

Institution:	University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Unit of Assessment:	36A - Communication, Cultural and Media Studies
a. Overview	
<p>This submission capitalises on the growing momentum of Communication, Cultural and Media Studies (CCMS) research at Northumbria University across a distinctive blend of methods and subjects from the Humanities and Social Sciences. CCMS research combines established strengths – notably in its Film and Television research group – with newly developed areas, evident in its Journalism and Citizenship and its Cultural Histories/Practices research groups. CCMS research has benefited from substantial investment in new research staff and demonstrates growth in all areas, including support for early career researchers and an increase in PGR recruitment from 2 to 20 since 2008.</p>	
b. Research strategy	
<p>Our strategy has been to develop and broaden CCMS-based research at Northumbria University, building on existing strength in Film Studies but also opening up new areas of research, including television, journalism practice and processes, and cultural histories and practices. This explicit strategy has increased the volume and range of our research, which at the same time has become more international in scope and reach. The growth in this area has been so substantial as to warrant a distinct submission to UoA 36, the first made by Northumbria to a Media panel.</p> <p>The formation of a new Department of Media and Communication Design during the census period has been central to this strategy. It has strongly facilitated the development of a distinctive CCMS research profile through bringing together researchers previously dispersed across other departments. The expansion of CCMS research has also been underpinned by a series of new appointments of researchers at all levels, nine in total since RAE 2008. These include Professors Golding and Ross, established mid-career researchers such as Sexton and Shaw, and promising Early Career Researchers (ECRs) such as Peirse (who during her employment at Northumbria has published a monograph and an edited collection and is returned here as an established researcher), Jones (whose first monograph is returned in this submission) and, more recently, Walker, who will complete his first monograph in 2014.</p> <p>In addition, the University has invested in the provision of new facilities for staff and research students, and new research planning mechanisms including a formal mentoring scheme and specific support for Early Career Researchers have been introduced. Throughout this period of expansion, CCMS research activities have grown rapidly from a small base and are now organised into three groups. These groups foster collaboration, support and mentoring, and promote events designed to enrich the staff and postgraduate research environment. They are:</p> <p><u>Film and Television</u></p> <p>A central feature of this group's research for RAE 2008 (where it was included in a broader submission to UoA 64) was British cinema, and this continues to be the case, with Hutchings, Leggott, and new appointments Peirse, Sexton and Walker publishing in this area, both individually and in collaboration with each other. Leggott's AHRC grant on Amber Films has further underpinned this activity, as has Hutchings' membership of the editorial board of the Routledge journal <i>Visual Culture in Britain</i>. PhD research in this area includes work on British horror cinema, space in British film, and contemporary British realist cinema. New appointments, which include Jones alongside Peirse and Sexton, have helped to internationalise the group's research, especially that on cult cinema and the horror and science fiction genres. Hutchings' work on horror cinema was already moving beyond its initial British focus at the time of the last RAE, and during the census period he has published the internationally-focused <i>Historical Dictionary of Horror Cinema</i>. Sexton's work on international cult cinemas, his editorship of the <i>Cultographies</i> book series and a recently awarded AHRC network grant on 'International Cult' (in December 2012), Peirse's work on American and East Asian genre cinemas and Jones's work on extreme cinema, have served to expand further the group's research profile while maintaining a</p>	

focus on genres. PhD projects in this area include Korean horror cinema, Lovecraftian horror cinema and violence and the horror film. The group has also further developed its work on television, both in its own right and in its connection with cinema in the context of genre histories. The 2010 conference on British science fiction television organised by **Leggott** and **Peirse** was an important milestone in this regard as is **Leggott's** founding editorship of the *Journal of Popular Television*. **Hutchings**, **Leggott**, **Peirse** and **Sexton** have all published in this area, notably **Leggott's** edited collection on British science fiction television and **Leggott/Sexton's** edited collection on Chris Morris. The recent appointment of **Irwin**, whose research focuses on the role of women in the British television industry, ensures that this will become an increasingly significant aspect of this group's research in the future.

Journalism and citizenship

This is our newest research group, with all researchers appointed during the census period. Its work is focused on a number of journalism strands including international journalistic practice, global media institutions, gender and media, and media citizenship. **Golding** and **Ross** are both noted figures in this area whose research and research-related activities strongly underpin the group. **Golding's** recent research focuses on changes in European media and the public sphere, and the media and the Olympics, while **Ross** has an international profile for her work on gender and media, most recently in her edited collection *Handbook of Sex, Media and Gender* (2012) and her EU-funded project on women in media industries (2012-13). The international focus of the group's research is maintained in **Shaw's** work on human rights journalism, especially in the context of African media with his monograph *Human Rights Journalism*, as is **Ragnedda's** research on contemporary Italian media. **Golding's** editorship of *The European Journal of Communication*, his chairing of the European Sociological Association Media Research Network and his co-chairing of the European Science Foundation's 'Forward Look' programme for the future of media research across Europe all contribute to the developing profile of this group, as does **Ross's** editorial board membership of, among other journals, *Feminist Media Studies*, and **Shaw's** role as a co-convenor of the Peace Journalism Commission, International Peace Research Association and his co-editorship of special issues of the *African Journal of Media Studies* and the *International Communication Gazette*. PhD research includes projects on media portrayals of rapid social change; women politicians and Ghana's print media, and politics and social media use.

Cultural Histories/Practices

This research group's work is mainly but not exclusively underpinned by a cultural-historical approach. One of its foci is popular and rock music with notable achievements including **McLaughlin's** co-authored monograph on Irish rock music and the conference *A Special Relationship?: Irish Popular Music in Britain* staged at Northumbria University in 2012, and **Barron's** monograph *Social Theory in Popular Music*. **Barron** has also published on celebrity culture and on North-Eastern cultural history organising a symposium on Catherine Cookson in 2012 that brought together representatives from organisations engaged in local history services. **Gibson's** research, in the field of comics and graphic novels, includes published research on girls' comics and her website, Dr Mel Comics, has become a key resource in comics research and has received over 40,000 visits since its establishment in 2008. PhD research includes projects on male rock stardom, representation of gayness in Thai media, and gender in computer games.

Future strategy 2014-2019

Our future strategy is to build the momentum achieved during the REF census period. Major projects will be brought to fruition including monographs from **Gibson**, **Hutchings**, **Shaw** and **Walker** and a special issue of *Popular Music History* edited by **McLaughlin**. We will also consolidate our core research groups especially through developing our early and mid-career career researchers and extending our bidding and collaborative activity.

A specific focus for future investment in the CCMS area will be new appointments aligned to our three research groups, but we are also supporting the development of the research profiles of all our researchers – see below for strategies. At present, the CCMS area contains three Professors (**Golding**, **Hutchings**, **Ross**) but no Readers. Through new appointments and the mentoring of existing staff to promotion, we are creating a more balanced staff profile, including a more formal

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process of research mentorship and leadership for all staff. We are also supporting the further development of staff not featured in this submission but who participate in our research groups and work with more established colleagues.

Building the sustainability and further development of CCMS research involves increasing the numbers of bids submitted to research councils, charitable foundations and other potential funders and sources of research income. We are growing our support for such activity both in terms of funding for bid preparation activity and institutional support for bid writing. In particular, the recent formation of an interdisciplinary grants panel will help to increase the volume and scale of external bids through enhanced academic mentoring. **Golding, Hutchings, Jones, Leggott, Peirse, Sexton and Shaw** have bids currently in development ranging from large collaborative projects to smaller funding applications but as a normal part of professional development all our researchers will undertake regular bidding activity.

We will also extend our collaborations with external partners, including cultural organisations, businesses, European agencies and NGOs. Current collaborations range from the international (**Golding's** work with the European Science Foundation and **Ross's** work with the European Institute for Gender Equality and the New Zealand Labour Party, **Shaw's** work with UNESCO, **Sexton's** and **Walker's** work with international film festivals) to the national and regional (**Gibson's** work with LEAs, **Barron's** work with South Tyneside Libraries). Building on these collaborations, CCMS researchers are pursuing additional knowledge transfer opportunities, again with enhanced University support.

In addition, we will increase PGR recruitment as a key aspect of our research culture. Since 2008 this has been on an upward trajectory, rising from 2 to 20, including 8 PGRs holding University-funded studentships. Providing Early Career Researchers with supervisory opportunities has been a priority and our current ECRs (**Jones, Walker**) are engaged in PhD supervision. There will be continued investment in PGR students to ensure that growth continues, supported through a combination of improved recruitment processes and targeted campaigns. A variety of doctoral studentship and fee scholarship schemes are running, including those funded in collaboration with external organisations, and these are attracting both full-time and part-time Home and EU students, as well as international students.

Finally, we are creating interdisciplinary collaborations within the University as a way of developing and inspiring new research areas and building research capacity. This is the least developed aspect of the CCMS research strategy but participation in the annual University research conference and University-wide research forums is enabling us to identify valuable connections and synergies across disciplinary boundaries. **Hutchings'** membership of the Humanities-based American History research group and a new research collaboration between Media and Politics staff around issues of global journalism represent first steps in developing this ambition.

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

New appointments have been made at all levels, ranging from professorial to early career stage. These appointments have been aligned to existing research strengths – for example, **Jones, Peirse, Sexton and Walker's** research focuses on fantasy-based genres, a key research theme in the Film and Television group – or to develop new areas of strategic research importance – for example, Ragnedda and Shaw on journalism practice and Irwin in television.

We are committed to developing the careers of all our researchers. To this end, we have introduced during the REF period a new tool, the Personal Research and Innovation Plan (PRIP), to enhance the individual planning and management of research-related activities on a regular basis. The PRIP facilitates individual mentoring of researchers, with all staff receiving regular support from a named senior colleague to assist with planning and implementing research objectives, with staff aspiring to promotion also assigned a mentor to work with her or him in the development of their application. The PRIP also helps to ensure that research activities are

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resourced and that the time needed to implement them are taken into account in workload allocations. Information deriving from the PRIP process provides a mechanism by which CCMS research can be managed strategically.

Sabbaticals are available to all CCMS researchers to expedite the completion of major works and the development of grant applications. Since 2008, **Barron, Gibson, Hutchings, Jones, Leggott, McLaughlin, Peirse** and **Sexton** have all received at least one period of research leave. Research leave for ECRs is available as early as their second year of service; **Jones** and **Peirse** (an ECR at the time of her sabbatical) received early sabbaticals to work on their first monographs, both of which are returned in this submission. Financial support for conference attendance and research expenses are also provided to support the visibility of staff research and national and international research collaborations.

Training in research skills is an important feature of our staff development process. All levels of academic and support staff involved in research attend courses run under the auspices of the University's dedicated research-related training programmes, covering essential research knowledge and skills such as developing research proposals, ethics and governance, the bid authorisation process, the commercialisation of research, measuring research impact, and getting published. In addition, a Researcher Development Programme runs throughout the academic year, covering a variety of topics such as keeping up to date with research, how to conduct a literature review, measuring research impact, and open access publishing. The programme is designed to complement the training delivered to PGRs by the Graduate School. All workshops are mapped to Vitae's Researcher Development Framework, with training and support particularly targeted towards early career researchers.

Northumbria University is committed to providing an environment in which diversity is valued and encouraged, where there is equal access to opportunities and services and in which all prospective and existing staff and students are treated fairly, with equity, dignity and mutual respect. The University is also committed to promoting and supporting equality and diversity within research and this commitment is manifest in several initiatives. For example, research staff are included in the Equal Pay Audit and, where appropriate, actions are taken. Work-life balance opportunities are promoted and the Concordat for the Support of Career Researchers Action Plan is supported.

ii. Research students

All our PhD projects are aligned to the primary research areas established in CCMS, with the three research groups providing an important focus for postgraduate activity and identity, including attendance and delivering papers at research seminar series and symposia. In addition, all PGR students participate in the annual Faculty Postgraduate conference. Recruitment of high-quality students has been a priority and has been further strengthened through investment in additional university-funded studentships. These have been awarded competitively to applicants with first class honours degrees and/or distinctions at MA level; the CCMS area has attracted 8 of these across all of its research groups. Our PGR students have presented at conferences with international profiles, including the *Screen* conference at Glasgow University and the *Bloodlines: British Horror Past and Present* conference at De Montfort University, and during their period of study have had articles accepted for peer-reviewed journals *Visual Culture in Britain* and *The Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance* as well as authoring chapters for books from academic presses, including a volume from Edinburgh University Press.

A PGR Programme Director (**Sexton**) coordinates supervisory activity and research training in the CCMS area. All supervisors are provided with training to support the supervisory process, which is updated regularly to meet changing expectations and protocols. Supervisory teams comprise at least two people, at least one of whom will previously have supervised to completion. Student contact with Principal Supervisors is regular and monitored: formally this is required at least once per month. Each tutorial generates a written tutorial record form agreed by student and supervisor, a copy of which is lodged with the Research Office. Student progression is also monitored formally throughout the period of study. There are annual reviews for each student.

Core research skills are an integral part of our postgraduate research student experience, self-reflectively assessed via the PGR Development Portfolio, which each student must complete shortly after registration with the support of their supervisory team and update regularly throughout the period of their research registration. In the context of this planning, students can also bid for financial support for research-related and professional development activities (including conference attendance).

Subject-specific research workshops are led by senior research staff. An innovative feature of our skills development programme is the provision of opportunities for PGR students to shadow a member of staff, usually their supervisor, throughout an academic year, thus gaining practical experience in a highly supported and mentored context not just of research and teaching but of the professional activities supporting the academic endeavour. In addition, students have access to a structured programme of research training at a pan-University level.

The University training programmes align with Vitae best practice and focuses on research governance and organisation, engagement and impact, knowledge and intellectual abilities, and personal effectiveness. Specific examples of workshops include: career planning for postgraduate researchers; project management; media skills; web design; public speaking and presentations; time management and interview skills. Northumbria's Graduate School also augments this PGR training with additional enterprise training in conjunction with the Business Development team. Both one-to-one mentoring and an Entrepreneur-in-Residence scheme are available, offering a three-month stipend to support the commercial development of postgraduate projects. PGR students in CCMS are also able to take advantage of opportunities at regional level, such as the 'Research in the Wider Context' initiative, delivered collaboratively by all five North East Universities.

Our PGR students are able to feed back on any issues formally via the annual monitoring process and through representation on Faculty and University Research committees as well as via a Faculty Student-Staff Liaison Committee.

Northumbria's performance in the Higher Education Academy's Postgraduate Research Experience Survey is rated very positively in all areas. There has been an upward trend across the three surveys conducted in 2008, 2009 and 2011, including many areas that were already high scoring, such as supervision and skills development. Some of the largest score improvements relate to intellectual climate, teaching opportunities, and professional development and career opportunities.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

Centrepieces of our research income, which totals £62,000, are **Leggott's** AHRC project grant for research on and with Amber Films and **Sexton's** AHRC Network grant on global cult cinema in the age of convergence, which was awarded near the end of the census period in December 2012. This figure reflects the relatively recent establishment of CCMS as an explicit focus of research activity but also demonstrates the potential speed with which developments can occur. Research bids totalling more than £500,000 have been submitted during 2013 by **Golding, Hutchings, Leggott, Peirse, Sexton and Shaw**. Although income generated by the success of any of these bids will not fall within the current REF timeframe, the activity is referenced here as evidence of the ongoing development of the CCMS area from the very small staff base which existed at the beginning of the REF census period.

Scholarly, organisational and operational infrastructure

Our research groups provide our main scholarly infrastructure within which researchers, including staff and PGR students, can present their own work as well as engage with visiting speakers from a range of academic and professional contexts. CCMS research culture has been further enhanced throughout the census period by the activities of journals based in, or associated with the groups. The Routledge journal *Visual Culture in Britain*, which continues to be edited at

Northumbria, has been an important focus for the Film and Television group, with **Hutchings** on the editorial board and **Hutchings** and **Peirse** both publishing there; members of the group have been involved in conferences staged under the journal's auspices and are also active in networks derived from these. The Duke University Press journal *Cultural Politics* underpinned aspects of research activity in the Cultural Histories/Cultural Practices group until its editor John Armitage's departure from Northumbria University at the end of 2012. More recently, the Intellect-published *Journal of Popular Television*, edited by **Leggott** has provided a focus for our developing profile in television-related research. Similarly, **Sexton's** editorship of the *Cultographies* book series at Columbia University Press has facilitated the development of networks and impact-related activity in the area of fantasy-based genres. The North East Regional Film network, which was co-founded by **Hutchings**, and involves Film and Television researchers from the six Universities in the North East has also provided important opportunities for developing and presenting research via seminar series and conferences, the first of which was staged at Northumbria in 2010.

In addition to these Department-based elements, the wider University research infrastructure strongly supports key research activities in the Unit to do with grant applications and collaborations. Northumbria has invested in its centralised research support resources, growing staff in the research support function from 2.9 FTE in 2010 to 15.5 FTE in 2012 to meet the growth in research activity across the University. Experienced bid-writers and contract specialists have been recruited to complement the existing team, adding expertise in the areas of funding sources, proposal development, navigating the authorisation process, monitoring budgeting and project spend and assisting the production of interim and final reports. Additionally, Business Development Managers support collaborations between academic staff and business, for example in the development of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, while Research Funding and Policy Managers provide higher-level bid support including approaching potential external research partners and coordinating large scale strategic and multi-partner funding initiatives.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

Research Council membership and professional subject associations

Hutchings and **Leggott** are AHRC Panel members, and **Hutchings** was a panellist for a Grants panel in 2010. **Ross** was a member of the AHRC panel until 2012 and is a member of REF 2014 Sub-Panel 36. **Golding** was a member of HEFCE's Expert Advisory Group for the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, Chair of UoA 66 2008, and Chairs UoA 36 for REF 2014. He is Honorary Chair of the European Sociological Association Media Research Network and Honorary Secretary of the Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association (MeCCSA). He is co-Chair of the European Science Foundation's 'Forward Look' programme for the future of media research across Europe. **Ross** is Treasurer of MeCCSA and has been an elected executive member of both the Institute of Contemporary Arts and the International Association for Media and Communication Research.

Editorial positions

Golding is an editor of *The European Journal of Communication* and on the editorial boards of several media journals. **Hutchings** is on the editorial board of *Visual Culture in Britain* and advisory boards for *Cine-Excess*, *Scope* and the *Cultographies* book series. **Leggott** edits *Journal of Popular Television* (to be launched by Intellect in 2013); **Ross** was editor of *Communication, Culture & Critique*, co-editor of *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics* and is on the editorial boards of several journals including *Feminist Media Studies*. She is an editorial advisory member for Wiley-Blackwell's *Communication in the Public Interest* book series and the *International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*. **Sexton** co-edits the book series *Cultographies* and is editorial advisory member for *Studies in Documentary Film*, *The Soundtrack* and *Cine-Excess*.

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Refereeing academic research

CCMS researchers have peer reviewed submissions for numerous journals, including *Adaptation; Communication, Culture & Critique; Communication Studies; Cultural Politics; Feminist Media Studies; Feminist Review; Gothic Studies; International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics; Journal of Adaptation and Performance; Journal of British Cinema and Television; Journal of Postcolonial Literature and Cultures; Journalism Studies; Media History; New Review of Film and Television Studies; Participations; Scope: an online journal of film studies; Screen; Sexualities; Visual Culture in Britain; Social Semiotics*; and academic publishers including: Berg; Continuum; Liverpool University Press; Manchester University Press; Open University Press; Palgrave; Pearson; Routledge; Oxford University Press; Sage; and Wiley-Blackwell.

Recent invited lectures and keynote presentations

Barron: National University of Singapore (2011). **Golding:** many keynote papers, including conferences in Lisbon, Braga, Ulster, Nottingham, Paris, Boston, Bilbao, Thessaloniki.

Hutchings: keynote presentations at *Bloodlines: An international conference on the British Horror Film*, De Montfort University (2010); the conference *She-Wolf: Female Werewolves, Shapeshifters and Other Horrors in Art, Literature and Culture*, Manchester University (2010); the AHRC-funded *Spaces of Television* conference, Leicester University (2011); and the conference *Sensualising Deformity: Communication and Construction of Monstrous Embodiment*, Edinburgh University (2012). Also invited lectures at Aberystwyth University (2011), De Montfort University (2012), the Institute of Contemporary Arts (2012 +2013) and The Bram Stoker Centenary Conference staged at Keats' House (2012). **Jones:** Kingston University (2009) and De Montfort University (2011).

Leggott: Hull University (2010), Mainz University, Germany (2010), University of Applied Sciences, Kiel, Germany (2010), University of East Anglia, 2012; Portsmouth, 2012.

McLaughlin: Popular Culture Association of Australia and New Zealand, Sydney, Australia (2010).

Peirse: York University (2010). **Ross:** numerous keynotes and invited lectures in New Zealand, Italy, UK, USA. **Sexton:** Keynote presentation at B for Bad Cinema Conference, Monash University, Australia (2009).

Conferences and symposia organised by Media researchers

These include **Leggott** and **Peirse**, *Alien Nation: A Conference on British Fantasy and Science Fiction Television* in 2011, **Leggott**, *Acting Up: A Symposium on Television Comedy and Gender* in 2012, and **McLaughlin**, *A Special Relationship?: Irish Popular Music in Britain* in 2012, all at Northumbria University.

Collaborations

Jones is a member of the international research group Onscenity (<http://www.onscenity.org>.)

Peirse is a member of the Northern Television Research Group. **Ross** is involved in several national and international research networks including MeCCSA, Women's Studies Network, ICA's Feminist Scholarship Division and the emergent womenandmedia.eu group.

PhD examinations

Staff in the unit have externally examined 31 PhD theses including at Aberystwyth, Birkbeck Birmingham, Bradford, Central European University Budapest, Chichester, De Montfort, East Anglia, Glasgow, Goldsmiths, Hull, Kingston, Leeds, Leicester, London, Institute of Education, London School of Economics, Loughborough, Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan, Portsmouth, Robert Gordon, Royal Holloway, University of West of England, Warwick, and York.