

Institution: University of Chester
Unit of Assessment: 23 Education
1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

Overall context and structure

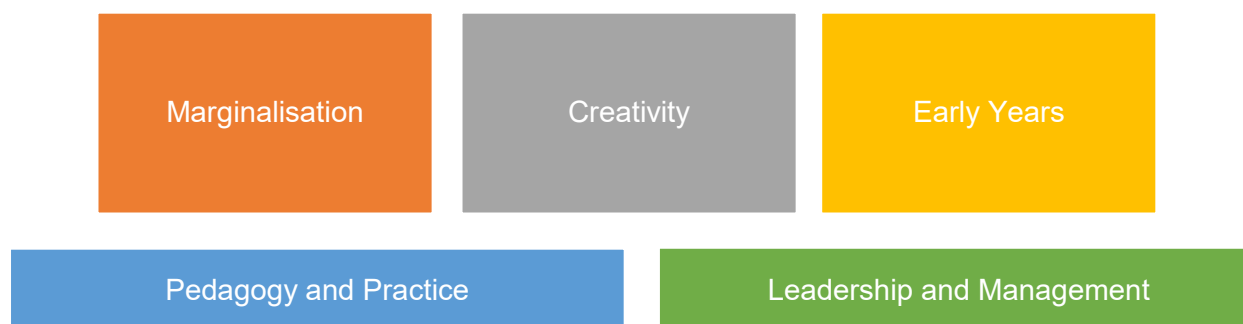
This Unit of Assessment corresponds with the Faculty of Education and Children's Services (FECS), and has close links with the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. As one of the 7 faculties within the institution, this Faculty is managed by an Executive Dean with support from two Associate Deans (AD). Comprising the departments Initial Teacher Education (ITE), and Academic and Professional Programmes, a significant proportion of this Unit's activity is teaching-focussed, and the University of Chester is one of the few institutions nationally to be rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in both Primary and Secondary Teacher Education.

Programmes within the Faculty benefit from a range of opportunities to engage with stakeholders beyond the institution, exploiting well-established links with five local education authorities, over 500 primary and secondary schools, and approximately 20 early-years providers. We also offer provision to five local Further Education (FE) providers, and have recently entered into a contract with the Welsh Government to deliver a PGCert., in Attachment, Trauma, and Mental Health, to FE colleges across Wales.

This submission to Education in REF2021 includes 9 Category A eligible staff with a significant responsibility for independent research, an 80% increase on the institution's first submission to this Unit in REF2014. Four of the staff previously submitted to this unit have retired or secured roles in other HEIs; their contribution towards the development of a sustained research environment is acknowledged through the inclusion of some of their most significant outputs. Despite this change in staff, and some consequent change in research objectives, the interdisciplinary research of Moran and Owens has progressed, demonstrating the effort made to ensure the Unit continues to focus on co-creation and partnerships. Within this submission, the foundations of Moran's research into marginalisation, and Owens' research into creativity, have clearly demonstrated sustainable research, and are to be further developed as core themes in the University's research strategy.

Research Interest Groups

Research into education and pedagogy has developed around three central themes that straddle two cross-cutting themes:



Marginalisation

This theme explores individuals, groups, and communities that have been forced to live on the periphery of society, with most research conducted ethnographically to enable understanding from both provocative and philosophical perspectives. The Unit has developed its regional connections with Cheshire West and Chester Council, as well as local homelessness charities, to add depth to its research on the many aspects of the marginalised experience. These include investigating issues such as homelessness and childhood neglect, and the wide range of issues that characterise them. These range from the personal (such as belonging, and relationships) to the institutional (crime,

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spaces, and rights), as well as the way these issues inherently relate to one another. An example output contributing to this research area is:

Moran, P. and Atherton, F. (2018). *The Philosophy of Homelessness*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Creativity

This theme explores creativity, learning, and the arts in professional, educational contexts. Although many of the connections originated from internal interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaborations, they expanded into the local area through Chester's Storyhouse complex, and Liverpool's Tate Gallery. These regional connections provided the foundation to cultivate numerous international partnerships, including those in Japan, Finland, South Korea, and Palestine. The Centre for Research into Education, Creativity and Arts through Practice (RECAP) is a unique hub, specialising in practice-based research and focusing on creativity, learning, and the arts in professional and educational contexts, and has been integral to the bolstering of the research environment within the Unit. Staff from the Faculty are members of editorial boards relevant to this specialism, including the *International Journal of Art and Design Education*, and *Applied Theatre Research: Intellect*. An example output contributing to this research area is:

Moate, J., Hulse, B., Jahnke, H., & Owens, A. (2019). Exploring the material mediation of dialogic space—A qualitative analysis of professional learning in initial teacher education based on reflective sketchbooks. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 31, 167-178

Early Years

This theme explores the practices, concerns, and issues, not only of young children, but also of their families, carers and other professionals who have meaningful contact with them. This includes the professional training of those who work with early-years children and the systems of support and issues related to their governance of children in their early years. Regional connections have been established predominantly with Cheshire West and Chester Council, Shropshire Borough Council, and Warrington Borough Council, as well as local registered childcare facilities. Staff from the Faculty are involved in peer review for journals relevant to this specialism, including the *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, and the *Journal of Early Child Development and Care*. An example output contributing to this research area is:

Atherton, F. & Nutbrown, C. (2016). Schematic pedagogy: Supporting one child's learning at home and in a group. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 24(1), 63-79. DOI: 10.1080/09669760.2015.1119671

Overall research and strategy

The University of Chester strives to support a thriving and inclusive research culture for staff and research students. This Faculty, aligned to the wider institution, has committed to the creation and propagation of knowledge that is significant and vibrant. Of greatest relevance is the overall commitment to create opportunities for developing sustainable, cultural, and effective communities, as the Faculty's research has focused specifically on this goal.

Achievement of strategic aims

The strategic aims of the Faculty have been, and continue to be, aligned to the institutional strategy that has been implemented at a local level. The Faculty Research Management Group (FRMG) is responsible for monitoring progress towards the strategic aims, and membership of the Group includes an Associate Dean, a representative from each Research Interest Group (RIG), and a bid writer. FRMG is represented by Dr Johanna Bacon (AD) and Dr Paul Moran on the University Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee, and by Dr Jane Bulkeley (AD) on the Postgraduate Sub-Committee.

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The University's Corporate Plan 2014-2020, as outlined in the institutional level environment statement, made a commitment to work together to achieve five strategic aims. Below is a summary, with examples, of how this Unit contributed to the overall strategy:

1. An expanding and innovative University research environment has been hosted through providing research active staff within the Faculty with individual allocations of time to undertake research through the Workload Allocation Model (WAMS) and providing a total of £81.1k from QR funding for research projects and activities specifically aligned to the Unit's research strategy. An example of this is Skillen's work on popular culture, funded through QR (Skillen, P. (2020). *Scouse Pop*. Equinox: Sheffield, UK.). This funding represents an increase in the reach and depth of the research project that Skillen has established, including 11 episodes of *Scouse Pop*, available through YouTube, numerous appearances on local radio, a seed-funded documentary, and a column in a regional newspaper about popular culture during the '80s. Overall, this expansion has resulted in staff with a significant responsibility for independent research, as reported in REF1a, increasing by 80% in REF2021, compared to REF2014.
2. Knowledge has been created through research and innovation by crossing traditional boundaries within academic disciplines, evidenced in particular through the research into creativity and the research into marginalisation, both of which have successfully integrated with one another via RECAP. The methodological innovation of these two key themes developed through discussions between RIGs, which are a core component of the research culture in the Faculty. This is evidenced, for example, within Atherton's work on methodology and the representation of chronic homelessness in the following publication:

Moran, P. and Atherton, F. (2018). *The Philosophy of Homelessness*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

In relation to research into belonging, exclusion, and identity, the Unit has recently attracted a new member of staff, Hamilton, whose research specialism also aligns to marginalisation, having researched into the experiences of young females from the travelling community within secondary education:

Hamilton, P., (2016): School books or wedding dresses? Examining the cultural dissonance experienced by young Gypsy/Traveller women in secondary education, *Gender and Education*, DOI: 10.1080/09540253.2016.1270423

3. High quality research and innovative practices have contributed to exceptional learning and teaching through the taught Education Doctorate (EdD) modules, which demonstrates the inextricable link between research undertaken within the Faculty, and the innovative teaching practices that contribute to exceptional learning as part of the student experience. This is evidenced, for example, through the expansion of RECAP as a methodological hub for theoretical and applied approaches to research, for both staff and students, that as a consequence has increased the number of research staff integrating their research into the doctoral programme. Overall, the doctoral level completions, as reported in REF4a, has increased nearly ten-fold, from 2.8fte (REF2014) to 27.95fte (REF2021). High quality research and innovation have also influenced the development and improvement of society through, for example, Moran and colleagues' contribution to marginalisation research into post-placement adoption support services, which evaluated the needs of adopted children and their adoptive families to inform support outcomes:

Harlow, E. Mitchell, A., Doherty, P. and Moran, P. (2015) *Constructing and Delivering Services of Support: An Evaluation of the Northwest Post-placement Adoption Support Service*. (2). Chester: University of Chester.

The research gave rise to the insight that school staff members were unaware of the principle that children's early relationships (attachments) impacted upon their ability to learn and make the most of their educational opportunities. This insight was taken up by the charity the Alex Timpson

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Trust, which invested £1 million in raising awareness amongst school personnel, changing practices in schools and campaigning to change teacher training.

- Evidence of an enabling research environment can be seen in, for example, the novel theoretical and methodological approaches by Owens and colleagues that challenges the accepted social and epistemological hierarchies through the expansion of the Centre for Research into Education, Creativity and Arts through Practice (RECAP). RECAP has been integral to bolstering the research environment within the Unit, expanding on international research networks, attracting an increased number of postgraduate research students engaged in this research area, and attracting substantial funding. A key publication articulating RECAP's operating principle of 'Critical Creativity' is the research monograph, which references the wide range of partners we work with, in and beyond the academy:

Adams, J. and Owens, A. (2016) *Creativity and Democracy in Education: practices and politics of learning through the arts*. Oxon. & New York: Routledge. Published Book-research monograph. (120 pages) Hardback: ISBN: 9780415741217 (hbk) 978-1-315-81540-4 (ebk) ISBN-13: 978-1138103917 ISBN-10: 1138103918 (pbk) 2017.

- The Faculty is the partner of choice in the communities that we serve, evidenced, for example, through the partnership between University of Chester and Storyhouse, a major arts and cultural base in the North West of England. Storyhouse provides both the Faculty and the wider institution with opportunities for the development and dissemination of arts-based research, by supporting researchers within the Faculty and also its research partners. An early career researcher (Poole), submitted within this Unit, has secured a secondment through this prestigious and significant civic cultural institution, facilitating the partnership with the University, particularly in relation to cultural education. The partnership offers direct benefits for University of Chester staff and students through a sharing of expertise, facilities, curriculum development and research. For example, the public lecture series has so far enabled dissemination of research to over 600 members of the public including, as part of the Educating Creatively Conference, those attending an event based on research into popular music from Liverpool during the 1980s, hosted by Skillen, and based upon his extensive research into 'Scouse Pop':

Skillen, P. (2020). *Scouse Pop*. Equinox: Sheffield, UK.

Future strategic aims

The Faculty of Education and Children's Services' teaching and research activities encapsulate the University's 'Citizen Student' strategy, which seeks to equip its staff and students with the skills and knowledge to be 'confident world citizens'. The vision of 'teaching-led research' formalises the University's commitment to encourage students at all levels to develop research skills and engage in research activities, and this ambition will be realised through this Unit in the following ways:

- The Unit will support and promote the Institution's distinctive research priorities through the alignment of its central research areas (marginalisation, creativity, and early years) with the university-wide strategic core themes.
- These research clusters will streamline activities to develop and create sustainable interdisciplinary links for the Unit. The fostering of increased collaborative multidisciplinary research activities will be core to the success of the development of these research areas, particularly in relation to marginalised groups, which will be vital to the continued vitality and sustainability of the Unit. Central to this collaboration will be the Unit's role in disseminating the transdisciplinary research, and supporting the impact agenda of its network of public sector bodies, particularly with education providers across and beyond the region. Key to the impact agenda will be the partnership with Storyhouse, which this Unit plans to develop over the forthcoming period, extending the benefits across the institution and local region, with increasing rigour, particularly given the devastating impact of Covid-19 on the arts and entertainment sector.

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- Despite its ten-fold increase in research income between REF2014 and REF2021, the Unit recognises the challenges of a small staff base, and is committed to collaborate in the aforementioned research clusters to secure additional research income through the Chester Grant Support Initiative. Having witnessed the increasing vitality of the research environment within the Unit as a consequence of significant funding of the RECAP centre, the intention is to establish a focused resource to bring together the far-reaching research of marginalised groups. Notwithstanding this, the Unit will strive to ensure that all staff (including those primarily engaged in teaching activities) are encouraged to engage in research activities within and beyond the Unit with the objective that an increased number of staff without a significant responsibility for independent research are empowered to get involved, particularly in alignment with their teaching. Within the FRMG, Associate Dean Dr Bacon, and a senior research officer, will address the logistics of this, and consequently monitor progress as part of the overall movement towards achievement of the identified objectives.
- Within the Unit, increasing the postgraduate research base will continue to be a priority and the ambition is to increase enrolment onto the EdD course year on year. We will also take the opportunity offered by revalidation of this Programme to explore its online co-delivery with international HE partners, around the theme of social engagement: an important opportunity that will help us build on our own research in this area.

The Unit is committed to enhancing the existing offering through its alignment with the University's 'Citizen Student' strategy, which aims to ensure research is embedded in all aspects of University life. A significant component of this will be exposure to a far greater range of methodologies, and awareness and experience of the impact of research beyond their specific area, which will be achieved through engagement with the aforementioned clusters. Not only will this increase collaboration with staff and other postgraduate research students in complementary research areas, but it will also support the translation of research and impact to undergraduate students, realising the ambition of embedding a culture of student as researcher. Targeted investment into the infrastructure and facilities will enhance the provision already offered to realise this ambition. The responsibility for, and development and management of, this initiative will lie substantially with the two Associate Deans for the Faculty.

2. People

Overview

As outlined in the institutional level environment statement, the University of Chester prides itself on employing exceptional staff that contribute varied skills and experience. Given the nature of the Faculty of Education and Children's Services, our academics come from professional backgrounds and offer a wealth of diverse experiences across the education sector, enriching the knowledge and perspectives of the Unit. In addition, the Faculty's Research Strategy focusses on creating a research environment where intellectual rigour, innovation, and excellence are pursued by all academic staff, and all staff and students are supported in engaging with research. The Unit supports the University's commitment to values that seek to foster an environment that is "open, inclusive, and supportive," and we encourage staff to see students and other collaborators as fundamental to the achievement of these aims, with their intellectual endeavours integral to our research activity.

Staffing Strategy and Staff Development

The Unit considers the relationship between teaching and research to be symbiotic, and a programme of development activities supports staff in balancing these two aspects of academia by offering:

- mentoring and workshops for Early Career Researchers;
- a workload management system which allows academics at all levels to balance their teaching and research responsibilities, and factors in extra time to apply for funding, as identified through the Chester Grant Support Initiative
- internal funding schemes;

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- training and development opportunities, including support with first publications, progressing after PhD completion, and identifying future career pathways
- investment in conference participation;
- grant-writing support.

Since REF2014, the Unit has focussed not only on sustaining, but also increasing the staff with a significant responsibility for independent research. This has been achieved through extension of the research trajectories of developing researchers (including Early Career Researchers), disseminating research interests through Faculty research seminars, sustaining a vibrant research culture through staff undertaking doctorates and participating in postdoctoral research, and developing pathways of research experience within the Faculty. Time is made available in the Workload Allocation Management System for these activities, and their value to the Institution is recognised.

The annual institutional Performance Development Plan (PDP) process, undertaken with line managers, is the standard mechanism for reviewing benchmarks for staff development, including research plans. Staff continue to be proactive in their own development, through participating in conferences, reviewing and editing journals, and engaging with and benefitting from the comprehensive professional development schemes available at the University of Chester. For example, Lambert, with support from the Faculty, has recently been promoted to Associate Professor. With research focussing on educational leadership, further education and professional qualifications, Lambert was recently invited to present on 'Emotional Recognition of Middle Leadership' at the University of Cambridge. This was built upon the following commissioned research:

Lambert, S. (2019) Leverage Leadership: A new paradigm for further education. Further Education Trust for Leadership

As another example, Atherton has been promoted to Lead of the Doctoral Programmes within the Faculty. Atherton continues empirical work and writing, with a focus on marginalisation and also early years. The following is an example of commissioned research undertaken by Atherton, together with Faculty Researcher Arya-Manesh, during the current period:

Atherton, F. and Arya-Manesh, E. (2016). Evaluation of Early Years Quality Improvement Project Commissioned by Black Friars Teaching Alliance and funded by the Department for Education (DfE) through the National College of Teaching and Learning.

Early Career Researchers

10 faculty staff have successfully gained a doctorate during the current REF period, with a further 12 in progress. These colleagues are encouraged to join the RIGs within the Unit, to gain the support of more experienced research staff, collaborate with on-going projects, and develop new projects of their own.

Staff have been supported in developing their research through funding schemes available through the institution. An example of an Early Career Researcher benefiting from such a scheme is Bamber, a Senior Lecturer who gained a doctorate (funded by the Faculty) in 2015 and has presented at a number of conferences, focusing on transformative and collaborative teacher education. Bamber has presented at further conferences and continues to lead on an Erasmus-funded project into Research in Teacher Education (RiTE). This project helps teachers to organise conceptual learning, particularly in mathematics, in ways that develop deeper and more independent learning in children.

Early Career Researchers, and other colleagues in development, have also been supported by working on existing research projects in order to develop their experience and expertise. An example of an Early Career Researcher benefitting from such an experience is Hulse, who gained a doctorate (funded by the Faculty) in 2015 and has presented at a number of conferences focusing on creative pedagogies in additional language learning. Hulse contributes to the activities of the RECAP Centre, and has collaborated with Owens to draw on creativity in education, specifically in relation to modern languages:

Hulse, B. (2018). Bringing languages to life: A longitudinal study of the development of creative practice in student teachers of modern languages. *Power and Education*, 10(1), 25–39;

Our most recent Early Career Researcher is Poole, a Senior Lecturer who gained a doctorate (funded by the Faculty) in 2019 and is now on a secondment to Storyhouse to increase research opportunities within and beyond the sphere of Arts and Craft Based Initiatives. Poole has presented at a number of conferences and is building a portfolio of commissioned research, most recently:

Pen-Y-Graig Framework for Woodland Skills Instructors and Psychotherapists. A Welsh Government 2-year pilot programme to test the viability of combining woodland regeneration with emergency service and veteran mental health recovery. (21k contracted and a further 9k pending). 2020. £30,000;

Research Students

Below is the disaggregated total number of doctoral degrees (PhDs and research-based professional doctorates) awarded, as reported in REF4a, for each year in the assessment period.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
PhD	0	0	1.0	0.6	2.1	0.4	1.0
Professional Doctorate	0	3.0	1.7	2.0	0	5.65	10.5

The number of research doctoral degrees awarded in the current REF period is 27.95, significantly greater than the 2.8 returned to REF2014, and the third highest number within the institution. The growth in these numbers reflects the high demand that the Faculty's research community has been able to develop and sustain.

There continues to be an increase in the number of applications from serving practitioners working in a range of settings, including schools, FE, and HE institutions, a trend which has been continuing for several years. Professional serving practitioners in these settings have significant time constraints, which require flexible and considerate supervision strategies. There is consistently a proportion of applicants who are employees of the University of Chester, as there is for applicants who are academics at other universities. Supporting the ongoing development of supervision capacity in the Faculty, therefore, continues to attract investment in additional staffing and resources

The current number of PhD students (11) is modest in comparison to the number on the EdD programme; however, the areas of research explored by the PhD students reflect the diverse research specialisms across the Faculty:

- Example 1: Playfulness and the Experiences of Patients with Dementia in Care Homes
- Example 2: Transformative Agency in Education Through Applied Theatre and Drama
- Example 3: Art and School Collaborations: Contextual Studies in Sweden using Arts-Based Methods

The development of new methodological approaches to research at applied and theoretical levels is seen, by way of an example, in the way research-active tutors have encouraged students in their doctoral work, to explore artistic and creative methodologies, resulting in successful completions:

- Example 1: A reflexive arts investigation: An examination of the shifting gendered identities of mother and daughter through psychodynamic and feminist discourses (EdD)
- Example 2: Living and learning through song (EdD)
- Example 3: Queering Blackpool: An Ethnographic Study (EdD)

Training and Support for Research Students

Whilst students are initially attracted by strong research accents being placed on critical theory, marginalisation, and innovative research methodologies, the numbers are sustained by the

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supportive mechanisms in place. The Doctoral Programme Leader, Senior Faculty Postgraduate Research Tutor, and Research colleagues systematically monitor these mechanisms, which include:

- Bi/monthly supervisor progress assessments for all doctoral research students
- Formal Annual Progress Reports
- Managing training for postgraduate policies and practices at Faculty/University level
- Oversight of research student ethical compliance through the Faculty Ethics Committee
- Encouraging participation in the annual Faculty Postgraduate Research Conference, as well as other research conferences
- Providing opportunities to engage in research collaborations with other institutions, both nationally and internationally

In order to fulfil our strategic aim to enhance the research environment for our PGR community, and to equip them for successful completion and future employment, progression plans are supplemented by an innovative and extensive training programme. To widen participation in these programmes, and take into account the needs of a diverse cohort of postgraduate research students with work/family commitments, departmental training is generally held on the same day as the research seminars. This is designed to encourage attendance from what is often a dispersed part-time community, and to provide training appropriate to PGR students at every stage of their research journey. Significant to the shared commitment to our Postgraduate community, all members of the department are involved in the provision of training.

Training sessions are designed to offer support to students at all stages of their PGR journey and beyond. These include core skills aimed at students early on in their doctoral career, such as research ethics, literature reviews, qualitative data analysis, and time management, as well as more advanced topics such as getting published, conference planning, digital humanities, and the analysis of key theoretical texts. These sessions are publicly available online, not only for the benefit of our current and potential PGR students, but as a contribution to the wider academy. PGR students on the Doctor of Professional Studies programme are offered parallel provision by means of termly residential research seminars, plus an annual summer school for professional doctorate students across four HE centres of excellence in the field. Towards the end of the study period, all research students are offered a formal mock viva in preparation for their final examination. While providing information and skills-training to support PGR students towards successful completion, the training programme also provides sessions on employability, both in and out of the academy.

Students are required to participate in our regular programme of research seminars. This is an integral aspect of academic formation, and helps to forge the principles and practices of peer review, to the mutual benefit of both presenter and audience. A simple but highly effective measure adopted within all our research seminars has been to give PGR students first priority in Q&A. This has successfully increased the confidence of individuals to participate in the professional research culture, and prepares students for the requirement to present at a department seminar or dedicated PGR symposium as a condition of their upgrade to PhD status.

These measures, including support with academic publication, have proven successful in instilling in PGR candidates the skills to participate in national and international conferences, for which bursaries have been available to students presenting papers. For example, Lindsey Bennett was recently successful in having her thesis accepted for publication with Routledge:

Bennett, L. (2021) *Making and Relational Creativity*. Oxon and New York: Routledge

Supervision of Research Students

As a result of the success of the doctoral provision in the Faculty, it has enabled the cultivation of a strong supervisory team that continues to expand. This will continue to evolve and strengthen as more staff complete their doctoral studies. As the reputation of the EdD continues to grow, the capacity of the Faculty to accommodate students in terms of supervision is a vital consideration and so a number of measures have been introduced to develop supervision capacity. The Unit, to support the building of capacity and expertise of the doctoral supervisory team, have paired new doctoral supervisors with more experienced colleagues. This is coordinated by Atherton, Faculty Leader for

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Doctoral Programmes. All staff undertaking research supervision complete mandatory University training to ensure that professional practices are integral to the activities. Currently, there are sixteen staff within the Faculty who are involved in supervision of both EdD and PhD students, of which four have come through the professional doctorate route within the Faculty themselves.

To manage the increased number of doctoral students moving to the thesis phase of the EdD, more experienced colleagues with complementary expertise from other faculties have been invited to co-supervise with new supervisors in this Faculty. All suitably qualified staff within the Faculty, including staff who have recently achieved their doctoral qualification, are invited to be a part of this and to contribute their specific expertise where they can. To encourage colleagues to become more involved with supervision, a new apprenticeship scheme is being developed whereby staff are invited by the student and the existing supervision team to observe supervision meetings at both Masters level and Doctoral level to gain insight into what is involved. Alongside University- and Faculty-led supervision training opportunities, the new apprenticeship scheme aims to enhance the Faculty's overall supervision capacity in a more inclusive way, to draw on colleagues with a range of expertise from which students can benefit.

Equality and Diversity

Given the research scope and interests of the members of the UoA, and the professional backgrounds of colleagues within the Faculty of Education and Children's Services, the fundamental importance of equality and diversity is evident and embedded in our culture.

Research into marginalisation, at its most basic level, seeks to address equality beyond the institution. Much of the thrust of the research undertaken within the Unit is about understanding the processes of marginalisation, and the means of social inclusion. For example, Moran's ethnographic study of the school experience of a looked-after child demonstrates how everyday classroom and school practices can successfully support the sense of belonging and confidence of vulnerable and marginalised children, and how theory can help us to clarify these issues:

Moran, P., (2016). How can it be? Nietzsche, the radical water practice of a looked after child, and the established order of the school. *Other Education: The Journal of Educational Alternatives*, 5(2), 148-168.

Similarly, Moran and Atherton's research into chronic homelessness analysed the causes that have resulted in this most marginalising of conditions, and the forms of support that were successful routes out of chronic homelessness:

Moran, P., and Atherton, F. (2018) *The Philosophy of Homelessness*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge

Other examples of research from the Unit that demonstrate a commitment to supporting social inclusion are:

Devarakonda, C. (2014). *Diversity and inclusion in early childhood: An introduction*. London, United Kingdom: SAGE.

Devarakonda, C., & Powlay, L. (2016). *Diversity and Inclusion*. In Wyse, D. & Rogers, S. (Eds.), *A guide to Early years and Primary teaching*. United Kingdom: Sage Publications.

Research within the Unit that explicitly tackles issues central to equity and inclusion is integrated into the doctoral modules. For example, PR8002 *Institutions, discontinuities and systems of knowledge* opens debate and analysis about the impacts of the unequal distribution of educational capital within society, as well including research undertaken within the Unit on adoption, looked-after children, poverty, and homelessness.

Staff within the Faculty are encouraged to get involved in the range of support groups facilitated by the University (including networks for women, parents and carers, and staff groups for disabled and

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LGBT+ people), and also with the University's annual Diversity Festival and International Women's Day Events. The Riverside site includes facilities such as a parent and baby room, gender neutral and accessible toilet facilities, and reserved parking for disabled people who are Blue Badge holders.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities**Income**

Overall, the research income, as reported in REF4b, has increased more than ten-fold; from £49,174 in REF2014 to £510,307 in REF2021. Much of the income has been driven through RECAP by international, collaborative projects - between 2014 – 2020 RECAP brought in £768,074 in research funding. RECAP has been the focus of much of the Faculty's research development, with the capacity to manage larger research projects that have developed sustainable partnerships and provided the opportunity for developing researchers to gain experience by being included in the work.

Other funded research demonstrating research impact in the area of marginalisation and social engagement includes Moran and colleagues' contribution into post-placement adoption support services. This was an £18,000 project funded through the Department for Education, Adoption Matters, Caritas Care that evaluated the needs of adopted children and their adoptive families to inform support outcomes:

Harlow, E. Mitchell, A., Doherty, P. and Moran, P. (2015) *Constructing and Delivering Services of Support: An Evaluation of the Northwest Post-placement Adoption Support Service*. (2). Chester: University of Chester

Insights from this research resulted in the charity the Alex Timpson Trust investing £1 million in raising awareness amongst school personnel, changing practices in schools, and campaigning to change teacher training. Across England and Scotland, this money has been spent on the creation of a consultancy post for Professor Harlow, training materials and accessible books, informative events and artefacts, support for associated charities and third sector organisations, and an action research project. Ofsted and the Department for Education have also been impacted, as have professionals, children, and families as schools have introduced change as a result of becoming 'attachment aware'.

Infrastructure

Research activity is co-ordinated through the FRMG, led by an Associate Dean who reports to the Faculty's Management Group. The FRMG has overall management responsibility for research within the Faculty, and is made up of representatives from each of the RIGs, the Doctoral Programme Leader, and the FRMG administrator, an experienced bid writer who coordinates research grant opportunities managed through the University Research and Knowledge Transfer Office.

The FRMG includes representatives from the RIGs, which Early Career Researchers are encouraged to join to benefit from the experience of more senior research staff, collaborate on existing projects, and develop their own projects. Through careful consideration of the research infrastructure and focussing on broadening its research base, the Unit has demonstrated sustainability through challenging times. Examples of Early Career Researchers whose progress has been supported in this way include Bamber and Hulse, as part of the Pedagogy and Practice RIG.

The outputs of these ECRs include:

Hulse, B. & Owens, A. (2017). *Process drama as a tool for teaching modern languages: supporting the development of creativity and innovation in early professional practice*. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 13(1),17-30;

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Griffiths, J., Bamber, S., French, G., Hulse, B., Jones, G., Jones, R., Jones, S., Williams, G., Wordsworth, H., Hughes, C. (2020) Growing Tomorrow's Teachers Together: The CaBan Initial Teacher Education Partnership, *Wales Journal of Education*, 22(1),209-231.

The commissioned research, a Teacher Education (RiTE) collaborative Erasmus funded project 2019-2022, of ECR Bamber led to:

Archer, R. & Bamber, S. (2020). Moving towards classrooms that foster deep conceptual understanding and reasoning. In Jain, P. & Hyde, R. (Eds) *Myths and legends of mastery in the mathematics curriculum*. London, United Kingdom: Sage Publications;

Bamber, S. (2018). Translating research into practice through collaborative planning. in Adams G. (Ed.) *Proceedings of the British Society for Research into Learning Mathematics* 38(3);

Bamber, S. (2016). Raising attainment of middle-lower GCSE students. in Adams G. (Ed.) *Proceedings of the British Society for Research into Learning Mathematics* 36(1);

Facilities

Physical facilities provided at our Riverside site include seminar and lecture spaces as well as specialist workshop facilities such as art/design and technology spaces and laboratories, plus a library supplemented by extensive online resources and teaching materials. Our facilities are enhanced through collaboration with Tate Liverpool, and that includes the co-delivery of the EdD module PR8007 Creativity in Practice. This has provided students with the opportunity to explore the ways in which an internationally significant arts institution engages artists and creative practices with communities, supporting social engagement. These themes are coextensive with RECAP's work and purpose. Similarly, our facilities are enhanced through collaboration with Chester Storyhouse, which, as well as being part of the Faculty's cultural education programme (run by Dr Poole, seconded from the Faculty to manage this joint programme), is also an institutional host for postgraduate research projects.

4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society**Key research users, beneficiaries and audiences**

Much of the research within the Faculty is characterised by its collaborative nature. Broadly collaboration is with:

- educational institutions locally and nationally;
- educational institutions internationally;
- institutions and partners that have a broader educational and social engagement focus, such as councils and cultural institutions.

Examples of research collaborations with local educational and partners with a broader educational and social engagement focus, include research involving two local adoption agencies, Adoption Matters and Caritas Care, as well as local social services:

Harlow, E., Mitchell, A. E. P., Doherty, P., & Moran, P. (2015). *Constructing and delivering services of support: An Evaluation of the Northwest Post-placement Adoption Support Service*. Chester, United Kingdom: University of Chester

- Research which explores the experiences of looked after children

Moran, P., (2016). How can it be? Nietzsche, the radical water practice of a looked after child, and the established order of the school. *Other Education: The Journal of Educational Alternatives*, 5(2), 148-168).

A demonstration of contributing effectively to the economic, social and cultural success of the communities we serve is included as an impact case study in REF3:

Examples of collaborations with international educational and non-educational institutions include practice-based research collaborations with over 40 organisations. In this context, RECAP sponsored research seeks to establish partnerships between educators and other social organizations to facilitate and effect positive social change, often internationally. For example, in Japan, where Owens and collaborator Taichi Kikaku Theatre worked with the Tsunami Disaster Committee in Minimisoma and returning evacuated citizens of Fukushima; and in Palestine where a focus on the relation of creativity to democratic and critical practices in the classroom and led to the publication:

Adams, J., Al-Yamani, H., Arya-Manesh, E., Mizel, O., Owens, A., & Qurie, D. A. (2020). Understandings of creative practice and pedagogy by teacher education communities in West Bank, Palestine, and North West England. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 1-17.

Tate Liverpool's co-delivery of the EdD module *Creativity in Practice* provides students with the opportunity to explore how an internationally significant arts institution engages artists and creative practices with communities, and supports social engagement, both of which are themes that are coextensive with RECAP's work and purpose.

Visiting research fellows Dr Anne Passila (LUT University Finland) and Professor Osterlind (University of Stockholm), in addition to continuing and sharing their own research, ran seminars with researchers for researchers within the Faculty on developing arts-based methodologies for working with businesses and public bodies. Visiting artist-scholar Yosuke Ohashi (Taichi Kikaku Theatre Tokyo, Japan) shared examples of arts-based practices being used to support communities in crisis. An example includes supporting survivors of 2011's Fukushima nuclear disaster in returning to their homes.

The key publication articulating RECAP's research monograph written to reference the wide range of partners in and beyond the academy:

Adams, J. and Owens, A. (2016) *Creativity and Democracy in Education: practices and politics of learning through the arts*. Oxon. & New York: Routledge

This research demonstrated how partners, using pretext drama techniques in partnerships outside of educational institutions, were able to acquire and demonstrate skill sets that helped them to face and tackle problems in creative, inclusive, and sustainable ways.

Application of RECAP methodology with international colleagues in the area of pedagogy and democracy is evidenced by:

Adams, J., Al-Yamani, H., Arya-Manesh, E., Mizel, O., Owens, A. a 'Qurie, D. (2020). Understandings of creative practice and pedagogy by teacher education communities in West Bank, Palestine, and North-West England, *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*

Wider activities and contributions

At the local level, Moran and Atherton's research on chronic homelessness has resulted in a joint project with Cheshire West and Chester Council to involve service users in the management and provision of support for homeless people in the area. At the national level, Moran's work with Professor Harlow has raised awareness of the needs of children with trauma and attachment issues with the national government, and with those responsible for delivering national school education. The organisations included in this were The Department for Education, Adoption Matters, Caritas Care, and the Alex Timpson Trust. Internationally, RECAP and Owens' research have established relationships between educational providers and other bodies concerned with social engagement, such as arts and culture institutions, businesses, schools, and universities. These examples include Alrowwad Cultural and Theatre Society, Palestine; Bethlehem University, Palestine; La Nave Va Theatre, Spain; Lappeenranta University of Technology (LUT), Finland; Rapid Action Group (RAG), Finland; University of Tartu, Estonia, and University of Vic, Spain.

The doctoral research programmes have successfully supported students undertaking their own research into the key themes of marginalisation and social engagement. For example, doctoral students have published on significant and current issues such as homophobia in secondary schools in the Northwest of England, and using arts-based methodologies to explore the experience of displacement amongst Palestinian scholars living in Gaza and studying in the UK:

Clark, N. E. (2018). *The LGBT+ Pupil as the Abject: An Ethnographic Exploration of Subjectivity and Discourse in UK Secondary Schools*. (Doctoral dissertation). University of Chester, United Kingdom.

Elwaheidi, M, T. (2018). *Leaving everything behind: understanding the experiences of Palestinian academics and their families in the UK* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Chester, UK.

Staff contributions to the research base include:

Atherton - External Examiner for early childhood programmes in Canterbury Christchurch University and London Metropolitan University, UK and University of Sheffield in Malta. Conference presentations include: BERA Symposium Paper (2015) Belfast; 5th Global Conference on Trauma, Lisbon (2015); British Early Childhood Research Association (2014).

Atherton and Moran facilitated a conference in Palestine (2020) with academic colleagues, NGOs and professional associates working in a range of political, professional and cultural contexts, about artistic, creative and ethnographic methodologies, drawing upon their own published work and exploring its potential for research in volatile environments.

Devarakonda has given keynote speeches at Equaliteach, Belfast Childcare partnership, Amity University, USA, Pondicherry University, India, and Constanz University, Germany. She has also been invited to give talks at Autonomous University of Barcelona, Millersville University, HU Institute of Applied Sciences. Devarakonda is External Examiner for the School of Education, Anglia Ruskin University and has examined doctoral theses in various universities in the UK and elsewhere. She is a reviewer for the journals *Power and Education*, *Disability, CBR and inclusive development*, *Critical Studies in Education*, *American Education Research Association*, and UNESCO reports.

Hamilton - External Examiner for the Faculty of Education at Edge Hill University, Senior Fellow (HEA), Peer Reviewer (2014) *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*

Lambert - Recipient of the 2016 FETL national research fellowship. Conference presentation June 2020: Emotional recognition of Middle leadership – University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education.

Owens - National Teaching Fellow, member of International Advisory Boards for the *International Journal for Applied Drama and Theatre Research* in Australia and *Journal for Drama and Theatre Education in Asia*, Board Member and Trustee for Storyhouse, Shakespeare North Education Committee Member, Scientific Adviser to ARTSEQUAL, Review and Advisory Board Member, *Applied Theatre Research: Intellect Journals*, Referee for *The Journal for Drama in Education: National Association for the Teaching of Drama*, Reviewer for the *South African Theatre Journal*, Board member and Trustee Chair of the Artistic Policy Sub-Committee – Chester Performs, RE:NEW Cultural Centre

Poole - Senior Leader for Cultural Education and Research (Storyhouse), Director of Research for Lapidus International, Co-vice chair for Chester and Cheshire's Local Cultural Education Partnership and a Trustee for Mythstories. Reviewer for a special issue of the journal *Pedagogika*: 'Digital technology and education'. Poole has given keynote or leading addresses at international conferences including at Braga Institute (Helsinki), Vaasa, Jyvaskyla and Turku in Finland, Kotle Jarvi, Tallinn, Viljandi, Estonia, Fabri Coats, Barcelona and Vic, Catalonia. Panellist at *Places for performance: New Directions* 'Are theatres an opportunity or a burden', and Chair of panel: 'Pink or Blue, Trains or Dolls; Are we selling our children a gendered worldview?' at Storyhouse. Panel Member and Presenter: *Games and Gamification*, *MirandaNet*

Skillen - Member of the British Psychological Society and Performing Rights Society, and Fellow (HEA)

Additional Contributions in Light of Covid-19

Recognising the importance of contributing towards national efforts, and in prompt response to the sudden and severe impact of Covid-19 upon the education sector, we offered a suite of free CPD from March 2020. This covered areas such as inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), and, of particular relevance to the research expertise of the Unit, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). With over 20,000 attendees from across the UK, 100% of the feedback received indicated that respondents were positively impacted by the training, including: (1) “all my staff at school have found them to be excellent so far, so please pass on Greenbank School staff to all your team”; (2) “Thank you for providing such excellent free sessions for us to take part in. I’ve been through a lot of difficult times and been directly affected by the coronavirus and was unsure whether I would be able to focus to attend. However, I am very glad I have and have found them very useful”; (3) “a huge thank you to all involved with the Faculty of Education for providing such a rich and diverse range of excellent CPD opportunities. By the end of next week, I will have benefited from 9 of the sessions provided by your expert team. I am so busy at the moment, facilitating home learning for my Year 6 class and the CPD is a welcome break to revise, reinforce, build and stretch my own knowledge”.