

Institution: The University of Leicester
Unit of Assessment: 28 Modern Languages
<p>a. Overview</p> <p>The School of Modern Languages, to which all staff in the Unit belong, is situated within the College of Arts, Humanities and Law. While staff research and teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level cross disciplinary and area boundaries, specific strengths and research groups are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spatial Practices and Diasporas</i> (Aissaoui, Fayard, Jones, Spunta, Wylie) • <i>Cultural, Literary and Memory Studies</i> (Aissaoui, Jones, Fayard, Louwagie, Penn, Rawlings, Spunta, Storchi, Wood, Wylie) • <i>Visual Culture: art, photography, theatre and film</i> (Blin-Rolland, Garavelli, Penn, Rawlings, Spunta, Storchi) • <i>Translation and Interpreting</i> (Elimam, Fayard, Louwagie, Malmkjær, Shih, Wood). Members of the different language departments contribute to teaching, assessment, supervision and research in Translation and Interpreting. <p>Of 15 academic staff (14 FTE), over half (7.5 FTE) are new appointments since RAE 2008, almost all young researchers taking up their first academic post. The School has developed Translation Studies at PGT and PGR level, and is currently establishing a Centre for International Communication from 2014 onward.</p>
<p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>Since RAE 2008 the School has promoted an integrated research culture focussing on links between its three major European languages, the Centre for Translation Studies (established with strong College and University support in 2010) and, imminently, International Communication (2014). New appointments have strengthened research in key areas of visual and literary culture as well as Translation Studies. Research seminars within Modern Languages and Translation Studies provide regular opportunities for themed discussion. Teaching Fellows in all three languages as well as Translation Studies, several of whom have completed PhDs while working in Leicester, also attend and participate in the School Research Seminars.</p> <p>Within the Unit, there are distinctive research clusters in Cultural, Literary and Memory Studies; Spatial Practices and Diasporas; Visual Cultures; and Translation and Interpreting.</p> <p>The theme of Spatial practices and diasporas connects the work of Aissaoui, Fayard, Jones, Spunta and Wylie. Aissaoui studies the relationship between history, memory and ethnic identity among North African migrants in colonial and postcolonial France, carrying out archive research into French colonial affairs, as well as anticolonialism and political activism among immigrants in France. Fayard's collaborative work on the history of sexual violence and social movements in contemporary France has extended to the study of life narratives of trauma and survival, particularly within the Maghrebi and African diasporas. Jones, similarly, has extended her interest in contemporary life writing, particularly autofiction, to the interdisciplinary field between space and literature, encompassing North African women's autobiographical writings. Spunta has furthered her work on space, place and landscape in contemporary Italian narrative fiction and photography, and on the theoretical debates around these topics in cultural studies, geography and aesthetics. Within Latin American studies, Wylie publishes on Latin American literature and culture from the late Nineteenth century to the present, and is particularly interested in writing from the Peruvian and Colombian Amazon.</p> <p>Within the field of Cultural and Literary Studies, research interests encompass interdisciplinary and theoretical approaches which frequently overlap with interests in Translation Studies and Visual Culture. Rawlings has extended her work on the religious heritage of Spain in the early modern period and on the historical legacy of the Spanish Inquisition, adding investigations of historical works in translation under the aegis of the Key Cultural Texts project. Penn's philosophical interest in Bergson and Deleuze underpins his work on both literature and film; work on Carlos Fuentes and the exotic in Mexican cinema has broadened to include the internationally celebrated avant-garde cinema of Carlos Reygadas. Louwagie adds Holocaust studies and</p>

Jewish literature, while her interest in life-writing overlaps with the work of **Jones**. In Italian, **Spunta** has continued to work on Italian contemporary fiction and theory, exploring in particular the work of Gianni Celati, Claudio Piersanti and Giorgio Messori, while **Wood** writes on the theatre as well as women writers of both Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries.

Within **Visual Culture Garavelli** works on Latin American cinema and video with a particular focus on Argentine cinema. **Spunta** has developed her interest in contemporary Italian photography, organising a conference in Italy (Rome) with the support of the British Academy. **Storchi** works on Italian and European Modernism and the Avant-Garde, the relationship between aesthetics and politics with particular reference to the fascist regime, early 20th century art and literature, architecture and design, thus also contributing to the Unit's Visual Culture research strand. **Blin-Rolland** works on adaptation in the French-language context, from and into literature, *bande dessinée*, film and television, thus contributing both to the Visual Cultures strand within the Unit, and Translation Studies.

The Unit has thus recently developed considerable strength in the area of contemporary Latin American Studies which contributes to several of the research strands identified above. **Translation and Interpreting Studies** is a new subject at Leicester, expanding and developing in response to high student demand at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The *Centre for Research in Translation and Interpreting Studies* (RTIS_t) serves as focal point for staff research and programme development in translation and interpreting studies while interacting with the wider community nationally and internationally, particularly China, the Middle East and the Far East. The Centre organises weekly research seminars, supervises research students, and hosts academic visitors. From 2012 to 2014, it hosts the AHRC-funded Translating Cultures Network *Key Cultural Texts in Translation*, with partners in France and Macao; from November 2012 to July 2013 it collaborated with the Intercultural Studies Group, Universitat Rovira i Virgili (Tarragona, Spain) and the European Society for Translation Studies on a research project on translation in language learning commissioned by the Directorate General for Translation of the European Union. The Director of RTIS_t (**Malmkjær**) is one of two Academic Directors of the European Regional Development Fund funded project *SME Support to Growth*. The success of the MA in Translation Studies and enhanced PGR numbers (12 f/t Translation Studies PGRs in addition to 8 in other areas of Modern Languages) that followed the establishment of RTIS_t led to two further appointments in Translation Studies (Shih and **Elimam**). RTIS_t acts as a focus for collaborative research and grant applications, currently under the aegis of its AHRC funded network described above, in which **Malmkjær**, **Rawlings**, **Louwagie** and **Wood** are active participants in workshops and conference. Staff research interests reflect the breadth of Translation Studies as a discipline. **Malmkjær** writes on Translation Theory and its relationship to other disciplines, and on the language of Hans Christian Andersen. Shih adds expertise in Chinese, in Interpreting, and in Editing for Translation, while **Elimam** works on the use of metaphors in the Quran and its translations. **Louwagie** publishes on self-translation around issues within Holocaust Studies, while **Fayard** continues to investigate the performance, translation and adaptation of Shakespeare in France in terms of cultural memory and transnational identities. **Wood** has also published on translations and performance of Maraini and Pirandello, as well as collaborating with a London based theatre company to translate and stage Maraini's text on gender violence, *Hurried Steps*. This play continues to have regular performances across the UK, the most recent in London November 2013. The growing body of research produced by staff has a broad international reach and establishes the Centre as an emerging leader within the field.

Unit strategy for the next five years is to:

- assist academic staff to produce high quality research outputs by tactical planning of study leave; research consultation meetings each semester and annual research away days; monitoring workloads; and reducing the administrative workload of new staff on probation
- enhance distinctiveness of its research by encouraging the formation and maintenance of research clusters both within and beyond the Unit organising themed seminar series and conferences focused on key research areas.
- continue to grow PGR numbers by making research expertise known within the wider academic community through the organisation of conferences and research seminar series; further

encouraging student progression from MA to PhD; offering funded studentships, fee waivers, and other bursaries; and identifying and helping students to apply for externally funded PGR opportunities including the BGP2 initiative; including studentships in grant applications; making international contacts and applying to funding bodies; appointing new staff who will complement and enhance current research strengths.

- grow research grant income by encouraging applications, sharing examples of successful applications, and making grant application a requirement for study leave.
- encourage inter-disciplinary research by inviting speakers from other Schools and Departments, and sharing research away days with them; by forging links with Research Centres in other Schools and Departments, and by participating in and developing interdisciplinary networks and seminar series and conferences.
- maintain the School website and promote our key research strengths on it as well as placing materials in the University's open access archive to encourage wider readership.
- attend College and University organised training events, and funders' and consultants' visits.
- nominate individuals for Peer Review Colleges.
- continue to encourage participation of staff in key and strategic external research bodies (learned societies, editorial boards/editorships).
- continue to recognise research potential in its Teaching Fellows and Research Assistants, encouraging them to complete PhDs, publish and attend conferences, and seek promotion and academic positions within and beyond the University.
- continue to diversity languages and cultures represented in RTISt, which, together with the School, interact with the forthcoming Centre for International Communication to offer PGR training and collaborative and interdisciplinary research across the School's different platforms.

c. People, including:

▪ Staffing strategy and staff development

The University is a signatory to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, and has recently been awarded the 'HR Excellence in Research Award'. The Award acknowledges the University's alignment with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for their Recruitment. The Unit complies fully with the Charter and aims to support PGR students, early career researchers and more experienced staff to achieve maximum potential.

Strategy

Research within the Unit is coordinated and monitored by the Research Committee, which reports through the College to the University Research Committee and agrees on implementation of research strategies. The Research Committee oversees study leave application and reports and agrees on the prioritisation of specific research projects by identifying appropriate peer support. Peer reviewing of grant applications is co-ordinated through the Director of Research, and draws on expertise where appropriate within a College-wide peer-review system. Internal funding, together with College funds (three members of staff have benefitted from College Development Funds to initiate new research or seminar series), supports field and archival trips, travel and conference attendance. The teaching timetable ensures one day per week free for research, and study leave may be requested one semester in seven. All staff except those very recently appointed (Blin-Rolland, Elimam, Garavelli, Louwagie and Shih) have benefitted from study leave since RAE 2008. Unit events include weekly Translation Research Seminars and monthly Modern Languages Research Seminars which both host a mix of speakers from the School as well as external visitors, annual Research Away Days to focus on specific items such as grant application or projects leading to impact, as well as more informal three-weekly meetings of staff to discuss research and identify possibilities for funding and collaboration.

The appointment of new staff takes into account succession and expansion of key areas of expertise, and the ability to attract and supervise PhD students. For example, of Category A staff appointed in the REF census period, **Wiley** extends expertise in Latin American culture, travel writing and literary theory; **Louwagie** enhances Memory and Holocaust studies and adds expertise in Self-translation which she also contributes to Translation Studies; **Storchi** adds depth to Italian contemporary and interdisciplinary studies; Shih brings Chinese to the Unit's language base, and adds strength to Translation Process Research and Translation Technology. **Garavelli** and Blin-Rolland extend the expertise in film studies and visual culture in Spanish and

French respectively while the recent appointment of **Elimam** adds Arabic to Translation Studies.

Development

New members of staff are on probation for three years, supported by an academic mentor through regular informal and more formal meetings; teaching loads are reduced to facilitate publication, conference presentation and research funding applications. Early Career Researcher colleagues are paired with more experienced colleagues in PGR supervisory teams and Probation Review Panels so that they can contribute to the management of PGR processes. They are strongly encouraged to attend College and University ECR training events which are taken into account in the annual probation reports. All staff attend annual appraisal meetings with trained more senior colleagues, and review research progress bi-annually with the Director of Research (**Wood**) and the Head of School (**Aissaoui**); here research and publications plans are identified, agreed and monitored. Part-time staff are eligible for the same study leave and promotion opportunities as full time staff, and care is taken to achieve workable workloads and research targets. Staff apply for one sabbatical semester in seven, for which they are required to produce a detailed research plan and identify associated funding. Research outcomes of sabbatical leave are approved by the University Staffing committee and reports are received by the Research Committee.

The School offers full and extensive IT and library facilities including digital libraries, an annual individual research allowance, mentoring and partnership for new researchers, and access to information and support on National and European funding through the College and corporate services. All staff are encouraged to attend the regular School, College, and University wide training events and seminars designed to refresh and updates research, supervisory and IT skills. The **College** organises weekly lunchtime research seminars which focus on (e.g.) grant applications, collaborative research, new research themes, calls from funding bodies or research related new technologies. **University** based support is delivered mainly via the Research Support Office (RSO) and the Academic Practice Unit (APU). **RSO** offers extensive support for research grant applications including help with costing, developing proposals, contracts and overseeing awards; it invites speakers from external funding organisations and other relevant bodies, especially during Research Focus Week which it runs each year; and it provides bespoke sessions on a variety of topics. The **APU** builds on Vitae's Researcher Development Framework. It provides four core programmes: **Research Leadership and Management**, aimed to help researchers at different stages in their career to become more effective in critical leadership roles; **The Enterprising Researcher**, which focuses on developing personal entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attributes; **The Intrepid Researcher**, an annual series of 10-12 methodology taster sessions presented by eminent scholars and experts in particular methodological areas; and **Skills for the Professional Researcher**, training sessions providing basic and more advanced research skills (including IT skills).

The Unit values all its members, recognising and supporting research by all categories of staff. Teaching Fellows can now apply internally for funding towards research and conference participation and these teaching-dominant contracts encourage pedagogic research to ensure that research informs teaching at all levels. Teaching Fellows have had a number of successes in recent years, including awards of PhDs (3), external funding (e.g. the Catalan Generalitat), and book contracts (Routledge). Awards to Teaching Fellows include a US-UK Fulbright Award at the American Studies Summer Institute at New York University; bids for Santander travel and research grants. Teaching Fellows regularly attend School and University research events (seminars, training), and in a small unit, this additional activity significantly strengthens and enhances the research culture.

Research students

Postgraduate doctoral students are supervised by a team of two supervisors, and progress is formally monitored annually through the Research Committee. Postgraduate supervision meetings are recorded through an agreed programme of work signed by supervisor and student. At end of year one a panel is convened for upgrade assessment, involving submission of written work, an interview and a plan for completion of research. This is followed by an end-of-year

progress monitoring meeting and submission of research statement from the student and supervisors' report at the end of each subsequent year of the students' research time.

Research student numbers have grown substantially, from 3 FTE in 2008 to 20 FTE in 2013. Supervision is spread as far as possible and appropriate across staff members in all languages. International students receive additional support from the English Language Teaching Unit as well as College and University training programmes. The increase in numbers has been achieved by: encouraging high-achieving MA graduates to read for PhDs; introducing a PhD in Translation Studies; offering a variety of forms of full and part funding and scholarship. Training activities for PGRs organised by the college include three compulsory generic training days each year as well as numerous other training opportunities for which attendance is agreed between student and supervisor and monitored through the Graduate School. The Academic Practice Unit provides PGR-specific training in research management, communicating and disseminating research, employability and career management. The Unit has also been part of the recent successful BGP2 East Midlands Consortium bid, which won £14.6 million for the recruitment and training of 410 high quality doctoral students between six universities over the next five years. The consortium will also devote some funding to Masters training, aiming to bridge the gap between BA and PhD.

The Unit offers supervised teaching opportunities for its PGRs within both the School and its Languages at Leicester programme to prepare them for an academic career, and the University's Academic Practice Unit offers training for those new to teaching at the beginning of each academic year. Research students are offered desk facilities in the department, generous space in the Library, e-mail and other IT facilities, and an annual photocopying allowance. Seven students have been supported to attend conferences or to recruit experimental subjects by the College Postgraduate Fund, and a number have attracted funding from other sources (e.g. Nemla (New York), NUI Cork Postgraduate Colloquium, and the British Association for Japanese Studies. One PhD student won a Fulbright Teaching Scholarship in the USA (2013-14). Further activities in which postgraduates participate include the *Festival of Postgraduate Research*: candidates submit abstracts to compete in a poster competition, the winners of which are selected by a range of experts from a range of backgrounds including academics from other institutions, members of research councils and other research funding bodies, industry, the media and the charity sector. The highly competitive College *Doctoral Inaugural Lectures* annually celebrate two outstanding PhD graduates able to communicate their research to a wider audience, and again Modern Languages graduates have successfully taken part. At *Café Research*, on the other hand, researchers present their research to their peers in an informal and supportive setting. The Modern Languages Postgraduate Society, formed with the support of the Student Union and the Postgraduate Tutor, offers social activity and an opportunity to discuss work formally, as well as the resources to invite internal and external speakers around specific topics of common interest. A new internship scheme gives PhD students the opportunity to gain paid work experience working as paid assistants within the School, thus giving them a fuller perspective on academic life. Further advice and guidance is accessible through the resources of the University's Career Management Service: one-to-one sessions enable students to consider their employment options, while the College provides training sessions in writing applications and preparing CVs. Pastoral support is available through the Welfare unit as well as dedicated personal tutors within the School.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Research income has derived from a range of sources and funding bodies.

- **European funding** Translation Studies (with Computer Science and EBD) attracted a grant from the European Regional Development Fund (£373,639) for the project *SME Support to Growth*; €20,000 from the Directorate General Translation of the EU for the project on the use of translation in the classroom, particularly at school level.
- **National funding** includes AHRC funding, for example £39,285 for the "Key Cultural Texts in Translation" network; British Academy funding for the project *Algerian immigration in France and the Algerian anti-colonial struggle 1945-1954*, as well as a further small research grant for *Spaces*

of Exclusion: rape and sexual violence in twenty-first century France. The British Academy also supported the project 'Viewing and writing Italian landscape: Luigi Ghirri and his legacy in Italian literature and photography.' British Academy Overseas Conference Grants have permitted participation in conferences in France and Spain. The Unit also won a £9,688 EMDA-HEFCE Innovation Fellowship; Edexcel. Additional income within the REF period has included the Dorothy Sherman-Severin Research Fellowship for Early Career Researchers.

- **Conference support** for the 2013 ASMCF Annual Conference has come from the Institut Francais (£3000), the Association for the Study of Contemporary France, Intellect Books and the University Press of Wales. Support for the *Algeria Revisited* conference (£4,500) has come from the Institut Francais, the Society for the Study of French History, the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies, the MHRA, the Society for Algerian Studies, and the Royal Historical Society, University of Southampton.

- **Facilities** In 2012 the Unit won £72,500 funding for five Interpreting Booths from the University's equipment and infrastructure fund, adding strength to Interpreting at both MA and PhD level.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

Staff contribute widely at national and international level to their disciplines, organising national and international conferences, formally collaborating with both HEIs and non-HEIs, giving keynote addresses, editing journals, serving on book and/or journal editorial panels and reviewing for journals, publishers and funding bodies. Some examples are given here:

Aissaoui organised an international conference in 2012 to mark the 50th anniversary of Algerian independence, with 70 speakers from Europe, North America and North Africa, and he is establishing an international Algerian Studies Network. *Algeria Revisited: Contested Identities in the Colonial and Postcolonial Periods* (April 2012: **Aissaoui** Principal Organiser). **Fayard** and **Louwagie** organised *Renegotiating Social Divisions in France and the Francophone World* (ASMCF, Leicester 2013). Other examples include *International Symposium of Cuban Studies: Space and Nature in Literature and Cinema* (June 2010) organised by **Penn** and the British Academy funded 'Viewing and writing Italian landscape: Luigi Ghirri and his legacy in Italian literature and photography' coordinated by Spunta, which has opened with a conference at the British School in Rome (2013) and will continue with a second conference in Leicester in 2014.

Malmkjær has given keynote addresses in Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Wanzao Ursuline College of Language, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, and Rovira i Vergili, Terragona, Spain. **Wood's** keynote lectures include Catholic University of America, Washington, and the University of Glasgow; **Jones** has given keynote lectures in Warwick and Berlin. **Louwagie** is a member of the editorial board of the international journal *Témoigner, entre histoire et mémoire* (Paris) and co-editor of the bilingual educational bulletin *Traces de mémoire. Pédagogie et transmission/Sporen van herinnering. Pedagogie en geschiedenisoverdracht*, the quarterly bilingual educational bulletin of the Auschwitz Foundation Brussels. **Malmkjær** was General Editor of *Target: International Journal of Translation Studies* until 2012; she remains a member of its advisory board and of those of *Interpreting: International Journal of Research and Practice in Interpreting*, and *SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation*. **Wood** sits on the editorial panel of Troubador Press and *Quaderni d'italianistica*, Canada. **Garavelli** is on the editorial board of *Secuencias: Revista de Historia del Cine*, while **Wylie** co-edits the book series, *American Tropics: Towards a Literary Geography*, for Liverpool University Press.

Journals and publishers for which staff review include: *American Sociological Review*, the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *British Journal of Canadian Studies*, *Geografiska Annaler B*, *Human Geography*, *European Comic Art*, *Témoigner, entre histoire et mémoire*; *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*; *Studies in Hispanic Cinemas*, *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research*, *Hispanica*; *Modern Language Review*; *The Italianist*; *Italian Studies* Continuum Press, Manchester University Press, Toronto University Press, Routledge, Oxford University Press. Funding bodies for which staff have reviewed include AHRC, Leverhulme Trust, the British Academy, the Auschwitz Foundation Brussels, and the Research Councils of Norway, Ireland,

Sweden, Hong Kong and Canada. **Wood** has been international assessor for professorial promotions in 3 American universities and one in South Africa.

Collaborations with HEIs and other bodies

Colleagues collaborate with a range of HEIs both within and beyond the UK on both long-term and short-term projects. **Louwagie**, for example, is a member of CARTEST, an international interdisciplinary research programme directed by the University of Metz focusing on the study of 'testimonial careers'. **Storchi** collaborated with the University of Warwick and Royal Holloway in the AHRC-sponsored project *The Cult of the Duce. Mussolini and the Italians, 1918-2005* between 2006 and 2011. **Wylie** was Senior Research Fellow on the AHRC project 'American Tropics: towards a literary geography' until 2009 with the University of Essex. **Wood** collaborated with the universities of Glasgow and Dundee on the AHRC network 'La mamma italiana,' and with the comune of Galtelli, Sardinia, for a conference on Grazia Deledda. **Fayard** participates in 'Shakespeare in the Making of Europe (SIME 14-16), a European research programme bringing together scholars from the universities of Utrecht, Amsterdam, York, the Ludwig-Maximilians of Munich, and Łódź. **Garavelli** participates in the international network 'Imágenes cruzadas entre España México y Inglaterra' which is currently organising a conference on the subject of 'El cuerpo Revestido.'

The Unit values collaboration in research both within and beyond its confines. **Aissaoui**, **Louwagie** and **Storchi** are members of the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies (based in the School of Historical Studies). **Louwagie** is its Deputy Director for 2012-13 and has arranged joint seminars across Colleges with external speakers (eg Robert Gordon, Serena Professor of Italian, Cambridge). **Aissaoui**, **Fayard** and **Louwagie** are participants in the College-wide Migration Research Network, as well as the Global, Colonial and Postcolonial Research Group which cuts across the Colleges of the University. **Penn** contributes to the Centre for American Studies; **Storchi** is a participant in the Heritage Network which includes colleagues across the University and has led to recent collaboration and event organisation with the £300,000 AHRC-funded project on German Expressionism run by New Walk Museum, Leicester; **Fayard** collaborates with the University's Arts Centre, Embrace Arts where she has curated an exhibition around the issue of sexual violence. The Unit also collaborates whenever possible with the local independent cinema in Leicester, giving guest introductory talks for example. All of these networks offer extensive opportunities for collaborative work, jointly hosted seminars with both internal and external speakers, and conference papers in networks broader than Modern Languages.

Further areas of collaboration with HEIs include extensive PhD external examining both nationally and internationally. Over 25 PhD theses from Cambridge to Australia have had a member of the Unit as External Examiner. Other forms of collaboration include invited research seminar papers, and membership of language specific committees. **Malmkjær**, for example, led the Danish workshop at "'Translating the Wonderful': Children's Literature in Translation", organized by the European Commission Representation in the UK and the Translation Group of Imperial College, London 2011.

Conclusion

By identifying key research strands, making strategic appointments and encouraging research activities within and beyond the Institution, we have sought to maximise the quality and impact of our research, despite the difficulties faced by a small Unit comprising small language units. We intend to continue to expand and strengthen the research base of the Unit by providing a supportive context for new staff and the increasing numbers of postgraduate students; to encourage and increase access to external funding; to collaborate within and beyond the University both with HEIs and other institutions and bodies; to continue to raise the profile of the Unit through participation in conference organisation and journal collaboration; to manage the growth and development of research within the Unit through peer review and through clear, thorough and supportive School, College and University mechanisms. A coherent research strategy, combined with appropriate people, structures, opportunities and support, as outlined in this document, will ensure the continued development of the Unit's profile.