Lords Select Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation.
- Hall advised the Church of England Special Advisory Group on the civil and criminal legal implications of Deliverance Ministry/exorcism and church policy has been modified on the basis of this advice (2016).

In addition to collaboration with academics, policymakers and communities of practice, colleagues have also engaged with the public on a variety of platforms to inform and shape opinion at grass-roots level. These projects have been supported by funds from the Strategic Research Fund. In 2017, the CRJ hosted a public *Symposium on the Syrian Conflict* in collaboration with the University of Nottingham's International Law and Security Centre; delegates included refugees from the conflict. The following year the Centre also hosted a public *Symposium on Gender Equality and the UN Sustainable Development Goals* and a *Workshop for faith groups on Exorcism and the Law* in collaboration with colleagues at the Universities of Leicester and Manchester.

Another example of 'ground-up' engagement include Hall and Lewis's work on human rights and toleration with schools, in particular their development of role-playing educational board game based on their research - *Brave New World* - that has been played in schools internationally (England, Wales, Spain, Belgium and Chile). Funding (c. £33K) to commercialise the board game was provided by the ASPECT Network in 2020.

The public reach of NLS research is further underlined by staff contributions to national and international media which include: *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Evening Standard*, *The Mail*, *The Independent*, *The Bangkok Post*, *Gulf Today*, *The Economist*, *The Sun*, *BBC1*, *BBC Radio (1, 4, 5 and Nottingham)*, and *Netflix Documentaries*. Since 2014, the work of NLS staff has been cited in 206 pieces in the popular national and international press, 166 pieces in the legal/trade press. Staff have authored 49 articles for *The Conversation*, with a readership in excess of 1 million.

NLS research staff also provide expertise to inform the work of the Legal Advice Centre, a full-regulated law firm within NLS which provides advice, assistance and representation on a not for profit basis to individuals and organisations that cannot access legal aid or afford legal representation across a large range of service areas, providing a vital access to justice to the community (e.g. Denoncourt has provided extensive advice on intellectual property/patenting to designers and artists). Over the past six years, the Centre has dealt with over 2000 cases, provided over 2,500 opportunities to students, and its clients have been awarded over £5 million as a result of its legal advice and representation. The Centre is a multi-award-winning law firm and was recently crowned ABS of the Year 2020 at the Modern Law Awards for its innovation and community involvement.