

<b>Institution: University of Bolton</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 29 English Language and Literature</b>
<p><b>a. Overview</b></p> <p>Research in English is focused in two dynamically interrelated groupings: the <b>Creative</b> and the <b>Critical</b>. Several staff teach in both areas; the Creative group (6 staff) includes practitioners in poetry, fiction, and drama (including screenwriters and playwrights), while the Critical (3 staff) is concerned with literary theory, philosophy, contemporary adult and children's literature. Since the last RAE (2008) there have been two major restructurings: English was made part of the School of Arts, Media and Education then placed within the Faculty of Arts and Media Technologies, prior to its present location in the Art, Design and Language subject group. While the number of researchers in the Critical group has remained constant, the Creative group has become stronger, with 3 extra staff being entered. Staff are as follows: Anne Caldwell, Mary Cooper, Jon Glover, Simon Holloway, Evan Jones, Justin MacGregor, Jill Marsden, David Rudd, and Suzanne Stern-Gillet.</p> <p>In the last RAE (2008), UoA 57, as English then was, scored as follows: 10%: 3*; 30%: 2*; 50%: 1*; 10% : u/c, improving slightly on its RAE (2001) score of '3A'.</p>
<p><b>b. Research strategy</b></p> <p>Encouraged by our performance in the last RAE (2008), the interdisciplinary nature of the new School allowed us to capitalise on various strands, chiefly, as the English Benchmark expresses it, to forge links with 'other media and other forms of artistic and cultural production'. The wider, eclectic base that the School provided was consolidated, for English, with the inclusion of colleagues from Philosophy, two of whom have been included in this REF submission (their research had always concerned cognate areas, but they had previously submitted their own, highly successful submissions: in RAE 2008, 55%: 3*; 45%: 2*). Research benefited hugely from the School and Faculty restructurings, with exciting, interdisciplinary ventures, a revived seminar programme and vibrant conferences. The current reorganisation, returning us to smaller subject groupings, has allowed the energy and the networks to live on, whilst also making the English staff a more cohesive and dedicated body. The group's research outputs now feed more directly into the annual, university-wide, Research Conference. All academic staff seek to foster the research environment of the University, contributing to internal conference and seminar programmes, aside from giving papers, guest lectures, performances and readings elsewhere; and, of course, continuing to produce outputs (books, articles, and creative works).</p> <p>In our research strategy for the last RAE (2008), our main aim was to pursue our critical/creative synergy, and this has been realised in various ways: with the appointment of more research active staff on the creative side, many of whom contribute equally to critical debates. Prof. Glover continues to head up the Creative area with his poetry (2 monographs over this assessment period), alongside critical work (on Jon Silkin, the Leeds Poets as a whole, and the <i>Stand</i> magazine archive at the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds). Likewise, Mary Cooper's dramatic work is a vital asset, regularly producing topical drama that has achieved national recognition. Anna Zaluczowska (not submitted) has explored writing in 'other media', especially multiplatform and transmedia work, which she is also seeking to theorise conceptually. In terms of new staff, Justin MacGregor has helped to define the emerging genre of 'documentary theatre' with his prolific creative output. The most recent appointments, Anne Caldwell, Dr Simon Holloway, and Dr Evan Jones, all Early Career Researchers, have bolstered our creative writing research in various ways. Their poetry covers a wide range of interests. Caldwell and Jones are particularly concerned with place and landscape, with Caldwell's latest project also turning to issues of memory. Jones, given his Canadian background, and his work as a translator, is concerned with nationality and identity, too. Holloway's work, both in poetry and prose, addresses issues of place and circumstance, reflecting on humans' need to impose order and meaning on events. Caldwell and Holloway have also reflected critically on creative writing in their research. Finally, Jones's recent appointment has also broadened our portfolio into translation studies, attempting to make connections between different literary cultures, having translated Modern Greek and Austrian</p>

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German poets for British/Irish journals, and anthologised Canadian poets for the UK.

On the critical side, Prof. Suzanne Stern-Gillet and Dr Jill Marsden have brought a new, philosophical depth to English research, especially in the areas of aesthetics and ethics. For instance, Marsden and Rudd are jointly supervising a student undertaking a graphic novel adaptation of Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, bringing together their respective areas of expertise, with Rudd drawing on his long-standing work in children's literature. This example demonstrates the more general synergy that the restructurings have facilitated, with, at the philosophical/theoretical end, the English researchers being pushed to interrogate their conceptual vocabulary more assiduously, while, at the other, the creative writers have opened our eyes to exciting new territories and formats, especially those using new technology and social media – the result being a far more innovative and fertile interdisciplinarity.

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

Each staff member has a Personal Development Plan reviewed annually in which research requirements and contributions are discussed. As research coordinator, Rudd oversaw the development of the research culture, with seminar programmes and conferences, staff development sessions for those new to research, the provision of support for research students in liaison with the University's central support facilities, overseeing bids for funds and the use of research monies. He also chaired the area's Research Degrees Committee and oversaw the Research Ethics subcommittee.

Staff benefited from the last RAE in terms of staff development and research activities. Prof. Minow-Pinkney and Rudd benefited from Research Investment Funds, the former with her Virginia Woolf research, the latter to edit the *Routledge Companion to Children's Literature* (2010). In the following year, Stern-Gillet, Marsden and Brid Andrews received support from this fund. From RAE 2008 funds, 2 part-time bursaries in Philosophy were created: one for a thesis on 'Causation and Explanation in Plato's *Timaeus*' (Ryan Wesley), the other, 'Towards a New Theory of Will, Agency and Self in Nietzsche' (Paul Hubbard). Beyond this, newer academic staff have been supported by the professoriate offering 'surgeries' and workshops on research matters.

In 2008 the University set up a working party in response to the Research Councils UK *Concordat*, resulting in a subsequent commitment to its codes. The University offers a wide range of development opportunities for researchers through the Learning Enhancement & Professional Development Unit and project supervision (e.g. project management skills, information management, research development, governance, enterprise, career management). The University also offers a Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in HE which is accredited by the HEA and available to all research staff.

More recently (2012-13), the University has made research activity a crucial criterion in academic staff appointment, which can only benefit attempts to build a more robust research culture, shaping what are, often, disparate interests into larger, more viable sub-groupings of research activity, with their associated research students. This has already been realised in some of our planning, with Glover focusing on the poetry scene in the North, both historically and in its contemporary forms. Linked to this, English has become increasingly involved in the work of the Centre for Worktown Studies, which also contrasts a historical appreciation of the region's cultural output with more contemporary work. Finally, Rudd's work, which has involved research activities around the Naughton archive, has been more generally concerned with making Bolton a research centre for Children's Literature studies. English had planned this some years ago, with the MA in Children's Literature and Culture starting in 2009, and it has subsequently attracted a growing number of research students.

**ii. Research students**

There are currently 14 students working within the area of English studying for PhDs (English staff also supervise other students, but these fall outside this UoA). During the assessment period, 2 students obtained PhD degrees: Anthony Hopwood for his thesis on 'Simone Weil's Platonism' and Kieran Peart for her thesis on 'South Asian Women in British Film and Television'. Of the ongoing students, one is working on 'Platonic Mania and Addiction' (Albert Yates); 4 are researching children's literature (Suzanne Brierley 'Place and Identity in Young Adult Fiction of the 1970s', Miriam Gerhardsdottir 'Empowerment or Entrapment? A Feminist Perspective on the Use of

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Intertextuality in Recent Children's Fantasy Literature', Francesca Visavadia 'The Rise Of Young Adult Fiction and its "Issues"', and Jacquie Ombewa 'Narration And Active Nationalism: Young Children, Storytelling and Social Justice'), with another working in comparative literature (Din Minh Hang 'A Comparative Study of English and Vietnamese Modern Poetry'). The remaining 6 students are working in Creative areas (Justin MacGregor 'Vigilance In Documentary Theatre: Developing New Works, A New Brand Of Theatre, And New Audiences', Jennifer Davidson 'Open Mike: a six part, one hour comedy drama series...', Nathan Kilburn 'The Transmediation of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* from a Philosophical Text into a Graphic Novel', Phil Isherwood's 'Poetry and Numinous Connections', Stella Pye's 'Calliope Come Lately: The Continuing Relevance of Formalisms in Women's Poetry', and Owen Lowery's 'A Critical and Creative Examination of the "Extrospective" Poetry of Keith Douglas ...'). Lowery has published poems in *PN Review* and *Stand* as well as reviewing recent poetry. He has read his work in Manchester and has recently been awarded a grant from Arts Council England to publish a book of poems related to the paintings of Paula Rego, who has agreed support his work by making available prints to appear in his book. Phil Isherwood is researching the role of poetry as a support in end-of-life care. He works as a creative friend at Bolton Hospice and his own published work has been awarded prizes and is recognised by the Hospice community and the Yorkshire organisation supporting similar work led by Char March. An anthology of Bolton Hospice poems is currently in press.

Research students are supervised by a research team comprising 2-3 staff: a Director of Studies, the regular point of contact, and up to 2 others with appropriate expertise. Research students are allowed to attend any other classes/modules that they feel would benefit their studies. This is aside from the University-wide research training programme, which cover topics such as research skills, techniques and management, research ethics and standards of good research practice, teaching skills, data protection, Freedom of Information and Intellectual Property, research funding processes, networking for researchers, communicating research, academic and commercial exploitation of research results, personal effectiveness, and career management. Students are encouraged to present at the annual University Research Conference and at the annual Postgraduate Research Day Conference, organised by the students themselves. Both of these provide the chance for students to learn how to present their research in a supportive environment. All these venues are also excellent for promoting interaction and networking not only amongst the students, but with the staff, too. Finally, research students are encouraged to attend and present at external venues (e.g. research conferences, readings) wherever possible.

**d. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

While the research coordinator has overseen much of the above, the Academic Group Leader manages staff timetables to recognise the activities of research active staff and to take into account the University equality and diversity policy. Other support for staff, in terms of workshops, research funding, and career opportunities (the PGCE), has been mentioned above, with details of use of RAE 2008 monies. Likewise, opportunities for both staff and students to develop their research skills have been mentioned.

In terms of facilities, students in the area of English chiefly require a workstation and library facilities. Aside from the central facilities (library and IT), the subject area also has a dedicated 'Research Student' room, with its own library, computers, seminar space. Standard software is available here, plus access to the various dedicated databases subscribed to by the University (MLA, newspaper archives, EThOS, and access to e-journals and e-books, some via Athens).

With respect to research governance, all research projects are scrutinised for ethical issues at the proposal stage, and, if necessary, are then considered at local, then university wide level. Any member of research staff suspected of any research misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, abuse of confidentiality, misappropriation of resources, falsification/fabrication of data) is dealt with by a disciplinary process that judges people according to the University's Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research (based on the 7 principles identified by The Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life as having relevance to best practice in the conduct of research: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership).

**e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base**

Research staff have built up a number of successful interdepartmental, national and international links, often engaged in fostering the development of the discipline itself. Staff have been encouraged to contribute to conferences in Universities worldwide. This has been supported financially with the aim of establishing research activities based on collaboration, building informal links between university departments and furthering publication ventures. Funding exists for well-known researchers to visit Bolton to give papers and contribute to Research development sessions to enhance the local research culture.

There were 30 Research Seminars held between 2008-2013, featuring such internationally known figures as Prof. Michael Schmidt FRSL,OBE (Founder and Director of the Carcanet Press), Prof. Peter Hunt (Emeritus, Univ of Cardiff, Visiting Prof., Newcastle University, Visiting Research Fellow, Trinity College Dublin), and Dr Paul Taylor (Institute of Communications Studies, University of Leeds, editor of the *International Journal of Žižek Studies*). Our own staff are also involved in these programmes, and we have continued our regular exchange programme with scholars from Łódź and Prešov Universities. The Philosophy Seminar programme also had a number of speakers addressing literature related topics (e.g. Prof. Douglas Burnham on 'Nietzsche and Writing', Prof. Stephen Houlgate on 'Hegel and the Definition of Tragedy'). Aside from these, the playwrights and screenwriters have a thriving programme of guest speakers, including an innovative series called 'An Audience with', which included Paul Abbott, Willy Russell, Debby Horsfield, Sarah Hooper, Jimmy McGovern, Sally Wainwright, David Edgar and Mark Herman.

Apart from involving scholars worldwide on a one-off basis, we have also sought more long term involvement with visiting professors. The writer and broadcaster Ian McMillan (best known for the weekly writing programme *The Verb*) was visiting professor from 2008-2011 and ran a number of workshops and inspirational sessions with research students; David Thacker, the artistic director of The Octagon Theatre, Bolton, was appointed a visiting professor in 2009, and has been particularly inspiring for those involved in drama. Finally, Prof. Schmidt, mentioned above, has helped us to build our creative writing research culture. He has held regular sessions with Creative PhD students at the offices of Carcanet Press and *PN Review* in central Manchester. This has facilitated both creative progression and a deeper understanding of writing in the world of international publishing. Schmidt has advised us on the expansion of traditional Creative Research Degrees and on on-line, distance-learning supervision. Schmidt will be further included in Bolton's research Degree work by acting with Glover as a PhD supervisor. In this, he brings his experience in successfully developing such work at Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Glasgow. Schmidt also works closely with Glover who co-ordinates the 'Northern House' sub-group of publications which is part of the Carcanet portfolio. Northern House poetry collections have included volumes by Bolton MA Graduate and PhD candidate Owen Lowery and by Bolton MA Graduate Lucy Burnett, who moved to the University of Salford to complete a Creative PhD which has led to her appointment as Arvon writing centre Director at Lumb Bank. Glover has used his own research-based writing to encourage Bolton research students to base their projects in impact-generating activities such as facilitating Creative Writing in Bolton Hospice and working with the Disabled. Schmidt is generally working with Glover and the Bolton English Research Team to facilitate research-orientated PhD projects with the Press on poetry publishing, its past and future in the era of digital publishing. Schmidt and Glover will also facilitate PhD research on the archives held in Leeds and Manchester on poets such as Elaine Feinstein, Geoffrey Hill, Tony Harrison, Jon Silkin and Simon Armitage. Furthermore, they are encouraging research projects on the nature and history of such poetry journals as *PN Review* (archives in the John Rylands) and *Stand* (archives in the Brotherton). The aim is to develop a research niche with collaboration between University staff, publishers, poets and archivists.

Rudd has continued his collaborations with individuals and institutions elsewhere. In terms of the former, his edited volume, the *Routledge Companion to Children's Literature* (2010) involved experts worldwide (in a recent review of such 'handbooks', Prof. Nodelman expressed his preference for Rudd's). As a second example, with a colleague, Dr Antony Pavlik at Boğaziçi University, Turkey (now at Luleå University, Sweden). Rudd guest-edited a special issue of the American journal, *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, to commemorate 25 years since the publication of Jacqueline Rose's *The Case of Peter Pan*, also managing to involve Rose herself. His own article in this issue was awarded the 'Outstanding Article of Literary Criticism in Children's Literature' in 2010, presented at their Annual Conference, Simmons College, Boston (June, 2012).



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He has given a number of keynotes and, in May 2011, was invited to speak with the ex-Children's Laureate, Anne Fine, at *Seven Stories* (the National Centre for Children's Books, Newcastle upon Tyne) about Enid Blyton to an audience of 80

(<http://blytonsevenstories.wordpress.com/2011/05/25/the-joy-of-enid-blyton-recording/>, 177 downloads). His work has been discussed in various publications (e.g. he is named in a section of Fiona McCulloch's *Children's Literature in Context* (Continuum, 2011, pp. 141-8). More recently, he was interviewed by the Canadian novelist/academic Randy Boyagoda for *The Paris Review* (<http://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2012/06/25/five-in-the-colonies-enid-blyton%E2%80%99s-sri-lankan-adventures/>).

More local collaborations have involved initiating, convening and chairing the centenary conference on Bill Naughton (May 2010) in conjunction with Bolton Museums and Libraries, Bolton Council and the Octagon Theatre. For the Lancashire Women's Institutes, he was also invited to talk about his research into Enid Blyton at their annual 'Literary Day' in Blackburn (17 April 2013), to an audience of 140 plus members. Aside from this, he is regularly asked by the media (press, TV and radio) to comment on children's literature matters. He is on the editorial board of six international journals, is editor-in-chief of *Children's Literature in Education*, is the joint list-owner of the JISC discussion group Children's-Literature UK, and is regularly involved in examining PhDs, in evaluating research and book/series proposals.

Glover is Fellow of the English Association and Honorary Fellow of the School of English, University of Leeds. He is a Director, Trustee and Managing Editor of the international journal *Stand* which publishes and reviews poetry and fiction. It is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity. As well as involving Bolton research students in writing and reviewing for *Stand* he works closely with co-editor Professor John Whale from the University of Leeds where the magazine is based. He also works informally with full-time research students in Leeds who act as Editorial Assistants and whose research programmes involve studying writers long-associated with *Stand*, including Jon Silkin, Tony Harrison and Geoffrey Hill. These research students benefit from working with Glover and Whale on archive material and on publication of the most recent poems by Geoffrey Hill which has required consideration of Professor Hill's late revisions. *Stand* provides international links for Glover and his co-editors in Bolton and Leeds to be in contact with recent developments in the UK, Europe and North America. His most recent collection, *Glass is Elastic*, was launched at the International Anthony Burgess Foundation in Manchester (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gmPU2yYIOt8>).

Stern-Gillet is an internationally known scholar. An Honorary Research Fellow in the Dept of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Manchester, she is regularly invited to give research papers in universities in Britain, Europe and the US (e.g. literary topics include: 2009, University of Krakow on 'Proclus and the Platonic Muse'; 2010, University of Haifa on 'Plato's vocabulary of Madness' and Manchester Metropolitan University, 'Creative Appropriation amongst the Ancients: a Case Study'; 2012, 'University of Cagliari on 'Plotinus' Vocabulary of Stillness'). In 1914 she has invitations to speak on aspects of Plato's poetics at the Institute of Classical Studies (University of London), Boston College and the University of Connecticut. Over this REF period she has given 13 such research papers. She is co-editor of *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* (Brill), member of the Board of Directors of the International Society for the Study of Neoplatonism, and has been an assessor for the REF.

Dr Simon Holloway is instrumental in organising/co-ordinating the UK's leading international creative writing conference, Great Writing ([www.greatwriting.org.uk](http://www.greatwriting.org.uk)), which he has helped run for the last 7 years. As it is always over-subscribed, the organisers accept only the most ground-breaking submissions. Selected papers, once peer-reviewed, are subsequently included in *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing* (Routledge), and the keynote address is usually made available as a live video stream or podcast.

Anne Caldwell is the programme director for NAWA (National Association for Writers in Education, membership 1500+). She has worked for the organisation for over 10 years and contributes a regular column to its journal. In 2014 she will be representing UK Universities who run creative writing programmes at the AWP conference in Seattle. Her new publication, *After Image*, was commissioned for an arts festival in Berlin.

Justin MacGregor is an award-winning writer and director of film, theatre and TV. He won a Manchester Theatre Award for 'Best Studio Performance' for the second in his trilogy of soldiers' stories, *God Wept and the Devil Laughed*. His recent play, *Mugabeland!*, at The Lowry, was his

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seventh world premiere in the past 3 years. He is also researching the theoretical basis of his practice in 'documentary theatre' and the impact of transmedia.

Dr Jill Marsden referees articles for Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology and reviews works on aesthetics for The Agonist. She has presented research papers at a number of universities in the U.K. including keynote papers at the University of Oxford on her research on Nietzsche and at the Anthony Burgess Foundation, Manchester, on the work of Pierre Klossowski. She was one of a group of distinguished European and American scholars invited to contribute to a Festschrift for Prof. David Farrell Krell (forthcoming, 2014).

Mary Cooper has been writing professionally since 1986. She has written more than thirty plays to commission for theatre, radio and screen. Her first radio play, *Wobbly Eggs*, was short-listed for the Ricard Imison Award and the Mental Health in the Media Awards. The radio adaptation of her co-written verbatim stage play, *Close to the Bone*, won a Sony Award. *Breathing Space*, a play commissioned for M6 Theatre, was toured internationally with support from The British Council and short-listed for a 'DORA', the major Canadian theatre award, for Best Touring Production 2003. Her short film, *Missing Out* won IVCA Best Drama Award 2010. With her co-writer, Peter Spafford she won a Granada/Yorkshire TV New Voices Award, 1997, for her play screenplay, *Alarmed*. She has received several Arts Council England funding awards including: Resident Writer at Watford Palace Theatre and Resident Writer at the Half Moon Theatre, London. Her stage plays have been translated into German, Bengali and Portuguese. Her writing has been published by Methuen, RKP and Aurora Books. She is currently being commissioned by Breaking Cycles Theatre, Manchester and M6 Theatre, Rochdale. In addition she has been commissioned, along with photographer, Ian Glover, to create an installation for Leeds City Museums to launch the city's commemoration of the First World War.

Canadian poet Evan Jones has taught at a number of universities in the Northwest (Bolton, Liverpool John Moores, Leeds, Manchester). His poems and translations have been published in Canada, the US, UK and Greece, and his work has been translated into Greek. His first poetry collection, *Nothing Fell Today But Rain* (2003) was a finalist for the Governor-General's Literary Award for Poetry in Canada. With Todd Swift, he co-edited the anthology, *Modern Canadian Poets* (Carcanet 2009), a radical revision of the Canadian canon. In 2012, Carcanet published his second collection, *Paralogues*, giving readings in both the UK and Canada, some of which were captured on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Y5Ev-JryjM>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEBiuet9aVg>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0phjc-r5YY> Since 2003, he has worked as freelance poetry editor at Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd. Under his editorship, three collections have been finalists for the Governor-General's Literary Award (2003, 2005, 2010). Since arriving in the UK, he has worked to advance the writing of, and create a readership for, Canadian, Greek and Austrian poets via reviews, translations and public performances. From 2011-13, he was a board member of the Manchester-based, AHRC-funded organization Poets & Players. In Spring 2013, he was invited to be Writing Fellow at the Centre for New Writing, University of Manchester. His work has been discussed in many publications, including recently in the *Globe & Mail*, *National Post*, *Toronto Star*, *Quill & Quire*, *Manchester Review* and the Carcanet Blog. In 2011, he edited and coordinated the blog, 'New Poetries', which aimed to promote discussion of the anthology *New Poetries V* (Carcanet 2011). The blog was referenced in a *Guardian* review of the book, and brought much attention to the anthology, helping to propel it to the top of Amazon Bestseller lists.