

<p><b>Institution: Liverpool Hope University</b></p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment: Social Work and Social Policy</b></p>
<p><b>a. Overview</b></p> <p>Liverpool Hope, with roots in nineteenth-century Anglican and Catholic teacher education colleges, is an ecumenical and liberal arts inspired institution committed to the pursuit of academic excellence, awarded university status in 2005 and RDAP in 2009. This has driven forward the university's research ambitions and reflects a corporate repositioning marked by a significant intensification in research activity and investment. Research is a key activity in the Department of Social Work, Care and Justice in the Department of Social Science where the bulk of those in this UoA are located.</p> <p>This unit is very much a work in progress insofar as none of its staff were in post in the university prior to 2009, apart from Professor Brown, appointed in 2008 as Adjunct Professor at 0.2 FTE. Indeed, more than half of those submitted have been appointed since September 2011 (Dr Greener, Professor Mair, Ms Turner and Ms Katz). Essentially, the core of the unit is made up of members of staff from the Department of Social Work, Care and Justice (Professor Lavalette and Dr Greener) which was reconfigured in September 2013, and the Department of Social Science (Professor Mair and Ms Turner) which was established in September 2013). Other staff submitted are from Education (Professor Brown and Ms Katz) and from the Business School (Dr Wankhade). The unit is made up of highly experienced and established researchers (Professors Brown, Lavalette and Mair) and, on the other hand, early career researchers (Dr Greener, Ms Turner, Dr Wankhade and Ms Katz) with nothing in between.</p> <p>The overall field of research is located around issues relating to social policy. More specifically, the focus is on social work and care (Professor Lavalette, Dr Greener and Dr Wankhade), criminal justice (Professor Mair, Ms Turner and Ms Katz), and education (Professor Brown). The research which has been carried out has explored, interrogated and challenged topics of considerable public significance.</p> <p>The research culture is developing rapidly with the arrival of new staff who are completing, or have recently completed, PhDs and the key will be to build on this and ensure that it is consolidated and sustained.</p> <p><b>b. Research strategy</b></p> <p>The unit was entered for RAE 2008. Since then there has been 100% turnover of staff and the focus of research has changed from a relatively straightforward focus on traditional social work themes, to a more diffuse interest in social policy issues. As a result of this, the strategic plans set out in RAE 2008 for the unit have not been fully implemented, although their more general aims have been met. The university's strategy to enhance research culture across the institution as a whole, along with its being granted the power to award research degrees in 2009, has meant that the drive to embed research at the heart of Hope has been continuous. Thus, while the planned topic themes of 2008 - organisational context; diversity and social justice; and loss, grief and trauma – have changed, they have not wholly disappeared. The importance of the practitioner/professional in shaping practice continues to drive much of the work of Professor Lavalette and informs Dr Wankhade's work; social and criminal justice lies at the heart of the work of Professor Mair and Ms Turner as well as Professor Lavalette. The conceptual themes articulated in 2008 – empowerment and the integration of theory and practice – remain significant drivers of the unit's research. Similarly, the overall goals identified in 2008 have remained significant: to foster a strong culture of research and scholarship; to make a significant contribution to social work knowledge; and to integrate research and scholarship into teaching and learning. The introduction of an Integrated Curriculum across the university in 2013/14 means that research-informed teaching lies at the heart of the student experience.</p> <p>The university's desire to build a solid research culture has meant that a variety of initiatives have</p>

been put into place to encourage this: appointments; building in research time in work allocation; developing research seminars for staff to present their work to colleagues; funding attendance at conferences with the intention of presenting papers; supporting conferences and colloquia at the university; appointing Visiting Professors. The unit has benefited from such initiatives despite the changes in staff and organisational context.

There has been considerable investment in staff. New staff have been appointed at Professorial level (Professor Lavalette arrived in 2009 as Associate Professor and was promoted to Professor in 2012, and Professor Mair in 2012), and 6 junior staff who have been recruited since 2011 have all been research active, completing PhDs and with the prospect of publications coming from their doctorates (three of these are part of the submission – Dr Greener, Ms Turner and Ms Katz). Newly appointed junior staff have been supported in their research by a lighter workload which is mandatory for such appointments and are mentored through both formal and informal processes. Strategies for developing the research careers of staff are described in B.

Professor Barry Goldson, the Charles Booth Chair of Social Science at Liverpool University was appointed as Visiting Professor in 2012 and has also mentored new junior staff in developing their research and publication record.

All members of the unit have presented papers at conferences both nationally and internationally (e.g. the British Society of Criminology conference, the Social Work Action Network Conference, the American Society of Criminology Conference, the European Society of Criminology conference, the International Federation and European Association of Social Work Conference). Junior staff are encouraged to present papers at appropriate conferences and this is part of their annual appraisal. Such conference activity is fully funded by the university.

The university has hosted several conferences organised by members of the unit: the Social Work Action Network conference in 2009 and 2012; a meeting of the European Working Group on Community Sanctions and Measures in 2012; the first COST Offender Supervision in Europe conference in 2012; a colloquium on Social Work After Baby P in 2009 and another on The Future of Radical Social Work in 2011. It is expected that further such meetings will be held over the next five years.

Given the constraints associated with the unit (its size, the youth of its staff, its lack of history) these are considerable achievements and the issue for the next five years is to ensure that these achievements are built upon and expanded. While much of the research work that has been done has been the result of individual effort (with the support outlined above), the appointments of Professor Lavalette and Professor Mair (both with substantial research experience) will lead to more formal strategic planning where research can be monitored as part of normal departmental responsibilities via Annual Monitoring Reports. Targets for planned publications, research, conference attendance – especially for new staff – will be set and regular meetings held to monitor progress with help/support as required. The Faculty Research Committee meets regularly, with one of its main tasks being to assess bids for conference attendance and for the seed funding of research, and members of the unit will be encouraged to make such bids. Funding will be sought for research seminars where both outside speakers and unit staff can present their research. Staff at Senior Lecturer and above are expected to make at least one bid for external research funding each year, and new staff will be encouraged to follow this approach. Conferences which have been held at Hope have been highly successful and it is planned to develop these over the next five years with the aim of hosting 2-3. A key target will be to develop postgraduate research; currently there are three students working towards PhDs. A more active recruitment strategy will be developed to encourage applications from prospective PhD students.

The Department of Social Work, Care and Justice was reconfigured in September 2013 with addition of two staff who specialise in Childhood and Youth Studies; and the Department of Social Science was established in September 2013. Both departments are, therefore, undergoing change and it will be important to ensure that such changes are managed in such a way as to ensure that research remains a key imperative and is not marginalised by organisational issues. Professors

Lavalette and Mair (respective Heads of Department) are fully aware of this need; research forms a part of all staff annual reviews and is also a regular item in all departmental meetings.

**c. People, including:**

**i. Staffing strategy and staff development**

Institutionally, research is led by the University Research Committee chaired by the PVC (Professor Newport), which reports directly to Senate. All research at Hope is managed in accordance with the Research and Scholarship Plan; each Faculty articulates its own strategy within the parameters of this. All members of the Department are expected to adhere to the University's Ethics Policy, managed through the Ethics Committee structure. The ethos is collegial and collaborative; the aim is to offer a stimulating and supportive research environment and foster the growth and development of individuals at all stages of their career as scholars.

The Research and Scholarship Development Plan 2006-2010 was aimed at driving the university's goal to build a strong research culture by focusing on the recruitment of research-active staff. Staff levels have fluctuated due to staff turnover and the university's plans for restructuring. At the start of the 2012-14 year, the Department of Social Work, Care and Justice had a total of 9 academic staff (8.6 ftes), while the newly established Department of Social Science had a total of 8 (7.6 ftes) with further appointments planned.

A decision was made to expand social sciences generally in the university by refocusing the Department of Social Work, Care and Justice and establishing a new Department of Social Science (covering Criminology and Sociology). Members of both departments form the core of the unit and there has been a steady stream of appointments since 2009 including two professorial posts which are aimed at stimulating research and helping to attract grant funding. Professor Lavalette and Dr Wankhade were appointed in 2009, followed by Dr Greener in 2011, Professor Mair in 2012 and Ms Katz and Ms Turner in 2013 (Professor Brown was appointed at 0.2 FTE in 2008 in Education). In addition, Dr Moth, and Dr Merryweather have joined the Social Work department, and Dr Hart and Ms van Ginneken the Department of Social Science. All of these appointments will strengthen the research base of the two departments.

There is a very high proportion of early career researchers in the unit – indeed two are currently completing PhDs – and they receive a lighter teaching load (as do all newly appointed staff). Managing the research of these early career staff will be critical as there can be a post-PhD limbo following publications derived from the thesis and Professors Lavalette, Mair and Visiting Professor Goldson are involved in supporting such staff. All research active staff have an allocation of hours for research and how this is used is monitored in Annual Reviews. Plans for publishing, research, conference attendance, bidding for funding are part of the annual review process and are regularly monitored. The university runs regular short courses for new staff on such topics as publication, bidding for grants, etc. All new junior staff have a mentor (either within the department or outside it) who can support them, and Visiting Professor Goldson – as noted previously – works with such staff to support their research and publication plans.

There are annual University-led staff development sessions for staff at all stages of their careers on a range of research-related topics. The Research Facilitator (see D) offers particular advice on funding applications and opportunities. Staff are encouraged to engage with the promotions process at appropriate stages of their career; the institution's Research and Scholarship Development Plan lays down that promotion from lecturer to senior lecturer is dependent on a number of criteria, including research of international standing and an active track record in applying for external grants. Opportunities to apply for promotion from associate professor to professor are also available and follows a stringent procedure including substantive peer review (as above, Lavalette made a successful application for a professorship in 2012)

**i. Research students**

**Environment template (REF5)**

With the growth of the unit it is hoped to expand the number of postgraduate research students, and this is one of the goals of the two departments. The high level of staff turnover is one reason for the poor recruitment of such students. Currently, there are three research students based in the two departments, one jointly with Theology.

One route for PhD students is via MA programmes and there are currently MAs in Criminal Justice and in Social Work. Plans are underway to develop a new MA in Social Science with a number of pathways (Criminology, Childhood & Youth, Social Policy, Sociology) which it is hoped will stimulate potential PhD applications. Professor Lavalette and Professor Mair have considerable experience in the supervision of research students, and wherever possible, secondary supervisors are more junior staff in order to build their experience of supervision at this level. Plans are underway to set up regular research student seminars across the university.

All research students take part in a university-wide programme of research training which includes staff from across the institution. . The postgraduate skills training programme at Hope aligns itself with the Vitae Researcher Development Framework.

Students with suitable qualifications are recruited on the basis of research capacity and potential, viability of proposal, and match with research strengths. Research students are monitored and supported through personal supervision, a dedicated Postgraduate Research Skills university-wide programme of seminars based on the Research Council endorsed *Vitae* programme of competencies. Sessions are attended by students from all three faculties. The Postgraduate Research Skills Moodle provides a virtual learning environment; additionally, there is a second e-resource for research students through external subscription – Research Skills Online. Postgraduate students are expected to participate in Department, Faculty and University research activities. All students present their work annually at a PGR/staff research seminar series. Postgraduate researchers will have opportunities to engage in undergraduate teaching and will be encouraged to present their work at conferences (departmental and faculty funds are available for this purpose).

Research supervisors work in small teams; one will be a subject specialist with the requisite knowledge to support the research project and one of the team must have experience of doctoral supervision to completion. The supervisory team also includes a Chair, well-versed in university regulations and with multiple completions.

There is a dedicated Postgraduate area in The Sheppard-Worlock Library for the use of taught and research postgraduates. Facilities include bookable study rooms and a drop in computer lab. With the support of their Dean students who are at a writing intense stage of their studies can request a bookable study room for up to a month

**c. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

Administration work for research activity is undertaken by the Faculty Office staff, who perform administrative functions such as the convening and minuting of meetings. Other, occasional, more substantial tasks such as the co-ordination of conferences can be undertaken by arrangement with the University's Conference Office. Institutionally, the Research Facilitator works in partnership with academics, as for bids above, to secure, manage and increase funding from external organisations both nationally and internationally. This is achieved through: one-to-one support; staff development workshops on topics such as proposal writing, costing and pricing and the support of early career researchers and the provision and analysis of management information statistics. Staff are regularly updated on funding opportunities.

With the exception of basic-grade lecturers, all staff are expected to make at least one funding bid per annum. This is monitored annually. Support for early career staff in bidding for funding is available centrally. Professor Lavalette was a successful bidder for a joint seminar funded by the

ESRC and the Japanese Society for promoting Science which explored New Public Management and its effects on social work in the UK and Japan. Two seminars were organised at the University of Stirling in 2010 and in Tokyo in 2011.

Professor Mair was involved in a joint bid with PSS (a Liverpool-based social services agency) for funding for an offender mentoring project. The application, with Local Solutions, was to the Cabinet Office Centre for Social Action-Rehabilitation Social Action Fund.

Further infrastructure support comes through the departmental library which has allowed for increased spending resources on books and on electronic databases such as JSTOR and Project Muse. A separate budget is available for the purchase of materials needed for individual research projects. These are supplemented by interlibrary loans and by access to the other national libraries through SCONUL Research Extra. Each Faculty has 2 designated full time Faculty Librarians who work closely with all academic colleagues to provide support and advice on all areas of Library provision. The University has set up an institutional repository for staff research outputs. Research outputs for the REF2014 are being entered on to the repository and it will then go live.

#### **d. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base**

Staff are actively engaged with colleagues to take forward their research agendas.

Professor Mair is a member of the European Working Group on Community Sanctions and Measures which meets twice a year to discuss developments and research on this topic (he organised the April 2012 meeting which was held at Hope). He is involved in the COST project Offender Supervision in Europe (2012-2016) which involves working with a number of European academics (the first COST conference was held at Hope in 2012). He is currently working on a comparative study (England & Wales and Belgium) of media representations of probation with a Belgian academic. He is discussing possible research with the successful bidder for the electronic monitoring contracts for England and Wales; and is also talking with one of the companies bidding for probation contracts about possible collaboration. He has recently served on the British Society of Criminology Brian Williams Award Committee (2012) and the American Society of Criminology Freda Adler Award Committee (2011) and August Vollmer Award Committee (2009).

He is a Director of SOLON which is a consortium of academics and professionals/practitioners based in a partnership between the Universities of Nottingham Trent, Oxford Brookes, Plymouth, Liverpool John Moores, the West of England and Liverpool Hope. SOLON has links to the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) and Centre for Contemporary British History (CCBH), in the School of Advanced Studies, University of London, as well as to Rainer's Communities That Care, and with a number of other universities, networks and centres interested in the themes of law, crime and history. SOLON has a network of over 350 members: academics, practitioners and students across a broad range of subjects and representing universities and institutions worldwide. The consortium also works in association with the NCCL Galleries of Justice, the nation's Museum of Law, based in Nottingham and a holder of important archive resources for the history of law, crime and punishment (including the national Prison Service Collection). Managed by a Board of Directors drawn from the partner institutions, SOLON aims to bring together academics and practitioners across boundaries of disciplines and experience through its website, its conference series such as Experiencing the Law, plus occasional events such as seminars. It has sponsored a number of publications, notably its associated online Journal [Law, Crime and History](#) (formerly [Crimes and Misdemeanours: Deviance and the Law in Historical Perspective](#)).

He regularly presents papers at international meetings such as the European Society of Criminology Conference and the American Society of Criminology Conference. He is on the board of the European Journal of Probation and the Liverpool Law Review; he is a member of the Specialist Assessment Board for the Probation Journal; and is a co-founder (and joint editor 2000-2006) of Criminology and Criminal Justice which has now become the official journal of the British Society of Criminology. He peer reviews journal articles, book proposals, bids for research

**Environment template (REF5)**

funding, and research reports.

Professor Lavalette is a founder of the Social Work Action Group, a collection of academics, practitioners and service users which holds annual conferences (two of which have been hosted by Hope). Research events have been held regularly for academics, practitioners and senior students in social work, e.g. 'What happened to anti-racist social work?', 'Youth offending'. He jointly founded and is co-editor of a new international journal 'Critical and Radical Social Work' (Policy Press) and is Series Editor for six planned books (Debates on Critical and Radical Social Work) involving academic, practitioners and service users, the first of which will appear in November 2013. Other events have been organised and held at Hope by him – a one day conference on social work after baby P in 2009, and a Dementia Awareness Week in collaboration with PSS a Liverpool social service agency. The latter attracted national charities, carer organisations, health and local authority managers as well as academic and service users and featured heavily in local and regional media. He is a regular speaker at conferences of practitioners (see 3b).

Dr Wankhade is head of the Centre for Research in Emergency Services and Training (CREST) which involves close collaboration with members of the emergency services. He is editor of the International Journal of Emergency Services.

Professor Brown is a member of the Higher Education Policy Institute Advisory Board and Vice President of the Society for Research into Higher Education. He is a Visiting Professor in Education at The University of East London, Napier University Edinburgh and The University of Southampton and an Honorary Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Education at London Metropolitan University and at the Oxford Centre for Higher Education Studies.