

**Institution: Glyndŵr University**

**Unit of Assessment: 36:**

**Communications, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management**

**a. Overview**

This unit of submission is primarily concerned with University researchers located within the University Institute for Art, Science & Technology. Akin to a university faculty, the Institute consists of several academic Departments.

The researchers submitted in this unit of assessment reside in the Department of the Creative Industries (Drakakis, Harrison, Piper-Wright, Thompson, and Woodford-Smith), and the Department of Applied Social Sciences (Madoc-Jones). These researchers are varied in their areas of practice, but linked through their research that broadly embraces common themes such as communications, performance, media and culture.

As a focus for research activity in this field, this team are part of the University Research Centre for Creative and Applied Research in the Digital Society (CARDS). CARDS is a multi-disciplinary research centre, with membership that spans computer science, arts, humanities, media and communications, theatre and performance, and societal and cultural impacts of the aforementioned.

The Centre is divided into two branches, each with their own sub-groups, although interdisciplinary collaboration is strongly encouraged: a creative branch, embracing all of the work submitted here, and an applied branch, basically embracing the digital technologies that underpin so much of modern communications, media and creative work. The interdisciplinary structure of CARDS and of the Department of Creative Industries was a deliberate policy born out of the enthusiastic recognition of the success of this strategy at some collaborating universities and recognition that this is a dominant trend in the real world.

**b. Research strategy**

The University has not previously submitted to this Unit of Assessment, but has been keen to develop a staff base and research culture in this area over the previous five years. In line with the University's Strategic Plan (2009-2014), specifically the following Strategic Priorities: I1. Developing the Research Infrastructure and Capability; I2. Building the External Profile of Research; and I3. Growth in Research and Knowledge Transfer Income.

In the Art & Design submission in RAE 2008 (UoA 63), reference was made to the following strategic priorities: (i) ensuring a small core of research champions is in place to mentor the wider staff base; (ii) The establishment of a public art gallery in the University; (iii) creation of a new arts and technology building in the University to support business interaction; (iv) Developing links with research in optics at the University and the bloc organisation; and (v) developing the pool of staff to support research students.

Since the last RAE, two staff based in Art & Design have since moved to other institutions via promotions, reducing the base of doctoral qualified staff in the UoA. However, these moves serve to demonstrate the maturity and significance of the researcher capacity that is nurtured by the University. As these researchers carried significant experience, the University sought to find replacement, experienced senior researchers to foster the early career researchers within the UoA. For example, Professor Thompson, established in 2007, was joined by professors Drakakis and Earnshaw (the latter submitted on this occasion in UoA 11).

Following the last major academic restructuring of the University in 2010, the Department of Creative Industries was formed. The Head of Department established a Departmental strategy designed to increase the number of research students in the Department and to develop the existing staff base to prioritise doctoral level qualifications. As such, the Department now has eight academic staff enrolled on doctoral programmes of study and eight new research students have enrolled. There have been two doctoral and two MPhil completions since the RAE 2008.

The departmental strategy is supplemented the University's strategy for the appointment of new staff, which specifies that newly appointed staff must normally possess, or be close to achieving, a doctoral level qualification. Examples of this policy during the REF period can be evidenced in Piper-Wright and Woodford-Smith's appointments.

The University opened a highly-innovative £5.4 million Centre for the Creative Industries building for the department in March 2011. The Centre features state-of-the-art TV and radio studios, 3D workshops, design studios, IT suites, Apple training suites and post-production audio and visual facilities. It has become the new home of BBC Cymru Wales in Wrexham, strengthening the link to a leading professional media player and providing new production facilities for staff, guests and contributors.

The University opened the Oriel Sycharth Gallery in 2009, under the programming of Thompson and features invited curators. The Gallery aims to exhibit work of the highest calibre from emerging artists to those recognised and established in their field. The programme showcases a wide range of disciplines and media to inspire and interest students and the wider community. The gallery is open to the public and has featured a range of exhibitions including works by Thompson herself as well as Maurice Cockrill; Mildred Eldridge; Dennis de Caires; Frank Bowling; Irene Bache; M. J. Boenisch; George Chapman; and Edward Allington.

The Department of the Creative Industries collaborated with the Bloc arts organisation, most recently on the Northern Bloc 4 (NB4), in collaboration with Surgery DAR, and Northern Bloc 5 (NB5), in collaboration with DATRYYS, projects. These projects were led by Bloc and match funded by the Arts Council for Wales, with the University featuring as an academic and enabling partner. These projects featured a range of community and arts facing activities such as digital workshops, performances, and development of a Welsh poetry app, public art installations, and a range of commissions to external artists. One such commission in the NB5 project saw collaboration with View Holographics Ltd. in developing holographic artefacts.

CARDS has been a useful vehicle for collaboration and interdisciplinary work. Following recent research leadership appointments, the University is reviewing the centre with a view to ensuring an effective interplay between a focus on the themes emerging from that leadership, and continuing interdisciplinarity.

During this timeframe, the less experienced researchers receiving mentorship and named in this submission will take more prominent roles as catalysts and advocates within their academic subjects. It is the intention that mentors will still be retained at professorial level, but that they will pass on more broad staff research engagement work to these advocates. The broad aims for the group of researchers therefore are: a) to increase the number of staff actively engaged in research and possessing doctoral level qualifications; b) to increase research funding, primarily through collaborative work with industry and practitioners; and c) to increase the number of staff submitted to the UoA or its equivalent at the next REF by way of an increased number of staff having strong publications and outputs in impactful, international media.

We have a vibrant fortnightly seminar programme, which is promoted both within the University and further afield. In academic year 2012-2013 there were 17 such events <http://www.glyndwr.ac.uk/C.A.R.D.S./Seminars/>. These were delivered by academics from the Research Centre, by research students and there were also 3 CARDS. seminars delivered by external experts (Prof. James Foley – Computer Graphics, Georgia Institute of Technology, USA; Prof. Alan Dix – HCI, Birmingham University; Dr Jon Peddie – Computer Graphics, Jon Peddie Research Inc. (USA).

### **c. People, including:**

#### **i. Staffing strategy and staff development**

To encourage the development of the existing and incoming staff base, the University has made several strategic fractional appointments of experienced, senior, professorial-level academics (and their specialist fields), namely: Drakakis (English Literature and Drama), Thompson (Fine Art), and Earnshaw (Digital Media) who is part of the UoA 11 submission. In addition to providing

mentorship to less-experienced staff, these appointments have acted as a catalyst in raising the profile of research, within this UoA, both internally and externally.

Their influence can be seen in other, upcoming researchers that form part of the UoA 36 REF submission as well as others not included in this submission. For example, Earnshaw supporting Harrison (plus Atkinson, Liggett, Cunningham, Weinel) Drakakis supporting Woodford-Smith (plus Nefydd, Baker, Hayfield), and Thompson supporting Piper-Wright (plus Liggett, McClenaghan). These individuals interact within the Department, CARDS group, and the wider University, linking to the research of a more established researcher within this submission; Madoc-Jones.

The University's Graduate School has overall responsibility for supporting and developing staff and research supervisors. A programme of generic skills training and personal development events based largely on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework is provided for the research community. The University's policies and processes are consistent with the principles of the Concordat to support the career development of researchers.

## ii. Research staff

The University Research Centres provide a vehicle to support collaboration, encouragement, sharing of ideas, and mentorship to researcher at all stages. New appointments have a designated mentor as well as a line manager, although this may be the same individual on occasion. Part of annual appraisal focuses upon staff development and in providing support and training that aligns research activities and aspirations to the strategic research aims of the Department and University. This policy applies to all staff in the University and informs the use of the central staff development fund.

In addition to the University-wide strategies, systems and initiatives, researchers in this submission have undertaken a number of developments to encourage and support the culture of research. For example, the development of our wide-ranging fortnightly seminar programme, where researchers disseminate their work, and seek advice from more experienced researchers has proved very successful, and is popular with research students and early-career researchers (ECRs) <http://www.glyndwr.ac.uk/C.A.R.D.S./Seminars/>. Less experienced researchers are mentored by more experienced colleagues, informally and through appointing ECRs as members of PGR supervisory teams. The culture within the UoA fosters close working relationships in a vibrant yet intimate environment.

## iii. Research students

Support for PGR students in terms of induction, training, facilities, monitoring and supervisor support is provided at University level. Research students are administered and tracked by the University's Graduate School and are allocated a supervision team from University Departments. All research students are allocated to a specific University Research Centre as part of the admissions process, to ensure that they are welcomed into an appropriate research environment. All research students are required to take part in the University's research and transferable skills training programme. This has been mapped against the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and supports students throughout their programme of study. Feedback from students contributing to enhancement work is gained directly, through the student – staff consultative committee, through student representation on University committees, and through analysis of responses to the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey. In response to research student feedback, more campus space has been reserved for their exclusive use. For example, there is now a dedicated PG common room, in addition to the work/office environments throughout the campus specifically for research students.

## d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

The nature of the staff in the submission, as mentioned earlier, is primarily one of early career researchers being supported by established, fractional appointments. As such, research income is in its infancy within this UoA. However, some moderate achievements have been made in recent years.

In 2013, Piper-Wright was part of a successful funding application to the NESTA Digital R&D fund

for the Arts in Collaboration with Circus Starr. The total project funding is £125k, with the University allocation being £29k.

Madoc-Jones was part of a group from Glyndŵr University that has received funding for several projects, notably: £17,800 for *A Study into Fire raising in NE Wales*, funded by Wales Fire and Rescue Service and North Wales Police (2013), in 2012, *Research into Compliance with Community Penalties* for Wrexham Youth Justice Team was funded at £20,000. In 2010, he was part of a team that undertook *Voices of Children and Young People* for the Welsh Government funded at £25,000, £10,000 for *Research to explore the experiences of Polish migrants in the criminal justice system in North Wales* for North Wales Criminal Justice Board in 2009, and £12,000 for *Research to seek views of older people in Wales with a view to informing the older people's wellbeing monitor for Wales: The voice of older people in Wales* undertaken for the Welsh Government (2009).

In 2011 the University opened a new Centre for the Creative Industries. This Centre was a £5.4 million investment and provided the University with new facilities to support research in this field. In particular, the building features a broadcast standard television studio and production facility and a 3D workshop space with laser scanning, laser cutting and 3D printing technologies. The building is shared with BBC Cymru Wales, with whom academic researchers have regular interaction and who utilise the University's production facilities, when appropriate. The University hosts a community radio station and broadcast facility, Calon FM, located on the same site as the Centre for Creative Industries, together with two live performance spaces (Catrin Finch Centre and William Aston Hall), and an art gallery (Oriol Sycharth Gallery). In 2013, the University opened the Goldstein library, containing approximately 30,000 volumes allied primarily to the humanities. Upon acquiring the collection, the University re-developed an area of its campus to facilitate the library, including study areas. The Goldstein Library was bequeathed to the University by the late Professor Leonard Goldstein, an eminent name in English literature, in recognition of the University's commitment to widening participation and literary criticism. His legacy lives on in the University and is set to inspire the next generation of scholars in the humanities.

The University's commitment and investment in resources and facilities for research is on an upward trajectory. These technical facilities are serviced by technicians within the Department and University, whilst the Goldstein Library is supported by the University's library and information services team. The University's students and staff also have access to the nearby Gladstone Library at St. Deiniol's, Hawarden. The Gladstone Library, recognised as one of the most important research libraries and collections in Wales, houses a collection of over 250,000 books, journals and pamphlets, including most of Gladstone's non-political correspondence, speeches and papers. The Gladstone Library, specialising in theological and Victorian studies, provides an excellent resource for the University's researchers in the humanities and theology.

The University's Research Office provides support for grant and other research funding proposals, and for contract and collaboration agreement negotiation and completion.

#### **e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base**

The body of **Drakakis'** published outputs that have been submitted address the unique position that Glyndŵr is in, insofar as its English and History sections come under the umbrella of a larger Department of Creative Industries. Drakakis' outputs are of direct relevance to the range of the Department's academic emphases, since it spans Literary Criticism, History, and Theatre Studies, while being anchored firmly in the wider context of the Humanities. Such is his foresight of the interplay and opportunity that exists between these related fields, Drakakis was one of the founding academics of the successful Department of Film and Media Studies at the University of Stirling. He sits on the editorial board of the following publications: *Textual Practice* (Taylor and Francis), *Critical Survey* (Berghahn Journals), *SEDERI* (Spanish Journal of Renaissance Studies), *Multicultural Shakespeare* (University of Lodz) and *Anachriist* (University of Budapest) and has been a member of the editorial board of *The Journal of Social Semiotics* (Taylor and Francis). He was a member of the panel of assessors to evaluate all 18 university research centres in Portugal in 2008, and has been invited to perform the same function by the governing body (FCT) in 2014. Drakakis is an elected Fellow of the English Association, an emeritus professor at the University of

Stirling, and a non-stipendary visiting professor at the University of Lincoln, and he has been invited to accept an honorary doctorate at Blaise Pascal University in Clermont Ferrand.

**Woodford-Smith's** article *The (Dis)location of Time and Space: Transcultural Collaborations in Tokyo* in the Journal of Media Practice, is a collaborative article with Mikyoung Jun Pearce (Kaywon School of Art and Design, South Korea). Woodford-Smith's current research enquiry is based on contemporary performer practice and training, specifically drawing on Japanese performer training systems and practice. This research is a development of her doctoral enquiry, which focuses on the complexity of the self of performer as other, specifically in the context of collaborative work with a Japanese theatre company. The current research project led to the presentation of a paper at the Performer Training Working Group, Theatre and Performance Research Association, University of Glasgow and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (2013) (*'Virtual and Embodied Places of Transmission in Performer Training, Practice and Collaboration'*), and this research is being developed further through a practice-led enquiry. Woodford-Smith has collaborated in Wales (2004, 2008), Germany (2004), Tokyo (2005, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012) and Poland (2007) with *Gekidan Kaitaisha* (Theatre of Deconstruction). Kaitaisha was founded in 1985 in Tokyo and have toured extensively worldwide. Directed by Shimizu Shinjin, working with choreographer Hino Hiruko, Kaitaisha are one of Japan's most acclaimed experimental theatre companies.

**Harrison's** outputs combine elements of research and practice emanating from her key role as a media producer. As such, these outputs take the form of radio broadcasts; all four having been broadcast on BBC Radio 4, and by this nature involve external collaboration with presenters, writers, producers, and production managers. Harrison's most recent works are done in collaboration with Woolyback Productions, such as 'On it' (2011 & 2013), which won the Gold Award at the Sony Radio Academy Awards in 2012. Her role at the University sees her collaborating with a range of external organisations in projects at all levels. These collaborators include: BBC Wales; BBC Radio 4; NWN Media; Heart FM; and Midland News Association. She has recently secured project funding from the Welsh Government SEAP (Single Equality Action Plan) to prove a mechanism for students, who are in the Department of Creative Industries, to participate in enterprise activities with local charities and organizations.

**Madoc-Jones'** submissions make an important and innovative contribution to scholarship about minority language use. To the author's knowledge no papers have been published in relation to minority language use which have applied the insights of discursive psychology to examine not only what Welsh speakers say about their use of Welsh language but what purposes accounts may serve. Addressing a range of audiences, Madoc-Jones makes a significant contribution to understanding how knowledge about minority language use is arrived at and identifying additional reasons why linguistic oppression may be rendered real and services in a minority language may be available yet underused. His work draws upon collaboration with other academics, such as Professor Andrew Pithouse (Cardiff University), leading to the production of a report: *Voices of children and young people in Wales study: a qualitative study of children and young people under 25 years old* in 2010 for the Welsh Government. Madoc-Jones is an Associate Inspector with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. As part of this role he assists in the development and inspection of criminal justice services, taking a particular interest in Welsh language services in the Criminal justice System in Wales, leading to him contributing to a number of HM Inspectorate reports between 2009 and 2013. He is a book reviewer for Wilan Publishing and reviewer for the British Journal of Social Work and Journal of Diversity in Health and Social Care.

**Thompson's** work involves collaboration on several levels, most notably where her outputs have been specifically commissioned, such as in the case of the Colour Commission with South Bristol Community Hospital / Bristol Infracare LIFT Ltd. (completed in 2011). Previously, Thompson was commissioned to conceive a flooring design for the main foyer as part of the Hull Teaching PCT, LIFT Arts and Health Programme-Orchard Park. She collaborated on integrated colour scheme for way finding and area identification throughout the Health Centre. Thompson also collaborated on designs for the entrance Meet and Greet desk for the foyer. A series of digital prints of designs were eventually purchased for their collection and are currently on display. These prints were displayed at the Purdy Hicks gallery (ET 2009) and initiated production of a collaboratively designed and fabricated domestic version of the original desk designs. She holds a 0.4FTE

position and is a Studio Supervisor at the Slade School of Fine Art University College London (UCL), where she oversees the work of postgraduate research students, and is involved in the selection of work for exhibitions and prizes at UCL, Testbed and Windshow, London. In 2011, Thompson selected, organised and delivered, in collaboration with Lisa Milroy RA, the annual *Contemporary Art Lecture Series* at UCL. She has also been invited to write a short text for a Tate Modern/Tate Britain magazine/publication *Tate Etc.* Thompson's collaborative work is currently focused on progressing an AHRC bid, which is a Material Research Project in collaboration with Northumbria University, the Finnish academy of Fine Art, Helsinki and the Slade, UCL. A preliminary visit to discuss the bid in 2012 led to the exhibition *Colour as Material* at the Galleria Fafa, Helsinki between March and April 2013. She participated in the initial steering group and visit and subsequent exhibition. The current bid proposes three exhibitions each hosted by Gallery North, Newcastle, each with a daylong symposium and a final Conference at the Woburn Square Research Centre, UCL, London. As curator of the Oriel Sycharth Gallery at Glyndŵr, Thompson has overseen many prestigious exhibitions, most notably: Art & Industry (October – December 2012), 20th Century Welsh paintings of industrial and landscape themes, linked to theme of 1876 Wrexham Art Treasures and Industrial exhibition of North Wales. Thompson, curated, archived paintings and produced and edited a 64 page book to accompany the exhibition: *Dance of Life Mural* by Mildred Eldridge (November 2010 – March 2011), including the display and conservation of the murals, secured for loan from the local NHS Trust for permanent display in the University's Centre for the Creative Industries. She organized lectures and projection of the S4C film produced on Mildred Eldridge; and *The Art of Function* (April to September 2011), which included 12 artists reflecting diverse aspects of collaboration or individual reflection on the functional within art. The exhibition resulted in a commissioned text, poster design and radio program. Thompson was invited by Stephen Chambers RA to exhibit at the Summer Exhibition of the Royal Academy in 2012 and exhibited in Singapore *Theory and Practice of the Small Painting* at Equator Arts in July 2013. Thompson is included in Tony Godfrey's *Painting Today*, a comprehensive survey of contemporary painting presenting the work of both famous and emergent painters active around the world (Phaidon, 2009, ISBN 978-0714846316).

**Piper-Wright's** practice is influenced by action, process and transience and draws attention to the overlooked, the discarded and the habitual in everyday life. She makes art using photography, drawing, text and objects and these sometimes become interventions and installations. Her work is concerned with the meeting point between artist, work and audience and in finding alternative and unconventional sites for these meetings. Her work has been exhibited in the Oriel Sycharth Gallery, Wrexham (2012). Piper-Wright collaborates through engagement with projects operating as discursive spaces for the collective production and dissemination of art works. Recent examples include *Archive of Failure* (Print and web publication 2013), *Drawing Connections*, an international exhibition held at the Siena Art Institute in 2011, and *Hazard MMX: Reaction* (2010) for which she was commissioned, along with two other artists, to respond to the one day Hazard performance festival in Manchester, curated by Hab and Greenroom. She has written articles on practice and research for the Finnish magazine HESA-Inprint and the Higher Education Academy.

In addition to the researchers in the submission, other collaborative work is taking place within the Department, serving as an example of the upwards trajectory and influential effect that more senior researchers and mentors are having within the Department, it is anticipated that these individuals will be part of the next REF submission:

Susan **Liggett** has a successful series of collaborative exhibitions and academic outputs in conjunction with Karen Heald (Bangor University), based on collaborative research which mainly focusses upon art and therapy for patients with mental health issues. This work has been in collaboration with Prof. Rob Poole and Dr. Richard Tranter (Bangor University and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board) and resulted in an exhibition in Edinburgh, UK (July 2013) as part of the Royal College of Psychiatry International Congress; an exhibition in Oriel Pendeitsh, Caernarfon, UK (February – March 2013) and a publication in *Time & Temporality in Language and Human Experience* (2013). This work forms the basis of one of the Impact Case Studies included in this submission.

Marisse **Mari** is currently undertaking a professional doctorate programme within the University researching T-shaped designers and design thinking in Art & Design education. This work is

dovetailed into an academic collaboration and mentorship programme hosted by the sector skills council, Creative Skillset.

John **McClenaghan**'s main area of Fine Art practice was, for a number of years Painting and Drawing. His practice has, in the last few years expanded into assemblage, installation, sculpture and video. He has exhibited nationally and internationally for a number of years, notably at the Avenue Gallery, Northampton and the Akademia Gallery, Sofia in 2011, both in collaboration with artist Alec Shepley (University of Lincoln). He has a number of works held in both public and private collections in the UK and abroad, exhibited in the *Facing North* exhibition at The Storey, Lancaster (2013), and was one of forty artists selected to represent contemporary art practice in Wales as part of the 2011 National Eisteddfod of Wales.

Stuart **Cunningham** has examined two PhD candidates at other HEIs in the UK and one PhD candidate at a HEI in Denmark. He was Programme Chair of the biennial conference on Internet Technologies and Applications in 2013, and is a longstanding member of the conference committee for the Audio Mostly conference series since 2007. He regularly reviews academic articles for publication in several journals published by Springer and Wiley-Blackwell. Stuart sits on the British Computer Society, Computer Arts Society national committee. He has worked with colleague Jonathan Weinel recently to progress a collaborative project with Mad Hen Ltd., which examines the role of social media in cinema and society. Weinel was invited to participate in 'Sonic Fusion' project conference at University of Salford, in partnership with Keele University and the Sonic Arts Forum, to present a paper and musical composition. Cunningham and Weinel have an emerging relationship with Aalborg University, Denmark, which will see the exchange of research students between the two institutions and collaborative research projects, beginning in 2013.