

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Hertfordshire</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Panel D (34): Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory</p>
<p><b>a. Overview</b></p> <p>Art and Design at the University of Hertfordshire (UH) comprises 13 category A staff (11.0 fte), more than double the volume submitted to RAE 2008 (5.1 fte). Art and Design (the unit) is part of the School of Creative Arts – responsible for staff development and much of the institutional infrastructure – and the Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities Research Institute (SSAHRI), one of the university's three research institutes, which provides the wider organisational structure and support for research.</p> <p>The unit is currently organised into four research groups: <b>Theorising Visual Art and Design</b> (TVAD), the <b>Research into Practice Group</b> (R2P), the <b>Media Research Group</b> (MRG) and the more recently established <b>Design Research Group</b> (DRG). An Associate Dean for Research (<b>Adams</b>), who is a member of the Institute and School's Management Groups, manages research in the unit.</p>
<p><b>b. Research strategy</b></p> <p>The university's overarching Research Strategy 2011–15 aims to achieve research excellence in specific areas that demonstrate the capability to create a dynamic culture and environment, raise the university's international profile, excel in impact, exploitation and dissemination and, develop the next generation of researchers. The unit's research strategy has been shaped by these aspirations.</p> <p>The university has a policy of allocating the QR funding it receives on an annual basis back to the research areas to be used for further research development. The unit invests the QR returned to it in those elements that will best sustain and enhance its research environment: staffing and the postgraduate research culture. This is budgeted through a Research Delivery Plan agreed and monitored at research institute and university level. The key aims of the plan include the deployment of funds for dedicated research time to identified staff, in return for deliverables specified in terms of the quality of published outputs, the breadth of impact achieved and the degree of research income attracted.</p> <p><b>Achievement of strategic aims for research during the assessment period</b></p> <p>Our aim has been to build on established research strengths in theorising practice-led research; research in fine art, and art and design history; and to develop research capability in film and media and design. We have concentrated our research around four groups: <b>Theorising Visual Art and Design</b> (TVAD), the <b>Research into Practice Group</b> (R2P), the <b>Media Research Group</b> (MRG) formed in 2010 and the <b>Design Research Group</b> (DRG) formed in 2013.</p> <p>R2P, MRG and the TVAD are led by a senior researcher (<b>Biggs</b>: R2P; <b>Akass</b>: MRG; <b>Lees-Maffei</b>: TVAD) and include research fellows, visiting researchers from overseas, alongside a community of early-career researchers, and research students. The groups have international profiles, contributing actively to their respective discipline bases through international conferences, editing and contributing to peer-reviewed publications, membership of peer-review colleges, supervision and examination of research students. The groups support a cluster of 18 research students within the unit. The DRG comprises five early career researchers who are not submitted to this assessment, but it is anticipated that this group will form part of future research assessment submissions.</p> <p>The boundaries between each group are permeable, and academic staff and students collectively contribute to the School's research culture through a weekly lecture, 'Art Talks', which creates a platform for disseminating the unit's research internally; and the monthly 'Meeting of Minds' seminar aimed at academic staff and research students. There are also workshops, lectures and conferences such as the Design History Society conference 2009 and the Dr Who conferences 2012 and 2013. There is also joint supervision of research students across the research groups.</p>

### Future strategic aims and goals

Our strategy for 2014–20 is to:

- increase the number of research-active staff centred around the four groups through the appointment of staff with doctoral qualifications and through a programme of staff development.
- continue to develop research capacity by supporting existing staff to complete doctoral degrees. Sixteen staff have doctoral qualifications, we are supporting an additional seven, and by 2020 we plan to have between 25 and 30.
- support early-career researchers by using internal funding for staff research leave, allowing them to produce high-quality research outputs.
- increase the number of research students in media, practice-based research, art and design history and heritage by 50%. Currently we have 18 students and we aim to increase this to 27 by 2020. The key mechanism for this growth will be an increase in supervisory capacity, which we are currently addressing, and the expansion of professional doctorates in art and design.
- build on our international collaborations with universities and public bodies overseas, such as our recent link with the University of Canberra on practice-led research. We will also forge interdisciplinary links within the university through SSAHRI, particularly in film, media and heritage. To this end we have recently established the Creative Economy Research Centre, a hub for shared research interests in the creative, economic and social dimensions across the schools of Creative Arts, Humanities, Education and Business.
- facilitate greater levels of public engagement and community impact, building on existing collaborations with local organisations with international significance, such as the National Trust, Shaw's Corner, Elstree Film Studios, and Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation. The university hosts **UH Galleries** and **UH Arts**, organisations dedicated to the improvement of the region's cultural life through exhibitions, lectures, screenings and other such events. Over the next five years, we plan to develop this platform by ensuring that each research group presents examples of its research to the public on an annual basis as a central part of our dissemination strategy.
- secure increased levels of research funding from RCUK, UK charities and overseas funding bodies through the use of internal competitive funds to enable colleagues to make quality research grant applications.
- build on the substantial amount of applied research the unit has carried out in the form of consultancies and product design in the last five years, to further develop these applied forms of research and consultancy and hence integrate them into our existing research structures. One example is our work on three-dimensional printing and additive manufacture.

### Aims for each of the unit's constituent groups

**R2P** will build on its research on the epistemology of creative practice, extending its work on practice-led research into the broader realms of creative practice in architecture, design and creative writing through continued work with overseas partners in Brazil, Sweden and Australia. The group has recently established a professional doctorate, for which it aims to recruit up to five students a year. The group will also continue to provide the creative and intellectual locus of all of the unit's practitioners in practice-led research.

**MRG** will consolidate its research profile in media theory and the commercial applications of film technology through the Games and Visual Effect Research Lab (G-VERL), which makes visual effects technology effects available to artists working in film. It has already forged links with other schools within the university, working with School of Humanities film historians and with staff from the Business School on research into labour practices in the film industry. The group was instrumental in forming the Creative Economy Research Centre. The MRG will continue to host cross-disciplinary events such as the Dr Who conferences, and co-manage the *Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television Studies*.

**TVAD** will continue to support high quality research in art and design history around the interstices of text and image, and continue to recruit research students to its areas of specialism in twentieth-

century design history (**Lees-Maffei**); visual culture in early nineteenth-century France (**Adams**); post-Soviet visual culture, Darwinism and health (**Simpson**); architecture and social regeneration (**Rabikowska**). Its members will continue to edit and contribute to international-rated journals. The group also plans to work with local museums and cultural organisations, building on **Simpson's** AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award with the National Trust at Shaw's Corner and **Adams'** work with Letchworth Garden City Heritage Trust.

**DRG** plans to provide a locus for research in design with specific reference to the domestic use of three-dimensional printing, an emerging area that gives the public access to sophisticated production methods, the consequences of which are the subject of our research.

### c. People, including:

#### i. Staffing strategy and staff development

The unit is committed to the career development of researchers. It works within the framework set out by the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers implemented by the university in April 2010. The university was one of the first to be awarded the European Council HR Excellence in Research award. It received external re-approval of the award for a further two years in 2012. The university participated in the 2010, 2011 and 2013 Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS). The 2013 results show that in 12 out of 18 categories UH responses are above or more positive than the national average. The survey provides valuable feedback to the unit on its staff development strategy.

The unit has a policy of employing academic staff with doctoral degrees and of encouraging existing staff to register for doctorates. Doctoral study is part of an integrated approach to researcher development. The School's support for **Lees-Maffei's** doctorate (2006) formed the platform for her RAE submission in 2008, a successful readership application in 2010 and her recent membership of the AHRC peer-review college. Senior staff are similarly supported to undertake research degrees. At the time of submission, eight staff within the unit are registered for research degrees; six have also completed degrees either internally or externally since January 2008. The School commits around £17,500 annually to enable periods of remission from teaching to undertake PhD study. We support a funding programme, 'Academics into Industry', to develop industry-focussed collaborative research and lead the British Council-funded Design for Africa programme, in which three of our staff have collaborated with South African designers to explore new global markets. There are also plans to develop work in China and Ghana.

The School has a published policy of developing its research community and is committed to: supporting staff within the school to align themselves with, and contribute to, one of the research groups in the form of scholarly or research activity; funding small projects by early career researchers; and devoting two staff development days a year to research. At appraisal, all School staff declare themselves active in either research, scholarship or pedagogy, and agree a plan to produce outputs of recognised quality. Two appraisal interviews take place each year, at which progress against targets is monitored. Appraisals conducted by the Associate Dean Research address procedures that support both staff development and career progression. All research-active staff have access to funding to support research projects, grant applications and conference attendance, and for periods of research leave. In 2011–13 around £42,000 per year was spent on supporting research (excluding research staff contracts). SSAHRI also has an annual competitive funding round for awarding small grants (£19,000–£24,000) to early career researchers, and periodic one-off calls to support specific aspects of the research strategy (such as impact).

We actively support the development of early-career researchers through time allocations for research and mentoring. To this end, all research active staff are attached to one or more of the groups and participate in research seminars and staff training events; all are trained as research degree supervisors, and there are opportunities to contribute to supervisory teams for research students, both in the unit and in SSAHRI. Similar trajectories are planned for mid-career researchers. Appraisals address opportunities for applications for readership and, where appropriate, professorship. Support for research staff also takes place at research institute level. SSAHRI implements a second-reader scheme, in which grant applications are reviewed by an experienced researcher prior to submission in order to increase the quality of applications and

improve chances of success. The university also operates a research staff mentoring scheme aimed specifically at early career researchers.

All research staff are given central and local induction and are encouraged to access the academic staff development programmes provided centrally, as well as the [Generic Training for Researchers](#) programme noted below that is available to research staff and research students. This central provision includes CPD courses in career management, leadership and management, personal effectiveness, specialist research skills and techniques, doctoral student supervision, and public engagement. Locally, training addresses issues around practice-led research.

The unit fully supports the university's equality and diversity principles across all relevant protected characteristics. All new staff to the university, including researchers, receive mandatory equality and diversity training as part of their induction, to ensure the delivery of considerate and inclusive services. In developing its approach to staffing and staff recruitment the unit is supported by the university's [Equality Office](#) and Disability Services, which advise on equality and disability legal advice and best practices. The university promotes 'family friendly' policies such as flexible working, has an on-site children's nursery, and offers support for staff with caring responsibilities. It is a member of the Athena Swan Charter and a Stonewall Diversity Champion.

## ii. Research students

The unit continues to increase its research student community. There are currently 18 registered students compared with an average of four per year during the preceding assessment period (2001-2007). We have awarded seven doctoral degrees since 2008 (two of these were awarded between January and July 2008 and thus are not part of the REF4a data in this REF submission) and three Masters awards. The unit established professional doctorates in fine art and in design in 2012. The structure and content of both doctorates have been shaped by **Biggs'** body of work on the epistemology of practice undertaken by R2P.

Supervision teams comprise at least two academic staff, and they meet regularly. Progression examinations involve an assessor external to the supervision team and annual monitoring is part of a formal schedule to facilitate successful completions. The School has a Research Tutor (**Simpson**) supported by the Research Institute's Head of Research Degrees (**Adams**). The university's Research Degrees Board monitors students' progress and oversees the final examination. Our students regularly participate in the SSAHRI annual research student conference established in 2005. The conference provides a platform in which the Research Institute's 200 research students can meet for social and academic purposes, exchange ideas and hone presentation skills in preparation for external presentations and final examination. The unit also works with the Universities of Surrey and Oxford Brookes under its AHRC Block Grant Partnership award, resulting in a Professional Preparation Masters award in 2010. In 2012, our block grant partners participated in SSAHRI's research student conference. In 2009 the unit was awarded an AHRC collaborative doctorate (**Simpson**) with the National Trust's Shaw's Corner.

Research training at the university is coordinated by the [Doctoral College](#), which oversees all quality assurance and training for all key milestones of the research degree process. It provides a comprehensive programme of [Generic Training for Researchers](#) (GTR) informed by RCUK guidelines and designed to provide the knowledge and skills to help students progress successfully through research degrees and research careers. The programme is open to all staff and research students. The School sets aside £5,500 annually to fund research student presentations at external conferences and allow them to gain professional experience before graduation. The School also has an integrated taught Masters degree programme in art, design, art therapy, media and music, with core modules in research skills and creative enterprise. All research students in the unit are strongly encouraged to attend these modules. The programme provides an effective recruiting ground for the unit's research degrees. Six of our eighteen research students are alumni from our Masters programme. All research students are located in one building, and have dedicated study and studio space to facilitate a lively and sustainable research culture. The university achieves consistently good results in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), with above-average scores. This trend has continued in 2013, with supervision and research skills being particularly highly rated.

#### d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Since January 2008, the unit's research grants and contracts total £1.08 million from a range of diverse sources including the AHRC, British Academy, the Arts Council, Charities, Foundations and commercial organisations such as Tesco.

**Research councils:** In 2010–11 **Biggs** was awarded an AHRC grant (£519,537) for the *Non traditional knowledge and communication in art and design* project; **Simpson** received £52,520 for the collaborative doctoral award *George Bernard Shaw: Artefacts and the construction of identity* and a British Academy grant (£5,600) for research at the Darwin Museum, Moscow. In 2011 **Adams** was awarded £12,300 for a Professional Preparation Masters award in Fine Art from the AHRC as part of its capacity-building programme undertaken with Oxford Brookes and Surrey universities.

**Public Commissions:** In 2010–11 **Nelson** was awarded £20,070 for a sculptural commission for Guys Hospital, £30,000 for *Anarchy in the Organism*, with University College London Hospital's MacMillan Cancer Centre, and an additional £23,310 award to tour the work in the UK. He was funded to produce the sculpture *Hortus Desiderata* with an award of £200,000 from the Crown Casino, Melbourne, and received a Pollock Krasner Foundation award of £25,000 and a New Work Grant (AU\$20,000) from the Australia Council. In 2010–11, **St James** received £3,000 for *You, Me, It*, a project at the New York Streaming Museum, and £5,200 for *Reaching Into New Lands*, a video performance project financed by the Arts Council. The Redtory Gallery sponsored **St James'** one-person show (£27,000), and the Argentine Chancellery awarded him £48,000 for the Antarctic Silence Project (Polar South). **Jury** received £3,800 from the Arts Council for an installation, *Suspended Trauma*. **Marsh** was funded by the Québec Arts Council (£3,960) for a video installation, *Performing History*. **Marsh** has also been supported by the Canadian Arts Council with a grant of £1,212 for the production of a performance installation, *Automatons in the Park*.

**Industry, Commerce and Public corporations:** Sources of income include two Shorter KTPs working with Albion Water Management (£18,000 and £500), and a project on pattern resizing for Tesco, valued at £9,828. Between 2008 and 2013 **Lees-Maffei** was awarded £2,800 by the Design History Society for two major publications and a DHS-sponsored seminar. The School also received a British Council award (£67,850) for the project Design for Africa.

#### Infrastructure and facilities to support research

The School has extensive studio and technical facilities to support research, including film and media production facilities; printing, textile and photographic studios; machine shops; and rapid prototyping facilities with dedicated support from 12.0 fte specialist technicians, excluding the IT support staff. Research students have access to well-equipped study spaces including studio and IT facilities in one dedicated building for postgraduate study. The building provides a locus for study and social events for a community of some 150 postgraduates. The School also houses [UH Galleries](#), the largest exhibition space in the region, run by the university-sponsored [UH Arts](#). Research students and staff regularly exhibit work and contribute to its lecture series.

The unit is supported at Institutional level by a [Research Grants Team](#). It supports individual academics within the Research Institute to obtain external research funding, offering assistance with all aspects of pre-award funding activities, including identifying appropriate sources of funding; reviewing grant applications to ensure compliance with funders' imperatives; endorsing grant applications on behalf of the university; and advising on the grants submission systems and the costing and pricing of research. The team also advises on EC funding and on ethical approval for research projects. The university is a full member of the RCUK Research Integrity Office and has approval processes for studies involving human participants and potentially problematic ethical issues relating to research.

Information Hertfordshire, which provides the university's information services, IT and learning resources, offers support for learning, teaching, research and business needs. In response to RCUK and EU data management requirements, the university's three research institutes in collaboration with Information Hertfordshire won a £295,000 JISC grant to develop principal researcher competencies in data management.

The university's [Knowledge Transfer Team](#) works with academic staff to develop industry links through knowledge transfer, bringing together academic research and business ideas for mutual benefit. The team assists staff in the unit with preparing business proposals and funding applications, and manages Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, such as the successful *Albion Water Project*, from enquiry stage to project launch.

#### e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

The unit contributes to its discipline base through exhibitions, public commissions, contributions to peer-review panels for journals and funding bodies, contributions to national and international symposia, membership of learned societies and the examination of doctoral students. For example:

For the **Research into Practice** group:

- **Biggs** has made a major contribution to the understanding of research in the creative and performing arts in the UK and overseas through scholarly publications and consultative roles. He has undertaken international collaborations with the University of Lund (Sweden), Mackenzie Presbyterian University (Brazil), University of Canberra (Australia) and the Delft University of Technology (Netherlands). He is a board member of the National Research School in Architecture, Sweden. **Biggs** edited and contributed to *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts* (2011), a major publication that brings together perspectives on the epistemology of practice-led research. He has also contributed to developing concepts of doctoral education overseas, as evidenced in **Biggs**, B uchler and Rocco's published conference paper 'An International Collaboration for the Development of a Research Training Course in an Emergent Academic Discipline' (2010).
- **St James'** contribution centres around the exhibition of portraiture in performative, digitised and streamed formats in national and global environments. **St James** had one-person exhibitions in Beijing, Guangzhou and Taipei and was part of the worldwide group exhibition, Polar Sud, shown in Havana, Buenos Aires and Seville. In 2010 he was artist in residence in Antarctica by invitation of the Cultural Projects for National Antarctic Affairs, Argentine Chancellery.
- **Nelson** works with leading curators and scientists in the UK and abroad on interdisciplinary art projects, and contributes to national and international public lectures, seminars and conferences. *Anarchy in the Organism*, a Wellcome Trust commission for University College Hospital London, brought science, psychology and art together to rethink the meanings of cancer. *Plenum*, a commission for a pan-European art/science project for the Skyway Art and Astronomy Festival in Toru n (Poland), brought cosmology and creation myths together to tell an integrated story of our origins and place in the cosmos. **Nelson** is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and the Royal Geographical Society.
- **Marsh's** video installations, *Platerwald* and *Philharmonie Project*, are included in the National Gallery of Canada. Her research on the overlap between documentary and performance was the subject of extensive critical review in the Canadian art press, including *Canadian Art* (2009), and *Frieze-de* (2012).
- **Jury's** work addresses photographic manipulations and representation of women in the media. She was artist in residence at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, and in 2011 the Perlmutter Resident Artist at the Rose Museum. Her work is included in public collections, including the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University; Cornell University's Herbert F. Johnson Museum; and the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

**Theorising Visual Art and Design's** contribution to its discipline base is evidenced by **Lees-Maffei's** managing editorship of the *Journal of Design History* (OUP). In 2009, TVAD also hosted the Design History Society's annual conference, Writing Design: Object, Process Discourse, the major international platform for research in the discipline. The group's scholarly and academic publications have also provided an international platform for the dissemination of the group's work, such as **Biggs'** contribution to the book *Writing Design* (2010). TVAD invited visiting researchers from overseas universities (David Brody, Parsons College, NYC, 2010 and 2011; and Ketjil Fallan,

University of Oslo, 2012) and hosts an online peer-reviewed journal, *Writing Visual Culture*, managed by **Lees-Maffei**. **Lees-Maffei** is a member of the AHRC peer-review college; an advisory board member for Bloomsbury Press; a peer-reviewer for MIT Press; and a consultant to the project *Design in Portugal 1969–1974*, hosted by the Instituto des Artes Visuais, Design e Marketing, Lisbon. **Simpson's** interdisciplinary research has contributed to the discipline base of art and eugenics in the Soviet Union through conferences, publications, and chapters in *Art, Sex and Eugenics: Corpus Delecti* (2008) and *The Art of Evolution: Darwin, Darwinism and Visual Culture* (2010). She is a peer-reviewer for *Russian Review* and *Slavic Review*, and her project 'Art and Evolutionary Bio-politics: the Moscow Darwin Museum 1920s–1930s' (2010–11) has led to a further panel collaboration at the Association of Art Historians' conference (2012). **Adams'** contribution to the discipline base is through international conferences, publication and seminars.

For the Media Research Group, **Akass** co-edits *Critical Studies in Television: The international journal of television studies*, a major international publication for TV studies published by Manchester University Press. She has made a sustained contribution to the discipline base through conferences on American television, gender and soap opera. As principal investigator for the Visual Effects Research Lab, a €5m Intereg grant working with European partners institutions in Denmark, Germany Scotland, Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands, **Richardson** has contributed to the discipline base in the cross-disciplinary application of film technology through a range of exhibitions, conference and screenings, including the St Magnus festival 2012 and the Berlin Film Festival 2011, 2012 and 2013. His research focuses on new paradigms in visual effects technologies and workflows linking the worlds of film, art, technology and computer science, creating new synergies between artists, scientists, clinicians and film-makers. He has contributed to European Union policy for the creative industries and government white papers in the UK including 'Next Gen.' (the Livingstone-Hope Report on Skills Review on Video Games and Film Effects, 2011).

The unit has undertaken a number of collaborative projects. Adams and Simpson are working with the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation to examine largely unclassified archival material around design and the health benefits of garden city living. The unit is also working with Elstree Film Studios, recording the memories of ex-employees and generating valuable primary research material on working practices in British film between 1950 and the present. **Nelson's** *Anarchy in the Organism* was a collaborative cross-disciplinary exploration of the systemic structure of cancer undertaken with the Institute of Biomedical Imaging, University College Hospital London and included research from social historians of science from the Universitat Autonomata de Barcelona, psychotherapists and cancer patients. **Nelson's** *Plenum* was shown at the Lux Scientia festival, an EU-funded project curated by the international arts organisation Artichoke. Undertaken with two other artists, the project explored the interstices between art and science in the form of an animated film projection. **Lees-Maffei's** *Design History Reader* was co-edited with Rebecca Houze, N. Illinois University; her edited book *Writing Design: Words and Object* included contributions from 19 scholars worldwide. **Biggs** co-edited and contributed to the *Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts* which contained 23 contributions from international scholars. **Biggs** has also collaborated with Jenn Webb (University of Canberra) on an Australian Research Council-funded project on the application of arts-based research to creative writing.

The unit's members examine Masters and Doctoral-level research students internally and at UK and overseas universities. Since 2008, **Adams** has examined doctoral theses at the University of Lincoln (2008), University College London (2009) and the Courtauld Institute (2012), and internally examined five other doctorates; **Biggs** has examined Masters and Doctoral theses at the Mackenzie Presbyterian University, Brazil (2011, 2012 and 2013), at the University of Lund, Sweden (2009), and Master theses at the Universidad de la Republica, Uruguay (2013); **Simpson** has examined doctoral theses from the University of New South Wales (2009) and Masters theses from Kingston University (2008), alongside one internal submission. **Lees-Maffei** has examined one doctoral student from the University of Melbourne. All but two of the staff who form part of this submission supervise research students internally and contribute regularly to formative internal examinations for research degrees.