REF2021

Institution: University of Birmingham

Unit of Assessment: UoA20 – Social Work and Social Policy

Section 1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

The University of Birmingham's (UoB) UoA20 is housed in the School of Social Policy, one of four schools in the College of Social Sciences (CoSS). Our mission is to understand the world and also to change it, based on a commitment to focus on the lived experiences of service users, leaders, workers, the general public and communities. We draw on our long tradition and experience of collaborative engagement to transform lives through applied and conceptual research. We work with our research-user communities to build networks and coalitions for change which drive co-produced, research-led policy and practice across government, public sector, civil society and international, national and local communities, reaching some of the most marginalised and vulnerable groups in society.

Our work addresses four classic social policy themes in contemporary global contexts: i) inequality, poverty and wealth; ii) superdiversity and migration; iii) health and social care governance and workforce; and, iv) civil society and volunteering. As we committed to in REF2014, we have consolidated and grown these areas of expertise to address the continuing and emerging problems facing communities. We have critically engaged with debates about the growth and fragmentation of poverty in relation to fuel, debt and food, and the concentration of wealth. We have led empirically-based theoretical development of superdiversity and its implications for migration policy, and healthcare and support for extremely vulnerable people. Our innovative blend of health and social care research promotes organisational quality, performance and effectiveness alongside a values-based commitment to compassionate and person-centred care. Our research on public service workforces has produced new theory, including relationships between social risk and front-line practice; street-level diplomacy; and manifestations of shame. Our analyses of civil society have improved understanding of its role in tackling disadvantage and identifying key drivers for volunteering. We also have expanded into new areas, including experiences of the criminal justice system and mental health, and the wider evolution of neoliberal governance, marketisation and social harms, together with their implications for social cohesion. We have deepened our expertise in quantitative methods and data science. We have broadened and strengthened our disciplinary reach by working in collaboration with STEM and other social-science disciplines to produce novel insights through theoretically-informed empirical and conceptual work. Our intellectual and practical agility has enabled us to respond to developing agendas, including global challenges, e.g. migration and energy, poverty, and urgent problems such as Covid-19.

Our strategy following REF2014 was to increase external research income and our PGR cohort, and expand our international activities. Examples of our achievements against these ambitions are provided throughout this statement, but, in summary:

- our external research income has grown by 50% p.a. since REF2014, reaching a total of £17.63m in the REF period and averaging £3.1m p.a since 2017/18;

- research awards were £24.8m in the REF period, including over £8.24m to Early Career Researchers (ECRs);

- our annual PhD awards have risen by 57%.

We have benefitted from significant support from CoSS and the University, including match funding for external grant applications, funding for research centres and posts, support for PGRs, publication support and pump-priming funds. We also have driven the wider research culture of UoB through our leadership; e.g. whilst CoSS Director of Research and Deputy Head of College, Rowlingson introduced enhanced workload recognition and financial and professional services

support for research.

Since REF2014, the composition of the UoA has changed and grown (from 34.5 to 46.4 FTE), reflecting the reconfiguration of the School. This has added to the variety and critical mass of researchers, in recognition of the need for an interdisciplinary approach to understanding and tackling complex social problems. It includes one of the largest groups of interdisciplinary social-science researchers in health policy and healthcare services, based primarily in the Health Services Management Centre (HSMC), one of three departments in the School. The Department of Social Policy, Sociology and Criminology now incorporates conceptual, empirical and methodological expertise in sociology and criminology. The Department of Social Work and Social Care focuses on researching, theorising and addressing the challenges facing social work and social care.

Our departments are augmented by five interdisciplinary research centres focusing on key policy and societal challenges. They bring together staff from across UoB, playing a central role in PGR, post-doctoral and ECR development, co-production and local, national and international academic and practitioner exchange. They have attracted significant external research funding, including from UKRI, ESRC, AHRC, Wellcome Trust, NIHR, Nuffield Foundation, British Academy, Horizon2020 and the European Commission.

- **BRACE** is an NIHR-funded (£2.3m) rapid evaluation centre, led jointly with RAND Europe and the University of Cambridge, conducting research and evaluation into service innovations in health and social care, including remote home monitoring during Covid-19.

- The **Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM)**, led jointly with Birmingham Business School, conducts applied, interdisciplinary research into economic inequality, financial security and inclusion. It has been part-funded by philanthropic donations, match-funded by UoB.

- The **Institute for Mental Health** (IMH) is a UoB-funded, cross-disciplinary initiative with the College of Life and Environmental Sciences. It works closely with the NHS and government to improve mental health for children and young people (REF5a-2.3.2).

- The **Institute for Research into Superdiversity** (IRiS) is an international multi-disciplinary academic and practitioner hub for research, PGR training and interventions into migration and superdiversity. Led by the UoA, IRiS is the only UK institute, and one of the first globally, with this focus, and pioneered the Community Practitioner Research Programme.

- The **Third Sector Research Centre** (TSRC) was an ESRC-funded centre (2009-2014) that has continued with a portfolio of external grants, including from the Barrow Cadbury Trust. Uniquely in the UK, it focuses on the resources, roles and relationships of third sector organisations, has sustained partnerships with core sector partners and is a key source of independent academic advice.

A signature strength of the UoA is the commitment of its staff, researchers and partners to work collaboratively across its departments and research centres to respond with intellectual and practical agility to the challenges facing society.

The School Research and Knowledge Transfer (RKT) Committee implements our research strategy and activities. It is Chaired by the School Director of Research (DoR), who is a member of the CoSS RKT Committee, allowing a flow of intelligence and information between different University levels. Membership includes Departmental Heads of Research, School Impact, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and PGR Leads and research staff representatives. The Committee supports research activities including applications and outputs, and oversees local policies and procedures in relation to research agendas, including ethical and open research.

Since REF2014, we have focused on three areas of development that complement the goals set out above:

- building engagement with major global challenges by increasing our involvement in multi- and interdisciplinary collaborations;

- extending our regional, national and international reach; and

- extending and deepening our impact to make a greater difference to society and to diverse people's lives.

Building multi- and inter-disciplinary collaborations

Our core disciplinary expertise has enabled us to engage with debates about urgent social challenges, as exemplified by Hall's, Lessard-Philips', and Sigona's ESRC-funded projects on the implications of Brexit for official and unofficial migrants to the UK/Europe. Contemporaneously, we have increased our engagement with other disciplines to ensure that social policy knowledge and skills are included in the search for solutions to global challenges; e.g. HSMC, working with UoB and UK medical schools, is a member of the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) and NIHR Global Health Research Group on Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in Primary Care. We have utilised UoB initiatives (REF5a-2.3) to increase interdisciplinary collaborations via the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS), which provides funding and runs events, e.g. H. Clarke's and Storm's cross-university networks on Disability and the Life Course, and Insecurity, Belonging and Cohesion, respectively; and the Institute of Global Innovation (IGI), e.g. pump-priming Thomson's £1.4m GCRF award addressing energy crises in Latin America (REF5a-2.3.2/2.3.3). We are also active members of other UoB interdisciplinary research centres, e.g. Centre for Crime, Justice and Policing.

Extending local, regional, national and international reach

Reflecting our mission to make a difference locally and UoB's overarching civic mission, we have deepened our regional presence and influence. We have a strong track-record of collaborating with local organisations and an ethos of researching *with*, rather than *on*. This has developed over the REF period through our strong commitment to co-production and participatory research, whereby beneficiaries are involved in all stages of our research and knowledge exchange. This includes a standing Community Advisory Board comprising patients, service users, carers, and other community representatives, which supports our health and care research; HSMC's expertise on patient and public involvement in healthcare; and IRIS's Community Practitioner Research Project (see Impact Case Study (ICS) – Phillimore and Goodson). Individual projects also involve service-user co-design and co-research, e.g. an NIHR project (£449k) on shaping care markets (PI Needham) included a service user co-investigator and researchers. We have hosted events to foreground our approaches: for example, the 2017 international conference on 'Global perspectives on research co-production with communities' and the UK Participatory Research Network's conference, 'Multi-media approaches to participatory research'; we also have contributed to theory and practice on co-production, e.g. J. Clarke and Waring (with Timmons, 2018).

We have continued to engage in national debates and research areas of national priority including the funding of social care (Bennett, Glasby); insufficiency in mental health support (Fenton, Newbigging, Tew); the provision of an effective and engaged workforce (Gale, Needham); tackling problem debt (Rowlingson), pensions and equity release (Overton), prisoners' families (Kotova), and the challenges of healthcare delivery, including patient safety (Mannion, Millar, Waring), primary care reform (Smith) and community hospitals (Glasby).

Our post-REF2014 internationalisation strategy extends our academic and non-academic influence by: i) developing and increasing exchange with academics and institutes/universities worldwide; ii) encouraging and supporting research projects in non-UK countries, and in

collaboration with international partners; iii) increasing international mobility; and iv) internationalising research impact. To support this strategy, all staff and PGRs are encouraged and supported to participate in international exchanges (out-going and in-coming), conferences and events, and to lead and join international networks (see Section 4).

Extending and deepening our impact

Making a difference is central to our mission and strategy, as articulated in REF2014. We have built on our longstanding experience to i) extend impact into new areas; ii) work with new research-user groups; iii) deepen existing relationships and spheres of influence; iv) internationalise impact; v) extend capacity by providing additional support and guidance to colleagues, and; vi) embed impact in our research from the outset. The School Impact Lead (SIL), with professional services and financial support, leads our impact and engagement activities and has been integral to delivering this strategy. They gain insights and information from the CoSS Impact Working Group. Our REF2014 ICS authors and Paul Burstow, Professor of Practice - who led the UoB Mental Health Policy Commission - have worked alongside the SIL to provide mentorship to our staff. Workshops and events have been organised to engage all staff in the impact agenda, to discuss emerging impact and to identify potential beneficiaries, e.g. six ECRs shared their 'impact journeys' in one event. Staff are supported to engage with the extensive UoB and CoSS impact training, events and activities (REF5-2.1.3/4.1).

Well-developed relationships with research users, fostered over time, have enabled us to capitalise on their expertise and experience to ensure our research addresses real-world challenges, adopts appropriate dissemination activities and maximises impact. We have developed mechanisms for continuous engagement with our research partners, including Research Centre Advisory Boards/Steering Groups, e.g. BRACE, CHASM. This has facilitated our strategy of co-production, whereby research projects are co-designed with impact partner(s). The NIHR-funded Community Hospitals study (Glasby, Mohan, Ellis Paine £695k), for example, was co-designed with the Community Hospitals Association. Partners also play an integral role in dissemination and impact activities, often facilitating access to key policy-makers and influencers. A key pathway to impact is our strong relationships with regional, national and international NGOs, who we work alongside to use our research as a lobbying tool to bring about change for marginalised groups, e.g. Bennett's research with Carers UK highlighting rising carer usage of foodbanks during Covid-19.

Our dissemination strategy is two-fold, enabling both planned and opportunistic impact. We identify the most appropriate audiences and methods to reach them, e.g. engaging directly with policy-makers and parliamentarians, including innovative methods such as zines (Garthwaite), flash cards (Brooks-Wilson), and animations (Needham). We also use print, broadcast and social media, publications in practitioner journals and events to engage other interested parties and publics, e.g. we have organised 24 events at the ESRC Festival of Social Sciences since 2015. This is supplemented by using UoB dissemination channels and those of our funders, e.g. Williams' 'Decommissioning in health care' was featured in NIHR's 'Research Signals'. Our ICSs showcase the best examples of our impact and exemplify our commitment to creating sustainable impact by providing a rigorous and reliable evidence base as a foundation for change. They illustrate the range and depth of our impact on both policy and practice, the diverse pathways to impact and the range of beneficiaries.

Research integrity and open research

Our strong commitment to research integrity is particularly important given the vulnerable populations we work with. We adhere to, and comply with, the principles in the *Concordat on Research Integrity* (2019) and strive to embed a culture of integrity into all research activities. This means that we adhere to research ethics standards of relevant professional associations and organisations (e.g. NHS) and robust UoB ethics policy and procedures (REF5a-2.2). We also ensure that we meet legal and professional obligations with UoA membership of UoB's Humanities and Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee (eight members in the REF period). Our staff are

engaged in debates about good ethical practice and in developing research ethics policy, e.g. Schaub is research ethics lead for the Independent Academic Research Studies International Institute, and contributing to academic debate about ethical research, e.g. Tanner in relation to consent of individuals with dementia.

UoB has resources and training in research ethics, which all staff are encouraged to use (REF5a-2.2). PIs are responsible for ensuring that research staff are aware of, and adhere to, relevant ethical guidance. All PGRs receive bespoke training on research integrity in their first year, and compliance with ethical standards is monitored by supervisors and is part of the annual progress review. All research undertaken by staff and PGRs receives UoB ethical review, and external review where appropriate. UoB has mechanisms to amend ethics approval and to check compliance during and at the end of projects.

We have made a commitment to open research to facilitate impact and engagement by enabling access to both our outputs and research data. We are committed to the principles of The Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA; see REF5a-2.2)) and encourage all staff to register with ORCID. We use UoB's online portal (PURE) to ensure that all outputs are publicly available and make full use of UKRI/NIHR and UoB's funding for Gold Open Access. We have also demonstrated leadership, e.g. TSRC has created an open-access archive of its outputs with Policy Press, Sage and *Voluntas*. We have also engaged with the open data initiative, e.g. by submitting data to various UKRI archives - 24 projects involving 10 UoA members have submitted to the UK Data Service – and following the Open Science Framework, where applicable.

Future strategy

Covid-19 has provided an opportunity to take stock of the contribution that we have made, and can make in future, to society through our research. Over the next five years and beyond we will continue to undertake both conceptual and applied research that makes a difference to people's lives. Our current research themes have only increased in importance as the world emerges from the pandemic with growing economic, social and health inequalities, and our emerging areas of expertise, e.g. energy, crime and social harm, ensure that we are engaging with global challenges and the sustainability of our societies and the planet. We will continue to focus on our existing areas and adapt our agendas and methodologies to work on short- and long-term challenges, as we have shown we can do during the pandemic. Our work will contribute insights that will help to reduce different forms of poverty and inequality (e.g. food, energy, income and wealth); increase the support provided to marginalised migrants; improve health and social care systems and services; and support the resilience of public service workforces.

We do not underestimate the challenge involved in tackling these 'wicked' global problems given that the link between evidence and impact is highly complex. Our strategy to do this involves strengthening existing strategic partnerships and developing new ones with stakeholders in government, private, public and third sectors, and engaging with service users and the public to ensure our research is co-produced. Partnerships with academic colleagues in different disciplines, particularly bio-sciences and medicine, artificial intelligence, technology studies, computer science, politics, FinTech, economics and environmental science are crucial to our future research agendas. We will work with these partners through existing and new research infrastructure, e.g. NIHR ARC, to continue to attract research funding which allows us to conduct rigorous, large-scale, interdisciplinary studies. Such work is essential to help address societal challenges regionally, nationally and globally. We increasingly will lead these projects to ensure that we set agendas and contribute our expertise to them. Our strategy is also to increase our international impact and engagement by developing our relationships with strategic academic and research-users internationally to address urgent global challenges. Impact is deeply ingrained in all our work, and we will continue our strategy of co-production and research-user engagement at all levels, from grass-root communities to influential decision-makers and organisations. We will internationalise our impact, thereby effecting change on a larger scale and particularly in the

Global South, where we will partner with academics and policy networks in lower- and middle-income countries, on issues such as universal health care for all.

Our research community is central to our future strategy and we take seriously our responsibility to support and nurture our staff and PGRs whilst upholding social justice values. Our strategy is to continue to support all colleagues, with particular emphasis on building the next generation of academics and researchers. We will work towards better representation of both women and BAME in our community, and particularly in senior positions, and we will fully utilise the UoB resources and commitment to the Race Equality Charter, gender equality and inclusivity (REF5a-3.4.5). PGRs will remain an important part of our community, which we will build via the recruitment of highly-talented individuals from the UK and overseas and by exploiting all available funding sources. Our cross-UoA expertise in issues of health, inequality, civil society and diversity make us excellently placed to shape research and impact in a world recovering from Covid-19.

Section 2. People

Staffing strategy

We are committed to an inclusive research culture which puts people at its centre and creates a thriving environment in which all our staff and PGRs are empowered to pursue their distinctive research agendas and to collaborate with others in agile and transformative ways. Recruitment and talent management are integral to this strategy by i) replacing retiring Professors/Readers with established, world class researchers; ii) enhancing research leadership for mid-career academics, iii) investing in sustainability through supporting excellent ECRs; iv) increasing the number of women as future leaders through fast-track ECR programmes; and, v) extending quantitative and mixed-methods research capacity.

Four professorial appointments have enhanced research leadership, particularly in health and social care (Ferguson, Montgomery, Smith, Waring). We have utilised the Birmingham Fellows scheme (five year research-intensive fellowships – REF5a-3.4.1) to recruit three female ECRs (Antonucci, Garthwaite and Storm) and supplemented these appointments with eight (five women) ECR lecturers (Brooks-Wilson, Fenton, Gibson, Kotova, Overton, Ramos, Schaub, Thomson). Our appointments have significantly increased our quantitative capacity (Fenton, Montgomery, Ramos, Storm) and strengthened leading edge, interdisciplinary and impactful research programmes on national and international dimensions of inequality including: precarity (Antonucci), energy poverty (Thomson) and food insecurity (Garthwaite). In line with our strategy of strengthening Criminology we recruited Brooks-Wilson (youth crime and justice) and Kotova (penology), and appointed Fenton to support the Institute for Mental Health. Four of these appointees were recruited from outside the UK, supporting our growing Global community of scholars. Internal promotions included four Chairs (Needham, Pemberton, Sigona, Tew) and four Readerships (Gale, Newbigging, Monaghan, Williams). Smith (first female Director of HSMC) and Needham (DoR) added to female leadership at professorial level.

Tailored career development is supported by UoB, CoSS and School mechanisms, including mentoring, performance review, study leave and funding for research and impact activities. The annual Performance and Development Review (PDR), with half-yearly review, provides the opportunity for staff to discuss their research and impact activities, promotion, future work and identify areas requiring development and support with a senior colleague (REF5a-3.4.3). Staff are supported through formal and informal mentoring. All ECRs have a senior colleague as mentor and other staff are encouraged to work with mentors. Coaching is available for senior staff. Mentors also are provided for specific short-term activities such as funding applications. All senior staff frequently provide informal mentoring and advice on grant applications, outputs, impact activities, etc.

Staff are encouraged to continuously develop their research and leadership skills by utilising UoB's People and Organisational Development Unit's extensive range of courses (REF5a-3.4.4). Nearly all UoA staff have taken modules and 19 have completed UoB leadership programmes, including

a Research Leadership Programme that incorporates visits to international partner institutions in the US, Australia and Europe. Staff are also encouraged to seek training and development opportunities externally, and funding is available.

All Teaching and Research staff have a third of their workload dedicated to research and additional time is allocated to prepare large grants and engage in impact activities and research leadership. Time allocated to externally-funded research awards also is accounted for. ECRs on probation have reduced teaching and administrative loads to develop their own research agendas (REF5a-3.4.3). The CoSS Study Leave Scheme provides a semester's leave every seventh semester via a competitive application process. It supports activities which require concentrated time, e.g. writing monographs (Rowlingson, 2017), overseas visits (Phillimore), and, large grant applications (Bennett: £2.5m Wellcome). The assessment process ensures career stage and EDI factors are considered. 33 UoA staff have had study leave during this REF period. In addition, 'mini-leaves' (2-4 weeks) have been introduced to ensure agility and responsiveness, and to facilitate the completion of specific tasks.

The UoA includes many research fellows (RFs) (84 over the REF period) because of our extensive portfolio of externally-funded research. This places a particular responsibility on ensuring that their needs are met. We adhere strongly to the *Researcher Development Concordat* (2019), to which UoB is a signatory, with our focus on open, merit-based recruitment, effective induction, tailored training/development support and transparent, merit-based recognition, reward and promotion pathways (REF5a-3.3). All research staff are fully inducted when they arrive and receive on-going support and development. Staff who manage ECRs are trained to provide effective line, project and people management e.g. P. Hall (RF), was supported to secure a NIHR Capacity-Building Award. Research staff are co-located with academic and professional services who have full access to all School and UoB facilities and resources.

ECRs are fully-represented in our governance structures and actively participate in the life of the School, e.g. ECR representatives take an active role in the research and EDI committee and research centres. The UoA has been at the forefront of the development of an Early Career and Research Staff (ECARS) network spanning arts, humanities and social sciences and currently chairs it (Lessard-Phillips, then Brooks-Wilson) (REF5a-3.3). The network represents over 100 ECARS and provides on-going support and advice and peer mentoring, as well as organising events and activities. IRiS's expertise in ECR development is shared via its annual International Spring School.

Many of our research staff have progressed into permanent academic positions in the UK e.g. Glasgow, Hertfordshire, Liverpool, LSE, Sheffield and Queen Mary, and internationally e.g. Harvard, Warsaw and in research positions in Government and NGOs.

PGR training and support

PGRs are an integral part of our research community and we embrace our responsibility to foster the next generation of researchers. In 2019/20, 90 PGRs were registered in the UoA, 55 full-time and 35 part-time. The significant cohort of part-time PGRs reflects the high proportion of the community who are employed in related professions, particularly social work and health services. To meet the needs of this cohort, we have introduced both Professional Doctorates and distance-learning options, which we plan to grow over the next five years. We also have improved the representation of women over the REF period, with women comprising three quarters of our PGRs in 2019/20 compared with half in 2014/15. We have had a high representation of BAME PGRs throughout the REF period and this has increased from 39% in 2014/15 to 47% in 2019/20.

During the REF period, we have more than doubled the number of PGRs (from 39 in 2012/13 to 90 in 2019/20). We have increased the proportion of our PGRs in receipt of funding and have been particularly successful in securing funding from the Midlands Doctoral Training Partnership (MDTP) (21 ESRC awards in the REF period with 16 since 2017). We have also begun to access NIHR doctoral scholarships (two in 2019/20) and18 PGRs won competitive UoB – e.g. Global

Challenges cross-disciplinary awards - or School scholarships (REF5a-3.2). A significant proportion of our PGRs secure employers' funding (n=13).

UoB is fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration via the University's Graduate School (REF5a-3.2 and Section 3). Dovetailing with our strategy of greater interdisciplinarity, we are increasingly co-supervising PGRs across the University, making up 20% of the PGRs registered in the UoA in 2019/20. We have co-supervised a further 35 PGRs registered in the Medical School; Nursing; Psychology; Humanities including English and Theology and Languages; and with other social sciences e.g. Business, Education, Law and Politics.

Our ethos of co-production permeates our PGR community, as evidenced by our record of ESRC DTP collaborative studentships. We have been awarded one in each of the last three years involving partnerships with the Police, Office for National Statistics and Near Neighbours charity. Many of our PGRs undertake research in collaboration with research-users including regional, national and UK government, e.g. the Home Office, NHS, and NGOs such as Innovations in Dementia. A particularly high number of our PGRs are researching areas related to their employment, e.g. in health and social care and in government departments in the UK and overseas. Such practices contribute to our PGRs' research, influencing change in policy and practice; for example, Moore's PhD on safeguarding in care homes has influenced safeguarding policies, and Pertek's PhD on gender-based violence informed a submission to a parliamentary enquiry.

We are working to internationalise our cohort of PGRs: in 2019/20 20% were international (compared with 15% in 2014/15), with a significant number funded by governments. Most of these are conducting comparative research or research in their own countries/regions. Our strategy is to provide all PGRs with a global experience, either by conducting fieldwork overseas, presenting at international conferences or via placements or visiting positions, e.g. Strain-Fajth was a visiting researcher at City University of New York in 2019/20. Part of this strategy is to extend our cohort of co-supervised PGRs, which has included both the Universities of Melbourne (Fenton) and British Columbia (Daniels), and we utilise Universitas 21 (U21) scholarships for these purposes, e.g. Butt (McGill), Jolly (Connecticut). In 2017, we established a visiting PGRs programme and have welcomed seven international PGRs from five countries (Australia, Brazil, China, Germany, Spain) for periods of three to twelve months, some via U21 scholarships. All visitors are immersed in the life of the School and have the opportunity to present their work to peers and faculty.

PGRs are supported throughout their studies by two trained supervisors who they meet at least monthly. They receive a two-week induction, covering working with supervisors and progression monitoring and welfare and wellbeing services, and a follow-up week focusing on academic practice, research governance and career development. Additional tailored support is provided to international and part-time PGRs. All PGRs are offered a buddy – a more experienced PGR – when they register. They have access to all UoB facilities and bespoke support, and opportunities are provided in person and online from UoB Graduate School and Library (REF5a-3.2/4.3 and Section 3). The PGR Director and Deputy Director oversee all aspects of the PGR journey, providing one-to-one support including weekly office hours. PGRs' progress is monitored monthly and is reviewed annually (APR) by two independent academic staff who provide feedback and enable PGRs to raise any concerns. Reasonable adjustments are made when necessary and PGRs have access to the full range of UoB support services (REF5a-3.2).

Every PGR undertakes a 'development needs analysis' informed by the Vitae Research Development Framework, which guides their activities throughout their PhD (REF5a-3.2). All PGRs have access to a comprehensive package of research methods and skills training. They all – full-time, part-time, campus-based and distance-learning – access a fully-flexible, credit-bearing research methods training programme, led by Bennett, covering philosophy, research design, ethics and qualitative and quantitative methods. The training programme is accredited by the MDTP (with Aston, Leicester, Loughborough, Nottingham and Warwick) which also provides a programme of events and professional development opportunities.

PGRs are full members of departments and research centres, participating in all their activities and organising some. PGRs have a programme of monthly seminars on various aspects of the PGR journey. An annual showcase event, organised by PGRs, enables them to present work to peers and faculty, with structured feedback, and includes an external plenary speaker and presentations by faculty and PGR alumni (e.g. a series of workshops on using research to influence policy). Similar events are organised by departments/research centres. PGR activities and achievements, including an extended 'highlighted researcher' PGR profile, are included in our monthly research newsletters. Several PGRs are elected each year to represent the community and participate in many School activities, Committees and projects, including the Staff Student Committee. Outside of this formal process, PGRs are asked for their views and feedback regularly. They have representatives on our EDI and Athena Swan Committees.

PGRs are encouraged to disseminate their research internally and externally and to academic and research-user audiences, facilitated by a Development Fund to meet participation expenses. This fund is also available for fieldwork and training expenses and, during Covid-19, it was used to purchase homeworking equipment. Our PGRs regularly present at events, including international conferences and publish work alone e.g. Acaroglu *Globalizations* (16(4), 2018) - shortlisted for the UoB best PGR publication prize - and with their supervisors e.g. Weisman and Montgomery *Research in Social Work Practice* (29(3), 2019); and Powell and Kim *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy* (36(1), 2019). Our PGRs have also secured internal and external funding to organise events e.g. Parzniewski and Benedikt (2015, ESRC, £3k), Partlow (2019, UoB) and Arianto, Jamal and Kania (2019 SPA).

Since REF2014 we have increased the annual average PhDs awarded to UoA registered PGRs from 8.5 to 11.73 p.a. We also have focused increasingly on employability, supporting PGRs to access relevant skills training and careers advice (REF5a-3.2). A key part of this strategy has been encouraging PGRs to undertake placements via the ESRC secondment scheme and, more informally, via our networks. Our PGRs have entered academic positions as lecturers in the UoA (Fenton), in the UK (Guiti, St Andrews; Jolly, Wolverhampton) and internationally (Johan, Indonesia) and RFs in the UoA (Alexander) or elsewhere (Parniewski, Manchester); been awarded postdoctoral positons (Weisman, Columbia); and taken up posts in Government (Kim and Lee (Korea)) and NGOs (Afridi, Deputy CEO of the equalities and community-engagement charity Brap; Terry, Institute for Voluntary Action).

PhDs and professional doctorates awarded								
Year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
PhDs	8.50	6.70	11.60	9.73	3.70	4.10	10.73	55.06
Prof. Docs	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

We provide leadership in PGR matters in CoSS: as College Director of PGR, Gale has improved access and engagement of PGRs from different backgrounds and with different working patterns, e.g. implementing innovative methods of networking for neuro-diverse, part-time and international PGRs. In the MDTP we lead the pathway for Social Policy & Social Work. Bennett is the CoSS Director of PGR Methods Training. Several of our PGRs created and lead the UoB Philosophy of Technology network. They have also contributed to national debates about PhDs, e.g. Partlow in Townsend *et al*. *How to keep your doctorate on track* (Edward Elgar 2020).

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

EDI is embedded into our values and research in terms of our focus areas, our approach to research-partners, our staff and PGRs. EDI is championed by our Director of EDI (DoEDI), supported by the EDI Committee and professional services. The Committee monitors equality and diversity issues and reports directly to the Senior Management Team (SMT). The DoEDI sits on the CoSS EDI Committee, which implements UoB EDI policies (REF5a-3.4.5). We established an EDI Research Task Group including staff with different protected characteristics and at different career stages. Its findings, alongside data and information from staff surveys and consultations,

fed into an action plan, which is being implemented, dovetailing with work at University and College levels (REF5a-3.4.5).

Our EDI strategy is two-fold: i) increasing recruitment from under-represented groups; and ii) supporting existing staff to reach their potential. We have made some progress in increasing staff numbers from under-represented groups, although much remains to be done. Women comprise over half of our staff and are in key leadership roles, leading research centres, and are well represented on SMT. Nonetheless, it remains the case that only 4/15 professors are female. We are committed to increasing this number and have appointed a senior professor, Rowlingson, to lead on our Athena Swan application. Looking ahead, we are proactively working to increase diversity in the UoA by, for example, shortlisting all BAME and female candidates who meet role specifications, using networks to encourage applications from under-represented groups and scrutinising our job advertisements for language bias.

We aim to be as inclusive as possible considering all protected characteristics as well as intersectionality. We provide targeted support for those with protected characteristics, ensuring that all staff have equal access to facilities and opportunities. UoB networks, e.g. LGBTQ+, provide additional support (REF5a-3.4.5). We are committed to flexible working in line with UoB policy to support the full participation of all staff and to take account of caring responsibilities. We have developed initiatives to support staff from underrepresented groups, including an Enhanced Mentoring Scheme, and supported staff to attend Advance HE leadership programmes designed for staff with protected characteristics (REF5a-3.4.4). We also focus on providing support to our PGRs and research staff, as they are crucial to widening diversity and promoting equality and inclusion in the researcher community of the future.

All staff are required to undertake online EDI training and completion is monitored. Those involved in recruitment undertake recruitment and unconscious bias training (REF5a-3.4.2). The Research Committee monitors funding applications and awards, study leave etc. to identify any concerns and take action to encourage and support underrepresented groups to apply. We are careful to ensure a diversity of speakers at events.

We also have carefully considered EDI issues in relation to REF. Our reading group participated in unconscious bias training. We have complied fully with the UoB Code of Practice and have undertaken EDI monitoring throughout to ensure that submission is representative. The University scrutinised our final submission for bias. We have submitted 48 staff (15 professors, 20 mid-career staff and 13 ECRs). The profile of the UoA includes more women and ECRs than in REF2014 and only two of the submitted staff are on fixed-term contracts. We have paid particular attention to our output submission, ensuring that it represents the UoA; 60% of the outputs are authored by women and 37% of the staff with four or more outputs are women.

We have actively used our expertise to improve the working lives of academics, e.g. leading a CoSS initiative to appoint mental health first aiders – a rapid response service for all staff and students. We also lead initiatives within our professional associations: Schaub Chairs the International Sexuality and Social Work Interest Group; Gregory founded the SPA LGBT+ network, with UoB hosting the inaugural conference.

Section 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Research income

A key objective after REF2014 was to increase our research income, to enable our research and impact activity, build capacity and ensure our sustainability. We have achieved this objective, generating £17.63m in research income during the REF period. We have done this by being both responsive, to specific tenders and funding calls in our areas of expertise, and proactive, seeking to shape funding calls as well as applying to responsive-mode opportunities around our key research priorities. There has been a clear upward trajectory, with annual totals in research income rising strongly every year from 2014/15 (£1.79m) to 2019/20 (£2.83m). The rise is accounted for

by increasing i) the number of awards e.g. 40 in 2019/20, and ii) the size of awards: nine awards in 2019/20 were over £500k, e.g. Antonucci's *Populism's Roots* (£866K, Volkswagen Stiftung); Ferguson and Cooner child protection work using Facebook and GPS data (£668K, ESRC); Gibson's Shame and Medicine (Wellcome, £899K); and Mohan's role of charitable funding in healthcare (Wellcome, £1.4m).

Our strategy is for all our staff to apply for research funding commensurate with their career stage, and over the REF period 90% of staff were awarded research grants. This has included ECRs, e.g. J. Clarke's The Healthcare Improvement Studies (THIS) Institute Fellowship. We are also capacity-building via our strategy of including our ECRs as Co-Is on larger awards, e.g. Ellis-Paine on an ESRC award on the voluntary sector (£578k).

Whilst the majority of our awards are from Research Councils and NIHR (n=154), we have diversified funding sources in line with our research strategy to improve our resilience to an uncertain funding environment. During the REF period, 26% of our research income came from UK Research Councils (£4.5m), 39% (£6.91m) from UK Government including NIHR, 16% (£2.86m) from charities including Wellcome and Nuffield and 11% (£2m) from the EU. We have also received 5% (£960k) from industry. Our diversification strategy has included increasing income from philanthropic sources (£1.2m) to fund research centres (£625K, CHASM, individual donor) and specific research projects, e.g. Pemberton's work with six Women's Centres developing gender-specific outcome measures for criminal justice (£458k, JABBS).

Our strategy since REF2014 has been to increase our involvement in multi-partner, interdisciplinary research awards in the University and beyond, e.g. Gale (Co-I, NIHR, (£899K) Predict and Prevent COPD, Mannion, (Co-I, (NIHR, £2.45m) Emergency Hospital Admissions, and Waring (CI) (NIHR, £2m) avoiding patient harm in prescribing, all in collaboration with medical researchers at UoB and other UK universities.

Increasingly, we have secured funding for projects involving international collaborators in line with our internationalisation strategy, e.g. i) Phillimore and Goodson's project on 'sexual and gender-based violence in the refugee crisis' (SEREDA), with Bilkent, Melbourne and Uppsala plus NGO partners (£696K, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond); ii) Sigona's project on European children's experiences of migration (£300k ESRC), iii) Thomson's work on generating inclusive knowledge and governance to address energy vulnerability in Latin America (£1.4m, GCRF); iv) Antonucci's European worker experiences of the gig economy and financial (in)security (£300k, ESRC New Investigator); iv) Montgomery's award to develop a methodology for rating the certainty in the estimates of effect of complex interventions with four international and two UK collaborators (£586K, ESRC GRADE).

Our success in responding to urgent funding calls will continue, as demonstrated by awards for six Covid-19-related projects including Ferguson's study of how social workers can keep children safe, in partnership with Research in Practice and the British Association of Social Workers (£360k, UKRI), and Mohan's project assessing financial vulnerability, risk and capacity for UK's charities following the pandemic (£234k, UKRI).

We have focused on building capacity in a number of areas, including adult social care, where we have become a recognised centre of expertise, contributing to a sustainable future for social care. Glasby is Deputy Director of the £2.5m (£4.8m in kind) ESRC Large Grant on Sustainable Social Care. Our membership of the NIHR's School for Social Care Research (Needham-led with Glasby, Newbigging, Tew) has enabled us to secure funding and capacity-build (eight UoB projects with a combined value of £1.7m, involving 14 staff). We have also focussed increasingly on evaluation of health services via BRACE.

A key facilitator of our impact activities has been the UoB ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) which provides funding, expertise and mentoring. Our impact case studies have each benefitted from it, including staffing to track impact in real time (HSMC); extending regional evaluation nationally (Phillimore); organising events at Party Conferences (Rowlingson); and

international dissemination (Needham). We have received over £60k from the IAA for 25 projects, e.g. Cooner's virtual reality case studies have been used to train local-authority social workers to improve child-protection practices. The IAA Urgency Fund has enabled us to respond quickly to changing circumstances, e.g. Phillimore's project on forced migration, sexual- and gender-based violence and Covid-19. We also use external funds to maximise our impact, e.g. Newbigging's project on the implementation of the Care Act, for the Department of Health and Social Care, informed a good practice guide for commissioners.

Infrastructure and facilities

Our UoA is in the heart of UoB's Edgbaston campus, enabling easy access to all University facilities, including the Edgbaston Park Hotel (conference facilities) and the new Library (REF5a-4.2.2/4.3). We occupy three floors of the Muirhead Tower (MHT). We share MHT with our CoSS colleagues, facilitating collaboration and exchange with other social scientists as well as College professional services, including a dedicated School Impact Development Officer, research support, communications, finance and IT. HSMC is housed in a dedicated building, Park House, which has conferencing facilities and houses the externally-funded Knowledge and Evidence Service, providing a range of bespoke research services, e.g. evidence reviews. MHT and Park House contain individual and shared offices; meeting/breakout rooms; and lecture/workshop spaces. Our PGRs are co-located with individual desks and computer access and benefit from UoB's Graduate School providing access to an interdisciplinary community and tailored support and advice. Westmere House is its hub (REF5a–3.2).

The CoSS Research Support Office has 4.8 FTE professional services staff providing bespoke pre-award support, identifying funding opportunities, costing applications and coordinating peer-review. It runs workshops tailored for all career levels and funding programmes. Post-award support is provided by a team of three, ensuring funder compliance and assisting with all aspects of grant management. Two Impact Development Officers work with College staff to maximise engagement and impact opportunities. A College Impact Working Group provides mentoring, support and funding which was used to track impact for ICSs (HSMC, Needham). College and University impact prizes have incentivised and recognised effectiveness, along with increased recognition of impact in recruitment, PDR and promotion.

At School level, a research and events team (7.5FTE) supports the DoR, research centres, PGRs, event organisation and media outputs and produces a monthly newsletter and email bulletins. A range of support for research activities is available including residential writing retreats; a weekly on-site writing group (held over Zoom during the pandemic); peer-review of draft outputs via a manuscript 'incubator'; feedback on published outputs; pitch to peers; and work-in-progress workshops and formal and informal mentoring by senior colleagues for outputs, grant applications and impact activities.

Many of our research and dissemination expenses are externally-funded, but additional financial support is provided by i) a conference fund (£1k p.a. per academic); and, ii) personal research accounts (up to £3k funded by external awards). These are augmented by CoSS funds including an Impact Fund and Quality Outputs Support Scheme (£40k) for developing outputs including mentoring, presenting pre-publication work at international conferences and tailored publication workshops. Fourteen staff have benefitted, including Humphris, for her *Home-Land* monograph.

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

We take seriously our responsibilities to the academic community/our academic disciplines and to our society. We strive to make a difference in these arenas by contributing critique, evidence, ideas and solutions, and working collaboratively with our academic colleagues and research-users. As a result, we make major contributions to the research base in our core areas of expertise, and these form the basis for in-depth collaboration with research-users and major impacts in areas of policy/service effectiveness, which have led to broader social change. During the REF period,

our objective has been to shape, extend and deepen our collaborations, networks and contributions to academic debates and policy/practice.

Collaboration is key to our thriving research culture, and our objective is to continue to build new partnerships and strengthen existing collaborations to ensure their longevity and resilience. In line with our internationalisation strategy, we have utilised UoB connections and funding with the Universities of Melbourne and Illinois Urbana-Champaign (REF5a-2.1.8), and membership of U21 (REF5a-1) to facilitate staff exchanges and research collaborations (e.g. Needham and Phillimore's Visiting Fellowships at the University of Melbourne). Millar's 2015 Fellowship to Shanghai Jiao Tong has resulted in continued collaborations, funded projects and outputs. The Institute for Mental Health (Deputy Director, Newbigging) has a strategic partnership with Melbourne's National Centre for Excellence in Youth Mental Health, and we have received funding with Maryland to facilitate an ECR network of health researchers. The institutional funding provided to our research centres has enabled them to become international centres of excellence bringing together people and bodies of knowledge.

We have maintained, developed and strengthened our international research-partnerships and collaborations over the REF period, collaborating on research projects with international partners all over the world, including the Global South, and outputs, e.g. Mannion has co-authored with academics in over 13 countries in this REF period. Our collaborative work has been facilitated by prestigious funded adjunct/honorary/visiting positions (16 staff including six women, across 22 institutions worldwide). We have welcomed 35 visiting scholars from four continents, utilising CoSS and UoB funding and external funding (e.g. two Fulbright Awards) (REF5a-2.1.8). We have encouraged applications from overseas academics for schemes including EU-funded Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowships (three in this period). Through international connections we have leveraged external funding for international research collaborations, e.g. Sigona's Horizon 2020-funded Migration Research Hub.

These collaborations have enabled us to engage more effectively in academic and policy/practice debates of international significance, e.g. how to measure and enhance organisational culture to improve health outcomes (Mannion, Millar, Exworthy, Powell, Waring). We are involved in international networks as creators and leaders: Antonucci's membership of the European Social Observatory of social policy and employment; Fenton's membership of International Research Network on Transitions into adulthood (INTRAC) and Antonucci's, Lessard-Phillips's and Thomson's membership of European COST Actions on LGBTI+ Social and Economic in(equalities), International Ethnic and Immigrant Minorities Survey Data network, and European Energy poverty, respectively; and Thomson is project manager for the H2020 Fuel Poverty Observatory (813K Euro). Our involvement has enabled us to set agendas and be at the cutting-edge of comparative academic research, e.g. on the emergence of cooling as an issue in energy poverty research and international academic debates.

Our history of working collaboratively with the UK academic community continues, and has been enhanced during this REF period via stronger partnerships with key research groups and individuals working in cognate areas: in social care - our membership of the NIHR School of Social Care Research, a collaboration of seven universities to build critical mass of care research; in health – our membership of The Healthcare Improvement Studies Institute (THIS.Institute), a £42m, 10 year project funded by the Health Foundation; and in criminal justice - our collaboration with the University of Wolverhampton's Institute for Community Research and Development. Our research centres have built extensive networks of academics in the UK and overseas who regularly participate in their activities, e.g. CHASM's visiting fellows' programme. Our academic partnerships are strengthened by continuing to collaborate with former colleagues and research staff who are now in established academic positions; for example, Newbigging collaborated with former TSRC RF Rees on 'Voluntary sector and mental health crisis care in England' project (NIHR, £357k), Our membership of the MDTP has expanded the networks and opportunities available to our PGR community with regular conferences and events.

In recognition of the complexity of societal challenges, our collaborations, partnerships and networks are increasingly interdisciplinary. We have established partnerships with Universities worldwide; e.g. Lessard-Phillips collaborates with the Modelling Religion in Norway project, combining computer science and theology; Ramos works with political scientists at ISCTE-IUL (Portugal) analysing corruption, and with epidemiologists at Duke examining gentrification and health, and has co-edited a Special Issue of *Social Science Computer Review;* Storm collaborates with psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists on a H2020 project (2018-21) on EU radicalisation and inequality.

The strength of our extensive collaborations, partnerships and networks with research-user communities, and our commitment to co-production are exemplified by our ICSs. We have collaborated with supranational organisations such as the World Health Organisation (e.g. Mannion) and the European Commission (e.g. Thomson) as well as local government (see Needham ICS). Our national networks are wide-ranging and include government departments, parliamentarians, regional government, NHS, civil society organisations and art/theatre organisations. We also have a significant track-record of working in partnerships with community groups (see ICS – Phillimore and Goodson).

We play a significant role in bringing together research-users and academics to work collaboratively; e.g., HSMC is a leading partner in a NIHR Applied Research Collaborative (ARC) (previously Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care) (£30m from NIHR, NHS and local government) with Keele and Warwick universities and local NHS organisations, supporting the translation of research evidence into practice. Glasby led the chronic disease theme and Mannion and Williams are core members, creating effective partnerships between health and social-care organisations and universities. Garthwaite used her British Academy Rising Star Engagement Award (BARSEA) to host two workshops with participants from the UK, US and Canada, UK Food Poverty Alliance and 20 food-charity CEOs to discuss foodbank exit-strategies. Similarly, Kotova's BARSEA award brought together families of prisoners with policy stakeholders. Since 2014, we have hosted placements of six trainee Public Health Consultants, developing their research experience and competencies.

Contributions to the discipline(s)

We consider ourselves custodians of our disciplines, responsible for ensuring that they remain vibrant and relevant now and in the future. We aim to provide a distinctive contribution through our research activities.

Learned societies

We are actively involved in leading our discipline(s) via leadership roles in learned societies. Rowlingson is Chair of the SPA (2019-); Brooks-Wilson (2020-) and Gregory (2015-20) are/were on the SPA Executive as ECR lead/membership secretary; Ellis-Paine is Co-Chair of the Voluntary Sector Studies Network (2016-); Brooks-Wilson (2016-17) was secretary to the British Society of Criminology Postgraduate Committee; Smith is Deputy Chair of Health Services Research UK and Deputy Chair of NIHR HS&DR Commissioning Board, while Exworthy Chairs – and Waring has been Deputy Chair of – the Society for Studies in Organising Healthcare. We also contribute leadership and support to international professional associations: Schaub co-founded the European Social Work Research Association; Williams was Secretary, International Society for Priorities in Health (2014-18); Monaghan was Secretary and Treasurer, International Society for the Study of Drugs Policy (2014-18), and Mohan is on the conference-organising committee of International Society for Third Sector Research. Phillimore contributed to the creation of the Social Scientists Against Hostile Environment supported by the Academy of Social Sciences.

Event organisation and participation

We have shaped the intellectual agenda of our areas of research strength by organising events. We have hosted four international conferences and numerous national and local events, including

annual meetings of academic societies (International Research Society for Public Management, 2015), as well as more specialised areas (e.g. International Society for Priorities in Health Conference, 2016), most of which have been funded by external research grants (e.g. The Health Foundation) or institutional funds (e.g. Institute for Advanced Studies). These activities are supplemented by our programme of lectures, workshops and seminars, including public lectures e.g. John Hills (LSE); Lauren Heidbrink (California) and Fredrick Wherry (Princeton). Whilst our events are open to all, we tailor some to particular audiences, thereby ensuring that our research reaches research-users and the public as well as academics. We also engage with the public via our frequent contribution to news, broadcast and social media, to share our research via e.g., regular slots on Radio 4's *Thinking Allowed*, and to respond to current events e.g. CHASM's #BuildBackBetter blog.

Staff regularly present their work at academic and practitioner conferences. We have presented over 325 papers at international conferences. We are regularly invited to give keynote addresses and have given 70 internationally, e.g. Antonucci addressed the European Festival of Economics (2019) and Needham the International Research Society for Public Management (2019) and 170 nationally.

Editorial work

We have produced special issues and edited collections bringing together academic experts to stretch the boundaries of knowledge and understanding, e.g. Abbinnett and Cruickshank *Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Policy* (33(4), 2019); Lessard-Phillips *Social Science Computer Review* (38 (4) 2020); Ramos *European Journal of Social Psychology* (46 (7) 2016) and Needham *Social Policy and Administration* (with Waring) (53 (2) 2019) and *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy (*37(11-12 2017). We are also editors of book series, e.g. Abbinnett (Media, Culture and Critique, Routledge); Monaghan (Drugs, Crime and Society, Routledge); and Pemberton (Studies in Social Harm, Policy Press), enabling us to encourage novel contributions to debates and a diversity of authors.

All our staff engage in peer-reviewing for an extensive range of academic journals and major publishers; 29 – including 12 women – hold Editorial Board memberships, across 33 peer-review academic journals. Eight staff are/have been journal editorial board chairs or editors *Social Policy and Administration* (Powell), *Journal of Social Policy* (Rowlingson), *Social Policy Review* (Needham), *Global Migration and Social Change* (Sigona), *Sociology of Health and Illness* (Waring), *Journal of Integrated Care* (Glasby), *Cochrane Collaboration (Developmental, Psychosocial and Learning Problems)* (Montgomery).

Research funders

Nearly all staff have been invited to peer-review for funders in the UK and internationally, including research councils (AHRC, ESRC, MRC, UKRI), British Academy, British Council, NIHR, Charitable Trusts (e.g. Nuffield, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Leverhulme, Wellcome) and research councils in at least 18 different countries. Staff are increasingly involved in reviewing for interdisciplinary calls, e.g. Abbinnett (UKRI-JST Artificial Intelligence and Society). Beyond this we have a strong track-record of membership of grant awarding panels: in July 2020, ten staff were on 12 grant awarding panels including: UKRI (Covid-19); ESRC (Panel D, SDAI, Governing after Brexit), MRC, NIHR Main HS&DR Board, Health Foundation, Department of Health Policy Research Programme.

Contribution to PGR Community

We are committed to supporting the development of PGRs within our own institution and the broader academic community. Our staff frequently examine PhDs nationally and internationally in social policy and related disciplines such as public health, management, law and politics. We have championed PGR involvement in research communities, e.g. the NIHR School for Social Care Research doctoral network. Bennett is Co-Director of University of Pennsylvania's Social Impact

Fellowship programme, which provides training and advice to PGRs. PGRs are also partners in our research projects, e.g. Thomeczek is working with Antonucci.

External recognition

A number of our staff have been recognised for their contribution to their disciplines. Seven are elected Fellows of the Academy of Social Sciences (Exworthy, Glasby, Mannion, Mohan, Phillimore, Rowlingson, Waring) and Smith is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine. Garthwaite's *Hunger Pains* received the British Academy Peter Townsend Prize (2017) and four staff (Garthwaite, Leggett, Monaghan and Storm) have won awards for journal articles. Five have been recognised for their impact and engagement (Alpion (Albanian Nation's Ambassador's Award for research); Ferguson (*Social Work Education* Special Award for Impact); Kotova and Garthwaite (2018) (BARSEA); and Thomson (2017) ESRC Celebrating Impact Prize. Five staff – and IRiS collectively – have won UoB Impact and Engagement Awards, and Overton won CoSS's Outstanding Impact on Business and Enterprise prize for her work on financial services for later life.

Contribution to economy and society

Our commitment to making a difference means that our staff regularly engage with policy and practice communities through a variety of avenues. We consider the most appropriate way to engage with our research-users throughout the lifetime of our projects to increase the likelihood of bringing about change. Our strategies include articles in practitioner journals, e.g. *British Medical Journal* (Mannion and Davies, 2018; 2019); *Health Service Journal* (Exworthy, 2019; Smith, 2015; 2019) and *Community Care* (Ferguson, 2020; Gibson, 2016); speaking at practitioner events, e.g. Rowlingson, Chartered Institute of Taxation, 2019; producing policy papers e.g. TSRC series; contributing to our own and others websites; and writing for online journals, e.g. *The Conversation* - 19 academics have written a total of 58 articles with nearly 500,000 reads over the REF period - as well as print and social media.

We have also engaged extensively with parliament as special/policy advisors, e.g. Rowlingson to the Lords' Select Committee on Financial Exclusion (2016-17) and Antonucci to MEP Javi López (European Parliament Rapporteur) on job creation and growth. We have submitted written and oral evidence on at least 42 occasions to a range of Parliamentary and Select Committees, e.g. Antonucci to 'Life after Covid19'; Garthwaite House of Lords Select Committee on Food, Poverty, Health and the Environment; Fenton to The Public Petitions Committee Scotland on Youth Mental Health; and IRIS to the Women and Inequalities Committee. Overton authored the Parliamentary White Paper on housing equity and retirement. We also work closely with policy-makers and departments, including the Treasury (Rowlingson), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Needham, Phillimore), the Department of Health and Social Care (Glasby, Newbigging, Smith, Tew), the Department for Education (Ferguson, Gibson) and the Home Office (Phillimore). Newbigging was member of the Department of Health National Taskforce on Women's Mental Health; Sigona is a Member of the Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration's Independent Advisory Group and Brooks-Wilson served on the Youth Justice Board Advisory Panel. Bennett has advised the Welsh Assembly and Cabinet Office on national carer plans and Glasby has advised the Local Government Association on adult social care. We also provide advice to NHS England: Waring to patient safety teams and Williams on evidence-based interventions and contribute in Non-Executive and Governor roles at local NHS Trusts (Glasby, Needham, Smith, Williams). Internationally, Mannion is an expert advisor, WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region Working Group and Phillimore is the UK representative to the UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement Integration. Local examples include Rowlingson's membership of Birmingham's Financial Inclusion Partnership, and Pemberton is Co-chair of the Birmingham Child Poverty Action Forum.

A second strand of our engagement activities is with civil society regionally and nationally. We use our expertise to provide insights from our research in a number of roles in local government and civil society organisations, e.g. Garthwaite is a Trustee, Independent Food Aid Network (2018),

and member of the Oxfam UK Poverty Advisory Group (2017); and Mohan has a longstanding advisory role with National Council for Voluntary Action. In line with our civic mission, we use our research expertise to inform regional initiatives and tackle local challenges, e.g. Lessard-Philips is an Advisory Board member of Walsall Local Integration Partnership (2019-); Pemberton is on the Strategic Board on Birmingham Guns, Gangs and Organised Criminality (2017-); Phillimore and Goodson are members of Birmingham City Council's New Arrivals Partnership Board; and Goodson is a member of Brushstrokes Community Project Management Committee.

We provide advice and build capacity on research matters locally/regionally/nationally, e.g. Williams' strategic role in the West Midlands Research Design Service, providing advice on research proposals in primary and social care and public health; Goodson's training of peer interviewers; our membership of local organisation's research committees, e.g., NIHR West Midlands Clinical Research Network Programme Board (Allen) and UHB Research Committee (Smith as Chair); and nationally, Mohan is a member of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations Research Advisory Panel and Montgomery is a Cross-Whitehall Trial Advice Panel Advisor.

During Covid-19 our expertise and research have been utilised by many of our research partners. Our agility and existing partners have meant that we have been able to be reactive and respond positively to the crisis. Much of this work has been invisible and reactive, but we have also responded more strategically. We have successfully applied for research funding which will provide findings quickly to assist with immediate challenges, feeding directly into policy and practice and become a rich source of data for longer-term reflections on the impact of the crisis. Ferguson's and Cooner's UKRI-funded research on study of child-protection practices during Covid-19 has changed policies and practices at four local authorities, and influenced debates about how PPE and digital platforms can be used to conduct child protection work and support staff homeworking. Garthwaite's ESRC-funded 'Covid Realities' project captures the lived experiences of parents and carers on low incomes, and she submitted evidence to the Women and Equalities Commons Select Committee for its inquiry on the unequal impact of Covid-19. We also have adapted existing projects to provide early findings of the impact of the pandemic and utilised IAA funding to extend projects to study the impact of Covid-19 in real time.

Our influence on policy and practice is broader and deeper than is showcased in our ICSs. Further exemplars include

- Research by Phillimore, et al. (Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, €880,000, 2018-2; ESRC IAA £4,900, 2020) found that individuals in the asylum system were required to choose between hygiene products, food and data for their children's education during Covid-19. This was used by Duncan Lewis LLP in a class-action challenging the adequacy of asylum support, and cited in a House of Lords debate about levels of support;

- Research by Allen (Cancer Research UK, £128k, 2016-18), on the experience of older people with cancer, which explored why this group are less likely to receive some types of treatment, led to the Royal College of Radiologists releasing a public statement reinforcing their commitment to holistic care and training of clinicians;

- Hall's research on international retirement migration and care in Spain (FCO Consular Programme Fund, £9k, 2016; ESRC IAA, £20k, 2017) found that information was hard to access and inconsistent. She co-developed the website Support in Spain with the British Consulate, providing information, advice and a directory of services for older British people living in Spain. It has been accessed over 100,000 times.