

<p>Institution: University of Worcester</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience</p>
<p>a. Overview</p>
<p>The University of Worcester (UW) has 6 Institutes. This submission is from the Psychological Sciences Unit (PS) one of 4 academic units in the Institute of Health and Society (IHS), a large department encompassing health and social science disciplines. PS was established in 2006 following the appointment of Professor Dominic Upton as its Head. A small number of staff from the unit were returned to UoA12 in RAE 2008 but this represents the University's first submission to a psychology sub-panel.</p> <p>PS has 16 (14.8 FTE) academic staff of whom 11 (10.4 FTE) are returned here. The research in the submitting unit spans specialisms in clinical/health psychology, cognitive psychology, critical psychology and occupational psychology. These areas of specialism are at different stages of development but staff from each area are returned here and each is sufficiently developed to sustain cohorts of postgraduate students. It should be noted that psychology research is also undertaken in other areas of the University with which PS has close links and this activity contributes to the research environment. The Association of Dementia Studies (ADS), whose staff are submitted to UoA3, is a research centre that seeks to build an evidence base in order to improve the lives of people living with dementia, their families and those who work to support them. The Centre for People at Work (CPW), whose staff are submitted to UoA19, is a research centre focused on business and organisational development with a significant emphasis on occupational psychology.</p> <p>Research in IHS is overseen by a Director of Research (Professor Dominic Upton) who liaises with heads of academic units on strategy, staffing and staff development, chairs the Institute's Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee which formulates the Institute's overarching research strategy and authors an annual report on research activity which is submitted to the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee.</p> <p>UW has achieved sustained growth in its research over the assessment period and this is matched by the success of PS. Excellent projects have resulted in a record of publications in peer-reviewed journals, national and international conference presentations, and increased recognition of the unit's research quality as evidenced by a range of contributions to the discipline.</p>
<p>b. Research strategy</p>
<p>2008 - 2013</p>
<p>The overarching aim of the University's Research Strategy 2008-2013 was to grow the sustainability, extent and quality of its research, with main objectives to: increase the number of academics involved in peer recognised research and knowledge; focus resources on developing existing and potential areas of research strength (targeting support systems accordingly); increase externally sourced research income; further develop postgraduate (PGR) and ECR communities to take advantage of growing institutional research capability.</p>
<p>The University has invested significantly in its research (e.g. it has established a dedicated research office). It has promoted the development of Research Centres in key areas, and explicitly prioritised the support and development of staff in subject areas with potential for research growth (e.g. through its research support schemes – see below). It has had demonstrable success in meeting its objectives: across the University, four times as many academics are submitted to REF2014 as to RAE2008, to 11 UoAs (as opposed to 4 in 2008); since gaining Research Degree Awarding Powers in 2010, UW's community of PGRs has grown by approximately 20%; its research income has increased by some 400% over the REF period (£2.1m in 2012/13).</p>
<p>The university strategy informed the development of strategy at the Institute level and in turn the academic unit. Thus PS main strategic objectives have been to grow the volume and quality of its</p>

research, to increase external research income and to develop its PGR cohort.

To meet these objectives, a number of processes and mechanisms have been put in place by PS (as well as by the Institute and the University) to promote and support research:

- 4-year research plan – all staff are expected to produce a rolling 4-year research plan as part of the annual appraisal process: identifying development needs, outlining planned conference presentations and publications, targeting funding applications, etc. This has been achieved and has led to a year-on-year increase in research activity in PS as evidenced through the annual reports.
- University Repository Mandate – all staff are required to upload outputs from research on to [WRaP \(Worcester Research and Publications\)](#), the University's research repository. Any outputs not uploaded will not be taken into account at appraisal. By July 31st 2013, staff in PS had uploaded 166 outputs.
- Research Studentship Competition – the scheme fully funds (i.e. stipend, fees and appropriate research expenses) a 3-year full time PhD project or, where a case is made, a 5-year part time PhD project. The scheme encourages staff to seek matched or co-funding from other organisations, whether another HEI, a public sector organisation or a private sector organisation. The scheme has supported 43 studentships during the REF period. Staff in the submitting unit have been highly successful in this competition, being awarded 7 full time studentships (D Upton x 3, P Upton x 2, Irmgard Tischner, Davis), 4 of which have been match-funded by external bodies, i.e. Care Farming West Midlands, Public Health Worcestershire, NHS Telford and Wrekin. PS staff are involved in supervision of a further 3 UW-funded PhD studentships, 2 based in ADS, 1 in CPW.
- Research and Project Leave Scheme – the scheme 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. Most commonly the scheme has been used by staff to complete work on a contracted book or a number of journal articles, although the scheme also supports other activities, e.g. field work and bid writing. A number of staff from the submitting unit have successfully applied for research and project leave, e.g.: Tischner to complete her book, *Fat Lives: A Feminist Psychological Exploration* (Routledge 2012).
- Vacation Research Assistantship Scheme (VRAS) – the scheme, 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. PS has been awarded 5 VRAs for projects including: Emotional expression recognition (Davis); Same-gender couples choosing parenthood through adoption and fostering: a scoping study (Gabriella Misca); A quantitative analysis of trial quality and effect size in randomised control trials of cognitive behaviour therapy for chronic low back pain (Victoria Mason). It is worth noting that 4 of the 5 students appointed to a VRA have progressed to PhD programmes (at Worcester or elsewhere) or to more senior RA roles demonstrating that the scheme is being used both to support the careers of current academics but also to develop the careers of future researchers.
- Support for conference attendance – all staff in IHS are able to bid to a staff development budget to fund research dissemination at national and international conferences. Spending to this budget has grown significantly across the REF period rising from less than £10,000 in 2007/8 to £31,771 in 2012/13. Over the REF period, all staff from PS have attended either national or international conferences. For example, D Upton presented at the World Union of Wound Healing Societies, (Yokohama, Japan, 2012), P Upton presented at the International Society for Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity (Texas, US, 2012), Jones at the International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services (Vancouver, Canada, 2011), Solowiej at the British Psychological Society (London, 2012) and Wilkinson

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at the European Congress of Psychology (Istanbul, Turkey, 2011).

PS has also worked to create a vital and supportive research culture. IHS runs an interdisciplinary seminar series that provides opportunities for staff from the submitting unit to disseminate their research but which also includes external speakers. It holds an annual institute lecture which has been delivered by, among others, Professor Steve Field, Chief Inspector of GPs, and David Behan, Chief Executive, Care Quality Commission. D Upton has organised two Research Focus Conferences: one on Health & Well-Being (February 2008), the other on People, Policy & Practice (October 2013). Research Focus is 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.

PS has been successful in developing its research capacity, increasing its research income (see below), growing its PGR community (see below), and enhancing its research culture over the REF period. Growth in the number of active researchers and excellent research outputs has meant that, for the first time, PS is in a position to submit to a psychology sub-panel. The number of staff submitted (10.4 FTE) is more than double the number submitted to UoA12 in RAE2008 (5 FTE). This has been a consequence of the successful implementation of the research strategy alongside an aspirational staffing strategy which has resulted in some excellent new appointments (see below).

Strategy for the next 5 years

The unit's strategy for 2014-2019 builds on and extends the current strategy. Thus, the unit aims: to increase further externally derived research income (with an increased focus on accessing income from major funders such as ESRC and NIHR) by enhancing its bidding support systems in collaboration with the University research office, and by drawing upon the expertise of senior staff with an established track record in winning funding (Bradley, Peel, D Upton, P Upton); to actively support all staff to develop excellent research outputs but with a particular focus on ECRs (see below); to grow further the PGR community by continuing to seek support through the university's PhD studentship scheme (at the time of writing Davis has just been awarded a studentship for 2014/15), through seeking out further match-funding opportunities, through the development of professional doctorates (the first in Health Sciences welcomed its initial cohort in October 2013, with others planned in counselling and occupational psychology); to promote research with the potential for impact on local, regional, national and international services; to increase the visibility of its research both internally and externally, through programmes of public lectures, particularly making use of The Hive, Worcester's joint University and city public library, through podcasts, blogs, and social media.

Key to the implementation of the overall strategy is the development of applied research groups, each led by a senior researcher. Groups in the following areas have been identified which have emerged from the specialisms outlined above: Health Psychology, Cognitive Psychology and Critical Psychology. These groups will be used as the focus of funding applications, dissemination events and activities, partnership development, collaborations (both internal and external), and staff development activities.

c. People, including:**i. Staffing strategy and staff development****Staffing Strategy**

The University of Worcester (UW) has invested significantly in staffing over the REF period. PS has grown over this period from 9 academic staff (8.2 FTEs) to 16 (14.8 FTEs), of which 75% are submitted to REF (11 to this UoA, and 1 to UoA 3). PS has also maintained a small "research team" – research associates, assistants and technicians - that is employed to work across projects (currently 7 staff). The University's Equality Framework 2013-18 restates its commitment to ensure

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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 staff have equal opportunities to develop and progress. Thus, for example:

- The University has adopted the 'two ticks' approach in its recruitment of all staff, including research 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 (see below), this committee now receives data specifically for research staff.
- Stand-alone training has been provided for research leaders, utilising Vitae's *Every Researcher Counts* materials. This will in future be built in to training for research supervisors and principal investigators.

The diversity of the unit as a whole and of the submitted staff reflects the success of the University's approach.

PS has made significant recent appointments at Professorial level in order to strengthen and develop the academic leadership of research in psychology. Professors Peel and Bradley (the latter submitted to UoA 3) are recent recruits and bring with them not only developed outputs, connections and income but also experience of facilitating junior colleagues and strengthening any joint research initiatives. A number of visiting professors have been appointed to establish strategic links with local clinicians that will facilitate research in health psychology, for example: Veronica Wilkie, Visiting Professor in Primary Care, provides links with local Care Commissioning Groups (CCGs); Joanne Smith, Visiting Professor in Early Interventions in Psychosis, strengthens links with the local NHS Mental Health Trust.

It has also appointed a number of ECRs with excellent potential as researchers (Davis, Solowiej, Walklet and Wilkinson) along with more experienced researchers (Farrell, Jones, Scott (nee Wilkin)). It should also be noted, however, that a small number of excellent researchers, who would have been submitted here, have departed over the period (Catling, Tischner, Yeats).

Staff development

As noted above, all staff are expected to develop a four-year research plan which is reviewed and updated on an annual basis through the University's appraisal process. In these plans, members of staff are encouraged to identify their development needs. Within PS, consideration and discussion of plans support the allocation of facilities and resources and informs the workload balance between research and non-research duties. Particular care has been taken to ensure ECRs are given release from teaching duties to support their development, e.g.: to complete final PhD amendments (Wilkinson); to prepare publications and develop bids (Davis).

PS runs a programme of bespoke development workshops for its staff (e.g. writing for publication, bidding for funding and competitive tendering); it has a research mentoring system; it runs writing groups to support junior colleagues. The University also has a full programme of training and development workshops for its academic staff focused on research. There has been particular focus within this programme on developing staff knowledge and competencies in relation to ethics and research integrity and to enhancing public engagement with research reflecting the University's commitment to the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* and the *Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research*.

UW has implemented the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* and developed an action plan based on its recommendations. Key aspects of this plan have been the development of a bespoke training programme for its research staff, the establishment of a research staff forum, and the development of training for principal investigators around the commitments of the Concordat. PS has a strong track record in developing the publication record of its research staff: for example, Charlotte Taylor a current RA has co-published 19 articles (many

as first author) during her employment in this role (2009-present).

ii. Research students

There has been a significant increase in research student numbers in PS over the REF period from 5 to 16, reflecting the success of its staff in bidding for studentships and a growth in supervisory capacity. These numbers, however, do not include students in ADS or CPW who are co-supervised by staff in PS. The ambition is to grow this number further.

This growth will soon begin to show through in doctoral completions as a number of funded students are approaching submission in 2013/14. It should also be noted that staff in the unit have co-supervised three students in CPW who have completed during the period who are not reflected in the doctoral completion numbers for this submission.

The University's Graduate Research School (GRS) is responsible for the management of all Research Degree Programmes (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. IHS works closely with the GRS through a dedicated Research Degree Coordinator 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. 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. The number of approved supervisors in PS is currently 11.

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'). PS offers subject-specific training modules, workshops and mentor support. Much of the material on these programmes is available online. These programmes are constantly being developed in direct response to individual student needs identified through the training needs analysis process and through 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. They can also access a small grants fund to support them to attend external training events, conferences, etc.

PS works 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 which are both student-led. PS expects its research students to attend and present at Institute seminars and conferences as well as at external seminars/conferences. They are encouraged to publish their work in progress (and to upload this work to WRaP). There is research student representation on IHS 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. All PS research students are co-located in the unit, which allows a close working relationship with academic staff and has helped create a strong sense of a PS research community.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

Staff in the unit have undertaken over 30 funded research projects over the REF period, either as sole investigators or with regional, national and international partners to a total value of £649,647, with a considerable year-on-year increase over the period. This funding has come from a number of sources: from charities (e.g. Urgo Foundation, Shaw Trust, NCT), commercial companies (e.g. Mölnlycke Healthcare) and the public sector (e.g. NHS Education for Scotland, Worcestershire Public Health Directorate). The unit has a growing income from competitive research grant funds (e.g. British Academy, Big Lottery Research Grants Programme).

Major grants in the period include £162k from the DoH to evaluate the *Food Dudes* programme (2010-2012), £95k from the Heart of Birmingham PCT for an evaluation of their Cardiac Rehabilitation Network (2010-2011), and £84k from Worcestershire Public Health Directorate to support PhD studentships (2010). Not only have these funded research projects involved significant sums, but they have also had far reaching impact both locally and nationally. These projects are exemplars of how our locally derived research projects can have both traditional outputs (e.g. peer-reviewed journal articles) and a significant impact on service delivery nationally (e.g. P Upton's work with the Food Dudes programme has led to significant developments in the programme – see Impact Case Study 2).

In order to grow income further, various initiatives have been introduced at university and unit level. For example, the university's research office runs workshops, seminars and information-providing sessions on bidding for grants and provides assistance with searching for funding opportunities. Furthermore, both the research office and colleagues from a specially designated peer-review panel support all grant bids. The aim of this panel is to work with the applicant in order to refine and develop the proposal submitted in order to maximise chances of success. Within PS, researchers are helped to develop appropriate bids. Staff in the unit are also supported by a reduction in teaching time and re-allocation of administrative duties for those in the process of submitting for grants or other research funding.

Infrastructure and facilities

PS is located within a purpose-converted building on the University campus. Facilities are extensive and include observational rooms wired for sound and video recording with a central control room, a dedicated computer operating eye-trackers, EEG and other appropriate software; a human performance laboratory equipped with computerised testing equipment; group testing rooms; and dedicated labs with appropriate PCs, printers and scanners. This level of physical resource is supported by dedicated technical, administrative and research staff.

The University has invested substantially in its overarching research infrastructure in the period 2008-2013. Notably, it has established a Research Office, led by a Director of Research Development and supported by a Research Support Officer (funding). The Research Office is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of research governance systems to ensure the quality and integrity of the University's research. In particular, it has established a clear set of policies and guidelines around ethics and research integrity that meet with the commitments of the *Concordat for Supporting Research Integrity* and comply with relevant professional and ethical frameworks and codes of practice.

The University has continued to invest in its long established GRS, which manages its research degree programmes, and supports its research students and supervisors, both in terms of its staffing and its physical resources.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

Staff within the submitting unit are engaged in collaborative research with other universities and research organisations both internationally and nationally. For example: Peel with the University of Birmingham; D Upton with Kingston University, Ontario, Canada; Jones and Wilkinson with Birmingham City and Bath Spa Universities; Haigney with University of Bristol; P Upton with

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University of Sheffield; Farrell with National University of Science & Technology, Islamabad; Misca with AUT University, New Zealand.

The submitting unit and the University have also established a number of collaborations in the HE sector to support research. UW 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, joint supervision 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 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.

The submitting unit also has a number of developed and developing research collaborations with local and regional NHS Trusts, local CCGs, national organisations such as NHS Scotland and partners in the voluntary sector (e.g. PACE Health).

Staff in PS are active contributors to the vibrancy of British psychology through engagement in a range of activities which enhance the discipline/research base. These include:

- Membership of editorial boards/editors, e.g. Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science; Feminism & Psychology; Psychology & Sexuality (Peel); Psychology Teaching Review (Jones); EMDR Practice & Research (Farrell).
- Academic fellowships, awards and prizes: e.g. British Academy Mid-Career Fellow, BPS Book Award 2013 and BPS Psychology of Sexualities Section Outstanding Academic Writing Award 2012 (Peel) EMDR Europe Award for Outstanding Contribution 2013 (Farrell), Journal of Wound Care Award 2013 (D Upton).
- Reviewers for grant committees, e.g. NIHR (Bradley, Peel), ESRC (Jones, Mahoney, Peel), Diabetes UK, Chief Scientist Office, Canadian Diabetes Association, EDDA Centre of Excellence Iceland, MRC (Peel), Tenovus (P Upton).
- Active membership of boards, committees, networks, e.g. member of Heart of England Mental Health Research Network (MHRN) advisory board, NIHR West Midlands North Comprehensive Clinical Research Network (Bradley), EMDR Europe Humanitarian Assistance Programme (Farrell), BPS Division for Academics, Researchers and Teachers (Jones, D Upton, P Upton), BPS Research Board (D Upton).
- Conference keynotes, e.g. Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust care and compassion in nursing (Scott, 2012), NHS Education for Scotland conference (Solowiej, 2009, 2010), Evolving your IAPT Service National Conference (Walklet, 2013), BPS Division of Occupational Psychology conference (Scott & Solowiej 2012).
- Other, e.g. Parliamentary Advisory Committees on Transport Safety (Haigney).