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| <p>Institution: St Mary's University College</p> |
| <p>Unit of Assessment: 36: Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management</p> |
| <p>a. Overview</p> <p>St Mary's is entering eight out of a total of ten research active staff (4.7 FTE) to this Unit for the first time with specialist clusters in Irish Studies and the Popular Gothic. The Unit is defined by shared interdisciplinary approaches that focus on cultural history and questions of identity formation across time, cultural and media forms, audiences and locations. Their common activities find an organizational focus in the Centre for Irish Studies (CIS, established in 2011) and the Communication, Culture and Film Research Group (CCFRG, established in 2006) within the School of Arts and Humanities. The unit has produced two jointly-authored monographs (Hickman, Richards), two single-author monographs (Hopper, Mellins), published two co-edited books in a new Irish film series (Pettitt) and edited/contributed to two book collections on the contemporary Gothic (Cherry, Mellins). In total the unit has published 13 book chapters and 13 refereed journal articles during the REF assessment period.</p> <p>This profile represents an emerging unit of assessment, in the process of definition and growth within a University undergoing considerable strategic development. Following the granting of taught degree awarding powers (2006) and in the wake of an encouraging assessment for UoA 29 in RAE2008, the University College took steps to support a reorientation towards research. This included the appointment of five 0.5 FTE Research Fellows to this Unit. In November 2011 the School funded three, fees-only doctoral studentships, two of which were assigned to this Unit (Zaluckowska and Aiyku). There have been four PhD completions across the School since 2008, one in each of UoA 36's clusters (Mellins and Goudsmit). The School has established two new MA programmes in Irish Studies and Gothic in 2013-14 to provide a graduate platform into doctoral research. These developments in staffing, the research degree programme, and a widening graduate cohort, underpin the School's aim to support Irish Studies and Popular Gothic as a sustainable unit of research and viable base from which to attract research funding.</p> |
| <p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>i) Centre for Irish Studies (CIS)</p> <p>Comprising eight research active staff (Barr, Gibbons, Hickman, Hopper, Mills, Paull, Pettitt, Richards) and two doctoral students (self-funding Mecham and Zaluczowska), CIS is a formally organized university research unit with a Director, permanent academics, research fellows, a part-time administrator and a dedicated budget. It developed out of a long-standing undergraduate degree in Irish Studies (since 1992) but whose focus now is to develop its research around a taught MA, doctoral students and collaborative projects. The MA in Irish Studies has recruited eight full-time and four part-time students; one of the course aims is to provide a platform into doctoral study. CIS aims to promote excellence in research, connect with non-academic institutions and audiences, and disseminate its findings through public engagement and the media in the locale, nationally and through its international collaborations. One notable collaboration is with the University of Sao Paulo (USP) in Brazil, with which St Mary's has in place a memorandum of agreement (since 2011), and has resulted in joint research publications and staff mobility.</p> <p>Through its interdisciplinary approach CIS focuses on three key preoccupations in its analysis of Ireland, its proximate relations with Britain and the wider world of its diaspora:</p> <p>a) Firstly, the complex, historical inter-connections between Ireland and elsewhere as they are expressed politically and socially in formal institutions and structures but also more mobile,</p> |

- unplanned and popular processes (Barr, Gibbons, Hickman, Mecham);
- b) Secondly, relations produced in and through literary, theatrical and cinematic cultural forms which overlap and permeate each other in particular configurations and as result of real and imagined migrations between different locales (Barr, Hopper, Mills, Paull, Pettitt, Richards, Zaluczowska).
 - c) Thirdly, arising from a) and b) the research produced at CIS is concerned to theorise better the kinds of identity formation produced historically and culturally. The particular emphasis is on the transnational nature of these processes, with the aim of challenging accepted models of political change and cultural history (Hickman, Pettitt, Hopper, Richards).

The main cultural studies methods deployed by CIS focus on con/textual analyses of dramatic (Richards, Paull), literary (Hopper, Mills, Richards, Goudsmit), cultural or film representations (Pettitt, Hopper). This body of work and ongoing research marks out strongly the cultural realm as the material basis for contemporary debates and past events, continuities and shifts between the two. Indeed, a notable dimension to Irish Studies research methods combines the significant use of historical archive (print and moving image) – in the case of Barr, Gibbons, Hopper, Pettitt – and the qualitative sociological methods that feature in the case of outputs produced by Hickman. Within this range there are a number of methodological intersections with Mellins and Cherry in CCFRG that are indicated in the section below. However, the distinctiveness of the CIS unit is in its focus on the importance of scoping and analyzing Irish identities in particular locations and temporalities, drawing on a range of interdisciplinary approaches, and applying these to different socio-cultural texts and processes.

ii) Communication, Culture and Film Research Group (CCFRG) – Popular Gothic

The cluster consists of one senior academic (Cherry), an early career researcher (ECR) (Mellins) and a part-time doctoral student (Aiyku) that sits within the CCFRG of the School of Arts and Humanities. Since its formation in 2006 the Popular Gothic cluster within CCFRG has collaborated with literary colleagues across the School to host two major conferences on the Gothic (2010, 2012) leading to publication. This combined research has fed into the launch of an MA Gothic: Culture, Subculture, Counterculture, which aims to establish a basis for PhD research, generate research into the Gothic and produce a series of publications.

Research being carried out on the Popular Gothic takes an interdisciplinary approach, primarily in the areas of media and cultural studies, sociology, and fashion/textiles, exploring responses within the various audiences to Gothic texts in media and popular culture, as well as analytical approaches to those texts in their own right. Research contributing to the field of Gothic studies is focused on the following:

- a) The continuing significance of Gothic texts in popular culture, including the importance of these for the media and cultural industries, their wider contexts in terms of trans-media narratives, as well as the meanings they generate particularly in relation to socio-cultural and historical perspectives, and representations of gender, race and identity.
- b) The formations and practices of fan cultures in Gothic studies, including the discourses circulating within these groups, the developments of fan canons, constructions of identity through performative and dress practices, and the position these communities occupy within online cultures.
- c) The intersections of production and consumption, particularly as they are organized around audience activities and participation alongside and within the culture industries, but also the producerly activities of fan communities and their construction of archontic fiction related to the originating text.

Environment template (REF5)

The methods that distinguish the popular gothic research of Mellins and Cherry in this Unit are broadly qualitative, including person-to-person interviews, online discussion groups and participant observation to generate empirical data. This is supplemented by textual analysis of visual material including significant television, film and video output. In these ways, the two research areas combine to create a shared Unit methodology and approach that answers to the key concerns of media and cultural studies as defined by Panel D (Part 2D, Para 33). In the future, the Unit will consolidate links with UoA 29 literary scholars and explore the extension of its links to new units in philosophy and history where there is mutual benefit from so doing.

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

The research development of all staff is supported on an individual basis by the annual appraisal scheme. Opportunities for research development include: initial training and updates for supervisors, supervisor discussion fora, specific skills' training, and funding workshops. SMUC participated in the 2013 CROS survey and is preparing an application to the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research Award. In doing so, it supports fully the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and is working towards full implementation through its institutional policies and procedures. The institution is also in the process of aligning fully with the Concordat for Research Integrity. An action plan will ensure its full implementation by the end of the 2013-14 academic cycle. A targeted Research Leave scheme was implemented to support staff in preparing for the REF 2014 that assisted completion of outputs by two staff in UoA 36 (Gibbons and Pettitt). Research leave to buy-out teaching time, typically for part or all of one semester is a system that will be retained for the coming assessment period.

Staffing Strategy

The Unit has benefited from the outcomes of strategic funding outlined in the overview in section a., allowing it to expand the numbers of fellows in Irish Studies (1.5 FTE) and appoint a Chair with expertise in Irish Studies in 2011 (Pettitt). But the Popular Gothic has seen the loss of 2 FTE lecturers (Cherry, 2011-12 due to early retirement and Ruddell taking up new employment) replaced by a 0.8 FTE lecturer (Mellins, an ECR) and an 0.5 FTE Research Fellow (Cherry).

Full-time academic members of the School who are research active may nominate a research day a week in term time; those with fractional contracts may take proportionate research days. The provision and use of research time is monitored through staff annual reviews. Staff are encouraged to present their work in the School's research seminars and each semester priority is given to research students and to ECRs. St Mary's has appointed in open competition its doctoral students to lecturing posts. Mellins is a case in point, completing her PhD at St Mary's (2009), securing a lectureship in 2012. Additionally, staff wishing to study doctorates receive a significant financial contribution towards their tuition fees from staff development funds e.g. Purcell-Davis and Murphy. By providing this support, the School seeks to enhance its staff research profile and that of the University College, as part of SMUC's preparation to seek RDAP status. The School supports senior researchers to make external research funding grants such as those planned by Barr and Hickman to the British Academy and Pettitt and Richards to the AHRC. The University has an annual promotions policy where a Readers/Professors applications round is announced. Senior promotion appointments require the support of the Head of School and are budgeted for in an annual planning meeting in Spring. It is the policy of School to provide annual staff development support (per head £275) and access to its QR Research Funds of up to £300 per annum per FTE for attendance at conferences, training days in research supervision; in professional skills offered commercially, in-house, and bought in consultants. In a comparatively short period since 2011, the Unit has benefited from funding and greater infrastructural rigour to support research. This has been achieved with due respect to delivering the institutional requirement to balance teaching and

research in relation to its Mission. The Unit offers evidence of achievement and for strategic staffing policy to sustain future growth and development.

ii. Research Students

Provision for Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs) in the University College is coordinated and overseen by the Director of Academic Affairs and the Research Office. The provision is managed at School level by its Research Committee and PGR sub-committee that assess new applications and monitors annual progress (prior to them being submitted to the University College's Research Students Sub-Committee).

Directors of Studies are responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is made available to their research students, in line with a skills audit based on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. A central PGR skills training programme is provided at SMUC in addition to the sessions available at School level and via the University of Surrey's SPLASH programme. In addition research students are regularly invited to lectures and learning opportunities across the University College such as those on the MA core module 'Researching Modernities', and at other institutions across greater London. The SMUC programme culminates annually in a multidisciplinary PGR student conference held in June.

PGRs are allocated an annual allowance of up to £300 per annum to help support visits to archives, conferences and other beneficial research trips. This allowance has allowed Mecham to visit archives in Salford and Belfast for his PhD work on Walker and Zaluckowska travel to give a conference paper that was published. PRG students have representation on the School Research Committee and the University College Research and Enterprise Committee (REC).

A research students' module is hosted on the St Mary's virtual learning environment (VLE) which provides all research programme resources and access to an online Research Methods course (Epigeum). It also provides a forum for students to communicate with each other and with research staff. Opportunities have been provided for both staff and students to receive training on the VLE and Epigeum. Students engaging in teaching are required to undertake training for this role. They are assigned to a member of academic staff involved in the programme or module being taught who will coordinate their teaching activities and brief them fully on the objectives, academic content and programme regulations. The student is also required to take relevant modules on the University College's Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice and/or attend compulsory training for PGRs. Details of any teaching undertaken by students are included in the Annual Report, monitored by the Director of Studies and Head of School, and noted during the Research Student Sub-Committee meetings.

St Mary's is a member of GuildHE's Consortium for Research Excellence, Support and Training (CREST). Students are invited to attend its research symposia, workshops and conferences across 27 CREST partner institutions.

The number of PGRs in the School has grown from 6 to 11 during the REF assessment period, and three of these are attached to this Unit: one in Irish history, one in Irish media, and one in Popular Gothic. Two of these are supported by fees-only studentships. The Unit can record two successful completions in Popular Gothic (Mellins, 2009) and Irish Studies (Goudsmit, 2013). The School's intention is that once it reaches 20 enrolled PGRs it will establish a postgraduate tutor:

- To organize a postgraduate interdisciplinary conference annually to provide a platform for the PhD research/MA community within SW London.

Environment template (REF5)

- To allocate an annual sum for travel/attendance at external conferences and subsidized St Mary's conferences, available to all PhD students.
- To recruit at least one self-funded PhD student per year for the next period and bid for competitive studentships/fee waivers, including annual MA international students.
- To develop a strategy for selectively funded PhDs.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

This being a new unit of assessment and with no submission to RAE2008, there was no specific allocation of QR funds to Irish Studies and Popular Gothic, although individual staff have drawn on the School's research funds especially for interdisciplinary literary projects, staff development and made use of research days. For UoA 36 CIS and CCFRG generated very small sums of external funding that included: BAIS conference support 'Ireland Astray' - £500 (2011); Culture Ireland - €2,000 (2013); The Honorable the Irish Society - £2,000 annually (2011-12, 2012-13); the Nuffield Foundation - £1,000 for contract research (2012); funding for Irish language courses from the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht - £2,300 (2012-13).

An institutional Research and Enterprise Development (RED) Unit supports researchers at different career stages to attend training in doctoral supervision, impact workshops and grant bid writing. The finances of CIS, as with the broader School's research processes, are overseen by the Academic Director (Research) – who chairs the School Research Committee and its sub-committee for PGRs – the Head of School, a dedicated Senior School Administrator and a Business Support Manager, who manages research grant applications, events, organization, publicity, financial records for research income and its disbursement. There is an annual round of capital bid funding at St Mary's. Any research unit can submit an application as appropriate through their Head of School for research equipment and facilities. As yet there is no physical Centre for Irish Studies or Gothic, but there is dedicated archive space for collections of papers and AV materials pertinent to Irish Studies which are discussed in next section.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

i). As research clusters CIS and the Popular Gothic have been engaged in external collaborations over the period of census to a) further the disciplines that feed into their areas and b) to define their growing profile of academic research. Thus far, CIS has received funding support and endorsements for its conferences ('Ireland Astray' 2011; and at Irish Cultural Centre (ICC), Hammersmith 2013) from the British Association for Irish Studies (UK) and the Embassy of Ireland (London). In 2011 CIS/St Mary's entered into a five-year Agreement with USP, Brazil, to exchange students, staff, develop research projects and publish; a collaboration that has been active and productive. Pettitt's work in this collaboration is outlined more fully in the Impact Case Study but has involved curating a film festival (August 2013) in Argentina and Brazil and a bi-lingual book/DVD series. In 2013/14 CIS will support one visiting PhD student on a Brazilian government postgraduate grant, known as CAPES, for semester 2 (under Pettitt and Richards) and in 2014-15 CIS will support the post-doctoral research of a Sao Paulo-based writer/director in a project based on dramatized biography of Roger Casement's life to be delivered in 2016. CIS will continue to work with the IFI in Dublin on film research and dissemination such as its archive DVD series and explore other opportunities for research collaborations with RTE, the Irish television network, specifically to publish critical studies on its archival drama back catalogue made available in a digital format using CIS research expertise.

ii). Over the years CIS has hosted many public lectures involving journalists, academics, civil servants, diplomats, writers and politicians connected with Ireland including two presidential visits and three Ambassadors. Since its re-launch in 2011 it has hosted two international academic/community conferences (Nov 2011; Feb 2013), a public lecture series (March-April 2013) featuring Brazilian academics with support from the Lord Mayor of Westminster's office, the

All-Party Group for the Irish in Britain and Culture Ireland/ European Federation of Centres and Associations for Irish Studies (EFCAIS) 'Irish Itinerary' and a joint Gothic/Irish Studies postgraduate conference that focused on 'Researching Modernities' (November 2013). The UK's new Ambassador to Ireland will visit the University College and give a public lecture in January 2014. The Embassy of Ireland will host a joint book launch and reception for CIS in March 2014, offering continued evidence of recognition at a diplomatic level. In the REF assessment period, both academics from Popular Gothic have been involved in the organization, participation and editing publications arising from two Gothic conferences held at St Mary's in 2009 and 2011. In 2012, Strawberry Hill Screen was set up to co-organize the exhibition of a Gothic film series with the charity Strawberry Hill House, which ran from October-December, with public audiences and introductions by academics. This has been followed up in October 2013 with a gothic film series as part of the BFI themed season and Mellins has been interviewed by the BBC on her research. Popular Gothic will host 'Fashioning Subversion' in July 2014 continuing the biennial round of international conferences on the gothic.

iii). CIS has begun to acquire, develop and digitalise archival holdings pertinent to its research and of use to other researchers, namely the Irish Studies in Britain journal (ISIB) archive (1982-87) by Gibbons and the 'Peace Process' papers of the British Irish Rights Watch Group (BIRWG) by Minogue. Further funds will be committed in 2013-14 to digitalise and host web resources at CIS in collaboration with BIRWG. Paull is the editor of the Sean O'Casey website *Drummings: A Journal of O'Casey Studies* with general editor, Christopher Murray <http://www.seanocasey.co.uk/start.htm> live from 2013 and *UpStage*, an MLA listed journal of fin de siècle theatre, since 2010. CIS has worked and formed formal links with cultural and community organisations such as the ICC, Hammersmith, the Irish Arts Foundation (IAF), Leeds, the Irish Literary Society (ILS), and many other local groups in London and the south-east (Luton, Croydon) to ensure that research findings are disseminated.

iv). In a new initiative, CIS will be acting as sponsor institution for a Knowledge Transfer project on the 'Irish in Britain' which seeks to develop physical and virtual museum exhibition space application with ICC as it develops its new premises in Hammersmith in 2015/16. CIS will provide the academic liaison and host the research associate. It will also act as consultant on a new programme of accredited adult learning for ICC. Members of CIS (Pettitt, Hickman and Hopper) have also contributed lectures to introduce the London Irish Film Festival (2011, 2013), and acted as consultants on the London Irish Writers Week for 2013 (<http://in-gb.co.uk/irish-writers-week>).

v). CIS benefited from its institutional membership of and serving on a range of organizations for Irish Studies. These include EFCAIS, the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures (IASIL) and the British Association for Irish Studies (BAIS). Colleagues in CIS serve as follows: Richards – IASIL's elected European representative and BAIS member of the Postgraduate Bursary committee. Pettitt has served on the AHRC Peer Review College (2006-2009), the AHRC Research Grant Panel (2009) and on the IRCHSS (now Irish Research Council) on its International Board for most post-doctoral Research Projects. Hickman has been part of the ESRC Peer Review College (2010-ongoing), was a member Immigrant Council of Ireland, Dublin (2009-2011), is on the International Advisory Board of the Irish Social Sciences Platform (ISSP) since 2007, a member of the Runnymede Trust Academic Consultative Forum (2006-ongoing). She is an elected Academician of the Academy of Social Sciences (2011).

Further evidence of the Unit's professional acumen and contribution to the academic profession is summarized in the table below for the assessment period 2008-2013.

vi). Evidence of subject/discipline leadership and research fields

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|--------|
| Staff Initial/Factor | CB | BC | IG | MH | KH | MM | LP | SR | RM* | MP* | Totals |
| Leading position in professional subject associations | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Editorial positions | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Editorial board membership | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 14 |
| Examination of doctorates | 2 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Organisation of conferences | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 11 |
| Refereeing research proposals | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 36 |
| HEI consultancies | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Invited keynotes | 6 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 30 |
| Invited lectures | 23 | 0 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 62 |
| Peer reviewer conference papers | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Regular peer reviewer | 0 | 3 | 2 | 18 | 6 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 35 |
| External examiner for other HEIs | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 9 |

**RM Richard Mills and MP Michelle Paull. Research active but not included in 2014 submission.*

The table demonstrates considerable contributions made to postgraduate work in the field – assessing doctorates and postgraduate research funding applications; the peer review of academics' work for journals, publishers and funding bodies; a significant level of public engagement and professional representation in public lectures and conference papers that collectively suggest the future health and well-being of the unit. In terms of publications for the 2014-2019 period, it is expected that the number of monographs will at least double, including those publishing books for the first time; the output of journal articles/book chapters is expected to increase by 25%; book series will continue for three more titles and collaborative projects with other HEIs - including those in London, Brazil and Ireland - will develop productively. CIS and Popular Gothic will continue to develop as research clusters and consolidate their position within the UK as distinctive generators of public knowledge in their fields and develop further their profile and contribution at an international level.