

<p>Institution: University of Aberdeen</p> <hr/> <p>Unit of Assessment: UoA 28 – Modern Languages</p> <p>a. Overview</p> <p>Modern Languages at the University of Aberdeen forms part of the School of Language and Literature, a single administrative unit that comprises Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Studies, English Literature, Film and Visual Culture. French, Gaelic, German, Literature in a World Context, and Linguistics. In addition, the School provides first and second level undergraduate courses in Arabic, Chinese and Swedish and is host to a Language Centre which supports English-language preparation for non-native speakers. The School is one of six in the College of Arts and Social Sciences, which also contains the Elphinstone Institute (for ethnographic research) and the Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies (<i>RIISS</i>).</p> <p>There is close integration of Modern Languages with Film and Visual Culture, film being taught in French, German and Hispanic Studies, and visual culture being an integral part of research across almost all of the language specialisms. The Modern Languages submission therefore includes Celtic and Anglo-Saxon, Gaelic, French, Hispanic Studies, German, and Film and Visual Culture. Two members of staff in Celtic (Dumville and O'Connor) hold joint appointments with the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy.</p> <p>Staff research across the School is overseen by the Head of School (Craig, FRSE, FBA, Director of RIISS) and the School's Director of Research, Schell (Hispanic Studies). Postgraduate teaching and research are administered at School level and overseen by the College's Graduate School, which is responsible for PG recruitment, arranges block grant partnerships and awards scholarships. The School Research Committee (on which all programmes are represented) approves applications for sabbatical leave and oversees the distribution of the element of the School's operating budget devoted to research.</p> <p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>Given the wide variety of disciplines both in the School of Language and Literature as whole, and in this unit of assessment in particular, the research strategy of the School has been directed at supporting all units in the School to achieve the level of research excellence that made French fourth in the UK in RAE2008 and English Literature in the top rank for the first time (thirteenth equal). Given that staff numbers in many disciplines in the unit are small (Gaelic and Celtic each have three research-active staff, not all full ftes), the School has focused on developing interdisciplinary connections that allow members of the unit to work in larger research groupings across the School and College. This strategy has informed the appointment of a significant cohort of young researchers, all of whom have interests that cross disciplinary boundaries: thus O'Connor (Celtic), publishes in the History of Science, in English Literature and in Celtic; Larkin (French) works on the history of photography as well as on the modernist novel; Mathias (French) has published both on the nineteenth-century novel and on the history of science in France; Flaig (Film and Visual Culture) uses theoretical work in German in his study of the influence of early Hollywood films in Europe. At professorial level, Welch (French) has been specifically appointed to take forward the unit's strengths in Visual Culture and Schell to contribute to the School's considerable expertise in the history of science.</p> <p>The School embeds this strategy of inter- and transdisciplinarity in part through its support for and development of a series of Research Centres which span many of the disciplines within the unit and links researchers in this unit with clusters of researchers in other Schools in the College and across the University more broadly, and also by encouraging researchers to participate in the University's major collaborative research themes – most importantly for this unit, 'Energy' and 'the North' – and by College-wide themes such as 'Translating Cultures'. The 'Energy' theme is reflected in Stewart's project on 'Cultural Responses to the Dilemmas of the Hydrocarbon Age', while the work of Dumville, O'Connor and O'Leary on the meeting points of viking, celtic and anglo-saxon cultures in pre-medieval northern Europe contributes a historical dimension to theme of 'The North'. The 'Translating Cultures' theme is prominent in the work of Kiwan on migrant African musicians, in the work of MacLeod (Gaelic) on the impact of migration between the regions of Scotland, and in the work of Welch on the mutual perceptions of French and North African accounts of their cultural interactions.</p> <p>Research Centres in which researchers and PhD students from modern languages and visual culture are involved include:</p>

Centre for Modern Thought (CMT): this university-funded initiative, established in 2005, brings together theoretically informed researchers from a wide range of disciplines across the School, from other parts of the College (e.g. education and music) and from other areas of the University engaged with the University's major research themes (e.g. 'Environment and Food Security'). Its founder and current Director is **Fynsk**, and its work is focused by annual research themes such as 'Finitude', 'Image', 'Rhythm', 'Kant and the Question of Form'. The associates of the Centre are drawn from a wide variety of disciplines, including energy law, music, education, the physical sciences, and politics, as well as Modern Languages. It runs a weekly seminar for staff and PhD students, and it has sponsored major conferences on energy security and on nutrition and food security as well as on issues of textuality and the archive. A total of 18 PhDs and 5 MLitt by research students have been associated within the Centre since 2008 and more than £125,000 has been awarded to support their research.

Centre for Early Modern Studies (CEMS): this Centre is supported both by the School of Language and Literature and the School of Divinity, History, Philosophy, and brings together researchers in history, literature, philosophy and theology. It was built up with substantial funding from the Mellon Foundation and continues to attract significant external support, as, for example, in the £5000 of Wellcome Trust funding for its conference in 2013 on 'Duncan Liddell and his Library' (Liddell, 1561–1613, left his library to Marischal College and it forms an important part of the University's early modern collection). *CEMS* contributes to the 'Early Modern Studies in Scotland' programme of research seminars and is linked to the Newberry Library in Chicago, with both staff and PhD students funded to attend the Library's annual conferences. **Tribout** (French) is an Associate Director and a participant in a very strong research cluster in early modern studies that includes researchers in English Literature (Rist, Gordon, Elliott, Lynch), in history (Brown, Frost, Friedrich, MacKillop) and in art history (Geddes, Davidson).

Centre for Citizenship, Civil Society and the Rule of Law (CCCSRL): this privately-funded initiative (£400k in its first tranche) is indicative of the ways in which research in modern languages is developing through engagement with societal issues, in this case focused on the historical meanings and contemporary significance of citizenship in relation to legal frameworks in both the developed and the developing worlds. Its founder and Director is **Stack** (Hispanic Studies) and it involves researchers in law, in anthropology, in philosophy and in sociology and draws not only on **Stack's** own work on contemporary Mexico but **Kiwan's** on contemporary migrant communities in Europe and **Schell's** on the history of civil society in Latin America, as well as with the language policy concerns of **Macleod** and **MacLeod** (Gaelic). Nine PhD students have been attached to the Centre since 2008.

Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies (RIISS, which was host, from 2000-2010 to the AHRC Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies): since 2008 this Centre, and projects associated with it, have raised over £2m in AHRC funding as well as over £400k in private donations. It has provided support for the work of **Watson** and **Macleod** (Gaelic), and **Dumville** (Celtic), and has hosted conferences for postgraduate students in Gaelic. Its major research themes have included studies of migration, and issues of the sustainability of minority languages across Europe (it ran an annual 'Language and Politics' conference, from 2000 to 2010). It publishes monographs on Scottish and Irish writers (such as Peter Mackay's *Sorley MacLean*, 2010) as well the multi-lingual creative writing magazine *Causeway/Cabhsair*, which aims to present work in Scots Gaelic, Irish Gaelic and Ulster Scots as well as Scots and English.

Centre for the History and Philosophy of Science, Technology and Medicine (CHPSTM): this is co-directed by **O'Connor**, and draws on the work of researchers from the School of Divinity, History, Philosophy as well as the School of Language and Literature, and links to the University's programme in *Medical Humanities* (which provides arts courses for medical students) and to the **Centre for Medical Humanities**, which supports work on the relationship between medicine and the arts both for humanities and medical researchers. These Centres have close links to the research interests of **Schell** in Hispanic Studies, of **Mathias** and **Larkin** in French, and of **Stewart** and **Ward** in Film and German. The Centre has held significant events on science, the arts and popular culture in the nineteenth century, an area of common concern to several researchers in the unit.

The Centre for the Novel: Aberdeen University Library holds an extensive collection of eighteenth and early nineteenth century novels and the *Centre for the Novel* was established to develop research into this archival material. The Centre for the Novel, however, also provides a

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context for developing comparative study of the novel form in the various European languages within the unit, and provides a comparative context for the work of **Watson** on Gaelic fiction, **Larkin** on Proust, **Mathias** on Sand, **Biggane** (Hispanic Studies) on Unamuno and **Barker** (Hispanic Studies) on recent developments in the Spanish novel.

These Centres allow staff and PhD students to draw on the resources, both intellectual and financial, of a large number of research groups across the University, and to develop their work in a context where, as the result of the many visiting speaker events, research seminars, symposia and conferences, there is continuous input from leading scholars across a range of disciplines: Jerome McGann (Virginia), Haun Saussy (Chicago), Yves Abriouox (Paris) are among those who have presented their work in Aberdeen in recent years. A key part of the School's strategy has been to resource the work of these Centres by devoting at least a third of its research budget (£50k 2013–14) to support their activities.

In this interdisciplinary context, research in modern languages over the period of the assessment has been focused by four key thematic areas that staff identified as either intersecting with the work of the existing Centres or helping develop new areas of collaborative work: (a) literature and theory; (b) the socio-cultural: theory and practice; (c) visual culture, (d) translating culture

Literature and Theory: The unit covers a very wide historical scope in terms of its literary focus, from **O'Connor's** work on pre-mediaeval Irish legends and Icelandic sagas, **Dumville's** and **O'Leary's** studies of early Celtic writings, and **Tribout's** work on seventeenth-century French historiography, to **Watson's** studies of modern Gaelic fiction, **Welch's** engagement with 'thing theory' and **Barker's** analyses of the impact of electronic globalisation on the Spanish novel. There is a very strong theoretical dimension to this work, whether in terms of **Fynsk's** direct engagement with modern French thinkers such as Blanchot, Levinas, Lyotard and Lacoue-Labarthe, **Tribout's** consideration of the relationship between literature, politics and the emergence of the modern 'self' in the eighteenth century, or **Biggane's** analyses of the writings of Miguel de Unamano. Most of those engaged in Film and Visual Culture have a background in literature, whether national (German in the case of **Ward** and **Stewart**) or comparative (as in the case of **Groo** and **Flaig**), so that there is a regular interchange around issues of the visual and the textual, as in **Larkin's** work on photography and Proust. *CMT* has provided a focus for theoretical debate around these issues, but each of the languages also shapes a distinctive research agenda through conferences (e.g. Aberdeen hosted the Annual 'Women in French in Scotland' conference in October 2009, the proceedings of which have been published) and visiting speaker programmes.

The Socio-Cultural – theory and practice: Many innovative elements in the unit's research are focused on socio-cultural issues. Historical and contemporary conceptions of the workings of civic culture are central to the work of *CCCSRL*, and to the ethnographic work of its Director, **Stack** on, for instance, Mexican communities in the USA, but are equally important in **Kiwan's** research on the role of European Muslim intellectuals in contemporary philosophical and cultural debate. The historical dimension of the socio-cultural is prominent in **Schell's** work on civil society in Chile, while its contemporary significance is explored in **Stewart's** work on hydrocarbon cultures and in **Ward's** studies of European cinema and the urban environment. In this context, the work of Michelle **Macleod** and Marsaili **MacLeod** on support for Gaelic as a medium of communication in a wide variety of public institutions (following on the Gaelic Language Scotland Act of 2005) has had a direct impact on the development of the Scottish government's implementation of its language policy and on the ways in which the use of Gaelic is encouraged in a wide variety of public institutions.

Visual Culture: This theme includes a range of research projects situated at the intersection of the visual, technology and culture and organized into three interrelated strands. The first strand focuses on the relationship between old media and new media, bringing together **Groo's** studies on early cinema and "minor" film practices, with **Flaig's** work on Weimar visual culture and early silent and sound film comedy. Together, they are editing a book entitled *Digital Anachronisms and Celluloid Specters: On the New Silent Cinema*. **Groo's** interest in film conservation is connected to the second strand, which focuses on visual culture and ecology, drawing together **Ward's** work on visual culture and the urban environment with **Stewart's** work on 'oilscapes', presented in 2012 in conjunction with Peacock Visual Arts, a leading Aberdeen-based Contemporary Arts Centre. The third strand considers the interplay of history and memory in visual culture, which is explored in **Ward's** work on visualisations of the urban past in post-war Berlin, **Welch's** work on the image

in French political life and on CCTV and surveillance, **Marcus's** documentary films on sites of historical trauma and **Schell's** work on nineteenth century cultures of display in Latin America. **Larkin's** work on photography and modernism in literature also takes up questions of memory and the visual, as does **Welch's** work on France and Algeria, which is underpinned by an examination of the relationship of photography to history.

Translating Culture: Translation is fundamental to the work of the unit and several members of it have been engaged in significant translation projects. **Biggane**, for instance, has done the first translation into English of Miguel de Unamuno's *Aunt Tula* and **Watson** has translated Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and J.R.R.Tolkien's *The Hobbit* into Gaelic. In its broader and metaphorical sense, however, much of the research of the unit is about translation between cultures, whether it is the translation of medieval Celtic materials into modern forms in the literatures of the Celtic Revivals (**O'Connor**) or the translation of North African popular culture into European contexts (**Kiwan**). The translation of scientific hypotheses and practices into cultural activities is central to the work of **O'Connor**, **Larkin**, **Mathias** and **Stewart**, and the translation of philosophical concepts and aesthetic theories between cultures is central to the work of **Fynsk**, **Ward** and **Welch**.

These themes have helped members of the unit to focus the areas of commonality in their research and provided contexts in which they could present their work to colleagues sufficiently informed to give rigorous responses. **German** and **Hispanic Studies** both illustrate how strong and diverse are the interdisciplinary interconnections that are expressed in these themes. Both **Stewart** and **Ward** research in German and Austrian literature as well in film and visual culture, research in the latter area crossing over into the socio-cultural in their explorations of the impact of carbon culture on the environment and of memorialisation on the structures of Eastern European cityscapes. In Hispanic Studies, **Schell's** work on scientific circles in South America before and after Darwin's travels there links the history of European and South American scientific developments, and contributes to the understanding of nineteenth-century science to which **O'Connor**, and his co-director in *CHPSMT*, Marsden (History), are prominent contributors, while her work on women in the Mexican Revolution or on Che Guevara contributes to the social and political history of the continent which is also prominent in the work of **Stack**. His background in political anthropology provides strong links to the ethnographic interests of those engaged in the study of the cultures of the North, such as Ingold (Anthropology), and **Stack's** work for *CCSRL* also links him to researchers in the *Civil Law Centre* in the School of Law. **Barker's** work on the contemporary Spanish novel links closely to similar work on Scottish Gothic fiction by Baker (English) and by **Watson**, in his groundbreaking *Introduction to Gaelic Fiction* (2011). Indeed, research in Gaelic has an equally diverse disciplinary range, since it includes traditional literary study (**Watson and Macleod**), sociological and geographic research in the work of **MacLeod**, as well as empirical analysis of the outcomes of government policies on language development (**Macleod and MacLeod**).

Where these themes have demonstrated significant synergies, the School has encouraged the establishment of new Research Centres and two such Centres have been launched in 2013 as a result of the activity related to some of these themes. The first is the Sir Herbert Grierson Centre for Textual Criticism and Comparative Literary History (Grierson was the first Professor of English Literature in Aberdeen, a classicist by background and a noted contributor to comparative literature, though best known for his edition of the poetical works of John Donne), which is directed by **Biggane**, and will provide a context for the work of a wide range of textual critics across the School (in English and Linguistics as well as Modern Languages), and also for those in other Schools with expertise in textual editing (Wills, Scandinavian Studies, on Skaldic poetry; Lumsden, English, on Walter Scott; Davidson and Stevenson, Art History, on literature in Latin in the Renaissance), or expertise in comparative literary study – for instance, Spence and Lynch (English), who work respectively on Japanese and on Polish literatures. The Grierson Centre will build on Aberdeen's long and eminent tradition in textual criticism and provide a focus for comparative literary study across the many languages and cultures with which the School is engaged. The second new Research Centre is the George Washington Wilson Centre for Visual Culture (the archive of the original plates of Washington Wilson's early photographs of Scottish cities and landscapes was discovered in the 1970s and deposited in Aberdeen University Library), which is directed by **Welch**. It will provide a context for the many kinds of work on visual culture undertaken within the School – from the documentary films of **Marcus** or the concern with

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archiving early film in the work of **Groo** and **Flaig**, to the work of **Larkin** on photography or **Welch** himself on the political uses of the image – and link across the School to the research of Gordon (English) on the visual in early book history or Lumsden on the theatrical presentation of the works of Walter Scott. It will be able to draw not only on the Library's unique archive of early photography, but on its rich holdings in early print culture, in Jacobitism (the McBean Collection) and in nineteenth-century periodicals. By becoming established Centres these thematic areas of activity within the unit gain access to significant financial support and, therefore, have the ability to plan long-term and substantial research projects.

The shared research themes within the unit and the activities of the Centres mean that no matter how small an individual programme may be in terms of research-active staff or how unique an individual member of staff's research is within an individual programme, researchers can benefit from participating in substantial research groupings, with shared interests and ambitions, and are able to draw on the intellectual resources of a wide variety of co-researchers as well as the financial resources and the international links generated by the various Centres to which their research is attached.

c. People, including:**i. Staffing strategy and staff development**

Staff research is supported by activities and resources at University, College and School levels. The University has a dedicated Researcher Development Unit – RDU – providing a progressive, institutional programme of personal, professional and career development opportunities for researchers (irrespective of level or discipline). All activities are aligned with the Researcher Development Statement and Framework (www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf) to demonstrate progression across phases of career. The RDU also supports researcher-led and co-development of initiatives through a Researcher Development enabling fund. The success of such initiatives is reflected in staff promotion in the period: **O'Connor**, from lecturer to professor, and **Kiwan, Stewart** and **Watson** to senior lecturer.

The Principal's Excellence Fund and Interdisciplinary Fund, available to staff at all levels, have been particularly useful in providing Early Career Researchers with small pump-priming awards (for example, **Groo** was awarded money to set up a Shadow Play Silent Film Lab, co-organised with the Department of Music, in 2011). College budgets for research and travel support are devolved to Schools, and the Research Committee allocates awards to individual applicants (who must show evidence of recent application to external funding agencies) and also provides support for the activities of research centres. The School's strategy has been steadily to increase the proportion of its internal budget that is devoted to supporting research, with the eventual aim of ring-fencing 50% of its operating budget (at current levels equal to £85k) for supporting the work both of individual researchers and the School's research centres. The School Research Committee also oversees a self-funded internal research leave rota, and the School is committed to providing research-active staff with one semester's leave every 3 years, on the basis of well-supported plans and evidence of effective research output in previous sabbaticals. Staff are encouraged to arrange sabbaticals to be contiguous with externally funded research leave. The School also has an internal peer review policy, so that all external funding applications are reviewed internally by two members of the Research Committee prior to submission in order to ensure bids going forward are of appropriate quality.

The School operates both a formal mentoring system for probationary staff, as well as encouraging continued peer mentoring on an informal basis for post-probationary staff, with the consequence that the majority of post-probationary staff during the REF2014 census period have served as mentors. The School also has a Research Ethics Officer (**Stewart**, through most of the period of the review), who ensures all staff are made aware of and comply fully with the University's Research Ethics Policy. Equality and diversity is embedded in all institutional policies and procedures, and training on equality and diversity legislation and on the University's equality and diversity policy is compulsory for all staff who sit on selection or promotion panels, or are involved in the REF selection process. The University has been awarded bronze Athena Swan Award for its supportive environment for female researchers, and is accredited as an *Investor in People* for its staff development activity.

The development of the potential of individual researchers has been encouraged by the creation of a research intensive environment in which members of the unit have organised a large number of high-profile events and international conferences, including, a Carnegie-funded conference on

'Contemporary African Philosophy and Culture' in May 2009, with the participation of Jean-Godefroy Bidima and Paget Henry; the Annual 'Women in French in Scotland' conference in October 2009, the proceedings of which have been published; an international conference in April 2010 on 'Haiti and the Politics of the Universal'; a film-screening and discussion series on the theme of 'Film and Capitalism'; 'New Directions in Science and Literature', hosted in July 2011 by *CHPSTM*; a series of events in 2013 under the title of 'Image Ecologies: Visual Culture and the Environment', that explored 'Energy Environments', 'Visual Agricultures' (on the relationship between agribusiness, animal life, sustainability and visual culture) and 'Conservational Cultures' (on the relationship between material archives of visual objects, institutional practices and environmental issues).

Along with regular invited lecturers who have given talks in language-specific seminar series, the School has also run a cross-disciplinary Modern Languages Research seminar series, involving a mixture of invited external speakers, and in-house presentations, which provide a forum for staff to present their research, and for PG students to present their work-in-progress.

ii. Research students

All research postgraduates are provided with shared offices and with their own fully networked PC. After the first year they are normally offered the opportunity to do undergraduate teaching, which we see as important to integrating them into the intellectual life of the School as well as providing valuable professional experience. The School has its own monthly Postgraduate Research Forum, while the College's increasingly high-profile international Postgraduate Conference, 'Moving Forward', has become a popular and well-attended annual event, organised by postgraduate students in Modern Languages and Film.

The College Graduate School ensures a robust postgraduate training programme for all students in the College. All PhD students attend an induction course covering research methodology, bibliographical searches and academic writing, and this initial training is complemented by a series of University-wide workshops and training courses based on RCUK guidelines and the QAA Code of Practice. The Graduate school supports corresponding training of new and experienced supervisors, and expects that refresher training is undertaken every 5 years. All postgraduates attend annual monitoring meetings with a panel of senior academics in the School, who provide a report on their research progress to the School's Postgraduate Committee. PhD students in years 2 and 3 have to deliver a paper at an annual PhD presentation event, open to all staff and students within the School, as part of their ongoing professional training and development.

In 2010, the College established a series of thematically-focussed Research Project Award Schemes (RPAS) to fund designated research networks and PG studentships, from which Modern Languages benefitted through its 'Translating Cultures' theme, developed to co-ordinate with the AHRC's 'emerging theme' programme of the same name. The School's Postgraduate Committee publicises PGT and PGR opportunities, assists students with external funding applications, oversees the taught MLitts, and encourages successful MLitt students to go on to do doctoral research. The School has developed a number of taught postgraduate degrees aimed at boosting overall PG numbers. In Modern Languages and Film, the MLitts in Comparative Literature and in Visual Culture have attracted high-quality students, and have been the most successful in-house vehicles for recruiting PhDs.

Modern Languages were successful in being awarded a number of fully-funded studentships through the AHRC Block Grant Partnership (2 in French, 1 in Hispanic Studies, 1 in Gaelic) and a further 2 PhDs in Gaelic have been funded by the *SOILLSE* project – 'A Research Strategy for the Maintenance and Revitalisation of Gaelic Language and Culture'. One of *SOILLSE*'s aims is to increase capacity in Gaelic language research and Aberdeen validates PhDs undertaken in UHI. Additionally, College funding is available on a competitive basis, ranging from bursaries which cover fees to a small number of fully-funded scholarships (in total amounting to more than £1m per annum across the College), while two further postgraduate bursaries for students in French and German are provided by the Middleton Bequest. Postgraduates can also apply to the Research Committee for support for research travel.

Notable successes among recently graduated PhD students in Modern Languages include Dr Erika Fulop (French) who was awarded a Humboldt Fellowship in Berlin, and a teaching fellowship at New College, Oxford; Dr Timwa Lipenga (French), who was appointed to a Senior Lectureship

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at the University of Malawi, and Dr Lindsay Milligan (Gaelic), who was appointed to a lectureship in the University of the West of Scotland.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Research income during the REF2014 census period included **Kiwan's** participation in an AHRC award of £401,857 through the AHRC 'Diaspora, Migration and Identity' Programme, for her project on 'Transnational networks across Europe and Africa' (2006-2010), and Aberdeen's share of a £23,000 Carnegie award for a series of workshops from 2007-2009 on 'Locating Francophone African Culture', which led to the establishment of a Scottish-wide consortium. **Ward** received £22k from the AHRC for 'Framing the Past in Berlin since 1945'; **Marcus** has received three awards from the Carnegie Trust amounting to more than £7k; **Stack** has received several British Academy and Leverhulme awards amounting to more than £15k as well as several travel awards from the Carnegie Trust, and **Stewart** too has held several British Academy and Carnegie awards, as well as participating in an AHRC-funded project, 'Sharing All our Stories', which received £68k. **Tribout** was awarded an eighteen-month AHRC leadership development award (£85,523), which followed on a £1,700 award by the Carnegie Trust, and **O'Connor** received £21k from the Centre for Advanced Study, Oslo to fund his participation in a research programme there in 2012–13.

Planning of the *SOILLSE* project for the 'Revitalisation of Gaelic Language and Culture' was begun in Aberdeen in 2004, and in 2008 £5.28m was made available through the combination of a major Strategic Research and Development Grant (SRDG) from the Scottish Funding Council, grants from Bòrd na Gàidhlig and from Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE), as well as support from the participating institutions (Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and what is now the University of the Highlands and Islands [UHI]). This has been used to strengthen Gaelic-language research across many institutions – represented locally in the appointment of **MacLeod** to a postdoctoral fellowship and then lectureship. In addition, researchers in Gaelic, both staff and postgraduates, benefitted from that portion of the £1.2m awarded to *RiISS* by the AHRC which fell within the REF period, and from the £400k Margaret Jones bequest which underpins its current activity – allowing both **Watson** and **MacLeod**, for instance, to present their work at the biannual international Irish-Scottish studies conference, which was held in Vancouver in 2013, and supporting both a conference for postgraduates in Gaelic (2009) and the subsequent publication of its proceedings.

The infrastructure for the support of research has been significantly enhanced by the opening in 2011 of the University's iconic new library and historic collections building (£57m), which provides state-of-the-art conservation, IT and research facilities. This has allowed the housing in Aberdeen of important national collections previously maintained elsewhere, such as the Scottish Catholic Archive and the Blairs Collection, both with significant European dimensions. The Library contains well over a million books and manuscripts, including rich early-modern collections (relevant to *CEMS*), a wide collection of nineteenth-century periodicals of particular value to *CHPSMT*, and a significant archive of early photographic materials which will be exploited by *Centre for Visual Culture*.

The School invests heavily in subscriptions to online e-journals and bibliographical databases, such as the MLA Bibliography, LION, and JSTOR. Library budgets are devolved to individual disciplines, and in addition to the basic allocation, extra funds are routinely made available for new research projects, or to support the needs of newly appointed academics. Modern Languages and Film have thus been able to build up significant resources in the areas of Modern Thought and Critical Theory, Visual Culture, Diaspora and Migration studies, Francophone African and Caribbean Literature and Film, and Comparative Literature.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

Staff in Modern Languages are active participants in a number of Scottish-wide research networks, such as the Forum for Transnational French Studies (with Stirling, Edinburgh and St Andrews) and the *Screen Conference* (with the University of Glasgow), and they have participated in various workshops on Contemporary Continental Philosophy (with the University of Dundee). The *SOILLSE* network, of which **MacLeod** has been Co-Director and, for an interim period, Director, links Gaelic-language researchers in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and the University of the Highlands and Islands. The issue of minority language planning which is central to its activities has also been a key theme in a series of 'Language and Politics' conferences organised by *RiISS* in conjunction with Trinity College Dublin and Queen's University Belfast, and which have had significant implications for language planning in both Ireland and Scotland.

Stewart and **Welch** are members of the AHRC Peer Review College; **Welch** has also acted as

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international expert reviewer for the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences, and for the Conseil franco-québécois de la coopération universitaire, while **Fynsk** has served on the selection panel for the prestigious ICREA fellowships in Barcelona. Many staff act as reviewers for publishers such as Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh University Presses and many also act as editors of journals, either on a long-term basis or for particular special issues. **Fynsk** is Associate Editor of *Politica Comùn*, a journal which is a joint venture between the *Centre for Modern Thought*, Texas A&M University and the Instituto de Estudios Criticos 17 in Mexico; **Kiwan** was a member of the editorial board of *Modern and Contemporary France* from 2009-11, and since 2011 has been a member of the editorial board of *Performing Islam*; she was guest editor of *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* in 2008, guest editor of *International Journal of Francophone Studies* in 2009, guest editor of *Ethnic and Racial Studies* between 2009-11, and guest editor of *Music and Arts in Action* in 2011. **Biggane** has been editor of the *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* since 2006; **Larkin** has been guest editor of a special issue of *Romance Studies* on 'Marcel Proust and Music'; **Stewart** has, since 2012, been on the editorial board of the *Journal of Austrian Studies* (formerly *Modern Austrian Literature*); **Welch** was guest editor for *Modern and Contemporary France* in 2011 and *Nottingham French Studies* in 2009; **MacLeod** was a member of the editorial board of *Aiste* from 2006 to 2010 and since 2009 **Watson** has been a member of the editorial board of *Publications of the Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster*, and, since 2010, on the board of *Celtic Studies Scotland*. Since 2008, **Watson** has also been on the Steering Committee of the National Gaelic Dictionary Project (*Faclair na Gàidhlig*).

Invitations to give lectures at conferences and as visiting speakers at universities include **Biggane**, who delivered an invited paper at the University College London Hispanic Studies Research Seminar in 2012; **Kiwan**, who delivered a key-note talk at the Association for the Study of Modern and Contemporary France Post-Graduate Study Day, on 'Paris dépassé? North African Musicians' Transnational Networks'; **MacLeod**, who delivered a keynote lecture, "Local and National Discourses in Gaelic Language Planning Initiatives in Scotland" at an international Language Planning conference in Galway in 2012; **Larkin**, who delivered an invited paper as part of the Malcolm Bowie Memorial Conference, at the Institute for Germanic and Romance Studies in 2008, and at a symposium in honour of Naomi Segal in 2011, as well as presenting papers twice at the annual Society for French Conference, University of Liverpool, and at both the Modern Languages Association of America, and the American Comparative Literature Association. **Dumville** gave a series of over 40 lectures at the Royal Irish Institute in Dublin on 'Towards a New History of Gaelic Literature', and **Schell** was invited to give a lecture at the British Academy, London in 2010, as part of a symposium on 'The Mexican Revolution, 1910-2010: Historical and Cultural Perspectives'. **Stack**'s work with *CCCSRUL* has led to a considerable number of invited presentations on both sides of the Atlantic: he was a speaker in a conference on "Rethinking Citizenship" at the Max-Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (2008); he was a keynote at the "Citizenship, the Self, and Political Agency" conference (November 2010) held in the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Cambridge; he was an invited speaker at the Centro de Estudios Superiores y de Investigación en Antropología Social-Occidente, Mexico (2010) and in April 2012 at the Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London, he presented a paper on 'Liberalism and Religion in the Americas'. **Fynsk** has lectured equally widely on issues of contemporary French and German philosophy and theory, including in Naples, Paris, Copenhagen, Mexico City, Tokyo, New York, Stockholm, as well as being an annual contributor to the European Graduate School at Saas-Fee. **Marcus**'s documentary film-making has led to wide-ranging series of invitations to lecture at festivals, conferences and public institutions, including Harvard, Syracuse, Princeton and CalTech, Pasadena, in the USA, and the University of British Columbia in Canada. He has also spoken at the Center for Holocaust Studies, Krakow and his film *The Cemetery* was selected for special screening at 'Visible Evidence', the world's largest annual international documentary film conference, in Stockholm in 2013, while *The Memorial* was the only UK film selected for screening at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference – the largest international film conference – in Boston in 2012.

Prizes for members of the unit included **Watson**, who was awarded the 2012 Donald Meek Award (£5000) in the 'research book' category for his edited collection of Iain Crichton Smith's Gaelic poetry, and **Stewart**, who received the Eugenio Battisti prize in 2008 by the Society for Utopian Studies for the best article in *Utopian Studies*.