

<b>Institution: Edge Hill University</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 28 History</b>
<p><b>Section 1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p>The work of Edge Hill's historians has been submitted for national assessment since RAE 1996. The scope and quality of the unit's research have grown with each period of assessment, but the years 2014-2021 saw a particularly significant expansion. Since 2014, History's objective has been to expand the scale, scope, and impact of the team's research. We achieved this by establishing five strategic research clusters, outlined below, and by forging a range of new partnerships with internal and external collaborators. As a result, the unit has doubled in size (from 7 to 13 FTEs) and produced more than eighty scholarly publications. Placing impact at the heart of the team's research strategy has resulted in projects that have positively influenced the work of non-academic beneficiaries in fields such as education, political policy, cultural heritage, and entertainment. The growing reputation of Edge Hill's historians has also attracted a much larger cohort of PhD researchers — ten awards in this cycle, including three international students, compared with two in the previous REF. The team is particularly proud to have recruited History's first externally-funded early career fellow (<b>Irving</b>), one of the first two Leverhulme Fellows to be appointed at Edge Hill. Finally, the research strategy we established in 2014 led to the creation of the International Centre on Racism and laid the foundations for a Nineteenth Century Studies Research Centre to be established in the next REF cycle.</p> <p>The core of History at Edge Hill is housed in the multi-disciplinary Department of English, History and Creative Writing, which is one of ten departments in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. The unit also includes scholars from other departments in the University whose research complements our core specialisms. The extended team is divided into five intersecting research clusters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Medieval History</i> (<b>Ramli, Dobie, Tsougarakis</b>),</li> <li>2. <i>Middle Eastern History</i> (<b>Ramli, Irving, Renton, Tsougarakis</b>),</li> <li>3. <i>EHU Nineteen</i> (<b>Brown, Irving, Nicholson, Renton</b>)</li> <li>4. <i>Political History</i> (<b>Gordon, Keating, Renton, Spalding, Verney, Ward, Whitham</b>)</li> <li>5. <i>Race, Religion, Gender, and Class (RRCG)</i> (<b>Brown, Gordon, Irving, Keating, Nicholson, Ramli, Renton, Verney, Ward</b>)</li> </ol> <p>These clusters feature a diverse range of interests and methodologies, encompassing colonial and imperial history, social and cultural history, digital humanities, economics, gender studies, intellectual history, microhistory, politics, and theology.</p> <p>The creation of these clusters led to the <b>development of new research groups and centres</b>. In the RRCG grouping, the International Centre on Racism (ICR) was founded in September 2019. Directed by <b>Renton</b>, and with <b>Irving, Ramli, Ward</b> and <b>Verney</b> as members, the ICR is the base for a partnership with the European University Institute (EUI) and our flagship multimedia magazine project, <i>MONITOR Global Intelligence on Racism</i>. <i>MONITOR</i>, launched in 2018 via funding from the EUI, is the first magazine committed to bringing academic scholarship on racism to global public debate. The ICR evolved from the activities of the Ethnicity, Race and Racism research group; an interdisciplinary group which was founded in 2010 and hosted a regular programme of research events and activities throughout this REF cycle. Transforming this group into the ICR was a commitment made in REF2014 and it has borne fruit by establishing new international partnerships, attracting external funding, generating wide-ranging public impact, and enhancing the unit's reputation at a time when debates around race and racism have become pressing.</p> <p>The development of new research centres remains central to the unit's future research strategy. Our aim is to nurture collaborations and partnerships within each cluster, developing the most promising into formalised research centres. The research and impact activities of 'EHU Nineteen', our nineteenth-century research cluster, have expanded considerably in this cycle</p>

and now meet the criteria for forming an interdisciplinary Nineteenth Century Studies Research Centre. This will be established early in the next REF cycle and co-directed by **Nicholson** alongside colleagues from English Literature and Drama.

Medieval history has also been a marked beneficiary of our cluster strategy. Since REF2014, the unit has expanded from one medievalist (**Tsougarakis**) to include a further two (**Dobie, Ramli**), thereby incorporating medieval economic history and early Islam. **Tsougarakis** and **Dobie** are founding members of the University's research group, Monastic Lancashire, which promotes research on medieval monastic houses in the region and engages with schools and heritage organisations. Plans for promoting the integration of medieval monastic history into the secondary school history curriculum were discussed at the International Medieval Congress in 2019 but were temporarily stalled by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Members of the 'Political History' and 'RRGC' clusters also participate in the University's interdisciplinary networks: Migration Working Group – North West (**Gordon, Verney**) and the Prison Research Interest Group (**Brown**). Our research groups are also integrated into, promoted, and supported by the University's Institute for Creative Enterprise (ICE) and the Institute for Social Responsibility (ISR). **Ward** and **Brown** sit on the Steering Committee and Advisory Board of ICE, and the Director of the ISR sits on the Steering Committee of the ICR. This engagement underpins the interdisciplinarity of our research and supports its sustainability.

Alongside establishing the EHU Nineteen research centre, the Unit will focus on developing the collaborative research activities of the 'Middle Eastern History' cluster, and also fostering new projects in the 'Political History' thereby strengthening policy-impact.

In REF2014 History was commended for the impressive amount of impact activity taking place within a small unit and that strength continues to grow. The department established an Impact Working Group (IWG) in 2015, which monitors and facilitates promising impact opportunities in collaboration with department management and the university impact manager. Following analysis of the REF2014 process and the Unit's key research strengths, the group devised an impact strategy which, as well as supporting existing projects, focussed on the early identification of key external beneficiaries. Staff are supported through targeted training sessions with the University's Impact Manager and through sessions with external organisations such as the NCCPE. In addition, individual staff members have received media training to help ensure effective communication of research. Where time is needed to deliver on impact and public engagement, staff have accessed the University's Impact and Knowledge Exchange Fund (IKEF) and advice is also given about sources of external income and about impact as part of broader applications for external funding.

The unit's impact strategies are also supported through regular department-wide information gathering, research mentoring, guidance from the IWG, collaborative work within research clusters, and discussion (and objective setting) during performance review.

Collaboration, both with HEI and non-academic partners is central to all aspects of our research strategy and is central to our approach to impact. In line with the aims outlined for REF2014, we have built productive new external partnerships and research collaborations: the ICR includes members from the International Slavery Museum, Birkbeck, University of East London, Manchester and Leeds Beckett, while its international advisory board includes scholars from Harvard, Toronto, Maryland and Western Sydney. Research projects based within EHU Nineteen have involved collaborations with the British Library, the Atkinson museum and gallery (Southport), Gleneagles Hotel, and academics from Glasgow University and the Open University. The high-profile Lincoln Castle Revealed project (one of our case studies) was brought to successful fruition in this REF, to national public acclaim; **Brown** played a key role with Cambridge and Nottingham Trent universities. **Ward** has embedded work with community, particularly minority ethnic groups, as an integral part of his co-production methodology. He was lead CI on a 5-year ESRC/AHRC funded project called Imagine: Connecting Communities Through Research (£1.8 million) involving more than 30 community organisations. Since 2018, he has broached new research relationships with major Liverpool-based arts organisations Writing on the Wall and the Everyman and Playhouse theatres.

Historians also engage in considerable inter and multi-disciplinary working. Evidence of key academic collaborations include **Brown** and Barton's (UOA18) historical and criminological interdisciplinary work on the prison, which has generated multiple academic and public-facing publications and a major conference (British Crime Historians 2018). Another example can be found with the work of **Renton** with Gidley (Birkbeck), Rogers (Amsterdam) and Schüler-Springorum (Berlin), which straddles history, sociology and anthropology. The history team has also begun to work closely with Edge Hill's new purpose-built archive, which features a wealth of unexplored materials relating to local and educational history. Using this exciting new resource as the basis for locally focused, community-based research projects is a key strategic objective for the next REF cycle.

Key to our impact strategy has been the development of partnerships with a range of local, national, and international organisations, including The British Library, The Atkinson Gallery, The Dartmoor Prison Museum and the European University Institute. Members of the History UOA have also placed strategic emphasis on building media partnerships, including work with the BBC, Al Jazeera, and Ha'aretz playing a key role in **Renton's** impact case study. Social media have been used to build bridges to new audiences and facilitate sympathies and collaboration beyond academia. Collectively, this impact strategy has enabled our research to reach wider audiences and share the team's expertise with academic, professional, and public beneficiaries.

Central to our approach is staff development and support. As we outline in more detail in section two, the recruitment, retention and development of excellent researchers at all levels has been of great strategic importance to the growth and performance of the history unit. By supporting, encouraging, and investing in the research development of its staff, the core membership UOA has remained stable. Eleven of the staff submitted in this unit have remained in post throughout this REF cycle and those who were ECRs in 2014 (**Nicholson, Tsougarakis**) have now progressed into senior research, teaching, and administrative roles. Several members of the history UOA have benefitted from periods of university-funded research leave, which were awarded strategically in order to develop promising research projects and pathways to impact. Our collegial culture sustains an environment in which colleagues enthusiastically support one another by reviewing funding bids, sharing research materials, and teaching new skills and methodologies in an atmosphere of mutual respect. These strategies for attracting, developing, and retaining excellent researchers will ensure long-term succession planning over future REF cycles and provide opportunities to increase the diversity of the unit.

Since 2014, increasing the submission of high-quality external funding applications has been an important aim and remains central to delivering our research objectives. We have achieved this through a combined focus on the strategic development of clusters and a collegial staff-support environment. As a result, reportable external income has increased considerably compared to REF2014, including awards from the AHRC and the Leverhulme Trust. Non-reportable income and support-in-kind has also been obtained from the British Library, The Atkinson, and the Hagley Museum and Library (US). Several members of the UOA have also received support from internal research funding routes to seed the ground for competitive external bids. This is a long-term process, and we expect many of these projects to bear more fruit during the next REF cycle.

Our keenness to be early adopters in areas that contribute to equity means an ethical approach has been, and will continue to be, at the heart of our research strategy. For the last decade, historians have been central to our departmental, Faculty and University research ethics approval processes. The University developed a comprehensive and thoughtful Research Ethics Policy in 2017 after a thorough review and benchmarking exercise, of which **Verney** was a part, and the Unit proudly adheres to these policies. The University provides training on research integrity and detailed advice on all aspects of applying for ethical review and approval. Our approach to integrity includes having respect for our sources and subjects and through our commitment to responsible metrics: we do make benign use of metrics, recognising that quantitative evaluation should support but not supplant qualitative, expert assessment. Adhering to DORA, we exercise nuanced judgement of all available evidence in relation to recruitment, promotion and the allocation of resources. Historians are committed to open research and adhere to the University requirement that all viable publications are at least green open access.

In the next REF cycle, along with promoting OA for journal articles, we will explore with Library and Learning Services options for OA books and chapters, for example by working with Open Book Publishers, university presses and other providers, building on the steps we have already taken by making chapters OA wherever possible. We believe that a commitment to open research is an important way of reaching greater audiences, particularly HE colleagues in developing countries and research-users who may not have the same access to libraries and subscriptions.

The period since REF2014 has been one of profound growth and development for Edge Hill's historians. These changes have been driven by a new cluster-partnership strategy, which, in turn, grew out of initiatives that had been in development over the last decade. In REF2008, we submitted 5FTE, and had just joined a multi-disciplinary department. Since then, History has been galvanised by the collaborative opportunities of that new context, and the experience of being part of national and then international partnerships — first as external partners (e.g. **Verney's** AHRC Network on Barack Obama) and then, over time, as the initiator and hub of international projects, a trend exemplified by the flourishing of the ICR. The next REF cycle will be a period of continued growth and consolidation, enhanced by nurturing and capitalising on the energies of any new appointments. We will build on the now well-established strategic focus of identifying opportunities for collaboration, developing external networks and partnerships, and supporting these via internal and external grant capture.

## Section 2. People

At the heart of this submission are thirteen academics who research and publish historical, and historically informed, interdisciplinary research. Aside from our Leverhulme Early Career Fellow **Irving**, all are on full-time permanent contracts, which has enabled a collegial research culture to mature. During this REF cycle, History has become an increasingly diverse group characterised by wide-ranging interests and interdisciplinary collaborations. Five colleagues have joined the University since 2014, including **Ward** (2018), **Ramli** (2018), and **Irving** (2020): **Irving** first worked with our team as Lecturer in Middle Eastern History to replace **Renton**, who had won a one-year research fellowship at the EUI. That positive experience of development and support was critical to her decision to apply for a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship with us. To support **Irving**, we have developed a bespoke approach whereby she determines what she would like to do with support from her mentor, **Renton**. This has included developing her own module, establishing a new PGR network in her field and being a member of a PGR supervisory team – these experiences will contribute to her CV. The arrival of Irving is the beginning of what we hope will be the growth of a post-doctoral community in the future.

The number of historians within the core department has remained stable, reflecting our staffing strategy of retaining excellent researchers by encouraging their development and rewarding their progress. Within the assessment period **Brown** and **Renton** were promoted to professor, **Nicholson** (ECR in REF2014) and was promoted to reader, and **Tsougarakis** (ECR in REF 2014) was promoted to SL (**Whitham** was promoted to reader on 1 August 2020). This is a testament to the support mechanisms embedded at Edge Hill which have enabled us to nurture and reward achievement across all career stages and thereby retain a stable team.

The University and the department have a firm commitment to equality and diversity and to being an equal-opportunities employer. Career progression at the University is structured to ensure protected groups are given full and fair opportunity. Our unit's REF preparations involved extensive internal peer review of all candidate outputs and all members of the UOA were included in this process, giving everyone opportunity for professional development and direct involvement in the REF process. While we champion an inclusive approach to research and teaching that celebrates diversity, the stability of our team has limited opportunities to shape the staff profile according to these important principles: our current gender profile is 2F:11M and 15% of our colleagues identify as BAME. This is largely reflected in our REF2 with 18% of outputs by women and 12% by those identifying as BAME. Recent arrivals have begun to address the unit's ethnic and gender imbalance, and it should also be noted that a female professor of History has a senior role as Associate Head of Department (AHoD, research and postgraduate). Nevertheless, improving the diversity of the unit remains a key objective. The

seniority of many of the unit's historians (45% aged 55-74) means the next REF cycle may provide opportunities to put this into practice. We expect that the areas of research for which we have become known, e.g., the concerns addressed by ICR, will help us to attract an increasingly diverse field of well-qualified candidates. For now, our commitment to increase diversity focuses on the university's annual PhD/GTA scholarship programme and on recruitment supported by external funding. The histories of race and the impact of European colonialism have long been central to our research and teaching, and we are committed to doing more to address their enduring legacies. In the next REF cycle, the ICR will recruit a minimum of one postdoctoral fellow for the purpose of establishing a national postgraduate and ECR network in racism studies.

The department works hard to support ECRs with the development of their research. All new staff are given an experienced mentor who they can ask for advice and with whom they discuss research plans. ECRs undertake a comprehensive institutional induction programme offered to all staff (see REF5a). ECRs are also given a departmental induction and are expected to undertake the PGCert in Teaching in HE (if they have no teaching qualification). Both ECRs and staff returning from long-term leave are given reduced teaching loads to enable them to accelerate their research and both are prioritised in University research-funding schemes. ECRs are supported with applications for external funding.

Applications for substantial periods of internally-funded research leave can be made to the University's research support funds. These are competitive schemes, which ensure the quality of the projects and develop skills that transfer to writing external grant applications. All research-active staff, regardless of their mode of employment (part-time/full-time/fixed-term), are eligible to bid for these funds, notwithstanding the emphasis on ECR support. During this REF cycle, five colleagues secured research leave variously to: complete major publications (**Whitham**, 2019), initiate new research projects (**Gordon**, 2014), undertake overseas archival research (**Tsougarakis**, 2018), and launch major impact-building projects (**Nicholson**, 2017; **Renton**, 2018).

The UOA makes use of multiple measures to ensure opportunities for staff development and career progression, all of which fulfil requirements of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. All staff undergo annual performance and development review (PDR). Five-year research plans are outlined by staff on a rolling basis and discussed during PDR where objectives are agreed. These goals span all aspects of academic research from output plans, to impact-building activities, applications for internal and/or external funding, and conferences. In order to help staff achieve their research objectives, the department provides targeted, subject-specific training on topics such as impact in the humanities, open access, REF guidelines, research planning, and on the progress of REF preparations. These sessions are supplemented by the University's wider Researcher Development Programme, which provides a range of training opportunities including both face-to-face workshops and online modules, which are open to all staff, including associate tutors and postgraduates. Likewise, historians participate in training events organised by the University's Institute for Social Responsibility. These sessions are provided both for senior researchers (e.g. Research Governance, Developments in the Research Funding Landscape) and focused support for ECRs (e.g. Boost your Research Profile, What Makes a Good Grant Proposal).

Excellent University and departmental support is available for national and international conference attendance, giving staff opportunities to present their research, elicit feedback, and develop research networks. The department also provides funding for externally-provided researcher training, travel and accommodation for archival visits, meetings to develop external collaborations, and, where appropriate, short-term associate tutor support for replacement teaching.

Research is a standing item for discussion in department meetings and the annual departmental strategy days. There are also multiple additional opportunities for collective discussions about research to take place, including meetings of postgraduate supervisory teams, events hosted by research groups, and conferences organised by history staff (for example the British Crime Historians Conference 2018 and the Social Media and Anti-Semitism Conference 2019). A diverse range of external speakers have been welcomed to the department. Recent guests

include Peter Tatchell (human rights and LGBT campaigner), Alex Maws (Head of Education at the Holocaust Education Trust) and Gil Anidjar (Professor of Religion, Columbia University). Since 2014, the department has held an annual postgraduate research conference which staff attend and where GTAs, PhD and MRes/MA students network and present their current research. In 2020, prior to cancellation forced by Covid-19, History was due to host the Royal Historical Society regional visiting lecture, to be combined with the department's annual postgraduate conference. This visit will now take place in 2021. Other events have also been taken online; for example, the ICR organised 'Centring Race in History: Antiquity to the Present', in collaboration with MONITOR magazine and the European University Institute. The conference featured speakers from 4 continents, 167 attendees from 14 countries, and attracted over 2600 views on MONITOR's YouTube channel.

Developing and supporting the next generation of historians is a vital part of the unit's research strategy, and we have achieved this by expanding our postgraduate community. Six PhDs were awarded in this cycle compared to two in REF2014. This has been achieved through the Graduate Teaching Assistant scheme (established 2012) which has shifted the student profile from small numbers studying part-time to a more substantial full-time cohort. Within this REF cycle ten History GTAs were recruited.

Our growing reputation has attracted talented international students, including two US citizens and one Dutch national. EHU Nineteen has been particularly successful in attracting doctoral students; six of the GTAs appointed in this cycle were supervised by researchers from this group. Three of them were specifically attracted by the opportunity to work on interdisciplinary projects guided by supervisors from History, English Literature, and Computer Science. Historians' commitment to interdisciplinarity is evident through being part of supervisory teams of a further four PhD students researching English literature, linguistics and criminology. The team-taught MA in History & Culture and the MRes programme have also enabled the nurturing and retention of able and committed students through the GTA scheme and provided individuals with a long-term career trajectory. One joined Edge Hill as a mature student via the University's 'fastrack' access course and went on to complete a first-class BA and distinction-level MA before securing a GTA position and completing his PhD.

Postgraduate students are well supported from the outset and given a formal induction to the department and the University, its processes and support networks. Students and their supervisors complete a learning needs analysis (LNA: informed by Vitae's RDF which the Graduate School uses to inform its training and development programme for all PGR students); this establishes an individually tailored programme of training that adapts as students progress. This support and routine monitoring ensure that doctoral projects remain on schedule. Full-time students have supervisory meetings at least 10 times a year, though our open-door-policy means that students regularly drop-in for additional guidance. PhD supervisory teams consist of two (occasionally three) academics, one of whom is required to have previously supervised to completion. The University provides a full research training programme through the first semester of enrolment. Members of the unit contribute to those institutional training sessions. In their first year, GTAs' teaching responsibilities do not begin until the spring semester, giving them time to engage fully with research and pedagogic training before embarking upon supported teaching within the department.

To support the career development of PhD students and enhance their employability whether in academic posts, or careers outside of the academy, the department endeavours to integrate them as staff members so that they gain a rounded and balanced perspective on academics' diverse teaching, administrative, pastoral, and research roles. Many PhD students are seeking careers in research/education and so have the opportunity to undertake a PGCert in Teaching in HE. As part of their career development, postgraduate students have also supported the organisation of major conferences and co-written publications with members of staff. Career preparation is an important part of postgraduate training and the University careers service also provides support on writing CVs and applications, and preparing for interviews.

PhD students undergo three *viva voce* examinations – registration, progression and final – two of which involve external examiners. This provides strong oversight of progress and excellent preparation for the final *viva*. Compulsory training is provided for postgraduate supervisors within

the department: this includes sessions on LNA, applying for ethical approval, and postgraduate mental health. To nurture cohort identity and share information about research events and opportunities, GTAs meet informally as a group with the postgraduate coordinator twice per semester. **Brown**, as AHoD, line manages the GTAs and takes them through the standard probation process, consisting of four probationary meetings and associated observations of teaching within the first year. Thereafter, they have separate annual appraisals as staff and as postgraduate students. All History PhD students recruited in this cycle have been retained or completed successfully.

Considerable support is provided to underpin skills development. All postgraduates are guided through the process of applying for ethical approval for their projects. All PhD students are given the opportunity to offer a session on their own research within relevant modules and are encouraged to present their work at the annual departmental postgraduate conference. Small-scale postgraduate research expenses, including attendance/presentation at domestic conferences, are supported by the department budget. For larger costs, the department match-funds the competitive bursaries offered by the Graduate School. This funding is important to enable postgraduates to develop research networks, learn how to present their research and gives them experience of applying for funding competitively. The department provides necessary research expenses, such as travel to undertake research in archives overseas. Our PhDs have published their work in respected journals and edited collections and have been awarded external funding, for example £500 from the Society for the Study of Labour History. After graduation, some have gone on to secure teaching posts at institutions such as University of Liverpool, Lancaster University, Swansea University, and Edge Hill itself, while others have successfully pursued alt-ac (alternative academic) careers in further education, libraries, knowledge exchange, and freelance editing. We are proud to continue to support our former students with the drafting of job applications and the development of collaborative postdoctoral research projects.

### Section 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

External funding supports the vitality and sustainability of the history team's research, and so the development of high-quality funding bids is one of our key objectives. While this remains an area for development, we have had notable successes during this cycle and have more than doubled the income submitted to REF2014. These achievements were supported by:

1. the strategic development of our research clusters and centres;
2. the targeted use of internal funding to support external bids; and
3. a greater emphasis on, and support for, external funding applications.

The core of our approach is through planning via the PDR and discussing five-year research plans which all staff have. This allows peer review to be integral from the outset of project development. In addition, the PDR process can help to identify the support needed for researchers to develop competitive bids that align with funders' criteria. The research clusters provide peer support in the development of bids. This is particularly embedded in the practices of the interdisciplinary EHU19 and ICR, and will be enhanced for all the other clusters. As more staff win grants, we will have more experienced staff to act as mentors. In the meantime, support is also provided by colleagues in other UOAs where appropriate.

The appointment of **Irving** as Leverhulme Early Career Fellow represents a particularly noteworthy achievement, given the competitiveness of the scheme and the relatively small number of awards granted to post-92 universities. The Fellow is our first externally-funded postdoctoral researcher and we can begin establishing a track record of success that will bolster the credibility of subsequent applications. Attracting and supporting a growing community of postdoctoral researchers is a strategic aim for the future development of the UOA.

The team's research has been extensively supported by the University's research support funds. In this cycle, the following awards have been granted: 13 international conference grants and ten research project grants. In several cases, this initial support was instrumental to securing

external funding. For instance, **Renton** used internal funding to build a project on the European idea of the Middle East that underpinned his successful application for a one-year Jean Monnet Fellowship at the EUI (2016-17), which also built, on his previous award from the AHRC (2012-2013) on the British empire and Western Asia. Similarly, **Nicholson's** internally-funded pilot version of *The Old Joke Archive* attracted funding subsequently from the British Library Labs and Being Human Festival, and an AHRC collaborative doctoral award with the British Library (announced just after the REF 2021 period). This work responds to funders' emphasis on interdisciplinarity and AHRC's theme of digital transformation.

Institutionally, research support priorities have evolved toward greater emphasis on facilitating external grant capture, and this has led to enhanced support for bid writing, including structured support from the extensive central Researcher Development Programme and training provided by the research institutes. Alongside large project grants, we also seek smaller funds for research trips and other activities. Recent successes include **Whitham**, who has twice obtained research funding from the Hagley Institute, USA (2014 and 2017) for a residential fellowship to study records of the National Association of Manufacturers and US Chamber of Commerce and a grant from the British Association of American Studies to visit archives in Seattle; **Dobie** obtained funding from the Trustees of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales to support a major conference in 2019 supported in-kind by Edge Hill (the ICAEW Charitable Trusts have approved funding to support another EHU conference in June 2021); **Tsougarakis** obtained a grant from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation (2018) to support study in Venice; and **Irving** obtained a grant from the RHS to support postgraduate and ECR conference participation. Building on their external funding, both **Tsougarakis** and **Whitham** were able to obtain further internal research funding enabling them to take research leave.

Historians contribute extensively to university, faculty and departmental research and other infrastructures. **Verney** is Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty. **Ward** is Head of the English, History and Creative Writing Department, **Brown** is AHoD (research and postgraduate), **Renton** is postgraduate coordinator and Director of the ICR and **Nicholson** is coordinator of the Impact Working Group for the department. **Ward, Brown, Renton, Nicholson** and, since August 2020, **Whitham** are members of the department readers and professors group forming a key part of research leadership. As readers, professors and senior academics, historians provide research mentorship across the department and university. Advice on ethics is given by **Brown**, who leads on initial departmental scrutiny of applications for ethical approval and also sits on the Arts and Humanities Research Ethics Committee, which **Verney** chairs. **Brown** is a member of the Faculty and University research committees. **Brown** advises on applications for research funding and assesses applications alongside the Head of Department, **Ward**, and sits on the Faculty RIF Steering Group which reviews internal funding applications. **Nicholson** and **Renton** support the development of external funding bids and impact case studies within the department. **Renton** has also played an important role in developing the department's impact activities, instigating the Impact Working Group, which is now co-ordinated by **Nicholson**. **Renton's** role as Director of the new International Centre on Racism includes the development of a network for postgraduate and early career scholars in the field of racism studies.

As members of a multidisciplinary department, historians work closely with researchers in English Literature, English Language, and Creative Writing. To facilitate collaboration the department has regular seminar series in which all researchers, staff and PGRs, participate. We also facilitate exchange through regular conferences, including the department's annual postgraduate conference, which has welcomed keynote speakers from MMU, Lincoln University, Lancaster University, Liverpool University, and the University of Sheffield. We have an annual research away-day that reviews strategy and monitors progress. These more formal exchange infrastructures are complemented by informal opportunities for exchange, such as coffee mornings, some of which have become virtual under lockdown.

Edge Hill has made a major investment in the construction of a state-of-the-art new library (The Catalyst) which provides the resources, tools, and expertise needed to support the research and teaching activities of the history team. The history team's research is supported by a dedicated humanities librarian and specialised research support for students and staff, which includes advice on finding literature, navigating electronic journals and databases, using specialist

research software, and managing bibliographic data. The library's physical holdings have expanded significantly via its 'You want it, We get it' scheme, which allows both staff and students to directly request purchase of new texts whenever they are required. Historians are well supported by subscriptions to digital archives — including collections of newspapers, periodicals, parliamentary papers, and specialist research materials on black life and protest — which have been vital for the production of new historical research and delivery of research-informed-teaching. The Catalyst also features a purpose-built archives facility curated by the University's first archivist (0.8fte). Historians and their students have already begun to collaborate with him on new research and public engagement projects linked to Edge Hill's history and its relationship with the West Lancashire region. Support was given by historians to enable the recent archives call for material held in private hands (to donate, loan or copy) to enhance the collection. Developing our relationship with the University's archive and using it as the basis for new research projects is a key strategic objective for the next REF cycle.

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

Our collective contributions to the research base, economy and society have been delivered across five key forms of collaborative work:

1. developing history research projects
2. providing historical expertise to interdisciplinary research projects
3. contributing to the delivery and organisation of academic conferences, research societies, and publishing projects
4. partnerships with external bodies and heritage organisations
5. a broad range of impactful public engagement activities.

Together, these collaborative endeavours have enabled a relatively small team of historians to make big contributions to their discipline and share the results of their research with a wide range of local, national, and international beneficiaries. Engaging outside of the academy is central to our approach, whether that is with schools, via the media or relationships with cultural and other organisations.

Research projects led by historians have made significant and wide-ranging contributions. **Brown's** work on prisons has supported a £22 million heritage project at Lincoln Castle and her work on interwar motor-bandits has uncovered new discourses linking crime with technological change. **Renton's** research has made a major contribution to the history of anti-Semitism and revealed its links with Islamophobia. **Nicholson's** work on Victorian humour has uncovered the social, cultural, political, and economic significance of a long-neglected aspect of nineteenth-century life. **Whitham's** two substantial monographs reveal the crucial role played by business organisations in shaping American foreign and domestic policy during and immediately after the Second World War; work that sheds new light on the way the US readied itself for 'superpowerdom'. **Gordon's** research has contributed to our understanding of migration, transportation, and political protest in twentieth-century Europe. **Spalding's** latest monograph has made an equally topical intervention on the history of the left wing of the Labour Party. **Tsougarakis'** work on Greco-Latin religious interaction in the late medieval period has achieved international recognition and his study of Latin monasticism in Greece has become a standard work on this topic. **Verney's** collaborative AHRC Obama research network has led to further research on the Trump presidency and Black Lives Matter. **Ward** has been at the forefront of pioneering work on co-production and academic-community engagement. **Dobie** has applied insights from contemporary accounting practice to investigate issues in medieval management-practices. **Ramli** has worked to develop Islamic studies in schools. **Irving** has pioneered the marriage of archaeological and historical perspectives in subaltern studies of Palestine.

Historians have contributed their research and expertise to a range of external research projects. For example, between 2015 and 2017, **Gordon** was an external advisor for 'The Children's '68' research project (University of Reading), which involved collaboration with universities and heritage groups throughout Europe. **Nicholson** was invited to contribute his digital humanities expertise to several external research networks, including 'Humours of the Past' (AHRC) and

'Scottish Cosmopolitanism at the Fin-de-Siècle' (Royal Society of Edinburgh). **Irving** is a member of the Crossroads project, which examines the connected histories between Europe and Arab Christian communities in Palestine. Collectively we have disseminated research at over a hundred national and international conferences, symposia and research seminars, including over thirty events as keynotes or invited speakers.

Our environment has fostered a wider culture of interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary collaboration. The ICR brings together researchers from fields including History, Media and Film Studies, Theology, Sociology, Anthropology, Education, and Criminology. Similarly, Nicholson has fostered several productive collaborations with researchers in STEM disciplines. Between 2017-2019, for example, he was a visiting research fellow in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Bristol, where he contributed historical expertise to an ERC-funded project exploring big-data approaches to historical newspaper archives.

We have contributed to the work and governance of national and international research groups, societies, and subject associations. **Gordon** and **Whitham** have served on the steering committee of History UK, which represents the practice of history in higher education. In addition to directing the ICR, **Renton** is on the executive committee of the British Association for Jewish Studies and is President-Elect for 2023. **Brown** is a member of British Crime Historians steering committee, which organises the largest national conference in the field. **Dobie** is an executive committee member of the Business Archives Council of Scotland and joint editor of its journal *Scottish Business and Industrial History*. **Whitham** sits on the British Association of American Studies' public engagement and impact award panel. In 2018, **Nicholson** was elected to the board of the international Research Society for Victorian Periodicals and has judged four of the Society's annual prize competitions.

We have close, collaborative relationships with a range of cultural heritage organisations. **Brown** played a significant role on the advisory panel of the Lincoln Castle Revealed Project, which was a catalyst for the reinvigoration of the Lincoln Castle site and uphill area of Lincoln as a world-class tourist attraction. Similarly, her exhibitions at the Dartmoor Prison Museum supported the reinvigoration of the museum following its reopening in August 2017. Her wider public-facing work has enhanced public awareness of the history of the prison, its heritage and incarcerated offenders. **Nicholson** works closely with the British Library, which awarded him its Labs Prize in 2016. He has helped the Library to understand better its digital collections and to experiment with creative new ways of sharing these resources with public and academic audiences. **Nicholson** has also worked closely with The Atkinson in Southport, where his research underpinned an exhibition on the history of Victorian Humour (2019-2020), which attracted 18,004 public visitors, including 642 people for a day-long launch event funded by Being Human Festival of the Humanities.

Historians also support the health of the subject by editing and reviewing publications and funding bids. **Irving** is editor-in-chief of *Contemporary Levant* and series editor of *Revolutionary Lives* for Pluto Press. **Dobie** is joint editor of *Scottish Business and Industrial History* and editorial board member of *Accounting History Review* and *Contabilità e cultura azienda*. **Tsougarakis** is the Reviews Editor for the *Journal of Religious History, Literature and Culture*, and serves on the editorial boards of *Al-Masaq* and *Frangokratia*. **Ramli** is on the advisory board for the Edinburgh University Press book series, 'Studies in Islamic Scripture and Theology'. **Gordon** is editorial board member of the *Journal of Modern and Contemporary France*. **Brown** acts as a critical friend for *Social History* and is on the editorial board of the *Prison Service Journal* and *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*. Our historians regularly review submissions for leading academic journals in their fields and have also evaluated book proposals for Bloomsbury, Edinburgh University Press, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Palgrave, and Routledge. Finally, the history team have supported the work of external funding-bodies by reviewing proposals for the AHRC, British Academy, Leverhulme Trust, Royal Historical Society, and Research Council of Canada. **Ward** was member of the AHRC Peer Review College (2010-2016).

Historians have encouraged discussion and dissemination of new research by organising conferences, symposia, seminar series, and panels. In 2018, **Brown** worked with two GTA historians to host the British Crime Historians Symposium, which featured over a hundred

national and international delegates. **Dobie** co-organised the *Accounting History Review* Conference in 2019, which will return to Edge Hill in 2021. **Renton** and **Gordon** have organised an annual symposium for the Ethnicity, Race and Racism Research Group throughout this REF period as well as regular research panels, and in 2019 **Renton** organised the ICR's new annual international conference. In 2015 and 2016 **Nicholson** organised two symposia for the North West Print Culture Research Network. In addition to hosting these events, historians at Edge Hill have organised and chaired panels for numerous conferences, including the International Medieval Congress (**Tsougarakis**) and the annual conference of the Association for the Study of Modern and Contemporary France (**Gordon**).

The reputation of Edge Hill's historians is reflected in invitations they receive to act as external examiners for PhDs both nationally and internationally: including at Birkbeck, the University of Hull, the University of West of Scotland, University of Newcastle, University of Kent, University of Nottingham, the University of Swansea, University of Queensland, and University of the West Indies. **Nicholson** was also appointed by the University of Buckingham to examine an application for PhD by publication.

During this REF cycle, historians have contributed to society and economy in a variety of ways. They have used their research to influence policy makers and policy. **Gordon's** expertise on historical transport policy enabled him to co-author the North West Green Party's Transport Manifesto in 2015 and he has also collaborated with Generiques, an NGO in Paris promoting public understanding of the history of immigration in France and Europe. **Brown's** work on interwar motor crime has supported the History & Policy Network and informed a session delivered at the Home Office in London. **Renton** has briefed a Shadow Home Secretary, participated in an EU policy workshop on anti-Semitism at the EUI, and participated in a research briefing in the UK Parliament on anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. **Ward's** co-production research on minority ethnic histories contributed to the Cabinet Office's Race Disparity Audit, initiated by the May government in 2015. Finally, **Nicholson's** work on journalism history was cited in a report about advertising submitted to the House of Lords Communications Committee (2017).

The history team has maintained a track record of excellence in education by working closely with schools and other educational organisations. The Unit supported education professionals via a major Higher Education Academy funded collaborative (with Roehampton University and UCL) project in 2013-2015 designed to 'Develop undergraduate students' understanding of historical enquiry and research'. **Brown** was PI on the project, which also involved **Nicholson**, **Spalding** and **Tsougarakis** and employed three postgraduate students. The project produced a toolkit of materials designed to enhance the learning experience and outcomes of first-year undergraduate students. As part of the project, two one-day workshops were held at Roehampton (April 2014) and Edge Hill University (Nov 2014), and attended by teachers from schools, FE and HE in the respective regions. Dissemination was furthered via papers given at the Historical Association and Schools History Project Conferences, and a total of three sessions for School Improvement Liverpool (**Brown**, **Tsougarakis**, **Renton**). The project also formed part of the content of a Radio 4 Making History programme (August 2014).

As primary developer for Key Stages 4-6, **Ramli** is a key contributor to a project run by the Living Turath foundation that is creating a new Islamic Studies curriculum for primary and secondary schools in Australia. The project, funded by the Department for Communities and Justice in New South Wales, aims to design a new curriculum that combines traditional approaches to Islamic learning with a more global outlook. This new curriculum aims to help young Muslims to negotiate between their complex identity as Muslims, Australian Citizens, and members of the global community. **Ramli** has also begun development on a two-year, Key Stage 6 diploma programme for Muslim schools in the Arab world which traces the historical development of Islam and will help students grapple with contemporary issues facing the global Muslim community. Closer to home, **Nicholson** is currently working with nearby schools to train A-Level history pupils in critical and effective use of digital archives, with a view to encouraging the pursuit of original, curiosity-driven research before students reach university. This locally focused pilot project will be expanded during the next REF cycle using online toolkits — inspired by the work of **Brown's** HEA-funded project — in order to reach teachers and their pupils on a

national and international scale.

The expertise of historians in the unit has also underpinned a range of other collaborations and consultancies with external beneficiaries. For example, members of the team have been invited to perform fact-checking work for *New Republic Magazine* (**Gordon**), *The New York Times* (**Brown**), and Greg Jenner's *Dead Famous* (**Nicholson**). **Gordon** collaborated (2014-2016) with the French rail history association, *Rails et Histoire*, which aims to bring together researchers and rail professionals, and included a round table discussion at the French Embassy in Paris. Finally, **Keating** has given numerous talks to public groups at Waterford Museum, the Irish Freethinker & Humanist summer school, and the Ingestre Road Community Centre in Camden.

Research by Edge Hill's historians has reached even larger public audiences through social media, television, radio, newspapers and magazines. **Verney** has made thirteen appearances on radio, including Radio London (July 2016), BBC Radio Lancashire (2017) and Radio Five Live (July 2016) and two appearances on BBC1 *Breakfast News*. **Brown** has appeared on BBC Radio 4 (*Rethinking Clink* 2016 and *Woman's Hour* 2015) and BBC Radio 3 (*The Egg Dealer* 2019). **Nicholson** has written and presented three stories for BBC Radio 4's *Making History*, appeared as a guest on Radio 3's 'Free Thinking' debate programme, and was invited to write and present 26 short stories based on his research for the daily 'Time Traveller' slot on Radio 3's *Essential Classics*. Historians have also appeared extensively in the newsprint media, such as **Renton** in *Big Issue North*, *Ha'aretz*, *Taz Die Tageszeitung*, *Deutsche Welle*, *Judische Allgemeine*, and the *Middle East Monitor*. Similarly, **Nicholson's** work has received press coverage in *The Times*, *The Daily Mail*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, *BBC History Extra*, *History Today*, and dozens of online news outlets.

Historians have made particularly effective use of social media and online platforms to engage the public and contribute to global debates. **Renton** and the International Centre on Racism have an active online presence which centres on MONITOR. The magazine has attracted more than 100,000 views since it was launched in February 2018. **Nicholson's** twitter accounts, @DigiVictorian (22,863 followers) and @VictorianHumour (13,854), reach people in 97 different countries and his research-based posts were viewed more than 65 million times in this cycle. 85% of the 442 followers who responded to a survey reported that **Nicholson's** use of twitter had "changed their understanding of Victorian history." Research posted by these accounts has been used by teachers, curators, writers, lawyers, journalists, and nurses to inform and enrich their work and has also inspired coverage in the print and broadcast media.