

Institution: St Mary's University College

Unit of Assessment: 33: Theology and Religious Studies

a. Overview

This submission comes from the staff of Theology and Religious Studies (hereafter 'The Unit') presently within the School of Education, Theology and Leadership (prior to September 2013, the School of Theology, Philosophy and History), of St Mary's University College, Twickenham (hereafter 'SMUC'). In RAE 2008 there was a single submission to UoA 61 (Theology, Divinity, and Religious Studies) including historical and also philosophical contributions which were of relevance to this UoA. This broader submission reflected the interdisciplinary research culture that had been fostered in the School since its inception. The overall quality profile of this submission was 4* (10%), 3* (30%), 2* (35%). For REF2014 Theology and Religious Studies will submit again as a distinct discipline, however, following institutional reorganisation and reflecting their growing research strength, philosophy and history are submitting as discrete UoAs. The Theology and Religious Studies submission represents the work and research culture in a thriving School with over 350 students in a range of Theology and Religious Studies Undergraduate, Foundation and Masters Degrees not only taught at the SMUC campus in Twickenham but in collaboration with institutions including the Beda Pontifical College in Rome and St John's Seminary, Womersley. In consonance with SMUC's founding principle to contribute to the life of the Catholic Church in this country, much of the research activity and impact of the Unit is dedicated to promoting and preserving the highest standards of intellectual integrity in this wider arena as will be shown in the accompanying impact case studies. The Unit has a thriving research culture having seen seven candidates through to completion at Doctoral level during the REF assessment period, with 14 doctoral students currently under supervision. Most of the outputs discussed emerge from two research clusters within the Unit associated with two research centres: The Centre for Initiatives in Spirituality and Reconciliation (**InSpiRe**) and the Centre for the Social-Scientific Study of the Bible (**CSSSB**) led by Dr Peter Tyler and Prof Chris Keith respectively.

Centre for Initiatives in Spirituality and Reconciliation

Established in 2010, **InSpiRe** has three primary aims: to promote reconciliation within individuals between the apparently conflicting demands of faith and reason; to promote reconciliation between individuals and communities both in British society and globally, and to promote reconciliation between humanity and the created world. An important strand of the Centre's work focuses on the interdisciplinary investigation of power and its capacity for abuse. In this vein, Dr Stephen Bullivant is currently directing the European Society for Catholic Theology's 3-year project *Redeeming Power: Overcoming Abuse in Church and Society*. This centres around a network of European HEIs as outlined in his impact case study. The project's launch conference was held at SMUC in September 2012, attracting delegates from four continents.

Centre for the Social-Scientific Study of the Bible

The Centre for the Social-Scientific Study of the Bible (**CSSSB**) was created in 2012 with Prof Chris Keith appointed as its first Director. CSSSB's mission is to foster social-scientific research in Biblical Studies in the UK and internationally. It accomplishes these goals through funded research projects, organisation of annual or biennial conferences, hosting visiting scholars, and recruiting and supervising postgraduate students.

b. Research strategy

Research goals for UoA 61 in RAE2008 were the following: Consolidating research in Pastoral Theology, Bioethics, and Religion and Conflict whilst supporting all staff in the School in their own research and scholarly activities. This has taken the form of creating three new research centres: InSpiRe, CSSSB and the Centre for Bioethics and Emerging Technologies, CBET, initiated by Prof David Jones. Secondly, the Unit aimed to attract external research funding and continue activities such as research seminars, research days, and research leave, having special regard to the promotion of early career researchers (ECRs). All these goals were fulfilled as outlined below. For example, Dr Stephen Bullivant and Dr Pia Matthews were both appointed during the REF assessment period and are contributing to REF 2014 as ECRs. Third, the Unit proposed to increase the number of research students and see at least five doctoral completions. Again this has been achieved: seven students, under the supervision of research staff, have seen their doctorates to completion during the submission period: Dr Mervyn Tower, Dr Bridie Stringer, Dr Pia Matthews, Dr Chris Richardson, Dr Philomena Cullen, Dr Chris Dycek and Dr John Lydon. Finally, the Unit sought experienced researchers to invigorate its research culture and to mentor ECRs including the appointment of two further members of staff as Professor by 2013. Again, this was achieved with the appointment of Prof Michael Hayes as Professor of Catholic Pastoral Studies and Prof Philip Esler as Professor of New Testament in 2011, and Prof Chris Keith as Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity in 2012. Recent appointments have also included Dr Steve Walton (CSSSB) and Dr John McDade (InSpiRe). In conclusion, we have exceeded the research goals set out in our RAE 2008 submission.

Research Plans for 2014 – 2019

Over the next five years **InSpiRe** proposes to continue its development of the SMUC research environment and contribution to the discipline by, first, sponsoring regular major international conferences on significant themes connected with spirituality and reconciliation. Preparations are already underway for an International Research conference in June 2015 to mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of St Teresa of Avila with accepted speakers including Prof Rowan Williams and Prof Julia Kristeva. Secondly, by promoting dialogue within and beyond the Catholic Church in preparation for the 50th Anniversary of Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* in a series of initiatives over 2013-14. This will include a major International Conference in June 2014 incorporating dialogue within Christian denominations, with other faiths and people of no faith. In this connection Dr Bullivant is co-ordinating strategy with the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales and the British Humanist Association. Third, by promoting the highest levels of excellence in research and scholarship in the areas of spirituality and reconciliation by recruiting research students and developing educational programmes in the area. We presently have five students working towards doctorates within the centre and aim again to supervise at least five doctoral students to completion by 2019. Fourth, by hosting public lectures, colloquia, blogs and conferences that disseminate the fruits of academic and scholarly research to a wider public. And finally, by developing, in consultation with two other HEIs, a peer reviewed journal in the field of Christian Spirituality to be launched in the next five years. Details of all these proposals can be found on www.smuc.ac.uk/inspire.

CSSSB has the following research plans over the next five years: first, to host annual conferences, to be followed by the publication of the proceedings of those conferences. In 2013, the conference will be on "Evil in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity." The Centre is also participating in a research proposal to the AHRC that includes conferences in 2015, 2016, and 2017 on the reception of the Jesus tradition in the first three centuries.

Finally, the Unit will be developing **the Aquinas Centre** as a 'think tank' for theological literacy with a network of national and international scholar-consultors by acting as a nodal point harnessing

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practical insights and robust data from educators and formators in the field. The Aquinas Centre will be led, in this next phase, by Dr Anthony Towey whose own doctoral research examined Thomas' philosophical and eucharistic use of *amicitia* – 'friendship' in the *Summa Theologiae*.

Support for Interdisciplinary and Collaborative Research

As outlined above, SMUC has long recognised that theological research is inter-contextual and inter-disciplinary. In recognition of its work, St. Mary's was chosen to host Pope Benedict XVI's lecture on inter-religious dialogue and staff facilitated the linked faith-leaders seminar during his visit to Britain in September 2010 (See *Heart Speaks Unto Heart: Pope Benedict XVI in the UK*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2010). Further collaboration with the same bodies led to the subsequent Pope Benedict XVI lecture given by Lord Sacks in September 2011. St. Mary's also hosted the Catholic Theological Association of Great Britain's annual conferences in 2010 and 2011 on 'Newman' and 'Catholic Social Teaching' respectively. Moreover, through formal collaboration with theology departments at Durham, Nottingham and Roehampton Universities, St. Mary's hosted the first in a series of four Symposia profiling the work of young/early career UK researchers in the field. Since 2012 InSpiRe has established a regular bi-annual series of research seminars with Heythrop College, University of London and Sarum College, University of Winchester. These aim to foster the work of research students and so far three have been held looking at 'spirituality and the body', 'spirituality and the soul' and 'wisdom and love in spirituality'. As previously mentioned, Dr Stephen Bullivant is directing the European Society for Catholic Theology's three-year *Redeeming Power: Overcoming Abuse in Church and Society* initiative. This is an international, interdisciplinary project, examining the nature, function and location of theology, with particular attention to the power of theology to overcome power abuse in Church and Society, and is itself part of a larger endeavour of the International Network of Societies for Catholic Theology (INSeCT).

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

All staff within the School are expected to inform their teaching through appropriate research and scholarly activity, whether this is a matter of subject-focused research, pedagogic research, research resulting in publications, or ongoing engagement with the discipline. All staff attend the School's research seminars and present their work in this forum. Each semester priority in allocating seminars is given to research students and to ECRs. New members of staff are encouraged to present their work in their first academic year so that they can participate more fully in the research life of the School. These seminars, run at least once a month over the academic year, are usually attended by most of the research active members of staff and postgraduate students. Every year staff are invited to bid for up to one semester's research leave to write up a major piece of research. Many have used this opportunity to complete monographs that are being submitted as outputs in REF2014. Nevertheless, research leave is not tied to REF preparation. The success of the School in fostering the work of ECRs can be seen in their inclusion in this REF UoA submission and in the quality of their work.

Staff Development Strategy: Mentoring, Probation, Appraisal and Career Progression

Over the past five years the School has taken very seriously the progress and development of the work of ECRs. For example, Dr Stephen Bullivant was appointed as a Researcher and Graduate Assistant in September 2009, the same month he undertook his successful Doctoral defence. He was subsequently appointed to a 1.0 FTE permanent Lectureship in Theology and Ethics in September 2010. To allow more time for research, as of November 2011, he was given secondment from a substantive post allowing him to complete his submissions for REF 2014 and, as of September 2013, he was promoted to Senior Lecturer in Theology and Ethics, in recognition of (among other things) his research output. Dr Pia Matthews completed her doctorate in 2009.

During her PhD studies she was encouraged to complete a HEA-accredited PGCHE, achieved with distinction and eligibility for FHEA in 2009. In September 2011 she was appointed to the post of co-ordinator for the Foundation Degree in Healthcare Chaplaincy under the guidance of the Programme Director and is currently co-supervising an MPhil candidate with the support of Dr Towey. Leonora Butau completed her Masters in Bioethics in 2010 having achieved a distinction under Prof Jones' supervision. She was then appointed as a Graduate Assistant to the Department in the same year and began her Doctorate in 2012 'A Study of the Lived Experiences of Couples using Naprotechnology for the Treatment of Infertility in the Context of Catholic Theological and Ethical Analysis' under the supervision of Dr Towey and Prof Jones. The fees for this have been covered by the School. To reflect his increasing research profile and the initiatives of InSpiRe, Dr Peter Tyler was made a Reader in June 2012.

Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

St Mary's participated in the 2013 CROS survey and is preparing an application to the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research Award. In doing so, it supports fully the principles of the Concordat and is working towards full implementation through its institutional policies and procedures. SMUC is also in the process of aligning fully with the Concordat for Research Integrity. An action plan will ensure its full implementation by the end of the 2013-14 academic cycle.

Research Leave/Sabbatical Policy

A targeted scheme was implemented to support staff in preparation for the REF 2014 providing teaching relief to support research and impact activity. The Institutional workload planning model promotes the recognition of research activity in line with the staff appraisal scheme. For example, during 2010-11, Dr Paul Rowan was granted permission to rearrange his teaching schedule in order to support completion of his doctoral thesis. The thesis, entitled 'Towards a New Apologetics with G. K. Chesterton', was successfully defended at the Pontifical Gregorian University in December 2012 and is now being prepared for publication.

Exchange beyond Academia

The School has always prized its links with the Third Sector, in particular the Educational and Church-based initiatives that have developed from its research culture. This will be outlined in the accompanying case studies.

ii. Research students

Development of Research Culture, Support and Monitoring and Evidence of Progress

During the REF assessment period five competitive studentships have been awarded to doctoral students by the School. This has enriched the School's research student culture and environment. The University College Research Students Sub-Committee reviews the support and training provided by Schools for each of their research students through the Annual Report process. Development needs are identified through a personal development planning (PDP) framework which is based on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF). A research students' module is hosted on the St Mary's VLE. This contains all relevant administrative documents and research programme resources and provides access to an online Research Methods course (*Epigeum*). A central PGR skills training programme is provided at St Mary's in addition to the sessions available at School level and via the University of Surrey's SPLASH programme. The programme culminates annually in a multidisciplinary PGR student conference held in June. Students also have the opportunity to attend a number of research symposia, workshops and conferences across a range of disciplines at CREST (GuildHE's Consortium for Research Excellence, Support and Training, CREST) partner institutions.

Students engaging in teaching are required to undertake training for this role. They are assigned to a member of academic staff involved in the programme or module being taught who will coordinate their teaching activities and brief them fully on the objectives, academic content and programme

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regulations. The student is also required to take relevant modules on the University College's Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice and/or attend compulsory training for PGRs. Each research student is supervised by a team to give greater support. Their varied work includes biblical 'post-colonial' field work, youth ministry, belief transmission, how the Catholic Church has responded to HIV issues in England and Wales, the spirituality of hospice care and the psychological profiling of candidates for ministry. As well as a supervisory team an external moderator is appointed for each new PhD student. The moderator receives regular (six monthly) updates on the research progress of the student and regularly reports their findings on research progress.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Evidence for Successful Generation of Research Income

Grants received during the REF assessment period include:

- **British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant (£3,540)**, Project-title: 'The Reception of the Jesus Tradition in the First Three Centuries' (Principal Investigator Prof Keith with co-investigators Helen K. Bond and Jens Schröter);
- **National Catholic Safeguarding Commission** - grant awarded to conduct 10-year review of national statistics on abuse allegations within the Catholic Church (**£2,330**);
- **British Academy Quantitative Skills Acquisition Award** awarded for the project 'Who leaves the Catholic Church? A demographic profile of "Catholic disaffiliates" using British Social Attitudes data', involving Visiting Fellowship at Institute for Social Change, University of Manchester (**£3,596**);
- **Hünemann Foundation for the Advancement of Catholic Theology in Europe** - contribution towards costs for 'Theology and Power' symposium in Manila (**€1000**).

In April 2007 The Pastoral Review, which is based in the School, took on the role of distributing funds from a charitable trust to support postgraduate research in theology in the United Kingdom. Up to £50,000 per year during the period 2008 - 2012 was distributed in Pastoral Review Bursaries, many of which were for research projects based in SMUC.

In addition the **Plater Trust** allocated **£17,000** in 2009, which was matched by another charitable trust, to develop guidance on healthcare from the principles of Catholic Social teaching. Prof Jones took the lead in this and worked together with Ashley Beck and Paul Gately. This supported a number of events with stakeholders and led to the publication: A. Beck, P. Gately and D.A. Jones *Healthcare Allocation and Justice: Applying Catholic Social Teaching* (London: CTS, 2010).

Scholarly infrastructure supporting research

In 2004 St Mary's acquired the archives of *The Tablet*, a Catholic weekly founded in 1840. This archive is a unique resource for understanding the development and self-understanding of the Roman Catholic Church in England from 1840 to the present. The archive supports the research of a number of postgraduate research students in the School and is well used by staff and visiting scholars. For example, Dr Bullivant's paper 'Newman and Modernism' - which forms part of his REF submission - was based largely on the Tablet archive.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

Collaborative Arrangements

Since 2011 the Unit has collaborated with Heythrop College, University of London to deliver a series of Bi-annual Research seminars for Postgraduate and Doctoral students on the theme of spirituality. These seminars have proved successful fora for ECRs to share their findings and work with a sympathetic audience. Most of the seminar talks are available on the InSpiRe website: www.smuc.ac.uk/inspire. From Autumn 2013 we are being joined by Sarum College (University of

Winchester) which has been impressed by the work carried out in these seminars. Dr Bullivant has been co-director of *Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network* (www.nsrn.net) since its inception in 2008: an international and interdisciplinary network of scholars studying atheism/secularization and related topics. Dr Tyler has taken an active role in the development of the Mystical Theology Network (he gave a keynote address at the first conference of the network in January 2012 which forms part of his REF output submission) and SMUC will host the Network's annual conference at St Mary's in June 2015.

Joint Research Projects

Prof Keith is the Principal Investigator on a circa £900,000 AHRC Standard Research Grant proposal for a project entitled 'The Reception of the Jesus Tradition in the First Three Centuries' to be submitted in 2013/14. His co-investigators are colleagues at the University of Edinburgh and Humboldt Universität zu Berlin.

Leading Positions in Professional Associations

Dr Bullivant has been a committee member of all three of Catholic Theological Association of Great Britain (CTA), European Society for Catholic Theology (ESCT), and International Network of Societies for Catholic Theology (INSeCT) in the past five years.

Editorial Work

Dr Towey is Associate Editor of *The Pastoral Review*, published from SMUC, and several colleagues are on the editorial board including Prof Jones, Dr Rowan and Dr Tyler. Dr Tyler is also Deputy Editor of *Vinayasādhana: Journal of Psycho-Spiritual Formation*, published at Dharmaram College, Christ University, Bangalore and Editorial Adviser to *Mount Carmel Journal*, Journal of the Teresian Carmelites of the Anglo-Irish Province. Prof Keith is a consulting editor for *Stone-Campbell Journal*; he is also the main editor of the forthcoming *Handbook to the Reception of the Jesus Tradition in the First Three Centuries* (T&T Clark) and a contributing editor to the forthcoming *Dictionary of the Bible and Ancient Media* (T&T Clark). Dr Tyler has edited the *Bloomsbury Guide to Christian Spirituality* (London: Bloomsbury: 2012) and Dr Bullivant has edited the *Oxford Handbook of Atheism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2013).

Examination of Doctorates

Staff members are frequently asked to examine PhD candidates in external institutions. For example, Dr Tyler was External Examiner for two PhD theses at Heythrop College, University of London in 2012/13: Anthony Doe and Martine Thompson.

Organisation of Conferences

The School's conference *Sources of Transformation: Revitalizing Christian Spirituality* (2009) attracted wide international attendance and resulted in the publication of that name in 2010 (Continuum). This was followed by the second major InSpiRe conference: *The Cave of the Heart: Mindfulness, Contemplation and Social Renewal* which invited participants from the Buddhist, Christian and Hindu traditions to reflect on the present 'mindfulness' agenda currently being developed in healthcare and education settings. It is planned that the proceedings for the conference will be published in 2014. Dr Bullivant was Co-organizer of 'Nonreligion and Secularity: New Empirical Perspectives' at Wolfson College, University of Oxford, December 2009, Co-organizer of 'Nonreligion and the Secular: New Horizons for Multidisciplinary Research' at Goldsmiths College, University of London, July 2012, and Organizer of 'Redeeming Power: Overcoming Abuse in Church and Society', held at SMUC in September 2012. The 3rd International Theology of the Body Symposium: *A Timeless Catechesis on Life and Love* was held at SMUC on 3rd-5th June 2011 at which 250 delegates from 15 countries attended.

Refereeing Academic Publications

Staff are widely involved in the review and referee of academic publications. For example, Prof

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Keith reviews for Oxford University Press, T&T Clark, and *Journal of Theological Studies* and Dr Bullivant is reviewer of monograph manuscripts for Oxford University Press and Routledge and also Journal Peer-Reviewer for: *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Religion*, *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, *Journal of Sociology*, *History of the Human Sciences*, *Secularism and Nonreligion* and *Family Forum*.

Consultancies

Unit staff are frequently asked to assist with the work of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales. From 2005 to 2012 Dr Tyler was a member of the English Anglican-Roman Catholic Committee (English ARC), a national body set up by the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches to promote reflection, prayer, study and practical work in the service of unity between the two churches. Dr Bullivant is currently a member of the Catholic Bishops' Conference's Home Mission Consultation Committee, and is advising the Bishops' Department of Dialogue and Unity on a planned programme of Catholic-humanist dialogues with the British Humanist Association. Prof Jones is a member of the Healthcare Reference Group of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the Joint Bishops' Bioethics Committee, his accompanying impact case study shows the depth of his consultancy work with this and other major national and international bodies.

Scholarly Awards and Fellowships

Dr Bullivant received the Catherine Mowry LaCugna Award for New Scholars, Catholic Theological Society of America 2010, being the first non-US recipient of the award. As part of his British Academy Quantitative Skills Acquisition Award, Dr Bullivant will be a Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Social Change, University of Manchester, in Autumn 2013. Prof Keith has received a total of eight scholarly awards or fellowships during the REF assessment period including the 2013 British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant (£3,540) for his project: 'The Reception of the Jesus Tradition in the First Three Centuries' and the 2010 John Templeton Award for Theological Promise (\$20,000).

Invited Keynotes

Staff are frequently invited to give keynote lectures. For example: Dr Bullivant has given four during the REF assessment period including: "Always in need of purification" (*Lumen Gentium* 8): Vatican II and abuses in the Church', Theology and Power symposium, Manila, The Philippines, 18-19 July 2012 and 'I Call You (Facebook) Friends: New Media and the New Evangelization', European Society for Catholic Theology biannual congress, Brixen, Italy, 28 August – 1 September 2012. Prof Jones has given seven including 'The Ethics of Collecting, Storing and Using Human Tissue' at *Retention of Human Tissue: Legal and Ethical Aspects* hosted by the Scottish Council on Human Bioethics, Edinburgh, January 2011 and 'Ethical Perspectives' at *Death and Dying in Catholic Perspective* hosted by Durham University (The Centre for Catholic Studies), the Newman Association, Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle (the Departments of Spirituality, Formation, and Education) and the National Board of Catholic Women, March 2013. Dr Tyler has given six including: 'To Centre or Not to Centre: The Centre of the Soul in Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross' at 'Theological Explorations of Christian Mysticism', Keble College, Oxford University, January 2012 and *The Mystical Strategies of St Teresa of Avila* at 'Mysticism Without Bounds', Christ University, Bangalore, India. January 2011 and, finally, Prof Chris Keith has given seven including: 'Why Jesus' Identity as a Carpenter Was a Problem: How Christians Dealt With It' at Pepperdine Bible Lectures, Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA on 2nd May 2012 and 'On the Writing (and Burning) of Mark' at *Erinnerte und erzählte Geschichte*, Workshop of the Arbeitsgruppe Text und Geschichte der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie, Johannes Gutenberg - Universität Mainz, Mainz, Germany on 29th March 2012.