

Environment template (REF5)

Institution: London Metropolitan University

Unit of Assessment: 27 Area Studies

a. Overview

Research in Area Studies has developed in line with the research strategy mapped out in the 2008 RAE. It benefits from:

- A highly supportive environment for applied research
- Internationally recognised researchers
- Significant success in securing external funding of £4.4m

Whereas in 2008 the European Area researchers were spread across three locations and five separate departments they have now been brought together within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FSSH). From 2002 to 2013 there were three core clusters of Area studies researchers – in the Working Lives Research Institute (WLRI), in the Institute for the Study of European Transformations (ISET), and in the Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Languages and Education (HALE). Although the borders separating them were permeable, they focused on work and employment relations, on gender and European citizenship, on migration and society, and on languages and culture.

From 2002 to 2010 ISET and the WLRI were independent research institutes. In 2010 and 2011 when the Faculty of Applied Social Sciences merged with HALE, the two research institutes first joined the former and then the merged FSSH. The two faculties and two research institutes were brought together in FSSH to improve student experience, multi-disciplinary collaboration and to ensure the survival of strong research traditions. The additional synergies between the merged faculties and the research institutes now making up the Faculty Advanced Institute for Research (FAIR) made possible by the geographical concentration of FSSH on a single campus is of major significance for the future. FAIR, with 48 staff (30.4 FTEs), is led by a Director and committee of lead professors and researchers from each of its sub-units, and is serviced by its own administrator and finance officer. Within FAIR, ISET has now merged with the WLRI which now has 16 staff (10.8 FTEs) with 3 admin, 11 researchers (8 in UoA 27), and 2 Marie Curie Early Stage Researchers. Three other Faculty researchers are also entered in UoA 27. The FAIR director sits on the Faculty Executive Group, to which significant decision-making powers have been delegated by the University. FSSH has become the research focus for the whole of the University, and now directly manages LondonMet's Research Office.

b. Research strategy

At its creation in 2002 LondonMet established research institutes in order to encourage and support applied research with a strong commitment to social justice in contemporary multi-cultural Europe. This focused support included an initial £1m seed-corn funding and some investment in sabbaticals between 2002 and 2007. The result of this strategic focus was that the university achieved a joint-10th placed ranking in the European Studies UoA of the 2008 RAE.

We are proud to have achieved the main shared aims for the UoA described in 2008:

- to develop research further into 'the intersection of stigmatised identities of class, race, gender, ethnicity, faith, sexuality and age' (47 funded research projects took place in these areas, generating 13 books, 48 chapters and 65 peer-reviewed articles in 2008-2013).
- to 'continue to underpin our work' with a 'high levels of funding applications, particularly to research councils and the EU' (4 Research Council, 20 EU, 5 Government agency and 15 other successful external grants worth over £8,000 since 2007) generating £4.4m.
- to 'engage with emerging research agendas that we also aim to help shape' (applied research on migration, precarious work, restructuring and cultural change)

At the same time, staff mobility with six colleagues moving to chairs or readerships at other universities, another five taking early retirement, and two colleagues sadly passing away means that of the 17 individuals who were entered in 2007 only four (**Contrepois, Fischer, Mai** and **Jefferys**) are still at LondonMet and feature among the 11 individuals being submitted in REF 2014. The strength of our current submission testifies to the ability of our research clusters to both

Environment template (REF5)

recruit new excellent research active staff and to develop existing staff.

Since RAE 2008 we have raised our level of publications and external research income generation and increased our impact confirming the robustness and excellence of the UoA. We have collaborated on research with eight UK universities, 40 universities elsewhere in Europe and one in India (Mumbai), and we also worked on research projects with or for 12 employer organisations, 15 community organisations and 35 trade union organisations, ranging from the UK's TUC to the European Public Sector Union Federation.

Our funders ranged from the ESRC, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Leverhulme Trust to the European Commission's DG Research, DG Employment and Social Affairs and DG Justice. At LondonMet colleagues from the UoA organised ten conferences attracting over 100 external people to hear research reports and discuss issues raised by them as well as 96 different seminars, including two as part of ESRC seminar series and two as part of the ESRC Festival of Social Sciences, attracting audiences of between 10 and 60 staff, students and visitors. Invited speakers in the languages seminars organised by the *Centre for Transcultural Research* alone included Susan Bassnett (Warwick), Ulrike Freywald (Potsdam), Marie-Noëlle Guillot (UEA), Mari Jones (Cambridge), Hanna Komorowska (Warsaw), Gunther Kress (London), Andreas Musolff (UEA), Fil Nero (HEA) and Guido Seiler (Freiburg). ISET's New Dimensions of Citizenship seminars hosted Marco Martiniello (Liège), Joyce Outshoorn (Amsterdam), Sasha Roseneil (Birkbeck), and Angharad Beckett (Leeds).

Our Area Studies' strategic aims for the short and medium term, 2014-2019, are to:

1. Promote inter- and cross-disciplinary approaches within FAIR (working more closely with researchers in social policy and education) and FSSH through workshops and seminars and to generate more collaborative and innovative research proposals;
2. Embed research more deeply within the university social science and humanities teaching curricula;
3. Build stronger formal and informal partnerships nationally and internationally around our core research areas;
4. Maintain a high level of funding from Research Councils, the EU and other funders commensurate with demonstrating both the importance and sustainability of excellence in applied research;
5. Evaluate the achievement of these aims through:
 - Developing a stronger PhD culture around the two new Marie Curie Early Stage Researchers,
 - Involving more, and especially early career staff in research,
 - Sustaining significant volumes of quality outputs,
 - Focusing more effectively on securing a greater research impact through an increased use of film and photography in our dissemination, and
 - Ensuring greater recognition of LondonMet Area Studies research both within and outside the university.

These aims will be monitored by the FAIR Director and through the FAIR Lead Professorial group – meeting monthly – and by the bi-monthly Faculty Research Committee.

Each of these aims reflects building on the UoA staff's achievements and maintaining sustainable levels of excellent research. In face of rising levels of external competition for funding this means collaborating more widely internally and externally on grant applications. In 2013 in the UK we hold joint grants successfully with Manchester, Queen Mary College London, Surrey and Strathclyde Universities, and work with Ruskin College and Keele Universities. We hold research-based interdisciplinary seminars and hold bi-annual Away Day meetings for all FAIR staff. Maintaining sustainable levels of excellent research also means ensuring that it is seen more clearly as an asset for both teaching and reputation. The WLRI launched and successfully recruited to three cohorts of a Professional Doctorate (Researching Work) programme since 2009, and WLRI and ISET staff have contributed to several Masters courses and have given guest lectures to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes – key ways of proving funded research's value – while the non-research institute staff also contribute fully to teaching in their respective areas.

Environment template (REF5)

Another way we are ideally placed to grow our European success is to build on our own international networks through stronger collaborative external partnerships. In 2013 we signed a collaboration agreement with the CRESPPA CNRS research unit in Paris; in 2012 we secured an EU Marie Curie Integrated Training Network grant arising from 15 years of cooperation with universities in Sweden and France; and from 2011 we have been partners in an annual Health and Migration Erasmus-funded doctoral school in Bologna.

While the institutional and national research funding contexts remain challenging we see additional potential for developing the quality and impact of our research outputs. The Faculty's Interpretation & Translation section is one of four UK members of the *Conférence Internationale Permanente d'Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes*, and represents a significant area for future research. The 2012 formation of the Faculty umbrella FAIR grouping of research institutes and centres with different but overlapping social science and humanities academic interests provides an ideal hub in which the kinds of applied research which LondonMet specialises in can flourish. There are also increasing opportunities to present our applied research findings out to the local community through exhibitions and talks.

c. People:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

The 2002 creation and subsequent growth of the Research Institutes was followed by their integration into the highly supportive Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities with a lead role for FAIR, which now is the main host structure for the faculty's externally-funded researchers. This continuous investment and support has ensured that the conditions of those appointed to Research Contracts were both established in advance of and are in full accordance with the Concordat's principles.

Eight of LondonMet's 11 Category A UoA27 staff were initially recruited as research fellows (**Contrepois, Kumarappan, Mai, Markova**), senior research fellows (**Henry, McKay**), as Reader (**Threlfall**) or as Research Professor (**Jefferys**). The appointments were made as a result of a carefully planned and sustained staffing policy. Their subsequent value to the university is enhanced through:

- induction training and the allocation of a mentor/appraiser separate from their line manager; appraisal meetings are scheduled twice a year with all researchers; annual reports on progress are completed by the researcher's line manager;
- separate ISET and WLRI staff meetings, which were held 10 times a year between 2008 and 2013, and joint away days held in 2011, 2012 and 2013.
- being fully resourced on request to attend conferences and training. Thus for example in 2010 first **Contrepois**, and then two others attended week-long Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method courses; on average two staff per year have attended 2-day NVIVO training sessions;
- study leave policies offer researchers between one and four months' sabbatical after applying to the appropriate Institute (now FAIR leads) Committee with a detailed project proposal (**Contrepois, Mai, McKay** all benefited during the assessment period);
- HR procedures enabling the transition to open-ended contracts (**Contrepois, Markova** and **McKay**) when the initial appointments were on fixed term contracts linked to funding sources; only one colleague in the submission (**Kumarappan**) is still on a fixed term contract compared to 77% in the 2011 CROS survey of UK research staff;
- HR procedures enabling **Contrepois, Mai** and **Markova** to move from RF to senior grades (Senior RF for Contrepois and Markova, Reader for Mai) on demonstrating their capacity to lead independent research projects;
- HR procedures allowing the creation of posts to which internal colleagues can apply (enabling **McKay** to be promoted to Professor of European Socio-Legal Studies);
- university-wide promotion procedures allowing staff to apply for readerships, Chairs or Assistant Professorships. Thus **Fischer** was promoted Professor of Linguistics in the university-wide competition in 2011, **Contrepois** as a Reader in 2012 and **Mai** as Professor of Sociology and Migration Studies in 2013.

The three staff initially appointed on the lecturer/senior lecturer career path (**Fischer, Gedalof, and**

Environment template (REF5)

Murray) also benefited from researcher development:

- Research outputs were a significant item against which staff were measured in the university's performance reward scheme from 2008 to 2011;
- Teaching relief (**Gedalof**), sabbaticals (**Fischer**), conference attendance and the purchase of research materials was provided through the Faculty staff development budget;
- Annual Research Conferences and workshops open to all Faculty staff were organised in 2009, 2010 and 2011 to encourage greater involvement in research, and from 2012 monthly FAIR research surgeries, led by researchers experienced at fund-raising and in research methodology have offered early career academics research advice. Seminar series also allow new researchers and postgraduate students to present papers in a supportive environment.

The UoA27 research clusters have demonstrated a commitment to social justice and equal opportunities in their research and in their staff recruitment and development strategies. Not only do HR procedures ensure compliance with equal opportunities but the WLRI and ISET recruitment evidence this. Of the 16 staff working for the two Research Institutes in 2013, 9 are women, 8 were not born in Britain and six have ethnic minority origins; of the 11 Category A staff (9.0 FTE) submitted here, six are women, seven were born outside Britain and two come from ethnic minorities. For gender the breakdown of submitted staff reflect CROS 2011, but the 64% non-UK born is significantly higher than its 33%, and our ethnic minority 18% composition is higher than the CROS 2011's 7% figure for all university research staff. Our diverse staff profile clearly provides our research into migration and ethnicity with a particular edge, as illustrated by the involvement of four trade union racial equality officers in the **Jefferys** and **Henry** 2012-13 EU-funded research project, *Challenging Racism at Work*. The four Category A staff working fractionally who are being submitted constitute a higher proportion (36%) than the 23% who reported working part-time in the 2011 national CROS survey, but three of these chose to work less than full-time.

Working with trade unions, social partners, voluntary organisations and government agencies across many European projects has provided LondonMet's Area Studies researchers with clear processes for involving stakeholders across all their applied research. This helps inform the research agenda, assists with access and permits practitioners to critically engage with the results and with practitioners from other countries. Our outward facing stance has not only made our research relevant, it has also supported the development of researchers with external orientations.

ii. Research students

The UoA 27 research institute clusters closely integrate research students within their research cultures. In both ISET and WLRI full-time doctoral students (averaging 3 per year across the period) were included on staff lists and invited to the eight staff meetings held annually and to social events and Away Days. They have been allocated office space, desks and computers alongside other staff, and have had open access to photocopying and printing.

The WLRI recruited one ESRC-CASE doctoral student in 2009 and, after the university determined to boost the recruitment of PhD students through offering a limited number of full three-year fee waivers, one VC Scholarship student in 2010. The CASE student spent four months with each of the two trade unions jointly sponsoring her: Nautilus and the TSSA (she is now waiting for a decision on the revisions she was asked to make at her viva). In addition two full-time PhD paying students were recruited by the WLRI in 2009 and 2010, again one woman and one man who, like the VC Scholarship student (awarded his PhD in November 2013), were non-UK born and were recruited on the basis of its international reputation. Two Marie Curie Integrated Training Network Early Stage Researchers were also recruited in March 2013. A condition of their employment was that they were living outside the UK, and the WLRI's international contacts were most useful in securing excellent candidates. Appointed as Research Fellows they were also enrolled as PhD students, and they were seconded to the UNISON union's migrant worker organising team in October/December 2013. ISET recruited two VC Scholarship students in 2010 and currently has three other full-time PhD students. Two VC scholarship doctoral students were allocated to languages and humanities and the three staff being submitted to UoA 27 from outside the research institutes supervised 14 PhDs during the period.

Environment template (REF5)

Most of our doctoral students are part-time. Their numbers have increased dramatically with the development of a Professional Doctorate (Researching Work) based in WLRI. Its first cohort started work in February 2010, and seven students are now writing up for submission in 2014, while the second cohort of eight part-time doctoral students will join the WLRI's continuing two part-time PhD students in October 2013. Staff have increasingly used Skype and on-line conferencing to maintain regular contact with the students they are supervising.

During the assessment period five PhDs were awarded in Area Studies (4 European Studies, 1 American Studies and Anglophone Area Studies), while another has just been awarded and four others have had Vivas scheduled for late 2013 or early 2014.

There are five levels of monitoring and support for all doctoral students in Area Studies:

- (1) Supervisor-student relationship. Each student has two supervisors, who may meet the student together or separately.
- (2) Ethics compliance monitoring by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. Each student must provide a detailed description of the ethical issues raised by their research design and methods and get approval prior to starting their fieldwork.
- (3) Registration of the student's thesis in a ten-page outline by the relevant subject area.
- (4) Monitoring. Regular reports on doctoral students' progress are given to the FAIR Lead Committee or the Faculty Research Committee, and decisions on additional support taken there. These may involve increasing supervision or providing training or some other resource allocation.
- (5) Formal monitoring through the University Research Office requiring an annual progress review form to be submitted with evidence of written work. Students have an opportunity to comment on supervisory support and their supervisors and the faculty Research Student Progress Group (RSPG) provides annual feedback on the work submitted. Students are only allowed to move from MPhil to PhD registration after a significant element of their work has been read by someone other than their supervisor and the RSPG has given its approval.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Area Studies staff generated £4.4m of external research income over 2008-2013 as recorded in the HESA returns (about 90% of total external revenues). The largest funding areas were ESRC grants worth £607k, European Union Framework 6 and 7 grants worth £1.3m and other EU Commission grants worth £1.9m. These values are those to LondonMet after deducting payments out to partners where we were coordinators or PIs. This compares with £2.7m external research funding reported for European Studies in the 2008 RAE. While £1m of this funding total was secured by colleagues who have since left LondonMet, the net revenue raising achievements of those who are not being submitted (£500k) and of those who are is considerable – as this table of £2.6m grants obtained worth £10,000 or more evidences:

	Project Titles	Project Funders	£000s
Contrepois, Sylvie	French MNCS in Central and Eastern Europe	French Ministry of Labour	62
	Social Dialogue in Central Government	EPSU – CEMR European union and employer federations	25
	Conciliation, Arbitration and Mediation	EU DG Employment	80
	Restructuring regions and social identity	EU FP7	260
	Precarious Work among Students	EU DG Employment	80
Henry, Leroi	Health and Restructuring in the Public Sector	EU DG Employment	53
	Challenging Racism at Work	EU DG Employment	80
Jefferys, Steve	Privatisation and Productivity	EU FP6	45
	Outsourcing in the public sector	EU DG Employment	25
	Employer and Union responses to the Racial Equality Directive	EU Fundamental Rights Agency	144
	Changing Employment	EU FP7 Marie Curie	454
	Migrant Mapping in Haringey	Haringey Council	17

Environment template (REF5)

	Restructuring and outsourcing in industry	EU DG Employment	10	
Mai, Nick	Migrant Workers in the UK Sex Industry	ESRC	160	
	Psycho-social profile of traffickers	International Organisation of Migration	20	
	Evaluation of services provided to migrant sex workers in Haringey	Haringey Council	20	
	Circular migration	EU Third Country Integration Fund	68	
	Restructuring and Agency Workers	EU DG Employment	12	
Markova, Eugenia	Agency Workers	ACAS	17	
	Societal diversity in European media	EU DG Justice	95	
McKay, Sonia	Undocumented Workers' Transitions	EU FP6	150	
	Union recognition in healthcare	RCN trade union	20	
	Mapping union responses to discrimination in Europe	DG Employment	150	
	Precarious work and social rights	DG Employment	96	
	Precarious workers in Agriculture	European Federation of Food and Agriculture unions	32	
	Undocumented migrants, ethnic enclaves and networks	ESRC	170	
Murray, Tony	Home Away From Home: London's Irish County Associations	Irish government agencies	10	
Threlfall, Monica	Gendered Citizenship in a Multicultural Europe (the political dimension)	EU FP6	183	

Area Studies benefited considerably from continued investment in the TUC Archive Collections. During 2008-2013, the TUC Collections' digitisation programme has enabled access to primary materials on www.unionhistory.info/britainatwork and to online resources offered by other bodies such as the National Archives and English Heritage. Deposited institutional archives for the Workers' Educational Association and the Labour Research Department have been catalogued and opened to researchers.

Area Studies research also benefited from continuing support from both central and faculty sources. Continued investment in core salaries of approximately £2.5m in ISET and WLRI over the six financial years from 2007-8 to 2012-13 enabled nearly twice that amount to be brought in to the university in external funding. Over the last two years the importance for Area Studies research of the promotions to Chairs (**Fischer, Mai, McKay**) and to Reader (**Contrepois**) should not be underestimated. It is a clear indication that Area Studies remain a key research priority for FSSH, and that active consideration is being given to its future form and structure. This continued strategic investment was supported through the restructuring of the Research Institutes into first applied social sciences and then into the merged Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Faculty Advanced Institute for Research, within which ISET and WLRI have now merged together in 2013/14.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

The focus of much of LondonMet's Area Studies research on Europe has meant its researchers now constitute a distinct pole in the emerging European Research Area. This new development is illustrated by the ability of **Contrepois** to organise 11 national research teams to submit a large integrated project bid *Researching Languages at Work* under the FP7 call on *The multilingual challenge for the European citizen* that was evaluated as passing the threshold for research excellence. **Mai**'s selection as an expert by the EU Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals and **Jefferys**' invitation to the European Trade Union Institute to speak about trade unions and racism to its 2013 Athens conference on 'The Rise of the Right' are also significant.

Other illustrations of the contributions by LondonMet's UoA Category A staff to the research base are:

- (1) **Gedalof**'s current role as Chair of the Editorial Collective of *Feminist Review*.
- (2) **McKay**'s positions as Vice President of the Institute of Employment Rights and on the editorial board of the *Industrial Law Journal*.
- (3) **Fischer**'s council membership of the Philological Society.
- (4) **Jefferys**' memberships of the steering committee of *Journées Internationales de Sociologie du Travail* and of the editorial boards of *Labor History* and *Historical Studies of Industrial Relations*.
- (5) In 2013 **Contrepois** negotiating a formal resource-sharing partnership between FAIR and the CNRS/Paris 8 research centre CRESPPA, and her being invited to join the Paris Region's Committee on industrial heritage.
- (6) In 2013 **Markova** speaking as an expert to the launch of the Irish Presidency's *Researcher Careers and Mobility* Conference in Dublin Castle.
- (7) Keynote speeches by **Jefferys** to the *European Human Resource Directors' Circle* in Lisbon in both 2012 and 2013, and to the 200th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of the Marseille Industrial Tribunal in 2010; by **Fischer** at the *Valenzpartner* symposium in Erlangen in 2012; and by **McKay** to the British Universities Industrial Relations Association in 2012.
- (8) In 2012-13 **Mai** being awarded a 10 months' fellowship at IMéRA, the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Aix-Marseille University (*Institut Méditerranéen de Recherches Avancées*), where he is delivering an innovative art/science project on the intersection between migration, gender and sexuality in the Euro-Mediterranean area.
- (9) **Jefferys**' involvement over 15 years in a tripartite self-funded Swedish-French-UK summer school for doctoral students. With **Contrepois**, **Henry** and **McKay** this bearing fruit in the 2012-16 Marie Curie 9-partner Integrated Training Network (ITN) grant. The *Changing Employment* ITN is coordinated by Strathclyde University.
- (10) Research partnerships or collaborations with these UK universities: City, Glasgow, Greenwich, Keele, Kings College, LSE, Manchester, Queen Mary College London, Ruskin College, Strathclyde, Surrey, Sussex and Warwick.
- (11) Since RAE 2008 the total number of non-UK university research partnerships we have entered into is 49, to which total should be added a further 21 research partnerships with UK or European government agencies and NGOs. Most of these partnerships have flowed from securing EU FP6 or FP7 grants, from DG Employment or DG Justice Grants, from European Agency Grants (Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions; Fundamental Rights Agency) and ESRC grants, but in 2010-12 we were funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to work on European responses to forced labour.
- (12) In 2012 alone, in addition to working with the UK universities named above, we carried out joint research with the Athens University; Bulgarian Academy of Sciences; Sofia University; Central European University (Budapest); Latvia University; European University Institute (Florence); University of Bologna; Gothenburg University; Liege University; Pompeu Fabra University Law School (Barcelona); Munich Technical University; Umea University (Sweden); Madrid Complutense University; Venice University; Rome University; Free University of Brussels; and Silesia University.

Between 2008 and 2013 the 11 staff being submitted to Area Studies made increasingly important contributions to the discipline:

- (i) They examined four UK doctorates
- (ii) They examined four European doctorates (one Belgian, one Spanish, two French)
- (iii) They refereed 47 academic publications
- (iv) They refereed 16 research proposals (including one Canadian and three Belgian)
- (v) They gave 29 keynote speeches
- (vi) They sat on five editorial boards