

**Unit-level environment template (REF5b)**

<b>Institution:</b> Goldsmiths, University of London
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 20, Social Work and Social Policy
<b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b>

**Summary of Context**

The Unit reflects a multi-professional structure, combining social work, counselling and psychotherapy, and community and youth work. These professions draw on multiple disciplines, including sociology, social policy, anthropology, psychosocial studies, politics, community development and psychology. Uniquely, the unit has also developed a public theology and religious studies capacity to support a key strand of research and impact on how the professions respond to increasing religion and belief diversity among service users and publics. Research integrates each professions' benchmarks, codes, ethics and values which are reflected in the unit's commitment to research with impact built in, with a strong emphasis on co-production of social justice outcomes with policy makers, professionals and communities, through inception of research ideas to the delivery of frontline policy change. This aligns us with national and international agendas to support this including the global challenges initiative (via work on child torture) and 'connected communities' (via work on faith communities, Gypsy Roma Travellers, and social isolation). A new and strategic dimension to this work includes the lead researchers engaging with leaders at Facebook to develop ideas about tackling anti-Gypsyism on social media. The interventions and outcomes in this unit express a deep commitment to resource a fit-for-purpose and sustainable welfare and social care system. This comes further in to focus in our '[manifesto](#)', centring on professional services in contexts of anti-racism, climate emergency and a post-COVID future.

**Research Strategy – two phases**

The challenges and opportunities of this complex multi-professional and multi-disciplinary environment are at the heart of research strategy which has been taken forward in two phases. The first (2014-17) was focused on building the internal research culture, capacity and skills following a departmental restructure in 2013. We introduced individual research planning, with annual reviews, with the effect of driving research along as well drawing attention to opportunities for connection and evolution of ideas across the research environment. New appointments in this period have been designed around key research themes, with particular success in the area of religion and belief in professional practice, where an additional senior lecturer (Thompson), several associate lecturers and two professors (Dinham and Baker) have been appointed in this period.

The second stage (2017-20) emphasises a robust supportive research infrastructure. This has meant the introduction of self-assessment of the quality of outputs, an internal peer review panel (meeting termly), linking to external reviewer(s) in an informal peer review process, regular writing and funding 'surgeries', and supported writing partnerships between established, emerging and early career researchers (ECRs). The challenges and goals of the strategies described have required the development of new policies on ethics, sabbaticals and research leave, conference attendance, publishing with students, grant applications, consultancy, and visiting researchers. These have been developed in co-production with colleagues to ensure they are 'real-world' appropriate and widely owned. Alongside, a key goal of strategy has been to increase cross-disciplinary and cross-professional research.

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Research strategy and impact strategy are deeply intertwined and a key strength is the connection between research, policy and practice which is built in to almost all research. Projects are designed to respond to real world problems with practical recommendations and solutions. Examples, included as part of the Unit's Impact Case Study submission, are research on social work with affluent families, undertaken in partnership with local authorities who committed at the outset to making changes according to findings (Bernard); and the work on religion and belief with health and social care regulators which committed in advance to change policy (Dinham). This emphasises a broad understanding of research to include consultancy and evaluations (Thompson, Woodger, Shukra). Research excellence in this area is underpinned by a great deal of community engagement work in which a dedicated research-only colleague has generated a thriving network of community activists and projects all over London, which provide the environment in which deeply-rooted community research can be initiated and delivered (Green and Shukra).

These structural changes to research culture have seen a significant increase in successfully funded research, consultation and evaluation since 2018. Eighteen bids representing funding worth £3.5 million have already been secured for the period 2020 – 23.

### Research Spaces

Two strategic spaces organise the unit's research: the **Centre for Community Engagement Research (CCER)** and the **Faiths & Civil Society Unit (FCSU)**. Both are resourced by departmental colleagues and collaborate closely with other departments in developing joint research; especially Sociology and Psychology. They are designed to connect research directly to impact and they share a commitment to research co-production which starts with problems identified in policy-making and practice communities. CCER connects with a broad range of community spaces while FCSU focuses in particular on faith communities. These are intended to complement and sometimes overlap, as in our work with Gypsy Roma Travellers who represent both a secular community and a belief and values community.

The **CCER** was launched in Summer 2014, with four key elements within its remit: engaging with community partners for co-production of new and innovative research projects; matching student research projects with community research needs; knowledge exchange (in both directions, in and out of the academy); and advising the wider college in community engagement matters. Its founding-director has been a senior research fellow (Green), allowing for dedicated focus on research, and the centre is supported by six other permanent members of staff (Dinham, Baker, Turner, Bernard, Thompson, Shukra) as well as a range of doctoral students. Through its community engagement work, this space has been designed deliberately to open up a distinctive new connection between community arts, social work and youth. This has led to an extensive partnership with one inner and one outer London Borough, the London mayoralty, the Serpentine Gallery, Tate, and a number of local arts spaces to research ways in which statutory interventions with young people can be reimagined and humanised using creativity (Hughes, Henri). The intentional fostering of this partnership has been driven by the goal of connecting all three professional areas of the department and this has since resulted in the launch of a new module called 'Creative Social Work' for UG students, taught alongside qualified social work practitioners in local authorities across the UK.

The **FCSU** was established in 2008 and focuses on religion and belief in communities and the social service professions which serve them. It is recognised as an international leader

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investigating the challenges for faith communities of 'doing' civil society and professional practice in an increasingly religiously plural context. It is chaired by a peer in the House of Lords, who facilitates policy access. Its director (Dinham) also connects the Unit externally via his recent chairing of the UK national body on sociology of religion, BSA Socrel, and honorary chairs at Sheffield University and VID University, Oslo. Its deputy director (Baker) combines this role and the role of chief executive of the William Temple Foundation, which memorialises the work of the Archbishop of Canterbury who coined the term 'welfare state' and was instrumental, with Beveridge, in framing it. The Unit is supported by twelve visiting research fellows who are senior figures in policy-making, practice settings and academics in external universities in the UK, Europe, Australia and North America. It has a highly successful PhD programme whose students are variously funded by UKRI and/or donations from charitable bodies. There are four post-doctoral fellows.

## Strategies for Impact

Strategy for impact has been intentionally designed around four key strategic outcomes that enable the Unit to achieve its research and social justice outcome goals with policy makers, professionals and communities. These include:

- Building Knowledge Exchange and Impact Pathways: a knowledge exchange partnership with the City of London local authority was set up to provide an impact pathway between research, practice and professional education in social work, and then to disseminate learning nationally and internationally. This ran from 2015-2018, leading to three innovative research projects, one of which emerged as one of the submission's impact case studies (on social work with affluent families) (Bernard, Henri).
- Identifying evidence-based improvements: The South East London Teaching Partnership, a research-into-practice hub was designed to strengthen uses of theory and research in social work practice (Taylor, Fletcher). A key goal is evidence-based improvements in retention of social workers for continuous work with families for 5-7 years in order to serve children and families service users maximally. This was selected because of earlier research on social work career pathways which shows that this is an area in crisis. Impacts are evident in relation to social workers' morale, practice confidence, reduced costs of churn, reduced social (and therefore economic) costs to families, and community awareness of Social Work services. Work is underway to understand the extent to which this is being used as a blueprint for other local authorities and educators.
- Creating International Networks so that practices reach beyond the UK: an international network has been created to extend uses of a reflective social work learning model designed by the unit's researchers. The model, 'Key Situations', integrates theory and practice and is being used in several German universities and in Switzerland (Fairtlough, Stempfli).
- Connecting research to issues of pedagogy and professional training: A strand on the future of teaching and learning about religion and belief in community education and the professions (Dinham) began in earlier work on the place of religion and belief in learning in universities, leading to analysis of treatments of religion and belief in schools, FE, HE, professional education, and community education. It concludes that publics are confused about religion and belief because learning about them is confused. This thesis, published in a monograph in this period (Dinham 2020), forms a highly intentional pathway to impact which starts with reform of Religious Education, and of wider appearances of religion (eg collective worship, church schools etc) in schools. In turn this has opened up a

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complementary pathway focused on religion and belief in health and social care professions, leading so far to four journal publications in this area (Crisp and Dinham 2018; 2019;2020).

In 2016 two working groups were formed from across these four initiatives to work on consolidating the impacts and working out future pathways as well as building skills and capacities to do impactful research. Working in this way has enabled colleagues who were not originally part of the initiatives to become involved and increase their capacity. As a result, four further smaller research projects were devised between senior and early career researchers, designed to further develop and demonstrate existing impact, and in doing so to build the skills, experience and confidence of colleagues (leading to four further journal articles). Three of these were funded by the university in a competitive internal competition (Rova, Callan, Atlas). These working groups have also helped with the challenge of 'fit' in this complex research environment, especially between Therapeutic Studies and the rest. This has led directly to two further projects (on childhood torture, and fitness for purpose of mental health policy) (Cohen, Mukamal, Frizzell). In particular the childhood torture work has resulted in the adoption of new policy in the Istanbul Protocols which directly arises from (and acknowledges) the evidence produced (Cohen, Mukamal). Without the focus on cross-disciplinary work which has been at the heart of strategy, these initiatives would not have arisen.

**Outputs**

All outputs in the submission are green open access and this is embedded as an aspect of aligning with the professional values of social work, counselling and psychotherapy, and community and youth work. This has formalised in a commitment made across the research environment that all research should be freely available and actively promoted to possible beneficiaries at the earliest opportunity. Many colleagues already write alternative versions of journal articles for professional magazines and websites in addition. Most work is also made available in report form, with executive summaries, as well as in more formal academic outputs. Each profession shares a twitter account which is used to promote access to new work. Visiting roles are also regularly offered to practice and community partners which gives them access to the library and therefore to pay-to-view resources.

Training is provided on management and sharing of data, in an annual workshop first introduced in 2019. Best practice is that each unit of raw data will be translated in to short interpretative 'digests' for open access, made available within three months of units of analysis being completed. These are written with stakeholder audiences in mind in plain language for use by policy-makers, service users and the public in particular.

All research is subject to clear ethical scrutiny and processes. For staff this follows a standardised university procedure though this is supported by training within the department which considers the relationship between ethics and professional values and standards. A particular focus is on service-user engagement and benefit associated with all aspects of research, from methods to dissemination. Often this results in co-production throughout. There are two different ethics procedures for students as follows: postgraduate research students have a university-wide form; taught MA & BA programmes have a lighter touch departmental form which is considered by a small sub-panel. Students receive support for ethics submissions in dedicated time within their taught sessions, and supervisors also receive training which includes the direction that they should include at least one session on ethical dimensions.

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### Future Strategy

Future plans are focused in two areas. One is to further focus the work of the CCER as a community clinic, with critical reflective research built in. A business plan is in place which sets out plans to provide professional services in the community around the university, starting with counselling (in year 1), then social work assessments and a contact centre (year 2) and adding a youth service (in year 3). Though delayed by COVID, the plan is for students to undertake their practice placements in this space, and research programs to develop from it. A first research project would focus on the process of the development of the clinic itself. Subsequent research would experiment with new practices and approaches emerging from existing research, inside and outside the university. An example is innovative work on social work with affluent families, community work with people experiencing social isolation, and service provision for religiously diverse communities. The clinic has active university-wide strategic support and is widely supported in the community as a result of our dedicated community engagement work.

A second focus is on further developing cross-disciplinary and cross-professional work, with the aim of moving from multi-disciplinarity to inter-disciplinarity. In the Faiths Unit this work has already begun via two AHRC-funded projects, first to analyse how nine different arts, humanities and social science disciplines treat religion and belief, and second to identify what that means for policy making in welfare, security and social care. The intention is to extend an interdisciplinary focus connecting the professions and religion and belief. One strand focuses on the potential to draw on religion and belief as sources of wisdoms and well-being among stressed citizens and service providers. Another focuses on how professions engage with increasing religion and belief diversity among staff and service users. This has been built in to a widely consulted and owned departmental 'manifesto', resulting in embedding the themes of anti-racism, climate emergency and post-COVID services in all future research and teaching.

## 2. People

### Staffing strategy

Research strategy connects directly to staffing strategy where the balancing of teaching and research capacity has been a central theme in this period. Almost all staff come from professional practice prior to starting their academic careers and, while some have PhDs and publish, others have been more focused on professional education. Reflecting this, the department spent time in this period developing a number of shared key values designed to 'induct' professionals as they move into research roles and to develop a strong sense of being a research community. A formal process for research leave has been available since 2016 and may take one of several forms: a short concentrated block of time (measured in weeks); a longer sustained period of absence (measured in terms and half-terms); or a regular allocation of time within the normal working week. Every member of research active staff receives a minimum of one day per week for research in their workload allocation, representing an annual commitment of 44 days (more than two months) per staff to research, which in practice is augmented with externally funded buy-out and internally supported opportunities for dedicated research leave. Applicants are asked to make a case for supported time, stating the goal, the specific professional benefit to the person and to the department, the relationship to the departmental research strategy, the period requested and why it is needed in addition to the existing (44-day) allocation and cannot be achieved within it. Applicants are also required to list precisely the timetabled duties and general responsibilities which would normally fall within the period, so as to enable the replacement of duties to be managed effectively. Care is taken to respect diversity and inclusion in supporting and replacing periods of leave and

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colleagues who have had sabbaticals have all been from protected groups. These processes are now stated in research strategy and policies: research time is protected and is intended to be supported in an enabling atmosphere.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

The unit recruits a very diverse group of students and in many programmes is majority BAME. The religious studies area, and the focus on British Islam within that, also ensures a particular profile of students coming from a range of religions and beliefs (which are also a protected characteristic). It has also been important to foregrounding equality and diversity that the directors of research and of postgraduate research, who are also now co-heads of department, are respectively a gay man and a black woman, each well-rehearsed and trained in experiences of minority-hood, and committed from personal experience as well as professional values to deeply thoughtful inclusion. Recruitment of postgraduate research students is also rooted in a commitment to equality and diversity coming from the ethical codes and values of the professions represented. This applies to the focus of studies as well as the identities of students.

Equality and diversity issues have been built into the construction of this REF submission where 37% of contributing staff are BAME and a further 20% come from across the other protected characteristics including disability and sexual orientation. This diversity has a direct impact on the selection of the output portfolio, which itself also has a robust focus on two of the protected characteristics in particular: ethnicity, and religion or belief. 65% of all REF outputs directly addressed these two characteristics. 27% of all REF outputs came from BAME staff. Recent and substantial research funding awards for BAME members of staff in key areas of diversity and inclusion confirm the upward reputational trajectory of the Department, and will be further reflected in increased percentages of future output returns submitted by BAME research staff.

**Developing Research Capacity**

The unit has also introduced a positive assumption that new appointments will be for teaching and research unless there are specific reasons otherwise (for example where external funding has been awarded specifically to support a teaching and scholarship initiative, such as a teaching partnership with a practice body). The strategy, emerging from the REF 2014 is for a wide range of research capacities to be represented in all three professional/disciplinary areas. There are now professors in Social Work and Community Studies (Bernard and Dinham). A Therapeutic Studies professor and reader have retired and a replacement chair is planned for. In that area there is already one senior lecturer (Cohen) among a wider team of lecturers and ECRs (Rova, Torbati, Callan); and in Community Studies there are two senior lecturers (Thompson and Shukra).

Recognising varying levels of skill, experience and capacity, mentoring partnerships have been introduced, designed to match people with complementary talents to support outputs and impacts. A quarter of staff are currently supported in this way. This is especially focused towards early career researchers for whom their first two years also include additional time protection for mentoring in research and publications development

All staff undertake annual individual research planning with the Director of Research with a view to identifying areas of vocational and professional interest that can be incorporated into potential research or writing projects, which is separate from professional development reviews or performance issues and are designed to be supportive and practical.

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Research and impacts training and development are available via a university-wide programme made up of half and one day courses on a range of sector-relevant topics. Staff are also supported in their professional development via the funding of professional body memberships, attendance at Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and funding and time for longer term training. For example, the unit's Director of Research (Dinham) has been supported in a three-year commitment to an individual training in counselling and psychotherapy, to add to his qualifications in social work and community work. The intention is that, by increasing key individuals' professional qualifications in such ways, research connections can be further supported across the professions.

Within the period, pay and progression processes have reflected individual growth and flourishing and this has been deliberately supported in mentoring for staff showing promise towards next grades, and in devising new opportunities for people to develop new roles and skills, for example the introduction of an Equality and Diversity Lead (Nigianni), new Heads of Social Work (Taylor), Community Studies (Woodger) and Therapeutic Studies (Nigianni) and a Director of Postgraduate Research (Bernard). There have been appointments and promotions in this period across all bands and grades. Nine staff have left and eight are new appointments. Of these core posts, one has been appointed to a fixed term post. One colleague (a senior lecturer) has died in this period.

## Research Students

### Sustaining Future Research

Research students are a key part of the vibrancy of the research environment and are seen as future innovators of the professions represented. Fourteen PhDs have been awarded over the current REF period. The unit has five MPhil/PhD programs, in Religious Studies, Community Studies & Youth Work, Social Work, Art Psychotherapy, and Counselling and Psychotherapy. There are currently 26 MPhil/PhD students registered. The majority are working alongside their studies in health and social care professions, and many are well established in their careers, engaging in doctoral research concerned with improving professional practice. Post-graduate research strategy is focused on improving the contribution of professional practice-based post-graduate research across the university and in practice settings, and on increasing staff capacity to supervise. Students are encouraged at the point of recruitment onwards to focus their studies on practice-based issues. The broad goal is to recruit approximately equal numbers of doctoral students in each of the three professional areas and to provide fora in which they can come together to explore multi-professional working. Efforts are also made to bring practitioners, service users and postgraduate researchers together in seminars and reflective workshops held both in the university and in social work and policy settings.

A specific strategy within this has been to recruit Muslim students within a 'British Muslims in Professional Practice' theme. This is part of the Faiths and Civil Society Unit's focus on religion and belief and responds to the recognition that Islam, as Britain's second largest faith community, stands in a distinctive ontological position in relation to social work, community and youth work and therapies which can often inhibit their access to and use of services. This can result in a failure of services to respond effectively and users to engage, despite stated commitments to inclusion and diversity, for example in relation to ritualised child abuse, FGM, honour and shame based violence, and stigmatisation of mental health as to do with 'jinns' or 'demons'. The goal is to support Muslim doctoral candidates as thought-leaders in their communities and fields in order to build capacity to challenge and innovate. This strand has been supported by a leading Islamic charitable trust, the Aziz Foundation, as well as by AHRC who is funding a collaborative doctoral studentship with Tate

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Britain to explore Muslim access to elite arts and culture, and how such creative spaces can be used to explore questions which often prove too difficult in words. This comes alongside ten MA studentships, focused on British Muslims in professional practice and the intention is to nurture at least some of these students in to MPhil/PhD.

The PhD Religion and Public Life programme is another strategic driver in the unit. It includes five externally funded scholarships for fees and maintenance from the William Temple Foundation, who also co-fund (with match funding from the department) the William Temple Chair in Religion and Public Life (Baker). Another student is funded by the DesignStar Doctoral Training Centre (working on the de-secularisation of design teaching in schools).

The Faiths and Civil Society Unit provides a student-led monthly seminar on religion, public life and the professions, attended also by academics inside and outside the unit. These are intended as opportunities to share and test out ideas as well as presentation skills. The department also provides a departmental PhD forum that convenes around subject-specific topics and on shared professional values, especially equality, inclusion and social justice. This is intended as a cross-disciplinary space to enable students to exchange and develop their ideas, as well as to learn how to communicate their research to different audiences.

The unit has a partnership with Nordoff Robbins involving the validation of an international Master of Music Therapy and MPhil/PhD, delivered across Nordoff Robbins' teaching bases in London and Manchester. The Postgraduate Research Committee maintains oversight of the research students' progression, supervision, upgrade and examination arrangements and the Nordoff Robbins Research Degree Programme Convenor is a member of this Committee. More broadly, academic staff are involved in collaborative teaching and learning on the Master of Music Therapy as well as in the examination of their MPhil/PhDs. There are joint learning opportunities for the research students, and we conducted the inaugural joint seminar for Goldsmiths & Nordoff Robbins PhD students and staff entitled *Creative Methods in Social-Engaged Research* in 2017.

### Early Career Researcher Development

Students are regularly employed in teaching on undergraduate programs and all PhD students are offered the opportunity to undertake the PGCert in Teaching and Learning in HE. These PhDs are also encouraged and supported to attend the national and European conference in the field, provided by Socrel, which has been chaired in this period by the Director of this PhD program. This has led to students developing strong networks across the field. Recent graduates have been able to make use of this, for example one who was awarded a post-doctoral position at University of Ottawa with one of the Fellows of the Faiths Unit; and another who went on to a permanent teaching and research lectureship in Social Work at another UK university. Likewise, a research assistant has gone on to a PhD by publication at VID University, Oslo, where the Director of Research also has a chair, and has since been appointed to a permanent senior lectureship at London South Bank University.

In terms of monitoring and support mechanisms there is annual review of policies and processes to ensure alignment with the university's standards, including in relation to Athena Swan. The university's induction programme for new students is complemented with a departmental induction. The departmental PGR Committee, which meets termly, plays a key role in ensuring the effective monitoring and support of students with regard to progress and completion. Additionally, a Head of Postgraduate Research was introduced in 2014 and provides regular surgeries where students



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can raise issues, including any about supervisors. The department's completion rates have increased significantly in this period, with most students completing within their registration timeframe.

### Equality and Diversity

In maintaining our commitment to EDI, the department strongly supports the attendance of all colleagues at relevant conferences, seminars and other events related to research and consultancy. These may be academic and/or professional. It is recognized that such events can be highly valuable to individuals, the department and the college for networking, presenting research, having impact through keynoting, and for continuing professional development. Colleagues are strongly encouraged to generate income for events' attendance within their proposals for research and consultancy projects. In all other cases, while there is no guarantee of financial support, every effort is made where a strong case for value has been made, judged against attendance either being critical to networking, and/or leading to an output of at least 2\* quality, rigour, originality, and/or the degree of impact likely to result. The size of the research overhead budget in any given financial year is also, by necessity, a determining factor. Applicants are required to make a short case setting out these elements and these are given full consideration by the Departmental Leadership Team, facilitated by the Director of Research, and giving full account to equality and diversity aspects.

Following staff and research students returning from periods of leave or ill health, a 'return' interview is offered with the Head of Postgraduate Research and/or Director of Research with the goal of hearing and responding to needs and experiences. This also applies to managing long-term illness, and colleagues with caring responsibilities. Accommodations have been made for five colleagues in this period. Our approach sits within a wider commitment to supporting the wellbeing of staff and research students. This has led to the introduction of a mindfulness service, in partnership with the Students' Union; and to a religion, spirituality and values reflection group focused primarily on therapeutic studies students but open to any emerging professional in the fields represented.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

As the departmental research strategy states, research is interpreted broadly to mean traditional academic research, as well as consultancy, knowledge transfer, impact activities, community engagement, and enterprise. The main focus in this unit is on small grants with significant impacts which demonstrate that a lot can be done with a little. For example, the current strategic engagement with Facebook over anti-Gypsyism on social media began with published research funded from an internal £1000 public engagement grant. This reflects the starting point of most projects in community engagement initiatives where specific problems are identified, requiring smaller funding amounts which are nevertheless significant in community terms. In this period the unit has submitted more than 40 research proposals, from both early career and more established researchers, of which roughly half were successful, and undertaken seven evaluations and more than ten consultancies, resulting in more than 100 outputs (including 60 journal articles, 5 monographs, 4 edited collections, and more than 20 reports). Three RCUK/UKRI proposals have been successful. A fourth was a large grant application (£500k) and received three top rated reviews but was not selected for funding. This is currently being revised for resubmission to alternative funders.

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The department has introduced infrastructure to support applications for research grant funding as fully as possible, activities which are supported by 0.2 FTE administration support and 0.2 FTE Director of Research input. This began with a series of workshops to collectivise a values base rooted in all the professions represented. Leading from this, all colleagues are encouraged to share in the overall responsibility to enable research and consultancy which is:

- **Supported** – research, community engagement and consultancy activity are fully recognised in workload models, and appropriate opportunities for training and other forms of professional development are identified within Individual Research Plans. Our community engagement and consultancy is a mixture of pro bono and paid work and helps support a virtuous cycle of research and interventions rooted and grounded in local needs and experience;
- **Transparent** – colleagues are asked to share their research work with colleagues in a range of supportive fora including the peer review panel, and writing and funding surgeries. A research mini-conference is planned annually (starting in 2019) to share ideas, projects and findings, with the goal of continuing to make new connections between the professions;
- **Independent** – academic freedom is stressed as the bedrock of academic life, and research and consultancy in this unit reflects this while at the same time encouraging activities to align as far as possible with the strategic aims and interests of the department. This involves a sustained strategy of hearing interests, reflecting and supporting them, and making connections which result in an environment which colleagues recognise as theirs, and own;
- **Accountable** – balanced alongside independence, the unit requires that activities are open to appropriate scrutiny by colleagues, leaders and, once published, publics, in keeping with the open access trajectory;
- **Connected to teaching** – research and consultancy, and especially findings and outputs, are fed directly in to teaching wherever possible, to ensure energising connections between teaching and research.

Clear procedures have been introduced including a 'light touch' quality assurance, designed to provide an opportunity to advise on and enhance applications. This is provided by a standing Grants Advisory Panel (GAP) made up of experienced researchers, operating as a source of supportive, informal peer review. A brief written review of proposed applications is provided and in some cases GAP members may request a short meeting with the applicant to raise questions and/or to sharpen points. All applicants are also asked to provide a short statement of the connection between their proposed project and the departmental research strategy, including its relationship to either the Centre for Community Engagement Research (CCER), and/or the Faiths & Civil Society Unit (FCSU).

In addition, since 2015 a termly writing and funding surgery provides a short review of prominent issues in the research landscape, (e.g., policies, guidance, relevant calls), a staff presentation and supportive discussion of a grant proposal that is near completion or recently funded, and staff presentations of their recent experiences of a writing process for each of a journal article, a monograph, an edited book and a book chapter. Alongside, a termly peer review panel invites colleagues to bring writing in progress for supportive discussion. A smaller group of senior lecturers, readers and professors is delegated by this group to provide an informal assessment of a likely REF 'score'. Since 2015 all researchers undertake an annual Individual Research Plan (IRP) designed to focus the next one, three and five years. These are reviewed annually. This process is entirely detached from performance review and is intended to be part of building a trusting and

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supportive research culture, especially between disciplines and professions which have not been used to working together. A termly Research Committee is required by university statutes and these have been reconstituted as workshops, not meetings, in which to discuss issues in the national and international research environment and share emerging and current research across the three professional and disciplinary areas. A monthly PhD seminar in Religious Studies connects a wide range of projects addressing religion in the public realm and the professions. A public bi-monthly seminar series is offered by the Faiths Unit each year for internal and external participants on key themes in faith and social policy. For example recent seminars include 'populism and religion in Britain and Italy', 'equalities and human rights outside the EU' and 'the future of teaching and learning about religion and belief'. The department has match-funded the William Temple Chair in Religion and Public Life to support postgraduate research and other research in this area.

Key to supporting and growing capacity has been the appointment of a dedicated research administrator on 0.5 FTE. In underpinning research, rather than teaching, the role operates in relation to the research cycle, rather than the timetabled academic year. There have been two postholders in this period: the first, an experienced researcher who wanted to be in a research environment while working out a pathway to a research career. This postholder was recruited as a research assistant in one of the department's research projects during the other half of the week and from there was successful in applying for AHRC funding for a PhD within the institution; the second was an experienced research administrator who joined from another institution after fifteen years of experience supporting research activities and RAE/REF processes.

The unit provides a dedicated research space with four fully equipped hot desks, space for six further laptop-enabled users, and a meeting space for up to ten participants. This is used by visiting researchers, fixed-term research assistants, doctoral students and a number of fractional appointments who choose it as a space of encounter across disciplines and professions. It is also available to all the FCSU visiting fellows and to donors to the PhD and MA programs. It is centrally located, and is immediately adjacent to the Director of Research and the Director of the CCER. This post was itself devised and funded as a research-only addition to the department in 2015, tasked with developing a community engagement and research remit.

<b>4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society</b>
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Collaboration is rooted in community and policy engagement designed to maximise relevance and impacts on community and professional practice. Community engagement has been led by a dedicated research-only research fellow (Green) and a senior lecturer (Shukra) whose role is to develop and sustain networks of community activists and partners, and to work with colleagues within the unit to connect their networks into research and impacts. Policy engagement is built in via the strategic partnerships with City of London and others, and in the structures of the Faiths and Civil Society Unit whose community of visiting fellows are policy and practice leaders across a range of settings, as well as the chair who is a working Peer in the House of Lords. This has enabled significant contributions in social work policy on working with affluent families, on independent schools' child protection inspection regulation, on codes of ethics and training in social work and counselling, and in reform of school RE. This has been driven by five main initiatives in this period:

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- (1) The Uses of Arts in Social Work project, which is a partnership of London Boroughs, the London Mayoralty, Tate and the Serpentine, with others, to develop innovative engagement with creative arts for social work service users. This connects Goldsmiths' distinctive creativity with new modes of social work which shift it from assessments rooted in bureaucratic processes and resource allocation, to relationships rooted in human flourishing. This has been deliberately and highly effective in involving and connecting colleagues across the department's professions and disciplines and has recently resulted in the launch of a unique and highly popular module called 'Creative Social Work'.
- (2) The South East London Teaching Partnership (SELTP) includes research into practice and a reflective research dimension and connects seven London boroughs and their social work provision, via the university, direct to national policy and practice agendas. The partnership has undertaken extensive analysis of workforce impacts (to be published as research outputs) which identifies a number of quantifiable achievements, including: 745 hours of classroom teaching co-designed and delivered by practitioners; 94% of 2016-17 teaching rated by social students as 4 or 5 (the highest ratings); 230 practitioners attending 'Twilight' research in to practice sessions; over 400 practitioners completing accredited CPD workshops and courses; 99% of 2017-18 placements in the statutory sector with 72% in partner boroughs; and 90% of students employed six months after qualifying.
- (3) The City of London knowledge exchange partnership has resulted in two key policy changes (in social work with affluent families, and in local authority work with socially isolated tenants);
- (4) The William Temple Foundation partnership includes five funded PhD scholarships, a chair and a wider program on 'Reimagining Welfare in new contexts of religion and belief'. This cohort is being mentored as a community champions' network for social activism and has already been highly active in networking new communities of researcher activists. One project formed a case study in the national inquiry into the future of civil society (2018);
- (5) A British Muslims in Professional Practice programme, part-supported by the Aziz Foundation. This is resulting in new models for Muslim-inclusive youth work, family therapy and mental health social work. Students are building pathways to impacts into their studies, with the unit's support, including mentoring for professional and community leadership, provided in partnership with the Aziz Foundation and the William Temple Foundation.

**National and International Networks**

Collaboration is also supported nationally and internationally by a number of visiting and honorary roles. One professor (Dinham) also holds a chair at Oslo where the boundary between state and church/faith communities is subtly but importantly differently drawn, such that social workers and community workers are trained in both theology and their profession. Some are ordained as ministers at the point of qualification. This makes it a rich space in which to research and challenge the binaries of secular-sacred, private-public into which much religions research has fallen. Two exchanges have been facilitated between staff in these two institutions to open up new perspectives on each other's social work teaching and research. He has also been honorary Stephenson Professor of Religion, Society and Leadership at Sheffield University in this period, where he has led on new interdisciplinary connections between Biblical Studies and professional studies. Other staff have Visiting Fellowships in the USA, Japan, Ireland and Brazil (Bernard) where research proposals have been developed collaboratively. Members of staff have been Co-I's on four European funding proposals including two Horizon 2020 proposals, involving up to nine countries. These were highly scored (meeting well above thresholds) but were not selected for funding. Nevertheless the processes resulted in three outputs drawing together participants from

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

four countries in three continents. This has been complemented in an AHRC Network grant involving nine disciplines and nine countries. The unit engages in a number of other collaborations with practice bodies, for example with:

- Transitional Care Education Services (TCES), a pilot project to assess the efficacy of educational interventions with young people at risk of exclusion;
- an immersive art-based research project to progress knowledge and understanding of Indigenous arts therapies and art psychotherapies pedagogies, with Deakin University, Australia;
- work on caste in Britain with the Equality and Human Rights Commission;
- a project on young people's views and experiences of caste discrimination in India and the UK with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India;
- a project in which art psychotherapists and their clients reflect on 25 years of accomplishments made possible by the Corinne Burton Memorial Trust in the field of cancer care;
- a project in collaboration with the Israeli Committee Against Torture focusing on child torture and leading to incorporation of new evidence in the Istanbul Protocols;
- a strand of work on religion in the workplace which connects the Unit to large city and transnational companies, for example exploring values in private sector workplaces and another project to develop a workplace index on religion and belief.

The notion of religious literacy, developed within this unit, has been widely picked up in social work education in Finland, Norway and Sweden. For example, it was the theoretical concept at the heart of the trans-Nordic RVS doctoral training program in 2018-19 and formed the centrepiece of academic keynotes and policy and public engagement events. It has also been adopted as the key theme of a new Finnish research group on religious literacy in education and the researcher who has developed the concept recently joined this new group in its opening conference.

The unit contributes significantly to the sustainability of the social work discipline as a leader in practical work to connect research and practice. The work of the SELTPS initiative is key, rooted in the focus on career pathways for social workers which make sense of policy changes and imperatives while also meeting the real-world needs of service users. In the Therapeutic Studies area this is also the case. The unit is recognised internationally as leading in pedagogical innovation and its methods and values have been especially adopted in Australia. Overall, the unit is already inherently multidisciplinary and initiatives have been designed in this period to connect the areas, notably a unit-wide project on uses of arts in social care practice which brings together social work, youth work and art therapy expertise. There is every ambition to move further in the coming period from multi-disciplinarity to interdisciplinarity and interprofessional work across social work, therapies and community and youth work, including the development of international interdisciplinary research bids. The AHRC Reimagining Religion and Belief projects have advanced this some way through the lens of health and social care practices in relation to their treatments of religion and belief diversity of service users.

Staff in this unit are members of the editorial boards of Research in Education, the Community Development Journal, the Journal of Beliefs and Values, and Religions. Two colleagues have sat on the AHRC doctoral training grant awards committee. Two are members of the AHRC peer review college and four in the ESRC peer review college.

## Delivering National and International Invited Keynotes

Staff have undertaken large numbers of invited keynotes across Australia, North America and Europe, including at Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia (New Interdisciplinary Spaces of Religions and Belief in Thinking and Practice: an analysis 3 November 2016), Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, USA, (*Religion in a Plural Age: religious literacy – contested and pressing* 9 July 2016), University of Essen, Germany, (*Religious Literacy and Diversity in German Universities*, 30 June 2016), Cambridge University, AHRC Cambridge Festival of Ideas (10 year celebratory event) panellist keynote (*The Future of Teaching and Learning about Religion and Belief*, 21 October 2015), the British Sociological Association Annual Conference Sociology of Religion Plenary keynote *Accident and Emergency: the loss and recovery of religious literacy in the welfare state* 23 April 2014 and the University of Chester AHRC conference Philosophy, Religion and Public Policy keynote (*Ontologies of Public Policy: how philosophical and religious ideas shape and mis-shape public policy* 8-9 April 2014). Other keynotes include the Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains conference, the 3rd EADMT conference in Athens Greece, and Art therapy and Indigenous ways of knowing', Deakin University, Australia. Colleagues have also contributed PGR training via membership of the AHRC DTC in the UK and via RVS in Uppsala, Stavanger and Oslo.