

<b>Institution: University of Manchester</b>
<b>Unit of assessment: 31 (Theology and Religious Studies)</b>
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Context and Structure</b></p> <p>The strengths of Manchester's Department of Religions and Theology (R&amp;T) lie in its particular configuration of (a) <u>text-based religious studies</u>, with a distinctive combination of Jewish Studies and Biblical Studies, and (b) the study of <u>religion and science in society</u>.</p> <p>This UoA comprises 11.3 FTE researchers located within the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures (SALC), one of the largest concentrations of humanities researchers in the UK, in the Faculty of Humanities (FoH). While maintaining strong interdisciplinary links within the Unit and with SALC colleagues in Classics, History and German, our researchers' disciplinary affiliations are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biblical Studies: <b>Oakes, Klutz, Morse, Boakye</b></li> <li>• Jewish Studies: <b>Langton, Samely</b></li> <li>• Christian Studies: <b>Scott, Law, Hoelzl, Midson</b></li> <li>• Islamic Studies: <b>Williams, Karimullah</b></li> </ul> <p>Since the last REF, we have concentrated on enhancing our core strengths at the same time as developing new directions that complement these in a fresh holistic approach to research culture, finance, outputs, and research-based teaching (NSS2020 100% satisfaction). Some achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publishing more than 20 books and five dozen articles in prestigious academic presses and journals</li> <li>• Increasing our external research income per FTE researcher by 135%, reaching a total of £1.3 million formally reported income (which is an 83.4% increase)</li> <li>• Increasing our average PhD completions per staff FTE to nearly four (from three), while maintaining the total at 44 completions, with 54% finding post-doc academic employment</li> <li>• Visiting appointments at Pennsylvania, Baylor and Münster Universities</li> <li>• Pioneering externally funded art as a new public engagement strategy for Library manuscript holdings</li> <li>• Rejuvenating our staff base with four new UoA-nurtured ECR appointments; ECRs now make up 35% of the Unit</li> <li>• Increasing the combined proportion of BAME and women staff to 26% (from 10.3%)</li> <li>• Strengthening Islamic Studies, after retrenchment of South Asian Studies</li> <li>• Instituting systematic impact planning by creating a stakeholder Impact Advisory Group</li> </ul> <p>Much of our research engages with an intellectual agenda of hermeneutics. We investigate religious texts and their historical reception (Impact Case Study [ICS] relating to early Church history), alongside the manner in which contemporary societies apply religious texts to new topics in culture, gender, the environment, law and artificial intelligence. We also address the role of texts in competing faith traditions, secular contexts and everyday experience. These strengths are partly rooted in the UoA's combination of strong Biblical Studies with equally prominent text-oriented Jewish Studies, areas of expertise for which the Unit also functions as a PGR and ECR training hub.</p> <p>Aligned with the hermeneutic perspective, and constituting a second research concentration, is our interest in the interface between religion and science, seen against wider questions regarding the relationship between religious attitudes, modern life-worlds</p>

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

and rapidly changing societies. This includes Christian theologies of ecology (**Scott**), Jewish, Christian and Biblical attitudes to gender equality (ICS on Jewish divorce; **Morse**), critiques of knowledge-based Church power (**Hoelzl**), Jewish attitudes to evolution and atheism (**Langton**), and spiritual resources for living with artificial intelligence (**Midson**).

While supporting the publication of eight research monographs, more than a dozen further book publications, and over five dozen journal articles, 44 PhD completions (matching the REF2014 total) and the capture of external grant income of £1,326,202 (an 83% increase over REF2014), the UoA has also strategically realised impact potential inherent in these society-related research topics. The ICSs we have selected represent two of our areas of strength in the study of texts which religious groups continue to receive as authoritative today.

### 1.1.1. Biblical and reception studies, Centre for Biblical Studies (CBS)

Research at the Centres for Biblical Studies and Jewish Studies (**CJS**) examines the textual foundations of Christianity and Judaism. Providing continuity in the prestigious Rylands Chair of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis, **Oakes's** widely received research into archaeology as evidence of the social and economic life of early Christians has influenced Church training (see ICS), while other research strands address gendered biblical reception (**Morse**), discourse analysis of post-biblical, NT and Gnostic texts (**Klutz**), Paul (**Oakes, Boakye, Langton**), rabbinic and modern hermeneutic practices (**Samely** and **Keim** [NB: now Lund; her name in bold as an author of a submitted output]), and modern Jewish theology in the light of Jewish-Christian relations and of science (**Langton**).

The UoA's *emeriti*, Brooke (presenter of the 2019 British Academy Schweich lectures and president-elect of the European Association for Biblical Studies 2021–24), Alexander, FBA, and Jackson (whose research underpins one ICS), remain closely involved as advisors in our research and impact planning.

**CBS** connects the UoA with SALC researchers in Classics, in particular Roberta Mazza and Stuart Campbell, organises annual research training events with the biblical studies hubs at Lausanne and Durham Universities, and receives PGR visits from the Nordic Network for Qumran studies. **CBS** maintains the Ehrhardt Seminar as a regionally important discussion forum (weekly attendance 15–40), convenes the Northwest of England Research Project Committee (see 1.2.2.2), and hosts the Manson Memorial Lecture annually, whose speakers have included Adela Collins, Yale (2014), Francis Watson, Durham (2018) and Andreas Dettwiler, Geneva (2019).

### 1.1.2. Jewish Studies, Centre for Jewish Studies (CJS)

As one of the regional centres of excellence in Europe [**text removed for publication**] the Centre for Jewish Studies provides Northern UK and Dublin researchers with networking opportunities and themed workshops, e.g. on material culture and digital humanities. It organises UK-wide PGR and ECR research training events and runs the '50 Jewish Objects' project (2018–22), which combines fresh research into Hebrew manuscript holdings with creative art commissions and innovative public engagement. **CJS** members have led several manuscript research and digitisation projects, including currently the production of a catalogue of the University Library's Hebraica holdings (3.1.2.c).

**CJS** brings UoA staff together with SALC colleagues in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies (Behar), History (Dreyfus, also CJS co-director) and German/Drama (Gelbin). Collaborating with **CBS** and the John Rylands Research Institute, **CJS** has attracted seven externally funded post-doctoral researchers in the reporting period (2.1.1).

**CJS** regularly hosts prominent visiting speakers (4.1.2), such as Browning (Chapel Hill), Levine (Vanderbilt) and Grabowski (Ottawa).

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Key **CJS** research topics included the encounter of Jewish Reform thinkers with evolutionary theory and secular modernity (**Langton's Reform Judaism and Darwin: How Engaging with Evolutionary Theory Shaped American Jewish Religion**, 2019) and Jewish hermeneutics in the light of theories of reading (**Samely**, 'How Coherence Works', 2020).

### 1.1.3. Christian Studies, Lincoln Theological Institute (LTI)

Christian Studies in the UoA has three interlinked strands, each of which also relates to the reception of authoritative scriptures:

1.1.3.1. *Theological Studies* research has focused on the historical genesis of contemporary concerns, such as the use of masterful knowledge in Church power (**Hoelzi's Theorie vom guten Hirten**, 2017), Christology in its biblical context, in 19<sup>th</sup>-century theology and in the writings of Kierkegaard, including the latter's use of Scripture (**Law**, PhD Storer, 2019), and theological inter-faith dialogue (**Law** edited a volume on Said Nursi of the *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies*, 2017). Leading theologians are invited to present the Samuel Ferguson lecture in March of each year, including Fergusson, Edinburgh (2014); Grosshans, Münster (2015); Soskice, Cambridge (2016); Ford, Cambridge (2017); Milbank, Nottingham (2018); Tanner, Yale (2019); also Keller, Drew (2020, postponed to 2022 due to Covid-19 pandemic), preceded by Rowan Williams, Cambridge (2021).

1.1.3.2. *Social Ethics* research is undertaken by the Lincoln Theological Institute (LTI), a key UK contributor to the discourse on religion and science. Themes have included societal changes wrought by technology and climate change, with four funded PDRFs since 2014 (details 2.1.1). LTI director **Scott** (*A Theology of Postnatural Right*, 2019) is Fellow of the Princeton Center of Theological Inquiry (1996–) and a member of its international project in Religion and Astrobiology (2018–). **Midson** serves (2019–) on the interdisciplinary working group on ethics at the Centre for Robotics in The University of Manchester (UoM) Faculty of Science and Engineering.

1.1.3.3. *History of Christianity* studies, resulting in publications by **Hoelzi**, **Law**, Crome and Gregory, have benefited from research networking since 2018 through the Manchester Wesley Research Centre (MWRC) and from support in kind by JRRI. This has seen the UoA supporting a visiting research fellowship in Wesleyan Studies (Stéphanie Prévost, Université Paris Diderot, 2019), and cooperation with Wesley researchers at two of three UoA-validated partner institutions, Nazarene Theological College and Cliff College (Luther King House Manchester being the third; 4.1.1).

### 1.1.4. Islamic Studies

Religion and science in the Islamic world is researched by **Karimullah**, appointed after his PDRA in the UoM AHRC project 'Genealogies of Knowledge'. He uses digital methods to study medieval cross-cultural Islamic discourses on science and medicine, as well as studying Qur'an reception and contemporary Islamic discourses on gender. **Williams** has continued his research on Rumi's *Masnavi* funded by the British Academy (2013–16) and Leverhulme Trust (2016–19), producing an annotated new translation from the Persian (3.1.2.a), as well as his investigations of Iranian religions. Strengthening Islamic studies with the appointment of **Karimullah** followed a strategic repositioning away from South Asian Studies after retirements (Suthren Hirst, Zavos).

## 1.2. Research and Impact Strategy

### 1.2.1 Implementation of 2014 Research and Impact Objectives

We have advanced the four strategic objectives identified at REF2014 as follows:

1.2.1.1. To enhance and promote excellence in published research with major external awards and international collaboration.

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

The UoA's strategic aim to support internationally linked research excellence has led to eight research monographs, more than a dozen further book publications, and over five dozen journal articles. Significant institutional links have been developed. These include **Langton's** election as Pennsylvania University Katz Center Fellow for Advanced Judaic Studies (2017–18), **CBS's** collaboration with Institut Romand des Sciences Bibliques Lausanne (leading to a volume co-edited by **Klutz**, 2018), **CBS's** partnership in John Rylands Library's Dead Sea Scroll fragments research with Yeshiva University, NY and Copenhagen University (see *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*, V, 2015), and **Scott's** Religion and Astrobiology role at Princeton (1.1.3.2).

Larger awards from the Leverhulme Trust, the British Academy and the AHRC (**Williams**, **Langton**) were augmented by research funding from discipline-specific bodies [**text removed for publication**]. Individual research accomplishment was recognized in the award to **Law** of the Oxford Doctor of Divinity.

Our research impact is exemplified by one ICS on Jewish divorce law and one on socio-economic realities in the early Church, as well as other instances, such as Church of England policy impact (4.2.1).

#### 1.2.1.2. To contribute to and benefit from the interdisciplinary potential of SALC

Interdisciplinary dialogue within and beyond SALC was maintained in particular with researchers in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES), Classics, Archaeology, German/Drama, the John Rylands Research Institute (JRRI), and Manchester's Methodist Archives and Research Centre (MARC) located at the University Library. The UoA contributes with AMES to the Manchester-owned *Journal of Semitic Studies* (**Morse** has financial responsibility). **Law** is on the editorial board of UoM Library's *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*. **Keim**, **Law** and **Oakes** contribute to the Manchester Centre for Correspondence Studies and **Midson** to a working group in UoM's Faculty of Science and Engineering (1.1.3.2).

These interdisciplinary links, strengthened through Honorary Research Fellows (HRFs) at **CBS**, **CJS** and **LTI** (1.2.2.3), have extended the breadth of our PGR/ECR training, enhanced our international visitor appointments and expanded opportunities for hosting PDRFs.

#### 1.2.1.3. To encourage and improve applications for research grants

Robust support and guidance structures include formal peer review of grant applications (2.1.2), complemented by informal advice from the UoA's own experienced grant winners, including *emeriti*. The strategic aim of these measures has been to nurture individual research plans, including research with strong impact potential, and to encourage the use of **CJS**, SALC, JRRI and FoH seedcorn funding (3.1.1). They have led to a number of successes, resulting in formally reported income of £1,326,202 and a research awards total of £1,695,730 (compared with £722,929 formally reported income and £1,179,185 research awards in REF2014, increases of 83.4% and 43.8%, respectively). Funding sources included Leverhulme Trust, British Academy and AHRC (**Williams**, **Langton**), alongside ESRC (Co-I **Scott**) and charitable foundation funding (**Samely**, **Langton**). **CJS's** national ECR research training includes a practical exercise in drafting a research funding application.

#### 1.2.1.4. To maintain a strong, well-integrated PhD community

The UoA has sustained a sizable PhD community with high-calibre entrants and a strong international profile, nurtured by supportive and innovative research training (2.2.3). In the reporting period international PhD students came from the US, Turkey, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, South Korea, India and Indonesia. Of the 44 PhDs who completed in the REF period, 13 have doctoral monographs published, or have them in press, two of them

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

winning prizes (2.2.1). Of the 2013–2019 cohort, 54% obtained academic appointments, while a significant number held competitive doctoral awards (2.2.1).

Through strategically planned conference presentations and on the basis of the international reception of staff publications, the UoA has promoted Manchester as an attractive PGR destination. Following the succession of **Scott** to the Ferguson Chair of Applied Theology (*vice Ward*), and that of **Oakes** to the Rylands Chair of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis (*vice Brooke*), the UoA has matched with fewer staff its high REF2014 PGR completion rate of 44. **CBS** in particular has maintained an average of 2.0 FTE international PGRs per lecturer for the past 10 years, one of the highest international PGR recruitment rates in FoH. This is a by-product of our strong engagement at US Meetings of AAR/SBL, where UoA-affiliated researchers, including recent appointees **Morse** and **Midson**, have typically presented more than ten papers p.a., as well as holding joint receptions with MWRC for prospective students since 2017. Signal publications on environmental theology (**Scott**) and the economic background of the New Testament (**Oakes**) have contributed to our visibility, as well as **Law's** international standing as a Kierkegaard scholar and the growing reputation of early career colleagues. **Scott** was awarded UK Council for Graduate Education Recognised Supervisor Status in 2019.

### 1.2.2. Future Research Strategy

The UoA's overall strategic aim is to continue to be among the top five UK TRS research concentrations by virtue of: (1) its text-based religious studies, which allies biblical with equally strong Jewish studies; (2) its focus on religion and science; and (3) its regionally and nationally important PGR and ECR research training.

The Unit's objectives are therefore:

#### *1.2.2.1 To pursue high-quality research that carries, where appropriate, impact benefits*

The UoA will facilitate the production of high-quality research outputs whose impact potential is maximised. We will reinforce the UoA's existing research strengths by encouraging the prioritising of (a) internationally leading outputs, and (b) research with strong potential for societal impact.

This will be achieved through advice and guidance, applications for University-internal seedcorn funding and research leave plans (2.1.2.2–3). Projects in the planning stage reflect these priorities. They include a collaborative funding application on 'Love, Boundaries and Sacred Texts' (**Oakes**), a bid on the comparative reception of evolutionary theory in the Abrahamic religions (**Langton**), as well as planned monographs on the phenomenology of reading (**Samely**), Rumi (**Williams**), kenotic Christology (**Law**) and Islamic environmental ethics (**Karimullah**).

The Unit will accelerate implementation of the University's **Open Access** (OA) Publications Policy (2015) by

- (a) continuing to produce OA Jewish Studies journal *Melilah* without processing charges as before
- (b) OA-publishing a catalogue of the Hebrew manuscript holdings of The University Library/John Rylands currently in preparation, and
- (c) bidding for UoM's institutional OA fund (£300,000 p.a.) and maximising the OA potential of UoM's public online research repository PURE.

For context, see 3.2.2.

The UoA will enhance its online public research presence with fresh resources (e.g. relating to BBC archives, 4.2.1), following the creation of **CJS's** '50 Jewish Objects' art resources, **CBS's** Pompeii website, **CJS's** podcasts of public lectures, and its 'Darwin's Jews' resource pack (4.2.2).

1.2.2.2. To consolidate the UoA's position as a major research hub for Theology and Religious Studies in Northwest England

The UoA expects to maintain and develop its regional leadership role in institutional networks. Following the 2014 restructuring of Biblical Studies at the University of Sheffield, a 2018 **CBS** initiative led to the creation of the Northwest Research Project Committee, which includes representatives from Liverpool Hope University, University of Chester, Nazarene Theological College and Cliff College, with the aim of preparing collaborative funding applications in biblical hermeneutics (currently 'Love, Boundaries and Sacred Texts').

**[text removed for publication]** **CJS** will continue to connect Jewish Studies researchers in the Northern UK and Dublin Jewish Studies Partnership (4.1.1). Building on the success of the **CJS's** innovative '50 Jewish Objects' project **[text removed for publication]** and following recent **CJS**-hosted research workshops on material culture and identity, we are preparing a collaborative **CJS**-led funding bid relating to Jewish material culture holdings at HE and non-HE institutions in the UK.

The UoA will maintain its impact and events links with Chester Cathedral, Manchester Cathedral and the Manchester Jewish Museum, as well as with its validated partners in research (e.g., joint conference on Ageing, January 2021) and PGR support (4.1.1).

1.2.2.3. To embed societal stakeholders in research processes in order to maximise positive societal impacts from our research

The UoA will strengthen its longstanding institutional connections to societal stakeholders in faith groups and organisations devoted to social cohesion and civic support. Strategic use of the HRFs of **CBS**, **CJS** and **LTI**, **LTI** governance structures, and links through vocational training have long informed impact horizons for specific research projects. We now go beyond that by virtue of the inter-institutional Bible, Gender and Church Research Centre (4.1.1), as well as the creation in 2020 of a 17-member external Research Impact Advisory Group (RIAG).

RIAG will help us to integrate into our impact planning national and regional perspectives of potential societal research beneficiaries. RIAG members will make themselves available for up to two project-specific consultations on impact per year, as well as for an annual planning meeting. The following organisations and societal concerns are represented on RIAG: We Stand Together England (social cohesion), Press Red and Women's Liberation Collective (gendered violence), the Muslim-Jewish Forum of Greater Manchester, the Bishop of Manchester, Greater Manchester Jewish Representative Council, Greater Manchester Citizens/Citizens UK, Tzelem (rabbinic campaign for UK social and economic justice), Manchester Jewish Museum, Manchester Cathedral, Jackson's Row Reform Synagogue, All Saints Centre for Mission & Ministry, Manchester University's Chaplaincy, the Manchester Council of Christians and Jews, as well as the UoA-validated partner institutions (1.1.3.3/4.1.1).

## Section 2. People

### 2.1 Staff

#### 2.1.1 Recruitment

In a time of national challenges to TRS, described by the British Academy's 2019 report 'Theology and Religious Studies Provision in UK Higher Education', and following University-wide restructuring, the UoA staffing stands at 11.3 FTE (14.5 at REF2014). Notwithstanding this reduced staffing the UoA has benefited from investment in four replacement appointments after retirements (Brooke, *emeritus*; Suthren Hirst, Zavos) or moves to other institutions (Smithuis, Mair, Crome, Gregory).

New appointments have (a) consolidated our expertise in hermeneutics (**Boakye**, **Karimullah** and **Samely**, the latter redeployed in 2016 from AMES); (b) enhanced our strength in religion and science (**Midson** and **Karimullah**), and (c) added a focus in hermeneutics and gender through **Morse**. They have also energised the inter-disciplinary dialogue across the Unit as a whole that has long been a feature of our research culture.

By rejuvenating its staff base with the ECR appointments of **Morse**, **Boakye**, **Midson** and **Karimullah**, the UoA has bucked the trend of generational concentration in UK TRS departments noted by the British Academy. Since these colleagues were on teaching-focused contracts or externally-funded PDRA/PDRFs before their current roles, their appointments can also be taken as confirmation of the effectiveness of the UoA's strategic emphasis on an all-inclusive and comprehensive nurturing of ECR research activity, regardless of contract.

In total we appointed eleven PDRFs or PDRAs during the census period, ten of them externally funded. They pursued projects in Biblical Studies (Cioatã 2014–2018, British Academy); Jewish Studies (Lorenz 2014–15, [text removed for publication]; Ben Williams 2014–2015, Leverhulme; **Keim** 2015–2018, British Academy; Popa 2017–2018, Saul Kagan Claims Conference Advanced Shoah Studies; Silvestri 2018–22, [text removed for publication]; Taylor-Guthartz 2020–22, [text removed for publication]); and in Christian Theology and Social Ethics at LTI (Wood 2013–2015, Keogh 2014–15 [funded by the UoM-internal Ferguson endowment], **Midson** 2016–2019, now FT Lecturer, and Radford 2020–22). The latter were, apart from Keogh, funded by the Lincoln Theological Institute Charitable Trust (3.1.2.d).

#### 2.1.2. Staff Development and Support

2.1.2.1. All staff receive mentoring and developmental support at every career stage and type of contract. Our support for ECRs is informed by the UoM Implementation Plan for its 2019 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers', which received the HR Excellence in Research Award from the European Commission (held continuously since 2011, see UoM REF5a §3.3.2). New staff are allocated an experienced colleague as mentor throughout a 3/4-year probation period. They complete the Faculty's 'New Academics Programme' (HEA-accredited) and benefit from a reduced teaching/administration load (75% in year 1, 80% year 2, 85% year 3), as well as from seedcorn funding initiatives to support their research trajectory and first major grant application.

All staff undertake compulsory research integrity training, while projects involving human subjects undergo ethics review before permission is granted (cp. REF5a §2(v)). The FoH's Researcher Development Framework offers an annual programme of researcher-led training for sharing best practice and all aspects of professional development for arts and humanities researchers.

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

2.1.2.2. Support for career development and promotion applications for all staff is embedded in the voluntary Performance and Development Review (P&DR) and the mandatory annual review of the Personal Research Expectations Plan (PREP), designed to highlight UoA funding and impact priorities and to contribute towards the UoA's and SALC's research planning. Staff who are planning grant bids of £100K+ receive enhanced support from SALC's Grant Writing and Impact Support Officers. In formal one-to-one PREP discussions conducted by the line manager or research coordinator, the UoA encourages individual research agendas, while offering opportunities for interdisciplinary dialogue and guidance on national funding trends. The guidance emphasizes the integration of funding applications into research planning, including funding that helps maximise impact. Additionally to PREP, the UoA research coordinator creates regular opportunities for staff to receive informal feedback on early-stage research, funding and publication ideas. The UoA's 26 HRFs, some of whom are also RIAG members (1.2.2.3), alongside the Unit's research-active retired staff and *emeriti*, are available to respond to grant applications, impact activities and publication drafts.

2.1.2.3. All SALC staff with teaching and research responsibilities are covered by SALC's work allocation model that includes a target for research time of 30%, and foresees one day officially scheduled for research in each teaching week. They may apply to SALC's Research Committee for one semester's Institutional Research Leave (IRL) to develop research outputs, funding applications and impact activities after six semesters of regular service, subject to a satisfactory project proposal and a report on their last IRL. By request, IRL may be anticipated or held up by one semester. Additionally, SALC offered supplementary research leave for the completion of specific high-quality research outputs, and FoH ran a corresponding senior competition (Professorial Enhanced Research Leave, PERL, five granted p.a.). During 2014–20 all eligible UoA staff were successful in their IRL applications, and **Samely** was awarded PERL. The UoA supported applications for externally funded leave as part of larger projects, such as those won by **Langton** (2013–2015, 2016–2017) and **Williams** (2013–2016, 2016–2019).

The SALC Personal Research Allowance was £1,000 p.a. (except in 2019–20 due to Covid-19 uncertainties); SALC's Research Support and Development Fund offered further targeted support of up to £6K p.a. as well as additional funds specifically for supporting Impactful Research.

### 2.1.3. Staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The UoA is committed to EDI and implements the University's equality of opportunity policies for all staff and students. EDI training is embedded in the Faculty induction programme for new staff and there are refreshers for all staff, including obligatory Unconscious Bias training for service on appointment panels. The Humanities Equality and Diversity Working Group is responsible for implementing Faculty and School Equality and Diversity Action Plans, and for monitoring staff gender and ethnicity profiles in recruitment and promotion. SALC offers targeted support to under-represented groups for training for leadership roles and for promotion applications. Other measures progressing EDI include Carers' Leave; enhanced Carers' Research Support; Parental Leave and Academic Returners Leave; Flexible Working Arrangements; Flexible Retirement Arrangements; and support for return to work after Sickness Leave, as well as specialist office furniture, equipment and software. UoA meetings are scheduled with inclusivity in mind, in particular in relation to childcare responsibilities and disability requirements, and our UoA's Decolonisation Working Group addresses further aspects of inclusion in academic practice.

Against the background of these measures we have made some progress in addressing existing imbalances. Our recruitment in the context of contraction has more than doubled the BAME proportion of submitted staff, to 17.7% (6.89% at REF2014), while maintaining a

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REF2014-comparable if slightly lower proportion of women staff 8.85% (for REF2014 that figure stood at 10.34% and since one staff member belonged to both the BAME and woman categories, the combined proportion of these two categories together was 10.34% as well, now 26.5%). We have also raised on UoA level the topic of the low progression rate of BAME and women students to PhD-level study with the UG and PGT student body and their representatives since 2019, as well as promoted student awareness of graduate research opportunities in TRS academia.

## 2.2 Research students

### 2.2.1. PGR Recruitment

The annual number of PGR students in the Department since REF2014 has remained steady at about 30. Recruitment is on average 10 per annum and since 2014 there have been 44 doctoral completions. Between them these PGRs held a total of 22 competitively funded studentships: 9 held AHRC doctoral studentships, 6 had funding from other external sources (including [text removed for publication], Gerda Henkel Stiftung, and project-linked AHRC), and 7 held internally funded awards (which include a collaborative doctoral complement of £57,900 funded from the FoH Strategic Investment Fund). LTI's trustees have continued their strategic investment in the Lincoln International Doctoral Studentships. Thirteen of our PGR graduates have published or forthcoming monographs: Seo (Wipf and Stock 2015), Tappenden (SBL 2016, winner, *Manfred Lautenschlaeger Award for Theological Promise*), Popa (Indiana University Press 2017, winner, *Yad Vashem International Book Prize for Holocaust Research 2018*), Keim (Brill 2017), Jacobs (Oxford 2018), Ozturk (Routledge 2018), Boakye (Wipf and Stock 2017), Keady (Bloomsbury 2017), Karaman (Mohr Siebeck 2018), Midson (Tauris 2018), Britton (SBL forthcoming), Kim (Bloomsbury forthcoming), Baesick Choi (Wipf and Stock forthcoming). Scott and Law supervised doctorates in the Collaborative Doctoral Award Studentship in the Theology of Public Engagement with Manchester Cathedral (2019-2022) and Langton collaborative doctorates with the Manchester Jewish Museum (Livshin 2010–2015 and Ward 2014–17, AHRC £51,000 and [text removed for publication] £42,000).

### 2.2.2 Supervisory Arrangements

Students have a main and a co-supervisor, frequently an interdisciplinary team. Students meet a supervisor on average fortnightly during the teaching Semester. An independent reviewer responds to work submitted at twice-yearly panels, one of them a progression panel, with all development and progression data, as well as training courses and ethics approvals, recorded in the UoM online system eProg. Students are encouraged to articulate and discuss their teaching, conference and publication plans, career plans and training needs, as well as to document through eProg their familiarity with the available support structures and development opportunities.

### 2.2.3. Student Development, Diversity and Equality, and Support

#### 2.2.3.1. General Support for Postgraduate Research

The UoA's PGR students are eligible for Graduate School grants of up to £400 p.a. for conference participation and other research costs. Home/EU and overseas students are eligible to apply, in accordance with the University's equal opportunities policy, for competitive SALC PhD studentships (£800K annually), and a high proportion of the UoA's PGRs received funding (2.2.1). The Graduate School offers all UoA PGR students dedicated workspaces in their final year and hot-desking in earlier ones, as well as specialised research equipment and facilities. It pays up to £3K for fieldwork expenses, including extra costs incurred by students with carer responsibilities.

### *2.2.3.2. Equality, Diversity and Wellbeing*

The University's equality of opportunity commitments apply to students, including the PGR recruitment and supervision processes. The UoA selection of candidates includes an interview with the prospective supervisor and the UoA's PGR officer, matching the needs of the candidate to the programme's opportunities in line with UoM's equality, diversity and support policies. Formal responsibility for the personal and pastoral support of PGRs in addition to supervision lies with the departmental PGR officer and the SALC PGR director, and students can access and are inducted to a range of SALC and FoH support offerings, including sessions on wellbeing skills and workshops run by the Graduate School Wellbeing Hub and the PGR Well Bee-ing Project, as well as UoM's Disability Advisory and Support Service.

### *2.2.3.3. Skills Development, Careers Training and non-HE links*

The UoA organizes research training for their own PGRs as well as those from validated partner institutions and, in the case of Jewish Studies ECR training, events are open also to national and international advanced PGRs. Annual events include a **CBS**-led Manchester-Durham postgraduate research collaboration, a **CBS** joint event with Lausanne, as well as **CJS**'s UK-wide research training workshops, supported by [text removed for publication] travel bursaries. Run over 3 days, the **CJS** training offers an innovative mix of sessions on current disciplinary trends and on HE and non-HE career options, confidential one-to-one meetings for advice from experienced staff on career, publication and research plans, a practical exercise in designing a funding application, and opportunities for networking. Post-event questionnaires by the annually 20-25 PGR/ECR participants from the UK and abroad show a very high degree of satisfaction, with one participant crediting the advice she received as decisive for her subsequently applying for and gaining a UK lectureship.

All new PGR students complete a skills audit to identify training needs. Subject specific needs are met by UoA-run courses (e.g. biblical languages), Greek and Hebrew sources reading groups, the bespoke UoA training opportunities described above, and two UoA reading groups: Women and Bible and the Manchester Phenomenology Reading Group. General FoH/UoM-wide training covers research skills, academic and CV writing, career planning as well as more than 20 annual theory-exploring research seminars and skills-oriented workshops run by [artsmethods@manchester](mailto:artsmethods@manchester). [artsmethods@manchester](mailto:artsmethods@manchester) also funds interdisciplinary, collaborative student-led initiatives and conferences for which all FoH students can bid.

PGRs can also access the Faculty's Researcher Development programme of activities (2.1.2.1) and are encouraged to gain appropriate teaching experience, where opportunity is available, through Graduate Teaching Assistant employment. For this they receive a comprehensive programme of training, mentoring and peer review, a UoA practice which has contributed to 54% of doctoral completers (2013–2019) obtaining academic appointments, including **Midson**, **Boakye** and **Keim**.

### Section 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### 3.1 Research Income Generation and Guidance

The UoA's research strategy is delivered at UoA level, but embedded into SALC/FoH-wide support structures, such as the institutional safeguarding of research time and other measures (2.1.2) as well as internal investment (below). The Unit achieved a total external grant income of £1,326,202 in the REF2021 period, an 83.4% increase over REF2014 income (£722,929). This amounts to an increase per capita of 135% (£117,363 p.c., versus £49,857; for awards figures, see 1.2.1.3). This success has been enabled by a suite of measures.

##### 3.1.1. Internal Investment and Support for Research Funding Applications

The UoA has successfully secured substantial internal investment, including Faculty strategic investment of £57,900 in collaborative doctoral funding to the LTI, the FoH award of **Samely's** PERL (£45,000 income to the UoA), SALC Impact Support Fund money (£5,239), JRRI ECR seedcorn funding (£5,000) and ESRC Festival of Social Science funding (£1,000). Where appropriate, ECRs and experienced researchers alike were encouraged to move from applications for pilot projects to larger funding bids (3.2.1).

The SALC Research Office and the Research Committee, chaired five times a year by the School Research Director, provide guidance on all aspects of research planning, and administer a range of research support funds, from an annual research expense allowance (2.1-2.3), to internal competitions for awards from the Research Development and Impact Support Funds (£45-60K p.a.) for pilot projects (up to £3K per annum) and impactful research; the UoA was awarded £3,000 for a pilot project. These internal pilot funds were additional to external BA/Leverhulme Small Grants/Network and similar grants, such as **[text removed for publication]** resource enhancement and research networking funding.

*UoA Research Strategy Development and Application Support.* The directors of **CBS**, **CJS** and **LTI**, the head of department and the research coordinator meet twice a semester as the departmental research committee, to discuss all matters relating to research, including impact planning, in the light of institutional and national trends and information shared at SALC Research Committee. The research coordinator communicates digests of this information to UoA members, and puts colleagues in touch with an experienced peer reviewer, as well as with a suitable RIAG member (2020–) for additional input on impact planning. The Ehrhardt Seminar has played the role of a demanding, high-powered testing ground for research ideas and impact plans in biblical studies, and benefited impact planning for one ICS (**Oakes**). The UoA's peer reviewing, as well as that in SALC, benefits from being interdisciplinary, and encourages effective originality and contextualisations that transcend subject boundaries where appropriate. The SALC Research Office support all staff with costings and checking of applications, as well as selectively with Grant Writer feedback (2.1.2.2); successful earlier bid documents from the UoA and SALC are shared.

##### 3.1.2. Priority Investment Areas and Successful Outcomes

The UoA has strategically encouraged collaborative, cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional research and funding applications, in particular in the areas of:

- (a) the role of texts in religion, whose success is exemplified by British Academy Wolfson Research Professorship (2013–16) and Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship funding (2016–19) for **Williams's** work on Rumi (£150,000 and £145,841)
- (b) the religion/science interface, on which **LTI** leads (see below) alongside **Langton's** Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship on 'Darwin's Jews' (2013–2015) and his AHRC Leadership Fellowship on 'The Doubting Jew' (2016–2017; £95,122 and £139,964).

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

(c) unlocking the research potential of holdings of artefacts, archives and manuscripts at UoM and Northern UK Jewish Studies Partner institutions, allied to innovative forms of public engagement and research training, for which the **CJS's** '50 Jewish Objects' and the Rylands Hebraica cataloguing and digitization projects are examples (**Samely and Langton**, [text removed for publication] 2016–22, £26,000 and [text removed for publication] 2018–22, £135,501; Smithuis and Alexander, [text removed for publication], 2015–18, 2018-22, £120,000 and £90,000).

(d) Other successes include the ESRC-funded project 'Life on the Breadline: Christianity, Poverty and Politics in the 21st century' (2018–2021; Co-I **Scott**; £29,000), and seven externally funded PDRF/PDRAs attached to **CJS** and **CBS** (2.1.1). Additionally **LTI**, funded since 2003 by the Lincoln Theological Institute Charitable Trust (1.1.3.2), supports projects in the study of Christian social ethics through PDRFs (£124,933 in 2016–19 and £93,657 in 2020–22), as well as salary costs (**LTI** director **Scott**), one international PhD studentship and finance for research activities.

### 3.2. Infrastructure and Facilities

#### 3.2.1. Library Resources and Facilities

The University provides an internationally excellent environment for research in TRS. With more than ten million items The University Library is the largest non-legal deposit library in the UK, the only National Research Library in the north of England and holds the largest collection of electronic resources in any university library in Europe, currently over 43,500 e-journals, 500,000 e-books and a large number of research databases (Section 4.2 REF5a). Direct **CJS** investment (£14K since 2014) has augmented the UoM Library's holdings of primary sources and scholarship in the area of medieval Jewry, and complements print sources through a specialist departmental library on Anglo-Jewish history.

The University Library's special collections division, the John Rylands Library, has played a central role in the UoA's externally funded research, and provided the basis for the research and public engagement focus of the '50 Jewish Objects' project. Our research has drawn on a number of key holdings: the Reed Dead Sea Scroll Fragments, approximately 15,000 Genizah Fragments, several hundred Sussex and Gaster Hebrew manuscripts (alongside notable collections of Persian, Arabic and Ottoman manuscripts), Moses Gaster's personal papers and correspondence, the Marmorstein and Haskalah Eastern European Jewish printed book collections and the Anglo-Jewish/Guardian Archives. **CJS** has commissioned or facilitated the creation of online open access (OA) research guides relating to the four last-mentioned holdings in the REF2021 period. International scholars attracted by MARC, which provides the world's largest collection of manuscripts relating to John and Charles Wesley at The University Library, often supported by JRRI, regularly present their research to the Unit or take part in UoA research training events while visiting.

We have made strategic use of JRRI seedcorn grants relating to a number of holdings to facilitate subsequent grant successes for researching them. These include Hebraica [text removed for publication] grants (Smithuis and Alexander, until 2022) as well as **Keim's** BA PDRF.

#### 3.2.2. Open Access (OA) and Digital Humanities

The UoA has been an early adopter of Open Access research publishing through the OA periodical *Melilah* (2013–) and other publications (1.2.2.1). The Unit now benefits from UoM's measures for driving OA publishing and related activities (cp. REF5a §2(v)). Our research is accessible through UoM repository PURE (respecting embargos), and the Library OA service for pre-publication manuscripts. Advice to researchers, and OA and research data management services, are delivered by a dedicated team. UoA members are

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

eligible to bid for the institutional OA fund (£300,000 p.a.) supporting OA for monographs and ECR attendance at [OpenCon](https://www.opencon.community/) (<https://www.opencon.community/>).

UoA research that employs and addresses Digital Humanities methods, often creating OA publications, includes **Karimullah's** corpus-based Islamic Studies, **Midson's** exploration of the human-machine interface, digitising and cataloguing Hebrew manuscripts by means of Text Encoding Initiative (Alexander, Silvestri, **Samely**), and innovative dissemination (4.2.2). This too continues a longstanding UoA strength as exemplified in the UoA-led digitisation of John Rylands Hebrew manuscripts (Genizah fragments 2003–9, Hebraica 2015–22) and humanities research databases on ancient Jewish literature (2003 Midrash in the Mishnah; 2013 Anonymous and Pseudepigraphic Jewish Texts), all of which remain functional and publicly available.

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

The UoA's strategy for building relationships with outside academic bodies and wider society consists in:

- (a) promoting the collegial exchange of advice and information and the use of UoM and other funding sources to achieve effective academic networking (4.1.2)
- (b) prioritising the judicious use of new digital or other technologies for engaging with public audiences (4.2.2), and
- (c) facilitating communication with selected regional societal stakeholders as potential first-line beneficiaries of our research, in particular with regard to non-HE training (ICS) and beneficiary policy principles (illustrated in 4.2.1. by the UoA's contribution to the Church of England's recalibration of its relationship with Jewish communities).

#### 4.1. Collaborations in Research

##### 4.1.1. Collaborations in Research and PGR Training

The UoA supports researchers in regional, national and international research leadership roles, such as the **CJS's** [text removed for publication]-funded Northern UK and Dublin Jewish Studies Partnership (1.1.2), which since 2016 has linked the UoA as the network's hub to the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, Glasgow, Edinburgh, St Andrews, Trinity College Dublin, Edge Hill, Chester, Wales Trinity Saint David and Bangor; the **CBS**-led foundation of the Northwest Research Project Committee (1.2.2.2); and the UoA's collaboration with Cliff College in the Bible, Gender and Church Research Centre (**Morse**).

Some 70 PGR students registered at any given time at the UoA and at its validated partner colleges Nazarene Theological College, Cliff College and Luther King House Manchester benefit from the training opportunities created by **CBS**, **CJS** ECR/PGR activities (1.2.2.2, 2.2.3.3) and the MWRC (1.1.3.3), thereby constituting a Northwest research training concentration in Christian, Biblical and Jewish studies. All PGRs at validated partners are overseen by a research committee consisting of UoA members and a UoA collaborative academic advisor monitors their progress at two annual reviews and approves PhD admissions.

##### 4.1.2 International Links and Appointments

We have consistently supported staff in seeking national and international research collaborations, including with the Universities of Lausanne, Copenhagen and New York (1.2.1.1), and in shaping international research agendas. Examples of the latter include **Langton's** design of a year-long seminar programme at the US Katz Center (1.2.1.1), a 2015 international conference of the UoA in collaboration with the Groningen Institute for Globalisation Studies initiated by **Hoelzl**, the agendas of the annual meetings of the British

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

New Testament Society 2014 and British Association for Jewish Studies (BAJS) 2015, as well as **LTI's** international theological colloquium on 'Love in Technocultural Lifeworlds' (2018).

International visiting appointments were held also by **Oakes** at Baylor University 2015 and **Law** at Universität Münster, 2015–16. In addition to Manson and Ferguson Lecture Speakers (1.1.1, 1.1.3.1), the UoA hosted Brad Sabin Hill (Washington, DC) as University Simon Visiting Professor (2018/**CJS**), as well as international speakers for the **CJS** Sherman and Bogdanow lecture series, attracting sizable public audiences to presentations by Levine, Vanderbilt (daily attendance 125) and Olszowy-Schlanger, Oxford/Paris (45); Browning, Chapel Hill (125); Marrus, Toronto (125); Barnett, US Holocaust Memorial Museum (70); Grabowski, Ottawa (100); and Porat, Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum (80).

#### 4.1.3. Service to the Profession and Editorial Roles

The UoA encourages acceptance of prominent roles in academic organizations, of editorial appointments and of peer review duties, appreciating the importance of such roles for connecting the Unit's research nationally and internationally. In the REF2021 period this included the presidency of the British Association for Jewish Studies (BAJS; **Langton**, 2015), chairing the European Forum for the Study of Religion and the Environment (**Scott**) and co-chairing the Paul Seminar of British New Testament Society conferences (**Oakes** 2014–19), as well as a number of prominent international roles held by UoA *emeriti* (1.1.1).

National professional roles performed by UoA-nurtured ECRs include Ribary (UoA PhD; 2016–2019) and **Keim** (2019–present) as successive Postgraduate and Early Career Research Representatives on the BAJS committee, and Alder (UoA PhD 2011–15; teaching-focused R&T South Asian Studies lecturer) as Early Career Representative of the British Association for South Asian Studies (2017–). Senior colleagues **Langton** and **Williams** served as Peer Review College members for AHRC, and **Law** for the Australian Research Council. **Keim** served on a British Academy expert working group on the Teaching-Research Nexus (2017–19), which advises UK Government Higher Education Policy.

UoA members have shouldered editorial and editorial board responsibilities in the fields of biblical and related studies (*New Testament Studies*; *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, both **Oakes**; *Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies*, **Klutz**), of Christianity (*International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, **Law**), of Judaism (*Jewish Historical Studies*; *OA Melilah – Manchester Journal of Jewish Studies*, both **Langton**), of Islam (*Mawlana Rumi Review*, **Williams**) and of religion and politics (*Fuge. Journal für Religion und Moderne*; *Jahrbuch Politische Theologie*, both **Hoelzl**).

Editorial roles in monograph series include *International Studies in Christian Origins* (**Oakes** 2013–), *Continuum Studies in Religion and Political Culture* (**Hoelzl** 2006–2017), *Religion, Geschichte und Gesellschaft* (**Hoelzl** 2020–) and *Studia Judaica* (**Samely** 2012–).

#### 4.2. Collaborations with Societal Stakeholders

The UoA supports engagement with partners beyond Higher Education to disseminate research-generated expertise. We thereby seek opportunities to educate, and to help others train and educate, but also to learn of stakeholder perspectives and to maximise strategic research impact.

#### 4.2.1. Addressing Societal Needs with Research Expertise

We have systematically developed our relations with faith, interfaith, civic, policy, media and wider educational bodies, among them bodies such as WeStandTogether and Church of England (CoE), culminating in the 2020 establishment of RIAG, which allows us to seek impact planning input from 17 stakeholder organisations (1.2.2.3).

A significant example of impact arising from longstanding partnerships, beyond the ICSs submitted here, is the incorporation of Alexander's research into the Faith and Order Commission's document *God's Unfailing Word* (2019), the most significant CoE statement on Christian-Jewish relations in a generation, with Alexander having been one of the drafters. Other examples include **Law's** membership of the steering committee of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Examination in Theology and **Langton's** service on the committee of the Archbishop's Jewish Forum.

UoA research results have enriched ongoing collaborations with interfaith, non-HE educational and media organisations, including **Langton's** consultancy to the Council of Christians and Jews, Netherlands (2015) and to the Washington Holocaust Memorial Museum (2014), as well as his service on the AQA Higher Education Expert Panel (Religious Studies A-Level curriculum, 2013–). As part of collaborative doctorates (2.2.1, 3.1), **CJS** facilitated the digitization and tagging of oral testimony audio archives at the Manchester Jewish Museum, and **CBS** was involved in the 2016 launch of the Chester 'diocesan year of biblical literacy'.

Adding new dimensions to such links, the recently founded inter-institutional Bible, Gender and Church Research Centre (co-founder **Morse**) will allow church practitioners to orient impact planning of research into the role which biblical texts can play in encounters with the survivors of abuse. **Midson's** investigations into the interface of religion and new technologies used church focus groups to explore the reception of robots in social and care settings, funded by the CoE's 'Scientists in Congregations' scheme.

In collaboration with the BBC, the UoA led by **Morse** holds annual workshops for A-level teachers. As part of the events, participants become involved in the ongoing creation of an online resource that exploits the BBC's *Beyond Belief* archive to document key interviews and debates, as annotated by UoA staff on the basis of their research. The launch of the resource is planned for 2021. This opportunity to collaborate with the BBC arose from regular UoA media contributions (4.2.2).

#### 4.2.2. Public and Social Engagement, Media Work and Online Tools

UoA members are engaged on a number of fronts in meeting the knowledge needs of the general public. We aim to make available research results by way of public engagement activities and open access online information resources that can be used in non-HE and HE teaching.

UoA members have made active use of new media for the dissemination of research which speaks to topical issues or can be used in vocational training. **Oakes's** website 'Entering Early Christianity via Pompeii' and **Langton's** 'Darwin's Jews Online Reader' are examples of this. Videos and blogs of **CJS**-commissioned artists document their engagement with the '50 Jewish Objects' on the **CJS** website in addition to artists' workshops for individuals and families which took place until the 2020 Covid-19 lockdowns. These art commissions serve to highlight UoM and other Northern UK Jewish manuscript treasures. The UoA's research is widely seen by internet users, with OA Manchester Jewish Studies journal *Melilah* recording 130,000 page views (February 2020), and 53,000 views of the YouTube podcast of Browning's **CJS** Bogdanow lectures (September 2020).

Our engagement with conventional media platforms includes BBC Radio 4's 'In our Time' (in the reporting period, **Williams**, Suthren Hirst) and 'Beyond Belief' (**Williams**, **Law**, **Scott**,

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

**Midson, Boakye, Morse**). **Boakye** contributed to a Channel 5 Select and Smithsonian Channel documentary on Crucifixion in the Roman Empire.

In pursuing UoM's social responsibility goals (see REF5a, §2(iv)), **LTI** has taken the lead through active dialogue with stakeholders, e.g. through co-organising the 'Climate change among the Religions' events (2020). For **Scott's** 'Life on the Breadline' project, see 3.1.2.d.

The UoA has experimented with new forms of public engagement. One avenue we have explored are film screenings, e.g. **CJS's** Screen & Talk events in partnership with UK Jewish Film since 2016 (also 2021 Bogdanow Holocaust event presented by Academy-Award winning director of *Son of Saul*, László Nemes). We have also modified the format of traditional public lecture events, e.g. the **LTI's** Ferguson Lecture with Manchester Cathedral (attendances c.100 p.a.) and panel discussions on cyborgs (Manchester Science Festival 2016) and on 'Robots and Loneliness' (2018, with ESRC support). For **Midson's** focus group meetings, see 4.2.1.

These activities illustrate the UoA's approach to creating and sustaining dialogue with international academic peers, general audiences and potential research beneficiaries. We support collegially promoted international networking, further the adoption of digital alongside other technologies, and encourage ways to stay attuned to societal stakeholder concerns in order to realize the impact potential of our research.