

Institution: University of Nottingham

Unit of assessment: UoA27B, School of Contemporary Chinese Studies

a. Overview

The School of Contemporary Chinese (SCCS) was founded in January 2007 through the merger of two small units – the Institute of Contemporary Chinese Studies, established in 2000, and the China Policy Institute (CPI), established in 2004. Its foundation reflected the University's broader internationalization strategy and marked a commitment to build the most dynamic school in Europe focused on social sciences research and teaching about contemporary China. It is a freestanding school that works closely with the rest of the University, particularly in fostering the University's China strategy.

The School has grown significantly, from a staff of 13 academics in 2008 to the current 24 academics, four Marie Curie Fellows, 30 PhD students and 5.66 (FTE) staff involved in Mandarin/teaching support roles. Research income now exceeds £1.4 million. The School actively engages in China-focused research in the social sciences and humanities and fosters an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach to researching China's economic, financial, social, cultural, political, legal, historical and technological development. It does so in close collaboration with the University's China campus in Ningbo, where two senior members of staff are currently based.

The reorganized CPI is the School's dedicated research arm. As such, it fulfils three key functions across the School: (1) to encourage and support high-quality research; (2) to ensure research is relevant and useful beyond academia; and (3) to disseminate research accordingly. It is unique among Chinese and East Asian studies departments in EU universities in its comprehensive efforts to reach out to governments, businesses, media, local communities and NGOs. It has also built an international network to enable staff to explore and develop collaborative research with fellow academics and practitioners. Since 2012 the School has reinforced and complemented the CPI by promoting the clustering of research into centres.

b. Research strategy

The School has prioritized a number of overarching strategic goals since it was established in 2007. These have provided clear direction and guidance throughout the REF 2014 period. They are as follows:

1. To establish the School as the leading centre within the EU for research and teaching on contemporary China, including Taiwan and other Chinese communities. This includes making sure research enhances the teaching and learning experience.
2. To conduct cutting-edge and thought-provoking research in disciplines of social sciences and the humanities on contemporary China, focusing on multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary collaborative research that is intellectually and methodologically robust.
3. To ensure the School is a collaborator of choice in research on contemporary China.
4. To develop fully the advantages delivered by the CPI.
5. To ensure the School is attractive to leading China experts and ambitious scholars at all career stages by providing a congenial environment that supports individual and collaborative research through making resources available, encouraging the formation of research teams, supporting grant applications and assisting the dissemination of research findings.
6. To ensure the School is attractive to the best research students by putting in place a system for recruiting, administering and supporting an exemplary PhD programme.

Like the overall strategy itself, the mechanisms used to achieve these goals are to some extent constantly and necessarily evolving. However, they can be summed up as follows:

1. **Promoting research excellence.** To secure strategic goals 1-3 the School promotes research excellence by:

- *Supporting the clustering of research expertise.* The School's academics are encouraged to work together to explore how they can produce synergy in their research, which can be interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary. This approach was first demonstrated by the Taiwan

Studies Programme, which saw five staff (Tsang, Morgan, Sullivan, Taylor and Lee) from three disciplines, plus one PhD student, begin working together on different aspects of Taiwan and engaging in an interdisciplinary research project on “Taiwan’s Impact on China”. Other clusters have now developed into four discipline-driven centres:

- Contemporary Chinese Politics and International Relations (Fulda, Tsang, Lee, Sullivan, Q. Wu, B. Wu and Lai, plus PhD students S. Kang, E. Pron, M. Thim, T. Fallon, S. Stieber and K. Wzsozanska) takes a macro approach to studying China’s emerging global partnerships with Europe, the US, South America and Africa and also examines more specifically the dynamics between the directions of political development and changes in society and economy.
- Applied Economics (Herrerias, Yao, Song, J. Zhang, Luo, Lai, Li, Chen, J. Wang, Morgan and Q. Wu, plus PhD students S. Beatson, M. Bastin, R. Ding, H. Loh, J. Ou, S. Meyer, S. Zhao, W. Long, T. Yao, F. Zhang, Z. Liang, H. Yin, K. Wysoczanska, Y. Zhao and J. Li) specializes in examining the relevance and importance of three key issues: the role played by technological progress and governance on climate change policy; the internationalization of the Chinese economy and its impact on the transmission of shocks across countries; and inequality and social economic policy.
- Chinese Migration (B. Wu, Sheehan, Cao, Q. Wu, Lee and J. Wang, plus PhD students F. Gao, J. Li and W. Long) examines the causes, processes, institutional resource constraints and socio-economic consequences of migration within China, as well as the dynamics and mechanisms for overseas Chinese migrants to integrate in destination countries.
- Finance and Banking in China (Chen, Luo, Li, Rooker, J. Wang and Horesh, plus PhD students S. Beatson and Y. Zhao) investigates the dynamics behind the Chinese financial and banking system.

Through these centres the School aims to develop synergy among staff by promoting and supporting cutting-edge collaborative research that can be developed into research projects for major grant applications. The involvement of PhD candidates helps to build their confidence and broaden their intellectual horizons as early career researchers. While the School supports clustering, it is also committed to individual staff members whose research does not fall within the existing centres. Part of the strategy is to build in flexibility for new clusters to be formed, for existing ones to evolve and for any individual who happens to be the only person in a particular discipline to work outside a centre without being disadvantaged.

- *Mentoring grant applications.* The School mentors grant applications through a tiered multiple mentoring and review process. A member of staff intending to apply for a major grant is encouraged to have discussions with the Research Director, who invites other experienced staff to advise as appropriate and utilizes the University’s Research and Graduate Services to help with costing and technical matters in designing a research proposal. The Research Director passes on the draft application to the University’s Centre for Advanced Studies and the Peer Review College, inviting constructive criticism before a formal application is made. The School ensures staff members take advantage of regular grant-writing workshops organized by the University to improve their skills in designing research proposals and managing research projects.
- *Sharing research findings.* The School uses the following formats to promote intellectual discourse and exchanges:
 - Brown-bag seminars: These hour-long events, held weekly during term, allow staff and PhD students to present findings from on-going research. Presenters receive constructive criticism, while other members of staff are kept informed of colleagues’ work.
 - Research seminars: These 90-minute events, held weekly during term, mostly feature external speakers, but staff members with completed research are also invited to speak. The series engages with the wider academic community and has attracted speakers from the UK, Australia, China, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore, the US and Taiwan.
 - Research workshops: Usually for up to 40 delegates and lasting up to two days, these

events allow speakers to give presentations of up to 20 minutes, followed by discussions of up to 50 minutes. They are generally used as a step in the production/development of collaborative research.

- **Major international conferences:** These include the annual International Forum for Contemporary Chinese Studies, which attracts up to 200 delegates from several continents and acts as a forum for intellectual discourse and networking. It includes PhD student panels to enable early career researchers to gain experience, confidence and skills.

2. Promoting research collaboration. To achieve strategic goal 5 (as well as 1-4) the School promotes collaboration not only among staff but also with colleagues worldwide. It takes advantage of the University's Ningbo Campus and inter-campus collaboration, including joint projects and the Ningbo Campus's support of PhD students conducting fieldwork in China. The EU-China Civil Society Dialogue, funded by a major EU grant, involves close collaboration with the China Association for NGO Cooperation, the German Asia Foundation, the Global Links Initiative, the Great Britain-China Centre, the Institute for Civil Society at Sun Yat-sen University and Leadership Inc., as well as our Ningbo branch.

Given its primary focus on using social sciences methodologies to study contemporary China, the School forges collaborative partnership with colleagues and institutions in China, with our Ningbo colleagues and beyond. It has strategic partnerships and develops collaborative research with various Chinese institutions. For example, the EU FP7 project on Chinese perceptions of the EU is based on a partnership with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Renmin University, Leiden University, Jacobs University Bremen and the Royal Institute of International Affairs. The CPI is engaged with the Central Party School in a project on the strategic direction of China's development in the coming decade – work that has received funding from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Royal Dutch Shell.

The School provides scope for academic visitors to conduct independent and collaborative research and to present findings. Self-funded short-term visitors, Marie Curie Visiting Fellows and Chevening Visiting Fellows benefit from this approach. (See section d for further details.)

The School is also working to build a collaborative network with colleagues and institutions outside China. The Taiwan Studies Programme leads the way in fostering collaboration beyond China and linking new partners with our China network. In addition to the five staff members, it includes four external collaborators who joined as non-resident Senior Fellows of the CPI: D. Keyser, formerly of the US State Department; R Wye, of Chatham House; G. Rawnsley, of Aberystwyth University; and M. Rawnsley, of Westminster University. All lessons learned from the collaborative process are shared with other research centres.

3. Maximizing impact through the CPI. To achieve strategic goal 4 the CPI fulfils the following functions in support of the School's overall research:

- Utilizes its working paper series as a platform for academic staff to put their research findings out for feedback so they can be revised for submission to the best journals;
- Makes, where appropriate, its links with policymakers, NGOs, the media and others available to staff and PhD students in support of their research;
- Hosts events, particularly workshops, with both academic and non-academic participants to help staff and students reach out beyond academia;
- Hosts visitors and speakers from outside academia and enables academic staff and PhD students to interact with them to promote their understanding of impact;
- Guides staff and PhD students in producing high-quality policy papers that highlight the policy implications of their research, thus helping them understand impact; and
- Enables staff and PhD students to put their ideas out for wider discussion via newspaper op-eds and the CPI blog (which attracted an average of 7,000 views per month in 2013).

4. Postgraduate administration. To achieve strategic goal 6 the School regularly reviews and enhances administrative support for postgraduate administration. (See section c.ii for further details.)

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

The School's staffing strategy celebrates diversity (staff members hail from Australia, China, Germany, Israel, Spain, Taiwan, the US and the UK) and encourages the introduction of best research practices from other countries. The School maintains the prevailing best practices in the UK until superior alternatives are brought to its attention.

In recruitment the School strikes a balance between several basic requirements. These include teaching needs; complementarity of research with existing staff; scope for new staff to develop; scope for developing new modules and new areas of research identified as strategically significant; and the suitability of the individual to the School's teaching and research environment. The great diversity of staff, the School's determination to cast the net as wide as possible and the non-tolerance of any discrimination reflect the enduring benefits of this approach.

Recruitment has ensured sustainability. In 2008 the School had one professor, three associate professors and nine lecturers. In 2013 it has four professors, two readers, six associate professors and twelve lecturers. Among the new professors, Tsang came from a professorial fellowship at St Antony's College, Oxford; Song from a chair at the University's own School of Sociology and Social Policy; and Morgan from a Readership at the School, after a worldwide search that attracted candidates from the EU, Australia and New Zealand. The School maintains a sufficiently flexible approach to appoint at senior levels scholars who have received their PhDs relatively recently but demonstrated exceptional achievements – e.g. Horesh (PhD, 2006; recruited as a Reader) and Sullivan (PhD, 2010; recruited as an Associate Professor). The School is also committed to developing a vibrant young academic community that nurtures early career scholars, as is reflected in the percentage (12.5%) of staff qualifying as early career researchers for the REF.

The School encourages junior staff to take training courses conducive to their careers (rather than just those required to fulfil their duties). For example, even a research fellow (Herrerias) has been invited to take the PGCHE so she can acquire the proper qualification to develop a teaching and research career if she so wishes. A system of informal mentoring exists to introduce less experienced staff to PhD supervision. Where the interest of the student concerned is not compromised, the School partners a less experienced staff member with an experienced PhD supervisor to supervise jointly. The School also offers full scope for staff to secure promotion quickly. Four Lecturers were promoted to Associate Professor (X. Zhang, Lai, Chen and Z. Wang) during the REF 2014 period, thus showing a clear path for career progression. The School also uses the annual personal development and performance review to ascertain what it can do to support individual staff development and advancement.

As part of its commitment to foster innovative, reflective and cutting-edge research, the School runs a study leave programme and provides funding for field research, taking part in conferences outside Nottingham and purchasing books. (See section d for further details.)

ii. Research students

During the REF 2014 period the School has graduated eight PhDs. All except one now hold teaching or research positions: at the University of Nottingham (two), the University of Newcastle, Monash University, Shanghai University of Economics and Finance, South China University of Technology and Hunan University. The last one graduated in July 2013.

In total, 30 PhD students were admitted between 1st August 2008 and 31st October 2012. Four hold ESRC awards and another an AHRC award; in addition, an AHRC MRes student has graduated. Six students have received scholarships from the University and another four Faculty doctoral training awards. Eleven students have received partial funding from the School and three partial funding from U21 awards. Five students have secured research-travel awards from the Universities China Committee of London; one an AHRC research fieldwork award; and three additional travel support from the U21 training and exchange support funds. Four new doctoral students started in September 2013, all with scholarships.

The PhD programme is an integral part of the School's research strategy. As PhD students

were admitted from 2007, when the School was founded, procedures and processes in recruitment and administration did not become standardized and institutionalized until the current REF period. A system is in place for dealing with enquires, admission administration, assessing every applicant's quality and suitability, allocating supervisors and assessing suitability for financial support. The procedures require an individual staff member who is approached by a potential applicant to inform the enquirer if supervisory capacity is available and if (s)he is willing to supervise – and, if not, to refer the enquiry to someone else who may be suitable. The policy is not to admit any applicant, however excellent, if no suitable supervisory capacity is available. A potential supervisor is required not to offer comments on an application but to advise a potential applicant of the procedures and the criteria for admission, so that (s)he can make the strongest presentation of a case for admission, which will be assessed strictly on merit. The application dossier, including a research proposal, a statement of interest in the School, a sample of written work and the standard completed form and references, is reviewed by two staff members independently, following a template. The School puts forward excellent applicants for scholarships, including Research Council scholarships and the University's own (the VC's Scholarship, the Sir Francis Hill Scholarship and the Faculty's DTA Scholarship). The School itself offers one to two PhD scholarships per year, and the Taiwan Studies Programme offers a scholarship every three years. The School tops up funding for exceptionally good applicants who have University Scholarships of lesser value than an RCUK scholarship.

The School makes the most of the ESRC DTC at the University by encouraging even non-RCUK-funded students to take modules offered by the DTC and the University's Graduate School. It also requires all PhD supervisors to meet their supervisees regularly, with 10 meetings a year as a guideline. Students and supervisors file agreed notes that summarize the key issues discussed, thus providing aides-memoires for both and enabling the School to monitor PhD supervision.

Towards the end of the first year a research student makes a presentation in a "brown bag" seminar to benefit from comments and engage with peers, staff and academic visitors. This represents an element of training, as the School aims to cultivate not only critical thinking but also the ability to organize and present research findings and arguments in a lucid and cogent way. The engagement dimension helps a student reach out to members of the School's network. Such occasions are used to foster team spirit and multidisciplinary discourse so that PhD graduates know about cross-disciplinary fertilization and how to explore collaboration. The Year 1 review is conducted to assess the progress made and the viability of a student's research plan and to provide constructive feedback.

The School supports PhD students in career development by offering opportunities for them to take teacher-training modules in the Graduate School and to serve as teaching assistants to acquire teaching experience. As the School develops research centres, PhD students are encouraged to join and explore the scope for joint research that leads to publication. The School also helps PhD candidates to adjust to full academic life by engaging them as active participants in conferences organized by the School. The School hosts a major international conference every year, and PhD candidates are encouraged to submit papers to be considered for inclusion. On the two occasions the conference was held overseas the School gave financial support to enable nine PhD candidates to travel to take part.

Under the initiative of the CPI, PhD candidates are offered further opportunities and support in building their skills and networks as early career researchers, as well as scope to disseminate their research findings. In 2013 the CPI made £7,500 available to the PhD student body to organize an international conference (led by T. Fallon) on the Emerging Powers, in collaboration with PhD students from the University's School of Politics. The CPI's "hands off but ready to help" approach gave the students the scope to develop and hone their skills in organizing and hosting an intellectually stimulating conference with delegates from 12 countries. This model is now being considered as a template that can be used on an annual basis. The CPI also provides other opportunities to the School's PhD students – as interns, as

helpers in workshops and as contributors to the policy paper series, the working paper series and the CPI blog. The high-profile speaker events organized by the CPI (e.g. lectures by Taiwan's 2012 presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwan's Deputy Defence Minister Andrew Yang and British Ambassador to Tokyo Sir David Warren) have provided PhD students with valuable opportunities for interaction and building confidence.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income. Total research award exceeds £2.0 million (see HESA statistics). This includes the School's share of large multinational projects supported by the EU. During the REF 2014 period the School, through the CPI, has played a leading role in designing, bidding for and implementing two such projects: the three-year "Chinese Perceptions of the EU" project, supported by the FP7 Programme (PI: Z. Wang), for which the total grant value was €1.4 million; and the China-EU Civil Society Dialogues (PI: Fulda), for which a grant of €1 million was awarded to a consortium of 10.

Selected individual medium-sized and small-sized grants include the following: Taiwan Studies Programme, £182,000 for 2011-2014, from the government of Taiwan (PI: Tsang); Farmers Innovation Systems on the Loess Plateau, £121,000 from NERC/DfID/ESRC ESPA (PI: B. Wu); Chinese Migration: Impact of the Financial Crisis, €54,000 from the International Labour Organization (PI: B. Wu); Welfare and Economic Growth in Early Modern China, 17th-19th Centuries: Accounting for the Origins of the Great Divergence, £103,000, from the British Academy (PI: Morgan); China's Promotion of Soft Power in South Africa, €54,000 from the Chiang-Ching Kuo Foundation, Taiwan (PI: X. Zhang); and six British Academy small grants on China's international energy quest, NGOs, emerging democrats, farmers in fragile ecosystems, competition law and socialization and environmental governance (PIs: Lai, Y. Lu, Z. Wang, Q. Wu, B. Wu and J. Zhang). The School also participated in an EU-funded project, "Supporting EU Access to Chinese Research and Innovation Programmes", receiving €39,800 (out of the total project grant of €499,000). Individual staff members also received six small grants of less than £10,000, which are not listed here.

Funding for early career researchers included four two-year Marie Curie International Incoming Fellowships worth €159,000 each (although not all funds have been received in full at this stage). Their holders are:

- Yanhong Liu, Graduate School of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (working with Z. Wang) – Chinese perceptions of democracy;
- Deyong Ma, School of Government, Nankai University (working with Z. Wang) – local democratization in China;
- Long Sun, Department of Political Science, Renmin University of China (working with Z. Wang) – the middle classes, civil rights and popular protest in urban China; and
- Yutao Sun, Faculty of Management and Economics, Dalian University of Technology (working with Cao) – globalization, institutional reform and China's innovation challenges.

Infrastructure. The University has dramatically improved the physical infrastructure for research at the School. In 2008 staff members were housed in three separate buildings. In 2012, reflecting its priorities, the University completed the purpose-built, state-of-the-art Si Yuan Centre to house the whole School, also allowing room for planned expansion. In recognition of the School's work, the Si Yuan Foundation of Hong Kong, an education charity, met a quarter of the £4 million construction cost – the only major donation it has made to a university outside China and Hong Kong. The new building includes a large dedicated space for PhD students and a separate section for academic visitors, as well as provisions for a small library for the most frequently used Chinese language material, lecture and seminar rooms, a common room and facilities for printing, photocopying and refreshment.

Via 107 computer terminals, staff, students and visitors have easy electronic access to the University's collections on Chinese studies, particularly journals and Chinese-language databases. A Chinese-language librarian is in place to provide specialist support for Chinese-language material and inter-library access.

For every Research and Teaching staff member the School makes an annual sum of £2,000 available to facilitate field research or international conference presentation. An application can be made to the Head of School for additional support in exceptional circumstances where more than £2,000 is needed. An annual allowance of £500 per staff member for the purchase of books for personal research and teaching is also in place.

All PhD students are supplied with a dedicated study space in a spacious room with desks, computers, secure wi-fi connection, free access (within limits) to printers and photocopiers and facilities for relaxation and refreshment. Each is entitled to 40 inter-library loan vouchers per year, with more potentially available in special instances. Every PhD candidate who has passed the Year 1 review has access to an individual grant of up to £1,500 for fieldwork and/or making presentations at academic conferences outside Nottingham. Supervisors are also required to encourage and help PhD candidates who need additional funding to apply for external support. A PhD candidate who has conducted fieldwork is required to submit a report so that feedback can be provided in a timely fashion. PhD students who conduct research at the Ningbo Campus receive an additional grant of £750 under the University's Inter-campus PhD Mobility Scheme.

Research administrative support. This is currently shared among six administrative staff – a full-time equivalent of 1.55 FTE professional research administrators. Plans are in place to strengthen administrative support in line with growth plans.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

The SCCS has fostered collaborative and interdisciplinary research not only in the UK but also beyond. It has strengthened China studies by cultivating talent both domestically and internationally, helped to attract a new generation of scholars by making the understanding of China widely accessible and provided expertise for referencing roles, editorial leadership and other services in the promotion of Chinese studies and for professional bodies.

Its major research programmes have helped to build multinational and interdisciplinary teams that nurture early career researchers. The “Chinese Perceptions of the EU” project (EU, FP7) trained two young scholars, one of whom (L. Zhang) has since become a lecturer at the University of East Anglia. The hosting of four Marie Curie Fellowships (see section d) involved mentoring early career researchers from China and providing rigorous social sciences training at Nottingham. Two Associate Professors whose talents were honed at the School are now taking on leadership positions at Chair level in other EU countries – Daria Berg at the University of St Gallen and Jackie Sheehan at the University College of Cork – although both will maintain their links with the School by becoming non-resident Senior Fellows of the CPI.

The School's outreach efforts, led by the CPI, have been unmatched by any other Chinese studies department in the UK. Interest in the study of China has been augmented by the School's determination to make expertise readily available to the media to explain complex developments in China to the general public. The growth of student numbers at the School confirms this. In 2008-2009 the total undergraduate body numbered 125 (FTE), taught masters 26 and PhD students five; in 2012-2013 there are 320 undergraduates, 91 taught masters and 30 PhD students. The School has contributed to enlarging the research base by drawing in and grooming new talents.

The School has supported research by enabling its staff to serve as referees for major grant applications, such as for the Arts and Humanities Research Council (Morgan, Sheehan), the Economics and Social Research Council (Cao, Sheehan, Song, Tsang, Zhang), the British Academy (Morgan, Song, Tsang), the Leverhulme Trust (Morgan), the Nuffield Foundation (Song), the Australian Research Council (Morgan), the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Horesh), the National Science Foundation of the USA (Cao, Morgan, Song), the Research Grant Council (a.k.a. University Grants Commission) of Hong Kong (Morgan, Song, Tsang, Z. Wang, Zhang), Council for the Humanities of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (Zhang), and Qatar National Science Foundation (Song).

The School has also contributed to the management of academic journals by encouraging members to take on editorial positions and editorial board membership. Morgan served as

editor of the Australian Economic History Review; Yao as editor of the Journal of Chinese Economic and Business Studies; Horesh as associate editor of the Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies; Horesh as guest editor for Provincial China (4:1, 2012); and B. Wu as guest editor of the Journal of Contemporary China (19:67, 2010; 20:68, 2011; 22:81, 2013). Board membership of major journals includes, for example, American Asian Review (Tsang); the Journal of Contemporary China (Tsang, Yao); China Economic Review (Song); East Asia: An International Quarterly (Tsang); Food Policy (Yao); the Journal of Comparative Economics (Yao); and Political Science Review (Tsang).

Members of staff have also served as referees/advisers/series editors to leading academic publishers, including Cambridge University Press (Cao, Sullivan), Longman (Sheehan), Macmillan (Sheehan), Oxford University Press (Cao, Horesh, Sheehan, Sullivan, Z. Wang), Palgrave Macmillan (Tsang, Yao), Routledge (Cao, Chen, Sheehan, Sullivan, B. Wu, Zhang), Stanford University Press (Sullivan) and Yale University Press (Sheehan).

They have also served as referees for more than 70 journals, including (for illustrative purposes) the following: American Journal of Sociology (Song); The Energy Journal (Herrerias); Asia Pacific Business Review (Morgan); Asian Journal of Communication (Sullivan, X. Zhang); Asian Perspective (Cao); Asian Studies Review (Morgan, Sullivan); British Journal of Sociology (Song); China: An International Journal (Cao, Taylor, Z. Wang); China Economic Review (Herrerias, Song); The China Journal (Morgan, Sheehan, Song, Sullivan); The China Quarterly (Cao, Morgan, Song, Sullivan, Taylor), Issues & Studies (Sullivan); Journal of Contemporary China (Tsang, Z. Wang, B. Wu); Journal of Current Chinese Affairs (Taylor, Z. Wang); Modern Asian Studies (Sullivan, Taylor); Modern China (Horesh, Sheehan); Modern Chinese Literature and Culture (Taylor); New Media and Society (Sullivan); Pacific Review (Tsang, Z. Wang); World Development (Song); Energy Economics (Herrerias); Ecological Economics (J. Zhang); Journal of Comparative Economics (Li); Hong Kong Law Journal (Q. Wu); Legal Studies (Q. Wu); Environmental and Resource Economics (J. Zhang); and the World Economy (Herrerias, Morgan, J. Zhang).

The School has also helped to enhance research quality in Chinese studies elsewhere. Firstly, members of staff have served as external PhD examiners, including at the University of Oxford (Sullivan), University of Birmingham (Yao), Macquarie University (Song), University of Manchester (Lai, B. Wu, Yao), Manchester Business School (Sheehan), Leicester University (Sheehan), Warwick University (Sheehan), Durham University (Z. Wang), Nanyang Technological University in Singapore (Song), Kingston University (Li), University College Dublin (Chen), George Mason University (Cao), Georgia Institute of Technology (Cao), Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Tsang), Uppsala University (Song), University of Sheffield (X. Zhang), King's College London (X. Zhang), University of Portsmouth (Yao), University of Sydney (Cao) and University of Technology Sydney (X. Zhang). Members of staff have also provided quality control for tenure/promotion reviews, including at the University of Denver (Z. Wang), National University of Singapore (Morgan), Singapore Management University (Lai) and University of New South Wales (Horesh).

The support the School has given to professional bodies includes service to various relevant organizations, including Treasurer for the British Association of Chinese Studies (Sheehan, 2005-2009) and executive membership of the Economic History Society of Australia and New Zealand (Morgan, since 2006), the Chinese Economics Association UK (J. Zhang, since 2112), the Chinese Economics Association (Chen, since 1996; Treasurer, 1997-2008) and the Chinese Women Economist Network at Peking University (Song, since 2002). Tsang has also served as a specialist for the Hong Kong Council for the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (since 2010)

The School has also supported area studies by hosting the 2013 joint conference of Asian studies, a gathering of Asian studies scholars from the UK and beyond, co-organized with the British associations for Chinese, Japanese and Korean studies, with the theme of "East Asian Societies in Transition: Challenges and Connections".