

Institution: Aberystwyth University

Unit of Assessment: 28a

a. Overview

The unit contains researchers working in French, German, and Spanish, in both linguistics and literature, and also (in the case of Spanish) in film. We work closely together in undergraduate teaching and indeed in postgraduate supervision. The recent move into an Institute of Languages, Literature and Creative Arts in 2013 will enhance possibilities for co-operation in research (see (b), below). In particular, an early development of the Institute is likely to be a research centre dealing with translation, and drawing not only on European Languages, but also on the Department of Welsh and on expertise in literature in translation within the Mercator Centre which is housed in the Department of Theatre Film and Television Studies. Recent success of the BGP2 bid with Bristol, Exeter, Southampton, Reading, Cardiff and Bath Spa will undoubtedly lead to new opportunities for postgraduate student recruitment.

The unit is distinguished by its determinedly outward-looking research strategy which has led to very substantial numbers of international engagements, in the form of conference papers and collaborations, and to a presence in international scholarship rather larger than the size of the unit would normally lead one to expect. Key to the Department's successes in these areas is a recognition that in a discipline such as ours, it is above all important to make an impact outside the UK, in the home countries of the languages which we work on, and that we need to cooperate with colleagues abroad in order to bring this about (and to measure ourselves by the standards set in those countries). The result has been not only considerable visibility outside the UK, but publications which are often produced in – and thus more likely to be read in – those countries. The most conspicuous success (and one of the largest AHRC projects in languages in the UK) is the Anglo-Norman Dictionary, but all colleagues are internationally active and internationally known.

b. Research strategy

The strategic aims for research are: to maximize output in terms of both quality and quantity, to develop connections with colleagues working elsewhere (notably, of course, abroad), and to seek to achieve a maximum impact. Some of the successes deriving from this strategy are indicated in the final section of this document (**Contribution to the discipline**). The core of the strategy is a collective decision to make research a real priority. This includes an insistence on maintaining research leave, and allocating a significant proportion of Departmental money to supporting research in different ways.

The current and future research strategy of the Department depends on a number of components. The development of connections with colleagues abroad (in networks both formal and informal) implies frequent travel and thus funding, so far secured predominantly from research grant overheads. It means also a commitment by colleagues to regular conference attendance. In a relatively small unit, achieving academic impact entails a greater investment in both money and time per capita than might be needed elsewhere, but we have consistently delivered this over many years, and intend to carry on doing so. We have organized or co-organized more than twenty conferences over the review period (see e (a) below), and this, too enhances the unit's research activity, visibility, and involvement with colleagues elsewhere. This exposure to work elsewhere is also vital as a means of allowing colleagues to calibrate the quality of their own work against the highest standards in the world.

Over the next five years (2012-2019), there are no significant plans for major changes of either direction or strategy. It is important that junior and mid-career colleagues develop their research careers in terms of publication, involvement with the discipline in the UK and abroad, and in research grant capture. In this, colleagues can draw on the experience of senior staff in the unit (**DAVIES** and **TROTTER**). At the time of writing, three research grant proposals (**BARON**, **GELLÉRI**, **HAMMEL**) are under review with the AHRC, the EU, and the British Academy; a major ERC proposal (**GOÑI PÉREZ**) is in preparation. More than half the staff in the unit thus have research grant applications currently under way. All derive directly from previous, smaller-scale research grant successes by the individuals concerned, and build on and develop recognized areas of expertise.

Institutional changes will have some implications for us: the University has moved towards a system of larger institutes, within which departments such as ours will be constituent elements. This opens up exciting possibilities of, in particular, a wider range of collaborative and interdisciplinary MA provision, designed to feed into increased postgraduate (research) recruitment. Several new MAs have been developed in the last

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year. Interdisciplinary and collaborative research will be enhanced by the move to an institute structure. Already, we have seen joint conferences (in one case leading to joint publications) with the Department of Theatre Film and Television Studies (**SIBONA**; **BARON**).

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

Compared to the position we were in for RAE 2008, we have strengthened existing areas of activity (e.g. by a recent appointment in French literature) and developed others (e.g. Spanish cinema). The Anglo-Norman Dictionary project which in 2008 had two PDRAs now has three, and two associated postgraduates. Colleagues are consistently operating at a more advanced and senior level in terms of engagement with academic networks than they were in 2008.

The staffing strategy is essentially one of vigorous mentoring of colleagues at all stages of their careers. After the probation process (in which research output and activity – publications and also grant bids – are closely monitored) the university's Staff Development and Performance Review gives due weight to this aspect of colleagues' work thereafter, and independently of this, regular research monitoring at university level occurs. The Department is fortunate in that two out of the seven staff (**DAVIES** and **TROTTER**) are Peer Reviewers for the AHRC and thus have a good understanding of research council processes and policies. A colleague who joined us recently (Andrea **HAMMEL**) has just been promoted, in large part due to research-related performance. Perhaps more important than the formal processes is the way in which the Department (in part through its Head) has actively and consistently encouraged a vigorous research-centred ethos and commitment on the part of all colleagues. Research projects and grant bids are discussed with senior colleagues at an early stage and appropriate guidance is offered, in part as a demonstration of the extent to which research is a Departmental as well as an individual imperative. The corollary is a Departmental commitment to fund research. The unit has now three senior colleagues (one professor, one Reader and one senior lecturer (both women), two mid-career lecturers and two early-career researchers. It is thus well balanced in terms of age and experience. It also benefits from the additional presence of (now) three PDRAs on the Anglo-Norman Dictionary project.

Post-doctoral researchers on the Anglo-Norman Dictionary project (two prior to 2012; three 2013-2015) are encouraged to attend conferences, to give papers, and (when they so wish) to teach. Attendance at international doctoral and postdoctoral summer schools (in Italy, France and Switzerland) has been actively promoted. One former RA (Jennifer **GABEL**) is now assistant to Professor Rafael Arnold in Rostock; Larissa **BIRRER** (who completed a Ph.D. whilst here with financial support from the Zeno Karl Schindler Stiftung (and who then worked for the AND as a part-time research assistant) is now assistant to Professor Richard Trachsler in Zurich; Natasha **ROMANOVA** (PDRA on an AHRC project on Anglo-Norman in the National Archives) went on to be part of the Online Froissart project in Liverpool. We have just recruited Kateriina **NÄRÄ** to the AND, who comes to us from another AHRC project, the Online Froissart Project (Sheffield). An application for a British Academy postdoctoral fellowship has just (October 2013) been made for someone who hopes to join the Department.

Early career researchers have reduced administrative loads. Research leave operates on a rota system, and ensures predictable periods of time for sustained research at a rate of approximately one semester in six. This is occasionally challenging for the Department but we have not compromised on this essential provision. The use made of research leave (and the initial case for it) are centrally monitored, formerly by the Deans and now by Institute Directors following the shift from Faculties to Institutes in 2013. Thus far, the question of fixed-term part-time staff has not arisen in this, or indeed in any other, context within the unit.

The unit has had (since 2003) two post-doctoral researchers (three since 2013), and at times additional researchers for one-year periods (Larissa **BIRRER**, Jennifer **GABEL**, Natasha **ROMANOVA**), as part of the Anglo-Norman Dictionary project. This brings a significant additional research force to the unit, and it has given rise to a number of additional publications (one book, four chapters, seven conference papers by the PDRAs). With regard to equal opportunities, it may be worth noting that all four of the post-doctoral researchers who have worked on the Anglo Normal Dictionary to date, together with those who have been associated with it as a result of other research projects (from Switzerland and with the DFG) have been from outside the United Kingdom. Of the six researchers associated with the project to date, five have been women.

Staffing desiderata include a reinforcement of the literary side of the Department. We are now steadily increasing the recruitment of research students, and intend to develop further our already impressive research grant income, with a target of a 50% increase by 2017. A particular area which it is strategically desirable to reinforce, and this is a national rather than a local consideration, is the Anglo-Norman Dictionary

project, which needs to be maintained as a long-term and evolving resource. Discussions are already under way within the University about this.

ii. Research students

Nearly all research-active members of staff are involved in PGR supervision and we have recruited several more research students in 2013. We have co-supervised a significant number of students, mostly associated with and indeed attached to Universities elsewhere in the EU (Freiburg, Neuchâtel, Zurich, Leuven, Murcia, Tenerife). The University awarded a Ph.D. studentship to the Anglo-Norman Dictionary project from 2012/13, with the explicit goal of developing expertise in that subject. Research students within the department have access to normal facilities (including inter-library loans) and photocopying, and travel funds: the unit has a strong record of supporting research activities such as conference attendance, or research travel. One of our part-time teaching staff in Italian embarked (in 2012) on a PhD in the adjacent Department of English. Completion rates for research students since 2008 are running at 100%. Efforts are made within the unit to assist with skills development, and career training, notably in the form of the assistance alluded to above for attendance at, and delivery of papers at, seminars and conferences here and elsewhere. The current BGP2 bid which involves Aberystwyth promises significantly to enhance the research environment for postgraduates. A recently-expanded range of research training is also provided centrally by the Graduate School which acts, as well, as a focus for interdisciplinary discussion; it is anticipated that the move into Institutes in 2013 (the unit will be alongside English, Welsh, the School of Art and Theatre, Film and Television Studies) will generate further opportunities.

Members of the unit have, within the review period, acted as external examiners for doctorates at the universities of Birmingham; Essex; Exeter; Freiburg; Glasgow; Granada; Imperial College; Liverpool; IGRS, University of London; Madrid Complutense; Manchester; Murcia; Neuchâtel; Zurich.

HAMMEL acted as moderator and adviser for the PhD workshop *Exil und Exilforschung*, Hamburg University, March 2013. **TROTTER** was invited to teach at the (doctoral/post-doctoral) *Scuola estiva di linguistica e filologia romanza*, Naples, June 2008 (co-organized by the Société de Linguistique Romane and the Istituto Italiano di Scienze Umane, Firenze-Napoli) and at *Journées d'études doctorales en lexicographie galloromane* (co-organized by FEW/Centre de dialectologie et d'étude du français régional, Université de Neuchâtel), August 2013. He will lead a doctoral summer school (on Old French textual editing) in Klagenfurt in September 2014. **DAVIES** has been invited to participate in a postgraduate summer school on geolinguistics at Kiel University in 2014.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

The unit has been spectacularly successful in generating research income (c. £1m over the REF period for eight research-active colleagues). Perhaps more importantly, success in this regard has been widely achieved, including by early-career researchers (grants have been secured by **DAVIES**, **TROTTER**, **BARON**, **HAMMEL**, **GOÑI PÉREZ**, **GELLÉRI**). The department operates a vigorous mentoring process in respect of research grant applications, and has developed a good level of expertise in this area of activity. Overhead income from research grants has been crucial to funding other research within the Department and members of staff have access to reasonable sums of money (c. £1,200 p.a.) for conference attendance and library visits.

Research is supported effectively by a central research office and in particular by research development officers who assist (and have intervened decisively on several occasions) with grant proposals. The development of this element of central university provision is indicative of a greater investment by the institution in such activities and indeed in research more generally. Central funding is selectively deployed to assist early-career researchers and to pump-prime bigger projects. External research funding has permitted the continuation and development of major projects (**TROTTER**), and the establishment of invaluable national and international research networks (**HAMMEL**, **GOÑI PÉREZ**, **BARON** are all actively engaged in funded networks). Amongst the elements of scholarly infrastructure may be cited the collection of the Anglo-Norman Dictionary project (primary materials, citation slips, and a small but invaluable library of source-texts) and materials which are being assembled in conjunction with **GOÑI PÉREZ**'s international project on Spanish periodicals and the history of science based in Lleida (Catalonia). Some of the research in the unit is facilitated both by the university's IT services (e.g., assistance with maintaining servers and network connections), and by a technician who works in the Language Resource Centre which is managed within the Department. Whilst research assistance is not part of his official remit, he has nevertheless been invaluable

as a “local” resource.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

Members of the unit play a significant role in their disciplines. Making due allowance for the stage of their careers that colleagues are at, there is a significant level of involvement in professional activity, including the organization of conferences (in Aberystwyth but also elsewhere), work on editorial and similar boards, roles taken on in research evaluation and learned society/research council work, and the giving of conference papers. We regard it as vital that colleagues make an impact above all in outside the UK, typically in the countries whose languages, literature and culture we study. Presence at international conferences is thus an essential part of our work, and it is both expected of colleagues, and financially supported by the Department.

The Aberystwyth Linguistic Forum (a university-wide lecture series co-ordinated by DAVIES) runs a programme of talks on aspects of linguistics and during the review period invited the following to Aberystwyth: David Parsons (Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth), November 2013; Claudia Gremler (Aston University), October 2012; David Willis (Cambridge University), March 2012; Evelyn Ziegler (Universität Duisburg-Essen), November 2011; Christina Schäffner (Aston University), March 2011; Diarmait Mac Giolla Chríost (Cardiff University), November 2009; Stephen Elspass (Universität Augsburg), April 2009; Ludwig Eichinger (Universität Mannheim/Institut für Deutsche Sprache), November 2009.

Other visiting speakers were: Rosa Vidal Doval (QMUL), February 2009; Jaime Céspedes Gallego (Université de Nanterre, Paris), December 2009; Luis Veres (Universidad de Valencia), March 2010; Roland-François Lack (UCL), March 2010; Daniel Macías Fernández (Universidad de Cantabria), March 2010; José María Aguilera Manzano (Universidad de Cantabria), March 2010; Michael Sheringham (University of Oxford), March 2011; Hans Goebel (Universität Salzburg), February 2012; William Dieneman, March 2012; Georges Kleiber (Université de Strasbourg), May 2012; Sara Jones (Birmingham), November 2012; Marta Giné (Universitat de Lleida), December 2012; Fidel Gómez Ochoa (Universidad de Calabria), March 2011, December 2012, February 2013; John March (Leeds) March 2013.

DAVIES was on the judging panel for the Schlegel-Tieck translation prize in 2008 and 2009.

Activities include:

a) Conferences organised

The Department has deliberately encouraged and developed conference organization as a way to increase visibility, and bring colleagues to Aberystwyth. The following conferences have been run, here and elsewhere:

BARON: Contemporary Cuban Cinema Seminar Series, April 2012, Havana; March 2013, Aberystwyth; Cuban Cinema Festival and Film workshops, March 2013, Aberystwyth; **DAVIES:** Forum for Germanic Language Studies, Gregynog, January 2010; organised panel at Sociolinguistics Symposium 19, Berlin, August 2012; on scientific committee of Sociolinguistics Symposium 18 and 19 (2010, 2012) and VALS 2010 (Swiss Association of Applied Linguistics); **GOÑI PÉREZ:** co-organiser, *Performing & Picturing Tangier: Beats, Borders & Beyond*. Morocco May 2008; co-organiser, *Performing & Picturing Tangier: Critiquing postcolonialism/Performing Cultural diversity* Morocco, May 2009; co-organiser, *II Congreso Internacional de Historia Bélica, War Languages. Universidad de Cantabria and Aberystwyth University, Santander, September 2011*; **HAMMEL:** organiser, *International Conference on Refugee Archives, British Academy, London, June 2008*; *International Conference on The Kindertransport 1938/39: Seventy Years On, London, May 2009*; *International conference on Holocaust Writing and Translation, February 2011, London*; *International Symposium on Forward from the Past: The Kindertransport 1938/39, German Historical Institute, June 2013*; **SIBONA:** principal organiser, *Our Inner Animal and the Theories of Creativity*, Aberystwyth, September 2008; principal organiser, *Performing Rituals*, Aberystwyth, September 2012; **TROTTER:** co-organiser, *Repenser l'histoire du français*, Université de Savoie, Chambéry, October 2011; on scientific committee, *La 'logique' du sens: de la sémantique à la lexicographie. Débat critique autour des propositions de Robert Martin*, Université de Metz, March 2011, and for *Les emprunts lexicaux au français dans les langues européennes, Craiova, November 2011*; organiser, *Present and Future Research in Anglo-Norman*, Aberystwyth, July 2011; comité scientifique, *XXVII^e Congrès International de Linguistique et de Philologie Romanes*, Nancy, July 2013, and president of a section of the congress.

b) Editorships

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HAMMEL: Member of the Editorial Board of the *Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* (Rodopi, Amsterdam); **MCMAHON:** co-editor of *English Language and Linguistics* (2008-); **TROTTER:** co-editor, *Journal of French Language Studies* (C.U.P.).

c) Editorial boards/committees

DAVIES: on advisory board of *Journal for Germanic Linguistics*; **GOÑI PÉREZ:** member of editorial board of the *Asociación de Hispanistas Siglo Diecinueve (Cultura y Literaturas Hispánicas)*; member of Scientific Committees for publication of proceedings of colloquia at the Université d'Artois, France (2012); at Lleida University, Spain (2012); and Torino, Italy, 2013; **MCMAHON:** editorial board of *Phonology*; **TROTTER:** member of *comité de rédaction, Revue de Linguistique Romane*; of scientific committee, *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*; of scientific committee, *Quaderni di Filologia Romanza*; of advisory board, *Romance Studies*; of scientific committee, *Revue internationale de linguistique française* (online journal of the Institut de linguistique française); of advisory board, *Romanische Texte des Mittelalters* series (Winter Verlag, Heidelberg); member of advisory boards for 'Lexis of cloth and clothing', AHRC project based in Manchester (Professor Gale Owen-Crocker); 'Medieval Francophone Literary Culture Outside France', AHRC project based in King's College London (Professor Simon Gaunt), of *French of Outremer* project based in Fordham University, New York (Dr Laura Morreale), and of the Leverhulme 'Bilingual thesaurus of English and Anglo-French' at Birmingham City University (Professor Richard Ingham); partner in ANR-funded *Dictionnaire du français scientifique médiéval* (Professor Joëlle Ducos, Paris-Sorbonne).

d) Research project evaluations

DAVIES: reviewed AHRC grants proposals for AHRC Peer Review College; reviewed end of project report as rapporteur for ESRC; **HAMMEL:** reviewer for ESRC; Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences; Swiss National Science Foundation; Fonds National de Recherche Luxembourg; **MCMAHON:** member of the International Advisory Board for Academy Professorships in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences; **TROTTER:** reviewer for AHRC; Irish Research Council for the Humanities; Università di Pisa; Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung (Austria); Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek); Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek-Vlaanderen (Belgium); Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft; external assessor, on behalf of the Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, of the *Dictionnaire de l'occitan médiéval*, 2012; on behalf of the Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, of the *Dictionnaire de l'ancien gascon*, 2013; member of AERES (*Agence de l'évaluation de la recherche et de l'enseignement supérieur*) committee to assess French linguistics in Université de Paris-IV Sorbonne, 2009.

e) Prizes

GELLÉRI: was awarded the William Reese Company Fellowship of the James Bell Ford Library, Minnesota (2013); and the Muriel McCarthy Research Fellowship from Marsh's Library, Dublin (to be taken up in 2014), in each case to work on the library's resources; **TROTTER:** the Anglo-Norman Dictionary was awarded the Prix Honoré Chavée by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Paris, in 2011.

f) Conference papers

The eight research-active members of the unit have given just under 100 (98) papers between 2008 and 2013; two colleagues joined the unit after 2008 (**MCMAHON** in August 2011; **GELLÉRI** in January 2013). This is an essential element of our impact strategy in terms of establishing the unit's *bona fides* in the academic world. Papers have been given in: Amsterdam; Arras; Basel; Berlin; Birmingham; Bolzano/Bozen; Boston; Budapest; Cambridge; Cardiff; Chambéry; Cleveland, Ohio; Craiova; Duisburg; Edinburgh; Florida; Havana; Heidelberg; Kiel; Kinsale; Klagenfurt; Krakow; Leicester; Leuven; Liverpool; Lleida; London; London, Ontario; Los Angeles; Lyon; Madison, Wisconsin; Manchester; Mannheim; Metz; Minnesota; Nancy; New York; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Oakland, CA; Oxford; Paris; Poitiers; Prague; Reading; Reims; Rome; San Francisco; Santander; Santiago de Compostela; Sheffield; Strasbourg; Sussex; Tangiers; Turin; Valencia; Valladolid; Warsaw; Wraclaw; Zurich.

g) Positions in national/international learned societies

BARON: member of Society of Latin American Studies and Cuba Research Forum; **DAVIES:** Member of international committee of International Association for Germanic Studies (IVG); **HAMMEL:** member of the Academic Steering Committee of the Study Group for the Forced Migration of Children, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, since 2010; member of the Vorstand of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Exilforschung, since 2012; member of the Management Committee of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, since 2005; member of the Executive Committee of Women in German Studies (WIGS); elected treasurer of WIGS, 2001-2009; **MCMAHON:** Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales, 2012; **TROTTER:** member of Bureau (since 2004) and subsequently Vice-President, Société de Linguistique Romane, 2010-2013. He was elected President for 2013-2016. **TROTTER** was *professeur invité* at the École

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Nationale des Chartes, Paris in March/April 2012 and will take up a visiting professorship at Paris IV-Sorbonne in 2014.

h) Involvement in research council activities

DAVIES: member of Peer Review College, AHRC, 2007- ; **HAMMEL:** participant in AHRC workshop for Resource Enhancement Grant Holders in 2008; **MCMAHON:** Invited member of RCUK Public Engagement with Research Advisory Panel, from January 2013; **TROTTER:** member of Peer Review College, AHRC, 2004- ; AHRC Strategic Reviewer, 2010- ; reviewer for AHRC for BGP1 and BGP2.