

Institution: University of Worcester
Unit of Assessment: 19 - Business and Management Studies
<p>a. Overview</p> <p>The submitting unit draws together staff from the Worcester Business School (WBS), one of six academic institutes at the University of Worcester (UW). WBS is structured into four academic subject groups: Leadership, Management and Human Resources; Marketing; Finance, Economics and Law; and Computing. In addition, WBS is home to a long-established Research Centre, the <i>Centre for People at Work</i> (CPW), led by a senior academic (Francis-Smythe). Researchers from each of the subject groups are returned here, falling within two broad specialisms: Business Psychology, HRM and Organisations; and Business Strategy.</p> <p>Overall responsibility for research in WBS lies with the Head of School (Mark Richardson) and the Director of Research and Staff Development (Professor Cox). A Director of Research Degree Programmes (Dr Francis-Smythe) oversees RDPs in WBS. An institute-level Business Development Office (BDO), led by a senior academic (Tim Maxfield), facilitates research and consultancy with businesses and other organisations at local, national and international level. Cox, Francis-Smythe (Chair) and Maxfield all sit on a WBS Research & KT Committee (on which all subject groups and the research student community are also represented).</p> <p>As a result of WBS's strategic support for research during the past five years it is now in a position to make a submission to the REF for the first time.</p> <p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>The University developed a 5-year Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy in 2009 establishing an overarching framework for driving forward the research agenda and informing strategy at the Institute level. Its main objectives were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the number of staff producing and disseminating peer recognised research; • develop existing and potential areas of research excellence; • increase externally sourced research income; • develop further the postgraduate and postdoctoral community; and • promote sustainable knowledge transfer (KT), innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship. <p>The submitting unit's strategy over the period has grown directly from that of the University and has been driven by senior staff discharging explicit responsibilities for developing research and KT (as outlined in the overview). It has sought to make research and knowledge transfer central to the work of the subject groups whilst developing and enhancing specialisms which cut across these subject groups.</p> <p>To meet its strategic objectives, WBS has placed a strong emphasis on developing its researchers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All academic staff produce a rolling 4-year research plan as part of annual appraisal which identifies development needs, outlines planned conference presentations and publications, targets funding applications, etc. • A mentoring scheme has been developed within the subject groups in which ECRs are provided with a more experienced research-active member of staff as their mentor. • Four staff from Business and Management have been supported to complete doctorates over the period (Bell, Oestreicher, Raghubansie and Sunderam) amounting to an investment of £14,686). <p>The unit has supported staff to engage in research by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing funding to attend and present at relevant conferences (This amounts to an investment of £71,934 over the REF period.). Staff have presented at, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ British Psychological Society ○ Academy of International Business ○ Economic History Society ○ British Academy of Management ○ Business History Conference (US) ○ European Business Ethics Network Conference

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- European Business History Association
- Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology
- World Symposium on Sustainable Development at Universities
- Regional Studies Association
- International Marketing Trends Conference
- Reducing the teaching load for ECRs (see c(i) below) .
- Providing remission from teaching and administration on an *ad hoc* basis to enable research to be undertaken.

Further, it has strategically supported staff to engage with University research schemes:

- The Research Studentship Competition fully funds (i.e. stipend, fees and research expenses) a 3-year full time PhD or, where a case is made, a 5-year part time PhD. The scheme encourages staff to seek matched or co-funding from other organisations, whether another HEI, or a public or private sector organisation. The scheme has supported 43 studentships during the REF period. Staff in the submitting unit have been successful (Cox, Francis-Smythe, Dr Gbola Gbadamosi (now left) & Ross) in being awarded four full time studentships focused respectively on: the history of the Kidderminster carpet industry; hedonomics (co-funded by Harris, a manufacturer of decorating products); “false performance” in business; male employees in female dominated professions.
- The Vacation Research Assistantship Scheme (VRAS), introduced in 2011, funds an undergraduate student to act as a research assistant on a discrete or on-going staff research project for a period of up to 3 months over the summer vacation. The VRA undertakes a range of activities appropriate to the project providing him/her with hands-on experience of research but also valuable support for the project lead. The University has funded 32 VRAs over the period in total with 3 awarded to staff within the submitting unit (Bell, Carlo Fabricatore, Stephen Hicks).

It has developed mechanisms to support the dissemination of staff research:

- All staff are required to upload outputs from research on to [WRaP \(Worcester Research and Publications\)](#), the University’s research repository. Uploaded outputs are taken into account at, for example, appraisal. By July 31st 2013, staff in the submitting unit had uploaded 240 outputs.
- WBS hosts a regular staff seminar series and a number of research ‘away-days’ at which staff present their research-in-progress as well as having the opportunity to discuss key issues in research.
- WBS hosted the Research Focus Conference on *Leadership & Management* in 2011, the banner under which the University presents a series of one-day conferences that bring together researchers from across the University under broad thematic headings. These events showcase the range of research being undertaken at the University while highlighting current areas of cross-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary work and identifying other potential areas of intersection between colleagues working in different subject areas.

The submitting unit has established a “funding champion” (Francis-Smythe) who works closely with the University’s Research Office to support staff in bidding for external funding and by identifying funding opportunities, liaising with possible collaborators, reviewing the bid, etc. It also provides an opportunity for staff to apply for timetable remission to develop suitable funding bids.

It has sought to build its capacity to supervise research students through:

- Establishment of the Register of Approved Supervisors. Staff members on this are research active and up-to-date with supervisor training
- Appointment of experienced supervisors to new and replacement positions (e.g. Davis, Nicholls)
- Use of visiting Professors as supervisors
- Development of existing staff
- Mentoring of ECRs who have recently completed their doctorates

Both the Business Development Office (BDO) and CPW have fostered relationships - both through direct liaison and through networks such as KEEN (Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise Network) - with a range of local and national businesses (e.g. Consulting Tools, Cargyll, Malvern

Instruments) and other organisations (e.g. West Mercia Constabulary). This has enabled research collaborations (e.g. SPHERE - Shared Police and Higher Education Research & Enterprise), led to innovation (e.g. development of the Career Competencies Indicator in collaboration with Consulting Tools) and facilitated a range of consultancy work (e.g. with Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Service).

The effectiveness of the research strategy is monitored through an annual reporting system which records publications (and other outputs), conference presentations, research income, research student numbers, supervisory capacity and other research-related data/information. These annual reports demonstrate the ongoing contribution to research undertaken by staff within the submitting unit across the period as a whole. Indeed, this REF submission itself further demonstrates the success of the strategy in developing a core of staff producing excellent research.

CPW has continued to be a model of the effectiveness of research groups/centres in driving the research agenda. It has been a significant contributor to income within the submitting unit; 4 of the 6 doctoral completions were based in CPW; and it has maintained and developed a range of external collaborations both with HE, the public and business sectors.

Research income has been fairly constant year-on-year over the REF period but lower than was hoped. The impact of the “funding champion” appointed recently is not yet reflected in these figures: significant work has been done with groups of staff to develop their capabilities in bidding and this should feed into income in the next 12-24 months.

Research student numbers have remained broadly stable over the period (see section c(ii) below) but there has been a significant increase in supervisory capacity with 16 staff from WBS recorded on the Register of Approved Supervisors as of July 31st 2013 as compared with just 10 when the register was first established in February 2010. This, coupled with the development of new RDPs, specifically a Doctorate in Business Administration which will run for the first time in 2013/14, will lead to an increase in these numbers.

The submitting unit’s strategy moving forward will build upon the current strategy. As such there will continue to be a focus on developing staff as researchers at all stages of their career but with a particular focus on enabling ECRs to fulfil their potential. This will be done in part by the provision of mentoring, utilising the experience gained within the unit in the past five years. Alongside the development of current staff, increased focus will be placed on recruiting staff with established research profiles or with clear potential to develop into excellent researchers. A new professorial appointment in Business and Management is anticipated early in 2014. The appointee will be tasked with driving the research agenda forward. Further research-focused appointments, notably in Leadership and Management and Human Resource Management, will follow. Another important element of the new strategy will be the development of research groups/centres on the model of CPW. This submission has been built around broad specialisms but it is anticipated that moving forward more specific areas of focus will be identified and supported to develop. For example, given the importance of SME firms operating within the Worcester area, it is anticipated that at least one of the research initiatives will focus on the management of such organizations.

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

There are 51 academic staff in WBS (which includes computing staff) as of 31st July 2013 which is a substantial increase from the 35 recorded in the 2008 HESA return. The percentage of part time staff is 30% (compared to 50% of staff returned in REF2); the percentage of female staff is 41% (compared to 38% staff returned in REF2); while those on fixed term contracts is 8% (compared to 0% in REF2). Overall staff demographics thus closely reflect the demographics of those submitted.

The University’s Equality Framework 2013-18 restates its commitment to ensure that its recruitment policy encourages applications from people with as wide a range of backgrounds, skills and experiences as possible and to maintain policies and procedures to ensure all staff have equal opportunities to develop and progress. Thus, for example:

- The University has adopted the ‘two ticks’ approach in its recruitment of staff.
- All recruitment and selection is subject to monitoring by the University’s Diversity and

Equality Committee in relation to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, as is retention and progression of staff.

- In light of a mapping exercise undertaken against the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* and in particular Principle 6, this committee now receives data specifically for research staff.

There has been a significant change in staff during the REF period: 28 out of the 51 current staff were not in post at 2008 HESA return. In the Marketing subject group 10 out of 11 current staff members have been appointed in the period. Some staff have departed who would have formed an important part of this submission (Dr Benedetta Cappellini to Royal Holloway; Dr Gbola Gbadamosi to the University of Bournemouth; Dr Dorothy ai-Wan Yen to Brunel University). These departures, however, have been offset by the appointment of experienced researchers (Davis, Nicholls, Loon). The submitting unit has also appointed a number of ECRs in the area of Business and Management (7 were in post as of 31st July 2013) most of whom took up their first academic post at Worcester after, or at the point of nearing completing, their doctorate. A key element of the unit's staffing strategy going forward is to provide targeted support to ECRs by assigning 25 per cent of their workload during the first two years of employment to the development of research. Continuing support is then contingent upon the achievement of hitting research output targets. Three ECRs are returned here; this group will be central to the continued growth of research in the submitting unit.

Another important strand of the staffing strategy has been the appointment of Visiting Professors. Two have been appointed over the period to the Leadership, Management and Human Resources subject group: Professor Mark Saunders and Professor Sharon Turnbull. As part of their role they have contributed to research student supervision, the development of funding bids, WBS research seminars and conferences, and training workshops.

The unit's commitment to staff development is demonstrated in its research strategy and by the role of Director of Research and Staff Development. In their 4-year research plans staff identify their training and development needs. These may be met from internal training provided by the Graduate Research School (GRS) (as part of its comprehensive Research Training Programme). There is, however, also financial support available for staff to undertake external training where appropriate. Staff are also encouraged and financially supported to undertake higher degrees where this is part of their development. Within the unit of Business and Management the number of staff with doctorates has increased over the period (from 10 to 19) a combination of its staff development and recruitment policies. Staff may apply to the University's Research & Project Leave Scheme which provides staff with full or partial remission from teaching and/or other duties for a period of up to two semesters (8 months) in order to undertake a project with a clear set of outcomes. Four staff from the unit have been awarded leave (Gbolahan Gbadamosi, Howard Cox, Carl Evans, Usha Sundaram).

The University has implemented the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*. It undertook a gap analysis against the Concordat in 2009/10 and developed an action plan for development. It revisited this analysis in 2011/12 and developed a new action plan. Key aspects include the development of a bespoke training programme for research staff; the establishment of a research staff forum; the development of training for principal investigators on the commitments of the Concordat; tracking of researcher careers after leaving Worcester.

The University is also committed to the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*. A revised ethics policy and procedures were approved in April 2013, a research integrity champion identified and procedures for dealing with research misconduct established. Bespoke training on ethical principles and procedures and on research integrity was delivered in the unit in 2012/13.

ii. Research students

As of July 31st 2008 there were 7 (3 full-time and 4 part-time) students in the submitting unit (of whom 4 were, or had been, in receipt of a UW studentship). 6 of these students completed their doctorate over the REF period, with one withdrawing for personal reasons. As of July 31st 2013, there are 2 full-time and 6 part-time students (of whom 3 are or have been in receipt of a UW studentship). These numbers reflect the unit's careful approach to recruitment (with a strong focus

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on quality of candidate), its success in winning University studentships, and its effectiveness in guiding students to successful completion.

The GRS is responsible for the management of all RDPs from recruitment to examination, for monitoring student progression, for the coordination of the research student training programme, for training and supporting supervisors, and for the day-to-day support of Worcester's research students. WBS works closely with the GRS through a dedicated Director of Research Degree Programmes to ensure that only excellent students are accepted on to RDPs and that all supervisory teams have the requisite expertise and experience. Teams consist, as a minimum, of a lead supervisor (Director of Studies), who is normally the expert in the field and a second internal supervisor, who, where the lead supervisor has little or no experience of supervision, will be an experienced supervisor who can act as a mentor for his/her colleague. Many teams also draw on external supervisors when particular expertise is required. Examples are Prof John Wilson (Adams), Prof Roger Gill (Doyle), Dr Hantang Qi (Kort), Prof Robin Pritchard (Milford), Prof Bob Stone (O'Sullivan) Prof Kiran Trehan (Thorogood). The GRS maintains a register of approved supervisors which identifies the expertise and experience of supervisors. This register is reviewed annually to ensure that its supervisors are research active and up-to-date with training – the GRS offers a range of supervisor training workshops.

All students on RDPs are required to undertake an associated training programme. The student completes an initial training needs analysis (utilising Vitae's *Researcher Development Framework* and associated Planner) and agrees a programme of development in consultation with the supervisory team. The GRS runs a full training programme including a series of generic research training modules ('Processes & Skills, Management & Methods', 'Publication, Dissemination, Engagement & Impact', 'Supporting Student Learning in HE') and workshops (such as 'Preparing for the Viva', 'Time Management', 'Drafting Your Thesis', 'Writing a Journal Article', 'Data Management', 'CV Clinic', 'Research Ethics'). WBS offers subject-specific training modules ('Research Methods in Education') and workshops. These programmes are constantly being developed in direct response to individual student needs identified through the training needs analysis process and through the student evaluation of workshops. The submitting unit's research students also have access to external training at: the University of Birmingham's ESRC Doctoral Training Centre; Coventry University, University of Gloucestershire, CREST (see **section e**). They can also access a small grants fund to support them to attend external events, and conferences.

WBS has worked closely with the GRS to nurture a strong, interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research culture among its research student body. This is achieved through the full training programme but also through student-led conferences and seminar series. GRS facilitates both an Annual Research Student Conference and a Postgraduate Work-in-Progress seminar series.

Research students play a vital role in the submitting unit's research environment. They are regular attenders/presenters at WBS seminars and Research Focus conferences as well as at external seminars/conferences including the British Psychological Society (Dunnion and Solowiej), International Conference for Social Science (Watts), British Academy of Management (Doyle). They are encouraged to publish their work in progress (and to upload this work to WRaP, for example working and conference papers by Doyle, Solowiej, and Watts. There is research student representation on WBS Research & KT Committee (as well as GRS committees and University-level research committees) which ensures the student voice is fed into not only the development of RDPs but also the development of research strategy at institute and university level.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities***Income***

CPW, in particular, has been effective in raising income from a wide range of sources. These include: a short KTP undertaken in conjunction with Cargyll Associates on the topic of membership retention; matched funding for 2 PhD studentships from Cargyll Associates and L.G. Harris respectively; a small grant from British Psychological Society to explore the evidence-based practice of occupational psychologists; consultancy and contract research with a range of organisations including West Mercia Constabulary, Hereford and Worcester Fire & Rescue Service, CONTACT Knowledge Exchange, the St Monica Trust.

Other notable grants won by staff in the submitting unit include: a collaborative R&D grant from the Technology Strategy Board undertaken in collaboration with the National Computing Centre on information security for SMEs (Henson).

Infrastructure and facilities

The University has invested substantially in its overarching research infrastructure in the period 2008-2013. Notably from 2010, it has established a Research Office, led by a Director of Research Development and supported by a Research Support Officer. The role of this Office is to support staff in their research, primarily in the process of bidding for research funding. It is also responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of research governance systems to ensure the quality and integrity of the University's research. It has, for example, developed and implemented: a revised *Intellectual Property Policy*, a revised *Ethics Policy* and new *Guidelines and Procedures for Good Research Practice* (in light of the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*), new protocols to support research funding applications pre- and post-award. It has in addition developed a range of [web](#) and paper resources to support staff research. As noted, the submitting unit has established a close working relationship with the Research Office.

The University continues to invest in its long established Graduate Research School, both in terms of physical resources and staffing. GRS provides office space and IT facilities for full-time and part-time research students. Its administrative team has been expanded to deal with the development of new RDPs (a number of Masters by Research as well as professional doctorates in education, business and health sciences).

Information and Learning Services (ILS) provides library and ICT services including learning and research technologies. It also runs the institutional repository (WRaP). ILS staff include a team dedicated to research support and work to a Research Services Strategy (currently being updated to align to the new university Strategic Plan). This aims to support individual researchers, contribute to research student training, and improve access to information resources, through desktop delivery where possible. The team also oversees a growing set of niche collections of primary resources. The Hive, a joint £60m university and public library and history centre, run in partnership by the University and Worcestershire County Council, was opened in July 2012. University researchers now have a single point of access to the consolidated county archives and Historic Environment Record as well as university library resources. The Hive offers superb opportunities to engage the wider community with scholarly activity.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

The submitting unit and the University have established a number of collaborations in the HE sector to support research. Worcester has a longstanding strategic partnership with the University of Birmingham. This partnership has facilitated the establishment of a number of research collaborations resulting in joint bids, seminar series, jointly funded studentships, etc. Research students from the submitting unit also have access to Birmingham's ESRC DTU through this partnership. Joint Innovation days have been run with Coventry University, the University of Gloucestershire and Buckinghamshire New University to which academic staff are invited, the purpose of which is to identify opportunities for collaboration in research and knowledge transfer. These events led to the establishment of an Annual Applied Research Competition (for staff and research students) involving Worcester, Coventry and Buckinghamshire universities and were also instrumental in the development of a PhD studentship competition jointly funded by Worcester and Coventry. The University is also a member of CREST (the Consortium for Research Excellence Support and Training), an organisation that brings together researchers from 20 member universities and which facilitates collaborative activity both face to face, through its annual symposium and a programme of research events and seminars, and virtually via an online community built around a series of interdisciplinary research groups.

Members of staff within the unit are engaged in a range of activities which contribute to the discipline/research base. These include:

- Membership of editorial boards: Journal of Services Marketing (Nicholls), International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management (Nicholls), Journal of International Education in Business (Ross), Journal of Issues in Applied Psychology (Francis-Smythe),

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Journal of African Business (Gbadamosi), International Journal of Social Economics (Davis)

- Editorial board advisor: Business History (Cox)
- Journal/Grant reviewers: e.g. International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research (Francis-Smythe), Journal of Consumer Behaviour (Cappellini), Business History Review (Cox), Industrial Marketing Management (Yen), Quality Assurance in Education (Gbadamosi), International Journal of Human Resource Management (Loon)
- Positions in learned societies, members of subject associations, professional bodies: e.g. Institute of Directors (Richardson), Royal Historical Society (Cox), British Psychological Society (Francis-Smythe), CIPFA (Hicks), Institute of Administrative Management (Evans), Chartered Institute of Marketing (Oestreicher), Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (Collier), British Academy of Management (Bower), Academy of Marketing (Saunders), Chartered Management Institute (Maxfield)

Research collaborations with industry have included the research project of Professor Cox on the UK magazine industry that has been supported by the Chief Executive of Professional Publishers Association, Barry McIlheny, and Paul Philips at IPC Media and which will result in a new history of Britain's magazine publishing industry.

Ross collaborated with Jonathan Lui and Sun Xiao (CAEIP, China) following up a successful PhD on the development of Chinese managers.

Cox collaborated with Dr Julie Bower of Birmingham University (with whom the UW has a strategic partnership) on the brewing and alcoholic beverages industry history and development.

Murray-Hopkins was expert working panel member for the Equality and Human Rights Commission for their investigation into the development of equality in the UK Ministry of Defence.

Evans and Richardson made a number of contributions of short articles for publication in the Institute of Administrative Management Journal.

Henson acted as Secretary of the Hereford and Worcester British Computer Society.

Hicks contributed a chapter to the CIPFA Guide to HE Finance and was a member of the CIPFA Higher Education Panel

Cox was appointed to the Business History Conference (US) O'Halloran Prize Committee to judge the best paper prize in the field of corporate social responsibility.

The research and consultancy activities of the Centre for People at Work have generated a wide range of collaborative activities. These involved collaboration with the following people:

- Prof. Ivan Robertson, Emeritus Professor of Work and Organisational Psychology at The University of Leeds and Managing Director Robertson-Cooper Ltd.,
- Professor Sharon Turnbull, Director of the Research Centre for Applied Leadership,
- Prof. Roger Gill, Visiting Professor University of Strathclyde Graduate School of Business,
- Professor John Arnold, Professor of Organisational Behaviour, University of Loughborough,
- Amanda Ingleby – Outreach and Widening Participation, Aston University
- John Dutton, Managing Director Consulting Tools Ltd.