

Institution:

University of Essex

Unit of Assessment:

21 - Sociology

1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy**1.1 Unit Context and Structure**

Since its foundation almost 60 years ago, the Department of Sociology (DoS) at Essex has become internationally renowned for its innovation, collaboration and global reach. On its 40th anniversary, its founding Professor, Peter Townsend, remarked that 'a department which found a place for mathematical modelling, history, anthropology, social philosophy and the sociology of literature', made 'interdisciplinarity inevitable'. This collaborative spirit continues to inspire us today and is reflected in the composition of the Unit of Assessment (UoA) for Sociology. Anchored by the DoS, the UoA also includes the work of colleagues in three related but independent departments: the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER), the School of Health and Social Care (HSC), and the Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies (PPS).

These are discrete organisational units but the DoS has played a key role in their establishment as well as the evolution of the UK Data Archive (UKDA) at Essex. Taken together, the UoA is a rich research environment which has contributed to the University's overall ranking as 42nd in the world for social science research, and to the DoS ranking as 44th in the world and 7th in the UK (QS World University Rankings by Subject 2020). According to SciVal data (June 2020) for 2015-2019 publications, the 'Sociology' UoA at Essex was within the top 20 (ranked 18th) for citations per publication when compared to all REF submitting institutions in the UK.

Reflections on our strategic aims in the REF2014 Environment Statement are provided in section 1.2 ('Research Strategy') below. We have fulfilled these aims and developed our strategy for the future, further strengthening our inter-disciplinary approach, supporting social research that maintains excellence, relevance and impact, and opening up new research horizons e.g. data-science, the biosocial, and visual methods. The vitality of our UoA is evidenced by the scale and diversity of, and recognition received for, our research - incorporating social theory, social policy, social work, psychosocial studies, psychoanalysis, research methodologies, social anthropology, social history, sociological criminology, social psychology, social epidemiology, and health policy. This breadth means we have inevitably taken a selective approach to the examples of activity provided.

The sustainability of the UoA is evidenced by its continued record of success in attracting research income in a context of increased competition and Brexit-related uncertainty, increasing staff numbers and doctoral completion rates, and by its championing of new social research methods and open research practices.

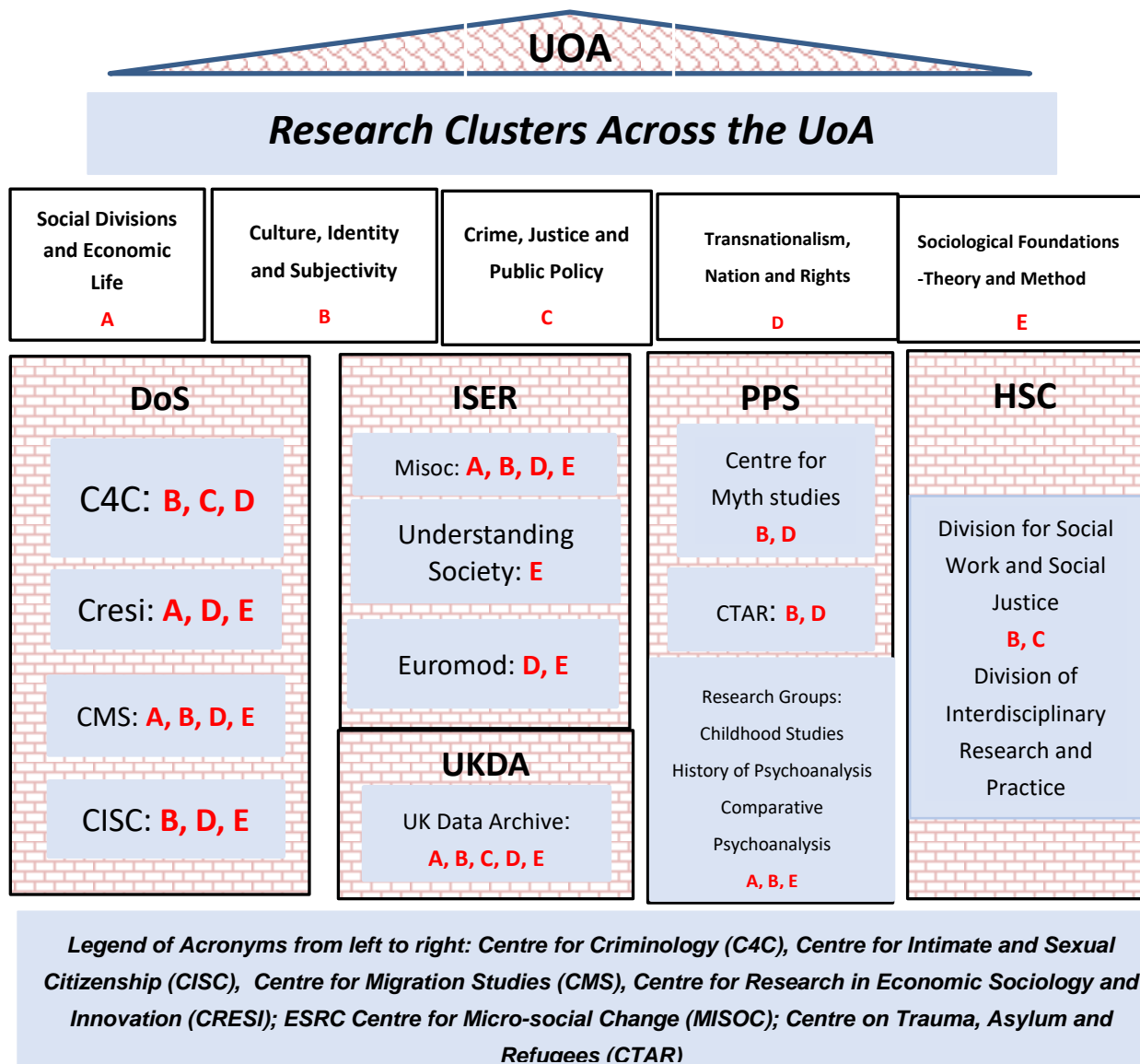
Compared to the previous REF period, the UoA's REF2021 submission shows:

- an increase in research income from a total of **£34,141,751m** to a total of **£43,886,876m** today (see REF4b);
- an increase in the number of FTE staff submitted from 47.45 to 66;
- an enhanced diversity among staff (see **People** section);
- an increase in the number of doctoral students completing their awards across the UoA from 171.20 in the last REF period to 183.35 in the current one (further detail in REF4a and **People** below).

Research expertise and outputs across the UoA are grouped into one or more of our five *Research Clusters*: Social Divisions and Economic Life; Culture, Identity and Subjectivity; Crime, Justice and Public Policy; Transnationalism, Nation and Rights; and Sociological Foundations – Theories and Methods. The Clusters are presented on the DoS website (<https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/sociology/research>) and Figure 1 illustrates how the four

departments engage with them as the organising framework for sociological work across the UoA.

Figure 1 UoA context and structure



Bringing together the research expertise and efforts of four departments presents challenges but also creates opportunities for cross-UoA links and collaborations. These synergies pivot on cross-unit research initiatives, postgraduate training, and dissemination. First, significant cross-unit research funding applications have included the ISER/DoS bid for the £6.1m ESRC Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC), which uses large-scale quantitative evidence to address major social divisions; awards to HSC/DoS totalling £110,249 for projects underpinning the REF2021 impact case study (ICS) on reducing care proceedings; the securing of two rounds of ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) funding led by a Principal Investigator within DoS; and a two-year DoS/ISER £122,985 ESRC, Nuffield and Office for Students award to establish at Essex one of the 17 national Q-Step Centres for quantitative methods training. Second, the UoA offers extensive cross-departmental postgraduate provision. The Sociology pathway of the Essex-led South-East Network for Social Sciences (SeNSS) ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership is open to applicants who wish to be (co)supervised in DoS, HSC or ISER. UoA staff contribute to SeNSS-wide cohort training in advanced social science methods and DoS/ISER currently co-teach five MSc research and theory modules. Third, research dissemination occurs through cross-faculty and intra-faculty seminar series, such as the ISER/DoS 'Current Methodological Issues in the Social Sciences' (2013-17) series for doctoral students across the faculty, and through the activities of our research centres (Figure 1).

Our five broad research clusters are designed to be synergistic and have fostered genuine research linkages across the UoA:

Social divisions and economic life (SDEF) encapsulates our long-standing research on the causes and impacts of socio-economic inequalities in many areas of life, from local to global arenas, and across substantive areas of inquiry (e.g. health, education).

Culture, identity and subjectivity (CIS) comprises social and psychosocial research on questions of culture, identity, history, memory, and the complex narratives of, and interplay between, individuals and society in the framing of identities and personhood.

Crime, justice and public policy (CJPP) develops theory iteratively with extensive empirical work whilst simultaneously addressing key issues of concern to the public and to policy makers within the fields of criminology, rights, health, welfare, environmental challenges, and the life course.

Transnationalism, nation and rights (TNR) connects researchers investigating citizenship and human rights, multi-culturalism, Indigenous rights, reconfigurations of 'the nation', refugees, and the socio-economic integration of migrants.

Sociological foundations: theories and methods (SF) provides an interdisciplinary space to explore the critical epistemologies, theories, methods and practices that underpin all our research.

The *research clusters* reflect the breadth of research conducted across the four constituent parts of the UoA. Shared interests facilitate joint-working but the profile of each department reflects its own theoretical, substantive and methodological orientations:

Department of Sociology (DoS)

The DoS was founded in 1964 and rapidly became known for its sociological pioneers and new approaches. It has played a major role in shaping the discipline ever since. The DoS fostered foundational research on gender, sexualities, deviance, sociological criminology, survey methods, social stratification and oral history, and continues to lead in these fields today. More recently, it has supported pioneering research in areas of globalisation, migration, economic sociology, social anthropology, psychosocial studies, human rights, and critical data science. The DoS has outstanding research strengths spanning all five research clusters within the UoA. It is recognised for its (inter)disciplinary innovation, internationalism, and commitment to social justice.

Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER)

ISER is an interdisciplinary research institute, featuring world-leading expertise in quantitative analysis, survey methods and a strong portfolio of national and international policy work. It reflects UoA strengths in our research clusters on **SDEL**, **CJPP**, and, of course, distinctive contributions to the development of Sociological Methods (**SF**). ISER hosts the ESRC funded 'Understanding Society: UK Household Longitudinal Study', and the ESRC Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC). In 2017 ISER was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for its 'authoritative social and economic research to inform the policies of governments for the improvement of people's lives.'

School of Health and Social Care (HSC)

The School was established in 2002 and staff contributing to the Sociology UoA are hosted within either the HSC Division for Social Work and Social Justice or Division of Interdisciplinary Research and Practice (clinical researchers are returned to UoA2). Reflecting research clusters concerned with **SDEL**, **CIS**, and **CJPP**, HSC research covers issues of social care, social justice and human rights, the sociology of health, welfare policy and reform, and citizen and service-user engagement in health and social care policy and practice. The DoS was centrally involved in the establishment

of HSC, creating longstanding networks.

Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies (PPS)

Previously the Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies (established 1993), research in the Department (from 2017) engages with sociology, social policy, social psychology, and criminology and contributes to the **CIS**, **TNR** and **SF** clusters. Staff were submitted within the Sociology UoA in 2014. Close connections are based on the historical contribution made by the DoS to the establishment of the Centre and continuing research links. Research applies psychosocial, intrapsychic, and interpersonal approaches to contemporary challenges (e.g. refugees, trauma and recovery, politics, social care, gender and sexualities, management and organisational functioning, education, childhood, mental health and wellbeing). Shared theoretical orientations provide bridges between the sociological, psychosocial and psychoanalytic (e.g. through the work of Deleuze, Butler, Elias, and others), and the investigation of shared intellectual questions concerning, for example, the constructions and strategic uses of 'ignorance'.

1.2 UoA Research Strategy and Activity

Our research objectives, as set out in previous Statements (2008, 2014) have been expanded:

- i) to enable high quality research in Sociology, broadly defined;
- ii) to strengthen the discipline of Sociology and enhance its interdisciplinary connections (particularly with psychosocial studies, social work, health studies and criminology) through our research and teaching;
- iii) to contribute to the analysis of everyday life and major social change;
- iv) to continue our engagement with social policy and the public sphere;
- v) to generate research that makes a positive impact outside the academy and is underpinned by high-quality scholarship.

Reflecting on the composition of the UoA and our objectives at the time of our 2014 statement, we have met the aims that were set out then (*i-iii above*) and successfully pursued our vision of remaining an international centre of research excellence with a vital and productive research culture. In addition, through strategic recruitment we have made efforts to increase diversity, broaden our age profile, and enhance our management of succession planning. We have strengthened procedures ensuring research integrity and ethical approval, and have developed new ways to progress to a more inclusive and open research environment (further detail below).

We aim to meet our objectives by:

- Building a broad sociological research base and improving staff diversity;
- Strengthening support and collegiality;
- Increasing research intensity through expansion and releasing research time;
- Increasing research income to re-invest in research activities;
- Making the best use of our many collaborations, international, national or internal; and, through the use of tools and opportunities;
- Preparing for future REF and KEF exercises while maintaining research sustainability and growth as a cross-cutting strategic aim.

Seven *overarching strategies* (periodically reviewed and discussed at research-focused Awaydays), have operated across past and current RAE/REF cycles with demonstrable success.

i) Strengthening research clusters and supporting research centres (see Figure 1, p.3)

Our Research Clusters provide conceptual and practical ways of creating a critical mass of research staff around specialisms (e.g. through seminars; joint supervision; publications; bids; meetings and presentations; and a working paper series managed by ISER with frequent contributions from Sociology). In addition, eight specialist centres within the UoA invigorate the

research clusters and contribute to new developments, benefiting from the input of over a hundred international visiting scholars in the assessment period.

The DoS hosts four of these Centres. **CRESI**, established in 2008, focuses on economic sociology, political and cultural economy, the multi-modality of capitalist economies, and patterns of consumption and innovation. **CMS**, established in 2018, involves staff and PGR students working on migration. **CISC** was established in 2008 to reflect department strengths in work on intimate lives and sexualities (as initiated by Emeritus Professor Plummer who founded the journal *Sexualities*, still based in the Department). The deputy director, Crowhurst is also convenor of the European Sociology Association Sexuality network (RN23). **C4C** is well known for its 'sociological criminology' perspective, developed at Essex by scholars such as Stan Cohen and exemplified in its co-authored research-based textbook (now in its 4th edition). It has strong links with the Human Rights Centre, Law, PPS, Government, and HSC.

PPS hosts two research centres: the **Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees** and the **Centre for Myth Studies**; as well as three research groups on 'History of Psychoanalysis', 'Childhood Studies', and 'Comparative Psychoanalysis'. In HSC, the **Division for Social Work and Social Justice** pursues a critical research agenda that includes work on participation, human rights and political economy.

Twenty-four members of staff in the UoA are also members of the University's award-winning, interdisciplinary **Human Rights Centre** which brings access to further networks, including UN agencies and international NGOs (e.g. Amnesty, Human Right Watch, ACLU).

ii) Securing research funding

Attracting large-scale funding is a key objective as it supports projects involving big data, large-scale surveys, international fieldwork, and longitudinal approaches. The UoA maximises the quality and prospects of funding applications through 'seed-corn funding', grant-focused workshops, project presentation opportunities, peer review of applications via Research Committees, and a dedicated post within DoS to facilitate grant applications. The Research and Enterprise Office (REO) provides assistance with preparing, reviewing and submitting bids.

iii) Recruiting excellent academics and supporting early career researchers

The UoA has increased academic staff numbers within the assessment period (see **People**), more than compensating for retirements and mobility, adding early career colleagues (ECRs), and recruiting to all the research clusters. Extensive mentorship of ECRs holding postdoctoral posts has supported them in gaining full-time lectureships at Essex or elsewhere (e.g. **Hadjimatheou**, **Sandhu**) and ECRs engage in a support and development group.

iv) Supporting research and strengthening research culture

Teaching is organised to ensure staff benefit from at least one research day per week and a generous research leave scheme (eligible permanent staff accumulate one research term for every six terms worked, including parental leave, or paid leave-of-absence). Research funding is available across the UoA to assist with conference attendance, networking, small-scale pilot projects, and visitor and seminar programmes. Doctoral students are supported to teach in their areas of research. Research mentoring, monitoring, and annual appraisal systems are organised both centrally and departmentally (see **People**).

v) Recruiting good research students and strengthening research training

The UoA has access to two UKRI research council funded DTPs – SeNSS and CHASE. In 2016, an Essex-led bid to form a new ESRC DTP – the South-East Network for Social Sciences (SeNSS) – was successful. The DTP comprises 10 universities, spans 13 social science disciplines and offers 45 doctoral studentships each year, all supported by member

match-funding and involving external collaborations. The UoA is also part of a large AHRC DTP, the Consortium of Humanities and Arts South-East England (CHASE), comprising 9 research-intensive institutions. CHASE studentships have been awarded and supervised within both DoS (5) and PPS (3), and staff have contributed to CHASE cohort training in qualitative methods.

All doctoral students across the UoA have free access to DTP virtual learning environment platforms and are eligible for bursaries to enable them to participate in DTP-brokered advanced training. UoA staff regularly contribute to this, e.g. ISER on ESRC-funded national datasets, the DoS on computational data science methods. At the University-level, the UKDA, which is the principal collaborator in the ESRC-funded UK Data Service, leads on training concerning deposit of social science data, contributing to the raising of 'open research' standards.

The DTPs foster research impact through collaborative studentships with external partners, and initiatives such as the ESRC IAA Business Boost (2019 and 2020) providing the UoA with an access-route to a £600,000 scheme linking doctoral students to private sector and social enterprises. In addition to DTP funding, the UoA has offered access to ESRC project-linked studentships (in ISER with Understanding Society (2), and MiSoC (1); in DoS with the 'Human Rights, Big Data and Technology' project (1), and the '2000 Families' study (1 PhD, 2 post-docs.)); and to match-funded collaborative studentships involving an external partner (in ISER, with IPSOS MORI, and TNS UK; in DoS with Essex County Council, Essex Police, Islington Council, and Wellcome Trust education and public engagement programme).

All UoA doctoral students are allocated £2000 for course attendance, £500 for conferences and can bid for Graduate Small Grants. Most students take two-three modules or bespoke training via the University's 'Proficio' programme (UoA staff often contribute sessions) and internal courses on e.g. design, ethics, integrity, and viva preparation. Training can include courses offered by the renowned Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis (now in its 54th year) or by external providers.

vi) Encouraging national and international research collaboration

Sociology at Essex promotes collaboration and adopts an international outlook. For example, staff are involved in projects as co-investigators and on advisory boards, links can incorporate PhD research supervision as well as partnership plans (e.g. an agreement between DoS and the University of Adelaide to co-supervise and co-award a PhD), and in the future, the Sociology UoA strategy will involve creating stronger links with Public Health researchers (UoA2). Further examples are provided in section 4.

vii) Identifying and serving the needs of potential research users

There are many examples of good practice and user engagement throughout the UoA. Understanding Society, as an example, stands out for its extensive user support, data-curation activities and its Policy Unit, while MiSoC (the ESRC Centre on Micro-social Change) runs Policy Groups that liaise with users from government and the third sector to help shape the MiSoC research agenda (see below). The experience of leading researchers contributes to the improvement of Essex-based investments (e.g. **Demireva** sits on the Advisory Board of the UK Data Service) and international standards regarding transparency and integrity in use and re-use of data (e.g. **Allum** is co-director on a EU (£257,831) project on 'Standard Operating Procedures for Research Integrity', and aspects of **Danchev's** work address replicability). The UoA subscribes to the goal of creating an open research environment and adoption of University's Open-Access Policy for pre-publication full-text outputs (available from the University Research Repository); encourages open access publishing where possible (with agreements in place with Sage and Wiley for gold open access publication of Essex researchers, in addition to provisions for UKRI-funded research outputs); and aligns with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Library staff provide training on accessing citations data (also distributed by Research Committees) and staff are asked to create ORCID identities.

Transparency and integrity in research are ensured by mentors, peer review, the ethics application process and monitoring by members of Research Committees.

1.3 Impact strategy across the UoA

The University sets out its strategy and aims in the Institutional Statement, and the REO provides support mechanisms for research and impact. Within departments, impact strategy is led by either a designated Impact Director or the Research Director, plus the HoD, and they monitor evolving case studies, encourage engagement with marginalised groups, and review applications for projects for the ESRC IAA funds awarded to Essex in order to facilitate sharing of experience. ISER supports impact/policy and public engagement with the additional posts of Impact Fellow, and a Communications and Engagement Manager and Officer.

Impact support is central to UoA research initiatives. In DoS for example, eligibility criteria for internal research seed-funding have been widened to explicitly support network development in the early stages of projects, and staff are allowed to reclaim indirect costs from external grants to augment impact activities of funded projects. An internal peer-review process for 'grant applications in development' is overseen by departmental Directors of Impact and Research, providing a means for: embedding stakeholder engagement into early stages of project development; encouraging originality and research that can benefit hard to reach or marginalised groups; and pooling stakeholder contacts.

At Research Impact Officers in the REO provide assistance for funding applications (e.g. grants, IAA awards), Pathways to Impact Statements / Impact Summaries, focussed support for REF Impact Case Studies and their authors, timely collection of evidence of impact, and deliver training on impact-related activities including public- and policy-engagement. A responsive Faculty 'Dean's Fund' supports the ability of researchers to capitalise on impact opportunities as they emerge, for example funding **Allen-Robertson's** invitation to Facebook HQ to meet with digital industry, policy and academic communities in Silicon Valley. University and departmental policies for logging consultancies and contacts on University databases such as the institutional Research Information System support visibility of, and potential for sharing, impact relationships.

Case studies and approach to impact

The five impact case studies (ICS) represent work across all of the constituent departments of the UoA and demonstrate the breadth of methodological approaches, intellectual activity, range of stakeholders utilising Essex research, and our approach to supporting impact. The five ICSs are integrated into the overall UoA research and impact strategy in several fundamental ways. Each ICS was developed and promoted through the research strategy and its associated support mechanisms. For example, all ICS authors have been supported by ESRC IAA funds, with one award going to each of **Jackle et al** and **Fussey**, two to **Sergi**, and three each to **Cox et al** and **Papadopoulos**, totalling over £84,000 of investment in these impact activities. In addition, learning and other outcomes from each ICS were fed back to reinforce the overall vitality and sustainability of the strategy itself.

UoA Research Objectives iv and v (section 1.2 above) emphasise collaborative engagement with public policy and practitioner communities in order to foster high-quality and positive research impact outcomes. These objectives are central features of each ICS and key to their success. The application of research-led conceptual approaches and development of collaborative methodology advanced by **Cox et al's** ICS, which improved recurrent care proceedings for families and service providers, *demonstrates our impact approach in terms of working closely with external partners in an iterative fashion*. **Fussey** and **Papadopoulos'** ongoing *relationships with policy communities within the UN and EU and at national governmental levels enabled quality research outcomes (Objective ii) to be presented in ways sensitive to organisational cultures and increase their prospects of becoming adopted into practice*. In both ICSs, the same features of the overall research strategy have also guided engagements with organisations such as Liberty and refugee services. **Jackle et al.'s** ICS, which played a vital role in improving the quality of official statistics in

the UK and Europe, illustrates the way in which *the impact of methodological innovation has been driven through ISER's extensive networks in this field*. Strategic and financial support for **Sergi's** ICS on changing approaches to policing Italian diaspora organised crime groups facilitated *durable relationships with multiple state- and transnational-level policing organisations*. These *relationships enabled a deeper understanding* of the varied nuances of policing and jurisprudence in different jurisdictions. *These in turn were incorporated into the presentation of research findings to increase their likelihood of influencing policy and practice*.

Impact activities and their associated learning, feed back into the sustainability of the UoA research environment through several distinct mechanisms. For example, ICS authors play a leading role in department-led grant proposal peer review processes. This initiative was designed to offer several benefits, including maintaining high standards of proposal submissions, offering guidance on developing effective impact plans, increasing the overall visibility of impact-related issues when formulating grant proposals, and to provide longer term mentorship for applicants. Another mechanism for channelling learning from ICSs back into the UoA strategy is through the IAA application processes. The approval process has been structured to require feedback and final sign off from both DoI and HoD (in the DoS both current postholders are ICS authors, as is the HoD of ISER).

The UoA takes full advantage of funding schemes that support the *enhancement* of impact, including an internal PVC-R Strategic fund as well as ESRC Impact Acceleration Awards (IAA) and Global Challenge Research Funds (GCRF). Forty-nine UoA academics have received IAA grants and GCRF funding has been awarded to twelve members for international projects that aim to build networks for long-term partnerships and future impact pipelines. The University Impact Awards scheme has recognised various projects within the UoA including a drama project with local immigrant communities, collaboration with the Independent Office for Police Conduct, the oversight of intelligence agencies, and evaluation of free childcare policies.

The UoA benefits from impact-focused relationships with industry partners, such as BT, and high-level policy communities including the Cabinet Office Open Innovation Team, the Industry and Parliament Trust, and the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, and initiatives such as the Essex Centre for Data Analytics, a data-pooling and analysis collaboration between the University, Essex County Council and Essex Police. All provide means by which policy and industry voices articulate needs and challenges, shape research projects and embed impact considerations, also enabling staff and PhD students to participate in policy processes and undertake training to develop impact-focused skills. Calls for evidence to Parliamentary consultations are circulated to research active staff and support is given for providing submissions, leading to UoA research featuring in debates in both Houses of Parliament and the work of All-Party Parliamentary Groups. Advisory roles are undertaken for local, regional and national government bodies, health, policing and other public agencies, national and international regulatory and policy agencies, third sector and civil society groups, and industry. For example, **P. Cox** is co-leading a Public Health England initiative to establish a national community of practice to reduce recurrent family justice care proceedings involving 40 services around the UK, and is also a member of the Data First advisory group, led by the Ministry of Justice and funded by Administrative Data Research UK. **Hewamanne** is the founding director of an NGO, *IMPACT-Global Work*, aiming to improve occupational health within South and East Asian global garment factories, fisheries and plantation-based industries, and has made recommendations to ILO and UNDP. Staff with expertise in the use of digital policing tools sit on police ethics panels across England, including the Gloucestershire Constabulary Ethics Committee, National Crime Agency Ethics Advisory Group, Metropolitan Police Service Research Ethics Committee (**Hadjimatheou**), and the West Midlands Police Ethics Committee (**Fussey**), the latter covering national data analytics capability.

Fussey's work on policing and surveillance has informed several government departments including DDCMS, the Home Office and the Cabinet Office in addition to national surveillance oversight bodies (Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office, and Office of the Surveillance Camera Commissioner). International consultation has included work with Europol (**Sergi**,

Fussey), UN OHCHR and the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (**Fussey**), UNODC (**South**), UNHCR (**ISER**), the European Commission (**ISER**) and **Güveli's** engagement with Turkish MPs on the integration of Turkish diaspora in Europe. The United Nations International Organization for Migration has used an adaptation of **Papadopoulos'** Synergic Therapeutic Complexity approach to dislocated persons as the model for their community-based approach to Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS). Users of **ISER** research come from a diverse range of organisations and their methods expertise has led to collaborations with national and global polling firms such as YouGov, ICM, and NatCen. Strong relationships with industry such as BT and BAE System create demand for **ISER** expertise, while innovative SMEs like Signal Media, Filament AI, and Leonardo have contracted ISER experts to help solve acute business challenges. The SeNSS partnership involves extensive industry links and in 2019 the partnership commissioned research to audit and understand the wider nature of these relationships, as well as the 'enablers and blockers' affecting social science relationships with industry.

Most recently, UoA researchers have advised parliamentary and government bodies on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, including **Güveli's** contribution to the government's report on 'Life Beyond COVID' concerning the likely impact of the pandemic on education. Evidence on NHS contact tracing apps from **Fussey** and colleagues was reproduced in the Parliamentary Joint Committee Human Rights report on UK government responses to COVID-19.

Impact and Media engagement

Media and impact training is readily available and the UoA employs many channels to publicise research and reach the general public and specific users. ISER has a dedicated media resource team led by a communications manager while the Faculty of Social Sciences has employed a Senior Communications Officer and also draws on central University services, particularly in relation to cross-disciplinary and inter-faculty projects. Since 2014 significant media output has included **P. Cox's** BBC series *Servants: The True Story of Life Below Stairs*, numerous research and widely shared opinion pieces for newspapers (e.g. **Beresford** and **McGoey** in *The Guardian* on, respectively, social care challenges and critiques of 'big philanthropy'), and coverage of **Fussey's** independent evaluation of the Metropolitan Police's trials of live facial-recognition technology (as a 'joint-exclusive' in *The Guardian* and *Sky News*, and in over 250 international news items including *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *NPR*, *PBS Newshour*, *La Repubblica*, *Le Monde*, *BBC Newsnight*, *BBC Radio 4 File on Four* and the *Financial Times* front page). Academic staff from all departments of the UoA have written for, been quoted in, interviewed or had research covered by, major national and international mainstream media outlets, including *BBC Radio 4 (Today, PM, Woman's Hour, File on 4, Thinking Allowed)*, *BBC Newsnight*, *ITN News*, *BBC Radio 5 Live*, *Sky News*, *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, *The Guardian*, *Observer*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Times*, *Express*, *Daily Mail*, *Deutsche Welle*, *The Economist*, *New Statesman*, *Wired*, *Nature*, *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, *Le Monde*, *El País*, *Televisión Española (TVE)*, *Voice of America*, and national chat shows including *BBC Breakfast* and *The One Show*. ISER's research on children featured in *Newsround* and specialised media aimed at parents, such as magazines and the online channel Mumsnet. Across DoS and PPS, academics have written over 40 articles for *The Conversation* (the 2016 article by **Yang Hu**, a senior research officer in DoS, received 6,156,205 reads). The Faculty, Departments and Centres make strategic use of online media to promote their research and expertise (across the UoA, Twitter accounts have over 42,000 followers). ISER has distributed 22 e-news bulletins to 2,500 subscribers (average 30% click-through rate), 12 newsletters to 1,700 subscribers and three ISER Annual Reports disseminated to 650 subscribers (policy makers, civil servants, media, third sector and researchers). In HSC, **Speed** co-founded the medical sociology 'Cost of Living Blog', an international collaboration funded by the British Sociological Association, which since 2012 has had over 217,000 page views. Material from the Blog has been picked up by *The Guardian*, *The Conversation*, the Royal College of Psychiatry, and many others.

2. People

Departments in the UoA follow the principles and practice of the University's 'People Supporting Strategy' and the Institutional Statement describes *Essential Training* modules, including those on 'Equality and Diversity' and 'Unconscious Bias' which all staff across the UoA are expected to have completed, with managers undertaking enhanced training. Staff involved in any REF-related management and decision-making will have completed the REF-focused elements of the Unconscious Bias training which pays attention to equality and diversity issues in constructing submissions and assessing outputs. The latter process requires two readers for each item, drawn from a pool across the UoA. A review of our outputs submission profile shows that ten self-identified BAME staff are included: seven are female, four with more than one item and of those with only one item two are ECR/L level; three are male with one item each in the submission, one retiring in the REF period, two being at L level.

Recruitment follows University procedures, rules on equality, diversity and inclusion, and job adverts include positive action statements and the 'Disability Confident' guidelines. Interview panels must meet University gender and ethnic representation guidelines and members must have completed 'Recruitment and Selection' training. Nonetheless, despite continued strong efforts to encourage non-white candidates to apply, the number of BAME staff remains relatively low. Table 1 shows that within BAME staff, 20% are Professors with the majority concentrated in Lecturer positions (50%) while among members of staff identifying as white 37% are Professor and only 18% are at Lecturer level. However, almost all self-identified BAME colleagues have been hired in the last 10 years and further analysis should focus on finer distinctions between 'white British' and 'other-white' which is standard practice in examination of ethnic penalty.

Table 1.

Position		BAME	Unknown	White	Total
Professor (R)	N	2	3	18	23
	%	20%	43%	37%	35%
Reader	N	1		1	2
	%	10%		2%	3%
Senior Lecturer (R)	N	1	1	15	17
	%	10%	14%	31%	26%
Lecturer (R)	N	5	3	9	17
	%	50%	43%	18%	26%
Senior Research Fellow	N	1			1
	%	10%			1%
Research Fellow	N			6	6
	%			12%	9%
Total		10	7	49	66

Staff are informed of clear criteria to follow on their 'Pathway to Permanency' and of standardised procedures for promotion. ECR staff at the probationary stage are assigned a mentor from amongst senior staff to provide support through these processes and to discuss matters relating to research, teaching, administration, and career development. Continuing support is available for all staff and the UoA follows the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, including avoiding (as far as possible) short-term contract conditions for research-oriented staff, encouraging colleagues to apply for promotion, and full participation in the recently established award scheme 'Celebrating Excellence'.

Measures to support 'inclusion', such as flexible and remote working, were already embedded across the UoA and in the context of COVID-19 have been supplemented by initiatives to provide

equipment and other assistance. Staff support and mentoring networks include Essex Women's Network, Parent's Network, Access Forum, Global Forum and Essex LGBT Alliance and within the UoA, colleagues have created Communities of Practice around shared research and cultural issues. For example ESARN - Essex South Asia Research Network (co-led by **Hewamanne** and **Deka**) is a forum for researchers working on South Asia to exchange ideas and develop new ways of doing research and teaching. Such groupings encourage diversity, inclusivity and creativity.

Departments endeavour to create teaching timetables that allow for personal responsibilities and to recognise adjustments needed after a return from leave caused by ill-health or similar issues. DoS provides for an additional two weeks paternity leave and a reduced workload for those returning from maternity leave. Staff with particular needs or carer responsibilities who might otherwise find it difficult to attend conferences or make use of academic opportunities are supported by a central 'Career Development Fund for Carers'. All staff are encouraged to maintain a healthy work/life balance and a 'career-break' scheme is available. Overall, the UoA has benefited from high staff retention alongside appointment of new colleagues.

Gender and Diversity

Athena-SWAN applications across the UoA have achieved Bronze awards for DoS and PPS (both 2019), Silver for HSC (2017) and led to a self-assessment exercise in ISER which will resubmit an application in April 2021. Applications have involved a comprehensive review of procedures and practices within UoA Departments, using surveys and focus groups to understand issues and problems faced by staff (administrative and academic) and PhD students, and the development of action plans regarding equality and diversity.

Table 2 shows that in terms of gender differences, 47% of men in the DoS (the largest department in the UoA) have reached Professorial level compared to 22% of women. In contrast, 31% of women are Senior Lecturer compared to 21% of men, and 13% are Research Fellows compared to only 6% of men. (These results could be further adjusted for age). As our Athena-SWAN analysis (pp. 40-41) noted, 'there may be a cohort effect here: there is no evidence that female colleagues appointed at the same time as male ones are less likely to become Professors and these figures may simply reflect the fact that there were more men appointed twenty years ago. That is, there are no women in that cohort who are not now Professors.'

Table 2

Position		Male	Female	Total
Professor (R)	N	16	7	23
	%	47%	22%	35%
Reader	N		2	2
	%		6%	3%
Senior Lecturer (R)	N	7	10	17
	%	21%	31%	26%
Lecturer (R)	N	9	8	17
	%	26%	25%	26%
Senior Research Fellow	N		1	1
	%		3%	2%
Research Fellow	N	2	4	6
	%	6%	13%	9%
Total		34	32	66

The approach to Athena-SWAN has received positive feedback, for example DoS was commended for 'evident senior commitment, engagement of staff ... (including 100% survey response rate), ... insightful self-assessment, and the generally positive trajectory already being seen.' Members of Athena-SWAN Self-Assessment Teams are represented in department management groups across the UoA to ensure delivery of action plans and new initiatives.

In a survey for the DoS Athena-SWAN application, 97% of students reported that they 'agreed that they would recommend the department as somewhere that was a great place for students of all genders to study.' Data from the survey and student focus groups emphasised the importance of female academic role models, strengthening the commitment to support female staff in achieving promotion and performing high-profile roles within the department.

Staff and students use 'AbilityNet' and other resources to help make IT and the Web more accessible for anyone with disabilities, and the physical environment of the campus and departments in the UoA are compliant with Equality Act 2010 guidance. Online access guides are available through a partnership with 'AccessAble' and in the REF period the DoS main office was moved down one floor and reconfigured to improve access.

The University supports staff continuing in their roles with removal of a fixed retirement age over ten years ago; staff and postgraduates within the UoA span a wide age-range. Diversity of sexual identity and preference is a celebrated feature of the intellectual work and culture of the UoA and the University is a Stonewall Top 100 employer. Indeed research on the excluded, marginalised and victimised has run through the history of the UoA and continues in work on sexualities, Indigenous peoples, ethnicity, race and justice, domestic abuse, financial and food poverty, mental health, and educational exclusion. As just one example, **Rohleder** is leading an international, interdisciplinary project exploring the experiences of sexual inclusion/oppression of people with disabilities in South Africa, with colleagues from the disciplines of psychology, disability studies, and social anthropology, funded by the International Foundation for Applied Disability Research. Work like this also supports the ongoing decolonisation of the curriculum and steps toward a Race Equality Charter award in which **Hewamanne** (DoS) plays a key role. A deep commitment to diversity and equality reflects the disciplinary orientation towards considering questions of power and inequality.

Departments are led by a Head of Department, with management responsibility for the Department Manager and academic members of staff, elected by academic and professional services staff, and assisted by Directors of Education and Research. Department meetings are held twice per term and Student 'Year Representatives' attend these and serve on key committees. In DoS a Steering Group meets fortnightly and is responsible for developing policy and strategy for the department; a maximum of 2/3 of this group can be of one gender.

Research Students

The number of doctoral students completing their awards across the UoA has increased from 171.20 in the last REF period to 183.35 in the current one (see REF4a) and Table 3 below:

Table 3

	Year of award							Total
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	
Normal doctorate	26.00	20.00	26.60	19.25	26.75	21.25	30.00	169.85
Professional doctorate	1.00	1.00	3.50	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	13.50
Total	27.00	21.00	30.10	21.25	28.75	23.25	32.00	183.35

As the table shows, we have maintained a consistent level of PhD awards over this REF period (notwithstanding an increasingly competitive PGR funding climate), and increased the number of Professional Doctorates awarded from within the UoA. Recent increases in staffing and hence supervisory capacity have not yet contributed to a marked increase in completions but will do so in the near future. We also note that the addition of a new UoA (Public Health) to our institutional submissions has had a modest downward impact on the PhD completions returned here.

Across the UoA, research students benefit from a strong research culture but also make significant contributions to it, particularly to the various research centres and groups in the UoA, all of which have active seminar programmes, and PGR research is featured on department websites. PGR Directors oversee recruitment, with a commitment to widening participation and diversity, and coordinate extensive training and support mechanisms for each research student. The University holds an 'HR Excellence in Research Award' and strongly supports the Researcher Development Concordat.

Training needs are reviewed prior to the student's arrival or at the first supervision and reviewed at each supervisory board meeting. PGR training is provided both centrally (e.g. on 'Managing your Research and Production of your Thesis', 'Surviving the Viva') and departmentally, through colloquia (DoS), student forums (PPS), joint student-staff conferences (HSC, DoS), and *Proficio* courses. Academic career workshops are provided on profile building, effective communication, and finding funding. The UoA enjoys strong relationships with public sector and industry organisations and IAA support is available for short secondment activities (e.g. as arranged in 2020 with Eurojust but due to COVID-19 could only be taken up online).

Facilities for students include an allocated desk and PC with printer access, in shared offices located centrally within departments to facilitate integration. Facilities are upgraded and refurbished regularly. The aim is to create research space that supports both study and sociability with shared kitchen facilities and break-out spaces.

Progress Monitoring

Department PGR Directors are responsible for student progression and ensuring an appropriate research environment is maintained. In the Faculty, a PGR Office and PGR Deputy Dean co-ordinate progress monitoring. In departments, full-time students must have two Supervisory Boards a year chaired by an academic who is not the student's supervisor to monitor progress and to provide intellectual input. A Chair's report on progress plus one from the student are submitted to the twice-yearly Research Students Progress Committee to review progress and make decisions on any necessary action. All research students must complete a fully developed research proposal for their second Board before PhD status is confirmed. PhD students have strict milestones for each year of study designed to help plan and complete stages, for example concerning access to data and complying with ethical approval procedures.

PhD outcomes and destinations

PhD student career preparation includes a peer-led 'Let's Talk' project linking individuals with community and policy groups, supported by internal and external funds, and the promotion of SeNSS/CHASE training on employability, and SeNSS/IAA business-link schemes, freely available for all PGR students. Many 2nd/3rd year PGR students gain experience as GTAs and supervisors will discuss future employment with their students (as required by supervisory panel reports), while 2nd and 3rd year PhD colloquia include employment skills sessions on presentations and writing for different audiences.

PhD students graduating from the UoA have moved on to a variety of destinations for employment or further research, contributing to the UK research system (e.g. at UEA, Warwick, Middlesex, Manchester, NatGen Social Research, NHS England) and, reflecting international recognition of the strength of research training at Essex, taking up posts at prestigious bodies abroad, for example, - UC, Berkeley; Institut d'Etudes Européennes; Université Libre de Bruxelles; The World

Bank; Max Planck, Germany; International Crisis Group, Mexico City; Facebook; German Federal Institute for Population Research; OECD.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Investment in infrastructure and facilities

The University has invested substantially in infrastructure support for the UoA, including data analysis resources (e.g. STATA, R, Python, ArcGIS), specialised secure data storage facilities (e.g. offered by the UKDA), and buildings. HSC occupies a substantial new building and the DoS and PPS are located in contiguous office spaces, recently refurbished with a shared common room. A purpose-built, secure, social science research facility houses ISER, the UKDA and EssexLab (a specialist laboratory for experimental social science expected to expand with dedicated interview rooms for qualitative studies, mobile lab equipment and software, and full-time technical support). ISER infrastructure includes dedicated servers and IT support to underpin the delivery and maintain the integrity and resilience of the Understanding Society Survey and other research assets. As mentioned, ISER also has a support team for media enquiries, publicity, marketing and impact. In the Library, a subject specialist assists UoA academics with research-related acquisitions.

The UoA benefits from the presence of the UKDA, a national repository that includes census and survey data gathered via the Office for National Statistics and other public agencies. UKDA is recognised for excellence in data governance, ethics, information security and strong infrastructure. Established in 1967 it has been a place of deposit for public records and in 2012 became the lead partner in the UK Data Service. The Business and Local Government Data Research Centre, (ESRC funded, 2014-22: £6,418,824), opens new avenues for UoA work on public policy, third-sector engagement (**Wyllie**) and the important growth area of data analytics. Additionally, various archives and artefacts of national and international importance represent benefits-in-kind held by the University, such as ESCALA, the collection of art from Latin America, of great value to scholars of the sociology of culture, representation, environment and protest, and donated collections curated by PPS including those of psychoanalysts Enid Balint, Juliet Mitchell, historian John Forrester, and the Sigmund Freud Collection.

Research Funding (see also REF 4b)

Our approach to securing research income is outlined in Section 1.2. UoA Research income (REF4b) during the period was £43,886,876 and the UoA has been particularly successful in consistently attracting the highest amount of ESRC income in the UK. As well as including individual research project grants, this sum is primarily awarded to the UKDA (which has received increased funding from £2.2m in 2014/15 to £2.8m in 2020/21) and to ISER. The total amount of Understanding Society's Research Council funding obtained during 2014-20 (for waves 9-15, including work beyond December 2020) amounts to £94.1m but this is allocated across this and two other UoAs. MiSoC was awarded £6.1m for a 5-year programme (2019-2024) including two sociology postdoctoral scholarships to be jointly managed by ISER and DoS. In 2019, funding for EUROMOD – the major tax/benefit micro-simulation project - amounted to £1.2m and ISER's new directions in biosocial research initiative has so far attracted funds from ESRC (£1.3M) and ERC (£2M). The foundation for this initiative is ESRC funding for Understanding Society to create a genome (£5M) and DNA methylation-wide scans (£250k and £660k) and proteomics (£660k) resources. Plans to test the roll out of sample collection in the Understanding Society Innovation Panel (£1.3M) have also received funding.

Overall, the UoA is large, diverse and successful in attracting funding for a wide range of research projects and consultancies. This breadth can be illustrated by providing examples of awards valued at over £50k reflecting the UoA strategic aim of attracting large awards in support of ambitious high-quality research.

Some projects directly reflect our comparative and international orientation e.g.

- **Demireva's** EU Horizon 2020 GEMM (Growth, Equal Opportunities, Migration and Markets) project (£515,913) addressing barriers to mobility, competitiveness and growth;
- **Soysal's** two major ESRC projects on 'Asian Educational Mobilities: A Comparative Study of International Migration of Japanese students' (£289,616), 2016; and 'Bright Futures: A Comparative Study of Internal and International Mobility of Chinese Higher Education Students' (£358,481), 2014;
- **Canessa's** ESRC (£460k) project on Gibraltar identity (gathering particular significance in the context of BREXIT); and
- **Crowhurst's** coordination of the COST-Action IS1209 program, 'Comparing European Prostitution Policies: Understanding Scales and Cultures of Governance' (2013-2017; €540,000 held at Essex).

Projects (over £50k) contributing to the UoA's public policy, justice and health research have included:

- **Morris:** Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship ('The moral economy of welfare and migration', £177,610);
- **Soreanu's** Wellcome Trust Fellowship in Medical Humanities;
- **P. Cox:** Victim's access to justice through English Criminal Courts, 1675 to the present, £236,377;
- a partnership between Southend Borough Council and the HSC Division for Social Work and Social Justice which brings £667,531 to fund two senior Research Fellows and a PI;
- the ambitious and very successful HRC/DoS 'Human Rights, Big Data and Technology' project, awarded £4.8m ESRC funding to support several work-packages in the UoA and a five-year post-doc.

Other projects explore the relationship between culture and society e.g. **Carrabine's** Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship ('The iconography of punishment', £159,886); and **Canessa** and **Borea's** €224,933 Marie Skłodowska Curie project 'Conquering Self-Representation: A Collaborative Approach to the Aesthetical-Political Dimension of Amazonian Contemporary Art'.

To pursue smaller or pilot projects, members of the UoA have received awards from numerous external funders, including local government bodies, companies and a wide range of charitable organisations (e.g. British Academy, Venus Charity, Dartington Hall Trust, Society for Research into Higher Education, Office of the Victims Commission, Family Action).

Our strategy expects to see the continuing development of research capacity and external partner support in established and new areas. Internally held GCRF and IAA funds are used for pilot projects and to support impact, KE, and dissemination. Regional collaborations also lever funding. **Green, Beresford, and Speed** won net income to the university of £675k over 5 years, as part of a £9.5 million collaboration with the Universities of Cambridge, Hertfordshire and East Anglia, under the auspices of the National Institute of Health, Applied Research Collaboration programme, and UoA involvement in the Eastern Academic Research Consortium has provided support for projects on: mental health; reducing health and social inequalities in coastal communities; and participation in a ESRC project on 'volunteering during the pandemic'. In addition, the range of consultancies and professional services provided by UoA members in this REF period is extensive.

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

4.1 Collaborations, networks and partnerships

A considerable amount of UoA work is based on international collaborations aiming to find tools to analyse data and address shared challenges. For example, 'EUROMOD' is a resource providing a tax-benefit microsimulation model for the European Union, enabling analysts to compare and calculate effects of taxes and benefits on household incomes and work incentives for national populations and the EU as a whole. An annual programme of events aims to widen use of the

resource and a bespoke training programme is offered internationally. The GEMM interdisciplinary project involved more than 25 different researchers, 10 different institutions based in the UK, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Norway, Germany, Romania and Bulgaria and gathered over 160 in-depth interviews. Large data sets from major projects (such as 'GEMM' and **Güveli's** '2000 Families') are made freely available for re-use via open-access repositories (e.g. Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences, GESIS - DBK - ZA5957, and UKDA:

<https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/studies/study?id=853333>; and the UKDA Data Service provides access to the flagship survey from ISER, Understanding Society <https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/studies/study?id=8644>

Dissemination and network events bring together researchers and policy, practitioner and public audiences, locally, nationally and internationally. The UoA has participated widely in ESRC Festival of Social Science events and other examples include: 'ContraST: a roundtable on governing sex work and human trafficking in European cities', disseminating findings of a project on governance of prostitution in two European cities, funded by the Sociological Review Foundation; 'Using big data to analyse crime victims' experiences and (dis)satisfaction', a workshop, supported by the ESRC project, 'Victims' Access to Justice' and involving DoS, C4C, ISER UKDA, and the ESRC Business and Local Government Data Research Centre. Presentations described the Crime Survey for England and Wales and other large criminal justice datasets held by three Essex-based ESRC-funded data centres. The C4C, Human Rights Centre, and HSC co-hosted an event on 'Mental Health, Human Rights and the Struggle for Social Justice' to thank the UN 'Special Rapporteur on the right to health' for supporting work at Essex; and **Preston's** (Co-I) EPSRC project networks scientists, sociologists and manufacturing companies engaged in 'Industry 4.0'.

Both PPS and HSC are involved in a strong research partnership with the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and jointly organise an impressive annual research conference. Collaborations with the health and care sectors are of significant benefit to the economy and society and have been features of work in ISER on population health data, in DoS on studies of medicine, pharmaceuticals, health and illness, and of course are central to the work of HSC which hosts various NHS and other health and care service-facing research facilities. For example, the National Institute for Health Research 'East of England Research Design Service' provides design and methodological support to health and social care researchers in the region. Total funding for the service (2018-23) is £5m, of which just over £1m is held by Essex. The separate Health and Care Research Service (**Speed and McPherson**) has worked in collaboration with local and national health and social care providers and commissioners (e.g. North Essex CCG, Alzheimers Research UK, Essex County Council, NHS England) to provide research and evaluation services on a commissioned basis. This service provides an opportunity for novice researchers to partner with experienced investigators to gain experience of undertaking commissioned research. Funds totalling £546,746 have been raised across 36 projects in partnership with local authorities, social enterprises and other third-sector organisations. With similar aims, other staff have gained a strong reputation for enabling service user participation in research (**Beresford, McPherson, Speed**). In the Division for Social Work and Social Justice, diverse partners include the International Federation of Social Workers; the British Association of Social Workers; Cyprus expert team for the Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU; Federal University of Rio; and University of Chile.

Across the UoA, the aim of Knowledge Exchange with relevant constituencies is to achieve a dialogue, stimulate research processes and partnerships, and articulate evidence and ideas to inform policy and practice choices and exploration of implications and consequences. This has been achieved through creation of KTPs (e.g. from 2017-20, the development of a scalable, avatar based, digital healthcare platform, driven by AI and Machine Learning technology, involving Speed (HSC), the School of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering and industry partner Orbital Media), as well as other KE initiatives. Sociologists (**South**), computer scientists and organisational theorists from different UoAs across the University have been involved in a transformational institutional partnership with regional healthcare 'community interest company' 'Provide' which has supported joint research, employability, and KE opportunities for Essex students and researchers since 2017. This is complemented by the long-term evaluation partnership between colleagues in

the HSC Division for Social Work and Social Justice and the Big Lottery-funded 'A Better Start Southend' programme.

For ISER, targeted beneficiaries include organisations in local, central and devolved UK governments; executive agencies, non-departmental public bodies, parliamentary select committees and quangos (e.g. HESA, EHRC, LPC); overseas governments, international organisations and the EU; independent research foundations (e.g. Nuffield Foundation, Sutton Trust, JRF); and other organisations engaging in public policy debates, such as think-tanks, charitable bodies, political parties, commercial and third-sector organisations. Engagement with research users and beneficiaries is central to the mission of ISER projects, with MiSoC and UKHLS being very successful at disseminating findings. MiSoC policy advisory groups provide face-to-face links with user organisations such as the Scottish Government, BEIS, HMT, DHSC, Home Office, DfE as well as more than 30 devolved public offices, NGOs and think-tanks. Individual researchers generate relationships with many organisations to present findings and offer advice. Dissemination includes: running interactive events, input into policy debates and Select Committee proceedings, hosting government department researchers, and collaborating with various academic institutions, think-tanks and NGOs. Tools employed include 'evidence briefings' and one-page 'explainers', easily shared and also targeted at practitioners where new evidence may lead to changes in practice (e.g. in schools, health or social care). UKHLS data and analysis has been used in more than 1800 research papers, often interdisciplinary, and by a wide network of collaborators. MiSoC ensures findings are accessible and employs a dynamic model of dialogue with a core set of policy-makers who influence social change, meaning these partners continually shape the research agenda. In this REF period, 32 events have been held featuring 68 different speakers from non-academic organisations, with attendees from 411 different organisations.

The UoA is involved in research-based professional development, training and network creation. For example, from PPS, **Main** gave nineteen presentations to psychotherapy organisations and trainees, the general public, and health practitioners, while **Nicholson** engaged in training for the British Army, Consortium of Therapeutic Communities, prison managers and therapists, and Children's Services. In DoS, over several years, **South**, colleagues and PhD students, organised conferences on 'women, criminal justice and domestic abuse', in partnerships with the Royal Statistical Society, the Chartered Institute of Housing, two ESRC Festival of Social Science events, all contributing to the launch of a regional Domestic Abuse Research Network and a successful application for a SENSS studentship award. **Preston** presented to the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists on the Grenfell Tower disaster; **Morris** to an audience at Cumberland Lodge on 'Social Cohesion in Times of Uncertainty'; and **Demireva** to the European Parliament and the EU Directorate General for Economy, Employment and Research; **Fussey** has made numerous presentations to various bodies on his evaluation of police facial recognition technology.

Relevant partnerships are wide ranging across the UoA and span the local to the global (e.g. **A. Cox** - advisory roles, Centre for Justice Innovation, New York, and Reprieve, the international human rights organization; **Papadopoulos** - frequent training for professionals working with involuntary dislocated and traumatised individuals across the world). Partnerships provide opportunities to work with regional innovation and R&D initiatives (e.g. the ERDF-funded KEEP+ scheme and Southeast Creative Economy Network); and they embed us in local communities (e.g. **Luthra, Gigoux** - links with Essex Migrant Agency Forum, Refugee Action Colchester; **Beresford** - 'Shaping Our Lives', a Disabled Person User-Led Organisation; **Green's** INVOLVE outreach project for vulnerable young people in the community, identifying priorities for well-being research).

4.2 Contributions to economy and society

The UoA is committed to ensuring its contributions to society, economy and the public good are incorporating consideration of the needs of hard-to-reach and marginalised groups. For example various colleagues have worked with the Tavistock-Portman NHS Foundation Trust, an internationally renowned mental health organisation, including **Papadopoulos** whose work with the Tavistock provides an ICS, and **James-Hawkins** who is analysing the connection between adolescent mental health and social media use. **McPherson** has collaborated with the National

Institute of Clinical Excellence in framing new national guidelines on the treatment of depression; **Speed** is a committee member, Essex County Council / University of Essex £2m 'Catalyst' project improving community services for vulnerable people. **Luthra** and **Nandi** have integrated the work of the Centre for Migration Studies into the Essex Migrant Agency Forum to support Essex Police through the use of their hate crime data. This also reflects our substantial commitment to human rights and social justice activities. **Allen-Robertson** has collaborated with the HRC Business and Human Rights Resource Centre as part of a project analysing their database on corporate human rights violations, **Fussey** works with Liberty, Amnesty International and the Ada Lovelace Institute in the area of digital rights, and several researchers working on rights in the criminal justice process have partnered with advocacy organisations. For example, **Thiel** works with Justice After Acquittal, a victims rights group, **A. Cox** serves on advisory boards for The Howard League and the Youth Justice Board, and several staff work with advocates for disadvantaged groups locally and regionally. Research-links also lead to staff taking up Trustee or Director roles in charities e.g. **Wheeler**: Sustainability and Environmental Education Charity; **Fussey**: Surveillance Studies Network international charity; **South**: Open Road drugs and alcohol services charity. Other associations have reflected standing in the sociological profession, e.g. **Busfield**: Treasurer, Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness, 2015-2020; **Samson**: Trustee, AL Charitable Trust, providing small grants to PhD students in areas of gender studies and sociology, and the Judith Trust, funding research on mental health problems, particularly in relation to women and the Jewish community.

Staff provide advice to governments and agencies on emergency situations and structural challenges, e.g. **Fussey** has been invited to join the Government Office for Science initiative on 'Rebuilding a Resilient Britain' led by Patrick Vallance to offer research-informed insights on trust in public institutions following the pandemic, and **Preston** is a member of the Space Environment Impact Experts Group advising government on behavioural and societal impacts of solar flares and other harmful space-related activity. The 'Understanding Society' programme submits evidence that informs changes in policy and legislation (e.g. Select Committees (on homelessness), Department for Work and Pensions (on income dynamics and improving the lives of workless families), the Casey Review (on opportunity and integration), and the Taylor Review (on modern working practices)). ISER data is also used by a wide range of charities (e.g. Age UK, Children's Society, Shelter), think-tanks such as the Resolution Foundation, IFS and the Social Market Foundation, and by various commercial organisations.

ISER also runs an innovative 'Research Vouchers for the Third Sector' scheme, enabling charities to undertake research using Understanding Society data. The scheme invites charities to propose research questions that could potentially be answered using Understanding Society and provides up to twenty days analytical support. Beneficiary charities include Young Women's Trust, Children's Society, Barnardo's, Child Poverty Action Group, MIND, and Coram Family and Childcare, and the scheme is being extended. ISER's collaboration and partnership work is co-ordinated and driven by a dedicated Policy Unit which champions, facilitates and supports impact on policy and practice, alongside the Co-Funders Group, a strategic partnership with various government Departments (e.g. Work and Pensions, Trade, DfE, ONS). A future plan is to transform the Policy Unit into a Policy and Partnerships Unit to create policy and social innovation partnerships, working with other organisations over a longer-term period through co-creating impactful activities. The Co-Funders Group will be widened into a policy forum by engaging other government departments and strategic users.

4.3 Indicators of influence and recognition

From DoS, **Carrabine** is serving as a REF sub-panel member for the second time and **South** has served on the Leverhulme Trust 'Sociology and Social Policy' prizes judging panel three times. **Speed** is a member of the East of England 'Research for Patient Benefit' Grant Assessment panel, **Demireva** is a reviewer for the European Research Council (ERC) Advance Grant Competition, the UN International Organization for Migration, and the BA Global Challenges Research Fund. **Fussey** regularly serves as an award panel member for ESRC new and emerging data investments and for joint ESRC-overseas research council awards, and **Speed** is a member of

UKRI Peer Review College for the Future Leaders Fellowship. Many other staff regularly review proposals for funding bodies e.g. British Academy (including Knowledge Frontiers), Leverhulme Trust, ESRC schemes, ERC Starting, Consolidator and Advance grants, Nuffield Foundation, Wellcome Trust schemes.

Grundy and **Glucksmann** are both elected Fellows of the British Academy. Elected Fellows of the Academy of Social Sciences include **Busfield**, **Carrabine**, **Glucksmann**, **Greer**, **Grundy**, **Morris**, and **South**. **Preston** received a Leadership Fellow award as part of the ESRC Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research. **Papadopoulos** (2016) was winner of an award from the European Family Therapy Association for his 'Outstanding contribution to the field of Family Therapy and Systemic Practice'; **Hobbs** was given the 2016 Outstanding Achievement Award by the British Society of Criminology prior to his retirement; **A. Cox** won the 2019 Critical Criminology Book Award of the American Society of Criminology, **Sergi**, the 2017 Italian Embassy 'Early Career Researcher Award', **Morris** a 2020 Cambridge University Press Award for Excellence in Social Policy Scholarship, and **Solar**, a 2016 'Best article' award from the Latin American Studies Association. In PPS, **Walsh** became an invited member of the British Psychoanalytic Council, in recognition of status as 'senior scholar and significant contribution to the field of psychoanalytical thinking'; **Gabriel** was made a Fellow of the Norbert Elias Foundation and **Soreanu** an Academic Associate of the Freud Museum. **Ioakimidis** is Chair, Global Education Commission, International Federation of Social Workers. Within the British Sociological Association, **Wheeler** is co-convenor of the Climate Change Study Group and **Speed** co-convenor of the Medical Sociology Study group (with over 1200 members) and Sociology of Mental Health study group. Many colleagues have held Visiting Professor positions, for example at Freie Universite Berlin and Cologne (**Luthra**), University of Wyoming (**Samson**), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Melbourne Institute for Economic and Social Research, Nuffield College, Oxford (**Demireva**), Flinders, Melbourne, Turin, Canberra AIC, Montreal (**Sergi**).

Invitations to make **keynote** contributions to conferences enable early dissemination of findings and reflect esteem and expertise. There are numerous examples from across the UoA but examples might include: **Carrabine**: 'Geographies of Landscape: Representation, Power and Meaning', *Between Edges and Margins: Innovative Methods in the Study of Deviance*, University of Ghent, 14 September 2018; The Rhetoric of the Image Revisited: Iconography, Semiotics and Representation', *Second International Symposium on Narrative Criminology*, University of Oslo, 16 June 2017; **Preston**: 'Disaster Capitalism and Time', Polish Sociological Association Conference, University of Warsaw, 7th May 2019; **Samson**: "Colonialism and Non-Universal Human Rights", Human Rights Policy and Practice International Symposium, Deusto University, Spain, 11 June 2019; **ffytche**: 'Outsider Hermeneutics', Neubauer Collegium, Chicago, October 27, 2018; **Soreanu**: 'Truth, Utopia and the Figure of the Child. A Ferenczian View', The 11th Meeting of the International Society of Psychoanalysis and Philosophy, Stockholm, May 4, 2019; **Ioakimidis**: Inaugural lecture at the Social Work Research Centre at the University of Chile, 2019; **Sergi**: Czech Criminological Association Conference, Brno, 2020; **Demireva**: Invited Speaker (with Steven Pinker and others) at the Harvard Kennedy School's Global Empowerment Meeting (April, 2018); **Fussey**: Keynote presentations at Africa's largest digital rights conference, FIFAfrica, Ethiopia 2019; Big Data Surveillance conference, Kingston, Ontario, 2016; and launch of surveillance studies chair at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 2019.

UoA staff are engaged in strengthening the field through varied involvements with journals - as editors of special issues (e.g. *British Journal of Sociology*, *Economy and Society*, *The Geographical Journal*, *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, *Sociology*, *Social Inclusion*, *Sexualities*, *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, *Theoretical Criminology*); service in senior Editor roles (e.g. *British Journal of Criminology*, *British Journal of Social Work*, *Crime, Media, Culture*, *Critical and Radical Social Work Journal*, *Critical Criminology*, *Critical Public Health*, *International Social Work*, *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Migration Studies*, *Psychodynamic Practice*, *Psychology and Sexuality*, *Psychoanalysis and History*, *Sexualities*); and as members of boards of over 30 journals (including - by research clusters: (SDEL) *Cultural and Social History*, *Citizenship Studies*, *Economy and Society*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, *British Journal of Sociology*

of Education; Work, Employment and Society; (CIS) Journal of Cultural Economy; Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society; Journal of Psychosocial Studies; (CJPP) Theoretical Criminology; Incarceration; Journal of Health Psychology; Psychology & Health; Deviant Behavior; (TNR) Indiana; (SF) Sociology; British Journal of Sociology; Frontiers in Sociology.