Institution: York St John University

Unit of Assessment: 36 Communication, Cultural, and Media Studies, Library and Information Management)

a. Overview

As there was no Communication, Culture and Media Studies (CCMS) submission in RAE 2008, this UoA represents a relatively recent but developing research cluster within the Faculty of Arts, signifying a growing critical mass of interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary research ranging across Cultural Studies, Media Studies, Film Theory, the Social Sciences, Visual Culture, and Heritage and Tourism Studies.

UoA 36 contains some of York St John University's (YSJU) most ambitious research, with a genuinely global scope and reach that integrates well with the University's internationalisation agenda. Staff are engaged in individual research projects and in a range of collaborative projects within the UK and throughout the world. With a shared engagement with issues relating to postcolonialism, transnationalism, new media and visuality, the research in this unit is organised around (1) questions of the narrativisation and visualisation of culture, and (2) questions of power, identity and difference in an interconnected world. This UoA is reflective of a research culture and environment that is keen to harness the vitality of such developing research and ensure its sustainability through University and Faculty funding and support. Our research activity ensures that undergraduate and postgraduate teaching is informed by cutting edge debates and relevant staff research expertise. UoA36 has a modest, but growing, number of research students. All have the opportunity to be involved in teaching and research activities (such as the annual Postgraduate Methodologies Conference or the termly Postgraduate Research Symposia, both of which are open to staff and students). They are offered financial support for the delivery of papers in relevant conferences and also the option of attending postgraduate workshops which are designed to develop their skills as research students and as future researchers and academics.

b. Research strategy

The Research Strategy of the Faculty, which is aligned with the University's Research Strategy, focuses principally on putting in place structures to:

- enable academic staff to develop research knowledge, understanding and skills

- provide appropriate staff development in research and research supervision and grow the numbers of staff with the University of Leeds 'sole supervisor' status

- ensure that research aspirations, qualifications and performance play a large part in academic staff Performance Development Reviews

- facilitate research productivity through effective use of scholarly activity and opportunities for teaching relief and research leave

- provide opportunities for interdisciplinary research

- increase research activity and the percentage of staff able to submit for the REF

- increase numbers of doctoral students.

Committees
The implementation of the strategy is overseen by the Faculty Research Committee (FRC) which meets four times per year. It is Chaired by the one of the Faculty's Professors and its membership comprises the Chair (appointed by the Dean), Chair of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee, Faculty Research Professors, Faculty Readers, and four researchers appointed by the Faculty Leadership Team. In promoting the development of a strong, vibrant and sustainable research community in the Faculty, in line with the University's strategic aim for research, the FRC has a dual reporting line, on one hand to the Faculty Leadership Team and on the other to the University

Research Committee. A Faculty Research Ethics Committee, reporting to the FRC and the University Research Ethics Sub Committee (URESC), has delegated responsibilityfor supporting staff in maintaining high ethical standards in all their research and for facilitating discussion more generally on research ethics.

Management of Research
A workload model and annual planning cycle have supported staff submitting for the REF 2014 through release from teaching responsibilities. Following the RAE 2008, the Faculty of Arts' QR budget enabled 50% of researchers in this UoA to benefit from periods of teaching relief during the census period in accordance with the Faculty Research Strategy. Rawle, Rovisco and Lawson-Welsh were allocated teaching relief to support their research during the census period. Other specific activities which stimulate the research activity of staff include:

- Staff Research Mentoring

- In-house research seminars open to all staff and research students

- Writing and skills support network open to all staff and research students in the Faculty

- Support for the convening and organization of international conferences

- Financial support for academics to attend and deliver papers at national and international research conferences.

The Faculty Research Strategy recognises research in Communication, Cultural and Media Studies as being an important area of development within the University's research culture and seeks to harmonise the recruitment policy, staff development strategy and research funding priorities to ensure that current strengths are sustained and developed further. Since UoA 36 is a relatively small and emergent unit within the Faculty, one dimension of this strategy will be to establish, within the next five years, a research group tasked to develop an infrastructure that might more effectively attract external funding. A key element of the Strategy is the appointment of external advisers to support staff and new researchers to apply successfully for research funding.

c. People, including:

i.   Staffing strategy and staff development

Academic Staff submitted to UoA 36
There are six full-time members of staff being submitted. All members of staff in the UoA have a doctorate.

Staffing Strategy and Staff Development

First, the current expectation within the Faculty of Arts is that all new staff should be in possession of a PhD (or near completion) at the time of their appointment. There have been three new appointments of permanent staff made since 2008 within the UoA (Chan, McDonald, and Rovisco), of these two are submitting in this UoA.

Second, opportunities are provided for all staff to develop their skills and understanding of research, as highlighted above (via, for example, in-house seminars, support for staff to attend and give papers at conferences.)

Third, all new staff are encouraged and supported to attend relevant Research Supervisor courses and other workshops run by the University of Leeds. All new staff, during their probationary period, are assigned a mentor with experience both as a researcher and teacher. Wherever possible younger or less experienced members of staff are included in supervisory teams in order to gain experience and enable them to attain University of Leeds 'sole supervisor' status.

Fourth, as part of the annual Performance Development Review (PDR) process, all staff outline

their research objectives and ambitions. In liaison with line managers, the Faculty Research Professor conducts a series of 'research conversations' with all staff specifically to focus on the research dimension of the PDR.

Faculty Research Administrator

To support further growth and enhancement of research across the Faculty a strategic decision was taken by the Faculty Leadership Team to allocate funds to employ a part-time research administrator in January 2011.

ii. Research students

Currently we have eight doctoral students across UoA 36. Our research students are encouraged to participate in the research culture of the Faculty through opportunities to attend and present their work at the Faculty research seminars, and postgraduate research symposia. As part of their regular training plan review by research supervisors, doctoral students are encouraged to attend a range of courses and workshops, available at York St John University, the University of Leeds or the University of York, addressing various stages and aspects of being a doctoral student. In addition to their own cross-Faculty reading group 'The Thinkery', and the new film-orientated '24 Frames per Second' research group (launched in February 2013 by Arts PhD candidates), all postgraduate students are invited to, and regularly attend, staff/student research seminars. They are also encouraged to give presentations on their research at the University's annual Research Methodologies Conference. There is funding available for postgraduate research students to attend and deliver papers at national, and in some instances international, conferences. In 2011 a University research studentship was awarded to a candidate within the area of UoA 36 who is being supervised by a member of staff from this UoA (Rawle). Lawson Welsh, Watson and McDonald are also currently supervising PhD students. Lawson Welsh has successfully supervised two PhDs to completion in the UoA period, and Watson has supervised one PhD student to completion.

c. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Current operational infrastructure to support research is maintained and enhanced through an annual University-wide Annual Operating Planning process that is driven at Faculty level. Research KPIs have been established as a standard aspect of effective operational planning to support overall University strategic direction. Capital Expenditure totalling £2,491,758 created new and refurbished workshop studios, a performance venue, digital media suite, seminar and conference facilities to support staff project work in the Faculty of Arts. There is dedicated administrative support for research and an events management team responsible for organising and, in liaison with the University Marketing Department, promoting research events. A key objective for this UoA is to invest in the development of bid-writing skills and the collaboration with colleagues inside and outside the institution with a track record in successful bids.

As a key part of the implementation of the University Research Strategy 2007-2012 a new University Research Students Centre came on-stream in 2008. This incorporates ICT facilities, informal social learning spaces, a seminar room and areas designed to encourage intellectual interactions between research students of different disciplines and their research staff colleagues. This enhances the academic environment for research students by fostering collegial support and research rigour and the informal dissemination of progress on research projects and findings, and by promoting cross-disciplinary networking. The Deputy Registrar: Research provides central support to Faculties in the management of their research students' and staff projects, as well as liaison with the research degree awarding body, the University of Leeds. During the census period, a Postgraduate Research Tutor was appointed in the Faculty to offer pastoral support to research students.

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d. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

Research in UoA 36 involves collaboration on a range of levels. These include staff undertaking research activities:

Within the University through cross-Faculty research activities

- Kim (Theology and Religious Studies) and Rovisco organized the International Symposium on 'Cosmopolitanism, Religion and the Public Sphere', followed by the publication of an edited volume (forthcoming in January 2014).

Within international networks

- Rovisco's membership of the NORFACE-funded seminar series/network on 'Globalization and Borders in Europe' (2007-2009) and subsequent publications
- Lawson-Welsh's membership of the 'International Network on Black British Women Writers'
- McKeown's membership of 'The Internet of Things Council' - the international think tank examining and predicting the effects of the evolution of the internet.

With national and international scholars through invited talks

- Watson's invited lectures at Keele University and the University of York, an international conference in Vienna (Austria), and talks at the Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of Western Sydney (Australia), University of Seville (Spain), Loyola University, Baltimore (United States)
- Rovisco's invited talks at the Workshop 'Re-Living the Global City' (Roehampton University, London), Sheffield University and Lund University (Sweden)
- Lawson Welsh's invited talk at the University of Heidelberg (Germany) and subsequent publication
- Rawle's invited talk at Aberystwyth University.

With national and international scholars through the organization of conferences

- Rawle's organization of the International Symposium 'Partners in Suspense: Bernard Herrmann and Alfred Hitchcock' in York. This symposium gathered international scholars on the works of Alfred Hitchcock, Bernard Herrmann and film music, including keynotes by world-leading Hitchcock and film music specialists
- Watson's organization of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies Inaugural Conference in Gothenburg (Sweden).

Editorships

- Lawson-Welsh is a founding Editor of The *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*.

Through membership of Editorial Boards

- Rovisco is an Associated Board Member of *SOCRES – Sociological Research Online*
- Watson is on the Editorial Board of *The International Journal of Heritage Studies* and *Enlightening Tourism*.

As a grant reviewer

- Rovisco's appointment as a grant reviewer in the areas of sociology and communication for the Fulbright Commission – Lisbon (Portugal).

In addition to the outputs included in the submission for this UoA, a number of articles, chapters and edited books have been produced during the census period by researchers who are not being submitted. These include:

- Nowicka, M. and Rovisco, M. (2009) *Cosmopolitanism in Practice* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009)

- Rovisco, M. and Nowicka, M. (2011) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Cosmopolitanism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011)

- Edgar, R., Halligan, B. and Fairclough-Isaacs, K. (2013) *The Music Documentary: Acid Rock to Electro Pop* (London: Routledge)

- Chan, M. (2010) 'Twenty-first century Gothic representations of post-human existence', in B. Cherry, P. Howell and C. Ruddell, *Twenty-first-century Gothic* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing)

- Chan, M. (2008) 'Virtually real and really virtual: Baudrillard's procession of simulacrum and the Matrix'*, International Journal of Baudrillard Studies*, Vol 5 (2) July.

- Chan, M. (2010) 'Beings in Japanese cyberpunk anime' *Film and Film Culture* 5, pp. 28-51.

Our research outputs, alongside our key involvement in the organization of a series of international conferences, and editorship and membership of editorial boards of international journals, testify to the rising profile of our research.