

<p>Institution: University of Bedfordshire</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 19 - Business and Management Studies</p>
<p>a. Overview</p> <p>The Business and Management Research Institute (BMRI) is one of ten Research Institutes at the University of Bedfordshire. Its remit is to provide a framework for focussing and developing research within the University of Bedfordshire Business School, one of the four faculties. BMRI's mission is to transform the Business School from a primarily teaching institution to a teaching and research-based institution by providing an appropriate environment and support network. Within the BMRI there are five Research Centres: Business and Information Systems Research Centre (BISC), Centre for Advances in Marketing (CAM), Centre for Leadership Innovation (CLI), Research Centre for Contemporary Accounting and Finance (ResCAF), and Centre for Research in Law (CRiL). CRiL is submitted to UoA 20.</p> <p>Each Research Centre has priority research areas clustered around two core research themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information Systems and Operations Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Systems and Knowledge Management • Operations and Project Management 2. Culture, Branding, Organisational Development and Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity, Organizational Development and Leadership • Consumer and Cross-cultural Behaviour • Entrepreneurship, Innovation and International Organisation • Marketing Strategy (Branding) and Communications <p>BMRI's activities are guided by the University Research Committee comprising the Directors of all the ten Research Institutes and chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Enterprise).</p> <p>Each Research Centre within BMRI has a designated Research Centre Leader to lead and manage research activities and report to the Director of BMRI. Centre leaders also work closely with the staff line managers to provide support and monitor research performance.</p>
<p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>BMRI's research strategy is guided by the University's research strategy. It is directly aligned with the university's core missions, thus receiving resources to support its implementation.</p> <p><i>BMRI's research strategy since 2008</i></p> <p>Our RAE 2008 strategy mainly focused on (i) facilitating research excellence, (ii) strengthening research capacity in Organisational Behaviour/Human Resource Management, Operations Management and Marketing through appointing senior research staff, (iii) increasing research student numbers (by 100% over five years), and (iv) increasing external funding. BMRI has made significant progress in each of those key areas. For example, the number of staff submitted to REF has increased from 8 FTE to 14FTE with a much stronger output profile than in RAE 2008; a total of five Professors in the areas of Operations Management, Marketing, Human Resource Management, and Accounting and Finance have been appointed since 2008; the number of research students has increased from 9 in 2008 to 76 as at 31 Oct. 2013; external funding has been significantly increased from circa £200k in 2008 to £450k in 2013 mainly as a result of our strategy to increase fee paying research students since 2008.</p> <p>In line with the RAE 2008 research strategy, BMRI has continued to emphasize research as a core activity within the Business School. It has expanded its research themes from three to five to reflect the growth of the School and the developing expertise within it. The BMRI's post-RAE 2008 research strategy has been strongly guided by the University's 5-year research strategy 2009-2014, which states that:</p> <p><i>“By the end of the five year period of this strategy all academic staff will be engaged in some form of research and/or enterprise activity in addition to teaching at undergraduate or taught</i></p>

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postgraduate level; applying for and obtaining external funds for research, enterprise, CPD, consultancy, they will be disseminating the results of their evidence led academic activity at conferences, in publications and increasingly as key note speakers at prestigious events.... We shall have moved from a primarily teaching led institution to a Teaching and Research Institution."

Guided by this strategy, BMRI has focused its activities on developing a strong research-enabling environment characterised by:

1. Provision of an environment conducive to research and enterprise, which encourages and facilitates interdisciplinary research.
2. A renewed emphasis on cross-centre thematic research (as outlined in section a).
3. Increase research and enterprise income by securing funding from a wide range of sources.
4. Enhance the supervision capability of the BMRI, expanding current supervision areas and increasing the number of research students.
5. A clear staff development strategy and investing in our research capacity and capability.

An annual review is undertaken and action plans devised and implemented to monitor progress against each of these.

The strongly teaching-dominated heritage of the Business School pre RAE 2008 has seen marked changes as regards the research environment. Some of the important developments post-RAE 2008 are:

- Special schemes have been established to foster the School's research environment. These schemes include (a) Dean's Scholarship and Research Awards, (b) Bursary Research Studentships, (c) Dean's prizes for scholarship and (d) Dean's prize for research.
- Research Investment Programmes have been organised by the University and the BMRI since 2011, with BMRI members benefitting from such schemes, resulting in good quality publications and conference presentations, as for example publications by Prof. Ramanathan and Prof. Duan, Dr. Cao, and Dr. He.
- Cross-disciplinary and multi-departmental fully-funded Writing Retreats are provided at both University (e.g. four annual retreats between 2009 and 2012) and faculty/centre levels (e.g. four between 2010 and 2013), with feedback and outcomes suggesting a positive impact on the research culture, and an increased number of good quality journal publications. Particularly the faculty/centre driven writing retreats have been invaluable in converting conference papers into outputs for a number of BMRI colleagues. For example: CLI's two writing retreats have resulted in the writing and commissioning of *Organizational Behaviour: People, Process, Work and HRM*, published in 2013 by Kogan Page.
- The Business School allocates funds for staff research development. Staff members are strongly encouraged to attend refereed conferences nationally and internationally.
- Centres have regular research seminars involving both external and internal speakers to share research findings, strengthen collaborations and stimulate intellectual debate.
- A new senior research fellow, Dr. Gendao Li, has been appointed in 2013 to strengthen the research capacity in the Business and Information Systems Research Centre (BISC).

Future research strategy

BMRI's future research strategy emphasises high quality research that is practice-based and driven by the needs of businesses and organisations. Key components of the future research strategy are to:

- Recruit additional research active staff, especially in research leadership roles such as professors, professors in management practice, and readers.
- Increase the quantity and quality of research publications.
- Consider research impact in all research activities and encourage staff to engage with research users to ensure maximum research impact.
- Increase research income from collaborative projects with a variety of stakeholders including

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governments, the third sector, other public and private bodies, and from research funding bodies (at national, EU and international levels).

New initiatives with potential to produce strategic outputs and research impact in the future

Implementation of the BMRI's research strategy includes.

- Building on the thematic approach to develop a practice-led approach to our research strategy in response to the needs of the regional business communities and our international partners.
- Setting targets in terms of research funding and timely completion of research students, and developing plans to achieve those targets.
- Maximising exposure of BMRI staff to external expertise by organising workshops and encouraging them to attend relevant conferences. Additional training programmes and workshops have been established to improve research quality; see section c.

c. People**i. Staffing strategy and staff development**

In May 2013, UoB's institution-wide Concordat implementation plan was awarded the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research Award, and will be rolled out in the coming period (www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/375-610291/Seven-UK-universities-are-recognised-by-the-European-Commission-for-researcher-development.html).

Staffing strategy

Post-RAE 2008, the emphasis in staff recruitment has been on attracting and retaining staff with completed doctorates and with evidence of publication success in high quality journals. Contracts have been predominantly permanent as a means of embedding new staff and their research portfolio more deeply into future development of BMRI. The Business School has been successful in attracting research active staff, especially young and early career researchers (ECR). For example, 79% of staff submitted to this assessment have been recruited since the last RAE, and 29% of staff submitted are ECRs.

Staff development strategy

The Institute strongly encourages and facilitates research from all staff in the Business School, supporting and increasing the number of research outputs and improving research quality, as well as helping to disseminate and communicate research outcomes and impacts more widely.

To further develop Research Centre leaders, Professor Duan attended a two-day Research Team Leadership training programme by Leadership Foundation for Higher Education in Nov 2008. Professor Farquhar undertook the 2010-11 BAM/ABS Director of Research Development programme; Professor Duan is currently undertaking the 2013-14 programme.

BMRI regularly arranges staff development workshops for the benefit of its staff members. Some of the recent research-focussed workshops include, "A Two-Day Research Training Workshop on Using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling" (2013) by Professor Ringle, Hamburg University of Technology, Germany; a two-day workshop on "Structural Equation Modelling" (2011) by Professor Shevlin, University of Ulster; "Bidding for Research Money" (2013) by Professor Syntetos, Cardiff University; and "Publishing Workshop" (2013) by Professor MacCarthy, University of Nottingham.

Early career researchers are supported in a number of ways, including a mentoring scheme involving a senior researcher, light workloads, conference support, peer review, collaboration where appropriate with senior researchers in publishing papers, developing bids and joint PhD supervision.

Workload planning for research active staff reflects the commitment of the School to research thus enabling both output generation and facilitating a culture for research.

Equal opportunities and ethics procedures

A commitment to equality of opportunity for all individuals, irrespective of their age, belief, disability, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation is at the core of the University ethos. The university has an Equality and Diversity advisor. UoB's Equality and Diversity Policy covers all areas of employment. A break-up of ethnicity of current BMRI academic staff shows rich cultural diversity (57% white, 15% Asian or Asian British, 10% Black or Black British, and the rest comprising other ethnicities). Forty four percent of the academic staff are female. The University seeks to enable students and staff to reach their full potential, and to provide them with an environment free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.

The University and the BMRI are committed to the highest ethical standards. Research proposals (by academic staff or research students) are submitted to the ethics committee of BMRI for approval, and then to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) (which includes independent lay members) which ensures that all research projects are assessed for full ethical approval before they commence. To maintain standards of research quality and integrity, the University has rules for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct in Academic Research by members of staff and research students.

ii. Research students

Research student recruitment

Research student recruitment is in line with the University's policy of widening access, with the Research Graduate School responsible for administering research students centrally. The student body in BMRI is diverse. PhD Bursaries are publically advertised and awarded to students who have been interviewed and met the criteria of the School's bursary scheme. In addition, PhD students are recruited with external funding (e.g., two PhDs with part-funding from Luton Borough Council and Bedfordshire County Council). The research student programme in BMRI currently has 76 students (19 part-time), with three PhDs awarded in 2009-10, two in 2010-11, one in 2011-12, and four in 2012-13. Student numbers have seen rapid expansion in the last two years, and hence it is expected that more PhDs will be awarded in the next few years.

The University provides high quality learning resources to support post-graduate researchers. The support includes a team of academic liaison librarians who provide an extensive information literacy/research skills support programme offered at induction and via individual appointments throughout a researcher's career. In addition, post-graduate research students have access to a wide range of digital resources.

Research culture

With an increased number of research-active staff and research students, BMRI's research culture has been significantly strengthened in the last few years (see section b). BMRI has invested heavily (time and money) in staff and students' research development, such as providing funding for conferences and training courses, holding regular research seminars involving internal staff and students, and external speakers. Research students work closely with their supervisors, participate in Research Centre events, have dedicated work space and are expected to participate in Business School events.

The student research training programme in BMRI focuses on equipping students with the particular skills and approaches required for research into business. Formal training is provided in workshops, supported by regular and recorded meetings with the supervisory team. Students are also regularly invited to attend staff research training programmes. Recent workshops for research students include 'Structural Equation Modelling' in June 2011, 'Statistical Inference' in Feb. 2012, on 'Partial Least Squares Modelling' in June 2013 and 'Publishing in Leading Journals' in July 2013. BMRI has allocated £1,500 to each research student to attend and present research papers

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in academic conferences.

A dedicated Research Students' Co-ordinator has been appointed in each Research Centre to enhance student experience.

Equal opportunities

A break-down of ethnicity of current BMRI research students shows rich cultural diversity (27% white, 36% Asians, 20% Black, and the rest comprising Arab, unspecified and other ethnicities). Forty percent of the students awarded a PhD since 2009 have been female.

Research student links with business, industry and the public sector

Almost all BMRI research students are engaged in projects involving direct contact with business communities or public organisations, as exemplified by those of two PhD students (Nagaraju and Ahmad) whose projects on improving innovation in SMEs are jointly funded by local authorities and the University and who work closely with small business and policy makers on improving SMEs' innovation performance.

Monitoring and support mechanisms

Formal systems of recording student progress comply with the requirements set by the Research Graduate School, using an online system to record interactions between a research student and his/her supervisors. All students engage with Research Centres through which they can interact and debate with academic staff other than their supervisors and peers (based on regular research seminars). Supervisors operate an early warning system whereby problems or lack of progress are highlighted and which inform the Director of the Programme who interviews the student. A training needs analysis document is prepared annually for each research student by supervisors to reflect on any skills acquisition required by the student.

Preparing research students for future careers

Most students wish to work in academic institutions after graduation and preparing them for their future career is accomplished at both the University and Institute level. Regular training events and workshops are provided at the University level to enhance general skills in academic writing, communications, teaching, and research methods, etc. At the Institute level, supervisors pay particular attention to developing the student's specific subject-based knowledge and understanding in the area identified by topic and project selection as one in which the student wishes to work in the future. We thereby seek to ensure that the students will be equipped with both general competence as well as the specific expertise required for their future career. Many PhD graduates have been successful in securing employment in universities in the UK (e.g., lectureship in Bedfordshire (Haag) and Aston (Wu) or in international consulting firms (e.g., Poorkavoos in consulting firm Roffypark).

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

There has been a marked improvement in the research infrastructure of the University as part of its journey towards a teaching-and-research led institution.

To support the preparation of research bids and the generation of external grant income, BMRI has established a Research Office, working with an extensive network of university, social / local government and enterprise partners in the UK, other European Union countries, central and eastern Europe, China, India, Nepal, Russia, the Ukraine, the USA and Canada. The research support provided by the Research Office includes (i) identifying suitable funding opportunities and informing staff about these opportunities, (ii) helping with bid writing, including searching/contacting potential partners and the preparation of budgets, (iii) grant submission and (iv) supporting the post-award process.

The University and the Business School provide various additional forms of support for facilitating research including writing retreats, the university journal and annual university conference. The Learning Resources Centre of the University is open 24/7. BMRI members have access to a wide range of digital resources creating a virtual 24/7 library service, research and subject related databases (82) covering full text journals (59,457 titles), e-books (4,826 titles) and to survey tools such as Qualtrics and SNAP.

Staff members have been very active in the REF period in submitting research bids, with increasing success. For example, Professor Duan secured funding from the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) (£50,000 for 2011-12; £15,000 during 2011-13), and from the EU, Leonardo da Vinci (£38,000 in 2013, £46,150 during 2009-11 and £59,975 during 2008-10). Dr Philpott has been successful in securing co-funding (£42,000 during 2010-12) from Luton Borough Council and Bedfordshire County Council for two PhD bursaries, in securing ESRC LARCI fellowship funding (£5,772 in 2010), and in securing FP7 EU funding (£63,501 during 2008-10). Dr Roomi has been successful in securing EC Erasmus funding (£22,443 during 2007-09). More recently, Mr. Hunt and Prof. Duan have been successful in their joint application with EU Partners to EU Leonardo da Vinci with a £38k grant to be allocated to BMRI. Prof. Duan has secured a grant from the UK Department for International Development (DfID) as a co-applicant with the Chinese Minister of Agriculture for a nine-month project on ICT-based knowledge transfer in Asia (total grant £150k, £30k for BMRI). Dr. Wilson has also just secured a £42k contract with the Home Office advising on their performance appraisal system. Many more research bids have been submitted to various funding bodies (digital economy theme of UKRC, European funding, UKIERI funding, etc.) in the last few years with realistic prospects for success.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

Interdisciplinary research, research collaboration with industry and other academic collaborations

BMRI strongly supports interdisciplinary research aimed at addressing issues faced by business and industry in line with our overall strategy. Members of BMRI are active in interdisciplinary research with other academics and in collaboration with the industry/third sector. Examples include: China Agricultural University (Duan and He), Chartered Insurance Institute, Oxford Brookes University, Open University, Universities of Edinburgh and Fordham NY (Farquhar), Said Business School and University of Seville, Ramon Llull University, Spain and University of Ulster (Cao), Brunel University, Swansea University (Chen), BAM Inter-organizational Relationships Special Interest Group, joint British Academy of Management (BAM) research seminar on inter-firm relationships in April 2013 (He), Central Bedfordshire and Bedfordshire Borough Councils (Philpott), Keio University, Japan, University of Sydney and International Society of Third Sector Research (Schwabenland), Luton Borough Council (Philpott, Wilson, Ocler, and Kakavelakis), British Transport Police (Loewenberger), Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and the Chartered Management Institute (members of CLI), BBC Wales X-Ray team on consumer scams (Croft).

Hosting international scholars

BMRI has actively promoted the dissemination and exchange of research ideas by its research staff/research students. Academic visitors post-2008 have included, Professor Fish, Charles Sturt University, Australia; Professor Kunnummal, Maharajah Sayajirao University of Baroda, India; Professor Chen, Kokushikan University, Japan; Professor Tian and Professor Wang, both at China Agricultural University; Dr. Obesso, University of Cantabria, Spain; Jose Maria Talavera and Nuria Priego Rodriguez, both at University of Granada; Octavio Eduardo Ibarra Consuegra, Dean of Uninorte in Colombia; Professor Francisco Javier Santos from University of Seville, Spain and Dr. Vollero, University of Salerno.

Seminars organised

BMRI has an established seminar series, in which leading academics from other universities and industry practitioners deliver lectures for the benefit of both staff and research students. External

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speakers for the assessment period include, Mr. Kidd, Aston Business School; Professor Wang and Professor Tian, China Agricultural University; Dr. Obesso, University of Cantabria, Santander, Spain; Dr. Nath, University of East Anglia; Dr. Buelens, Southampton University; Professor Syntetos, University of Cardiff; and Professor Zhang, China Agricultural University, Visiting Scholar from Nottingham University Business School.

Indicators of wider contributions to the research base and relevant esteem indicators (such as fellowships and awards, involvement on panels and journal editorships).

Keynote Speeches

Including: International Conference on Quality & Reliability Engineering, December 2011, Bangalore (Ramanathan); International Conference on E-Business Technology and Strategy (iCETS), August, 2012, Tianjin, China, and Second International Conference on Computers and Computing Technologies in Agriculture (CCTA), Wuyishan, China, August, 2008 (Duan); Financial Services Summit, *Marketing Week*, London 2011 (Farquhar).

External Examination for PhD/MPhil/MRes

Including: University of Pretoria, University of Delhi, Indian Institute of Technology Madras, University of Manchester (Ramanathan); Aston University, Portsmouth University, University of Wales, Brunel University, Coventry University, Victoria University Australia (Duan); Bournemouth University, Macquarie University, Australia, University of Edinburgh, Robert Gordon University, University of Kingston, Brunel University, University of Loughborough, University of Zaragoza, (Farquhar); Salford University, University of Northumbria (Croft); Plymouth University (Bentley).

Journal Editorships

Including: *International Journal of Bank Marketing* (Farquhar, May 2005 until August 2012); Special Issue of the *International Journal of Knowledge Management Studies* (2008) and Special Issue of *Computers and Electronics in Agriculture* (2008) (Duan); Area Editor of 'OPSEARCH', the official journal of the Operational Research Society of India (Ramanathan, 2006-11); Special Issue of *Business and Society Review* (Ocler, currently editing); Special Issue of *Qualitative Research*, an International Journal (Croft, 2009).

Editorial Boards of Journals

Including: *International Journal of Quality and Standards*, *International Journal of Advanced Operations Management*, and *International Journal of Business Performance and Supply Chain Modelling* (Ramanathan); *Business and Society Review* (Ocler); *International Journal of Social and Organisational Dynamics in IT* (Chen); *Journal of Political Marketing*, *Journal of Arts Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, *Middle East Journal of Management*, *Journal of Communication Management* (Croft).

Awards (External to the University)

Including: *Academy of Marketing Research Award* 2008 (Farquhar), Emerald Literati Network (U. Ramanathan, R. Ramanathan); Emerald Literati Network Award for Highly Commended Paper 2012 (Roomi), and ICSB/IJGE/NAWBO Best Paper Awards on Women's Entrepreneurship for Years 2009 and 2013 (Roomi), ESRC LARCI (Local Authority Research Council Initiative) Fellowship (Philpott).

Other honours

Including: Visiting Professorships in foreign universities (Duan, Bentley, Farquhar); Mid-term expert reviewer for FP7 project (Duan); ESRC referee/rapporteur (Duan, Ramanathan); Radio interviews by the BBC (Ramanathan, Farquhar, Croft, Minocha); shortlisted for Woman of the Year category at the Asian Achievers Awards, Sept 2012, winner of the Asian Academic of the Year Award at the *Asian Voice* Political and Public Life Awards 2012 (Minocha); Outstanding Reviewer of the Year (2012-13) from Emerald for the *Journal of Strategy and Management* (He); Emerald Literati Network Outstanding Reviewer for IJGE 2012 (Roomi).