Institution: University of Portsmouth
Unit of Assessment: 36 Communication, Cultural & Media Studies. Library and Information Management

a. Overview

Staff submitting into this unit reflects new collaborations between the research of the School of Creative Arts, Film & Media and that of the School of Creative Technologies. Research activities within unit are structured across two key themes: *Digital Transformations,* with a focus on the material preservation of digital artefacts *(Anderson, Delve, Pinchbeck)* and *Media Cultures,* embracing research on historical and contemporary media, cultural and creative industries *(Ede, Forster, Geraghty, Gruner, Harper, Janicker, Pinchbeck, Shaw, Smith, Sonnet).* These themes reflect our commitment to undertake research on the global transformations of computing and digitization in order to help transform the arts and humanities as it bears upon the organization, institutions, and practices of popular culture, and of cultural production within the context of media texts in circuits of production, exhibition and consumption.

b. Research strategy

Our activities within the fields of digital preservation, media archives and cultural industries recognise the emerging strategic importance of this domain for the University. Research in this Unit originates in research submitted to RAE 2008 under UoA 50 European Studies and around UoA23 Computing Science & Informatics. A key driver of our research strategy since then has been to connect these discrete areas of established research to create a new research agenda set on transformations of digital technologies in the context of media, cultural and communication studies. To achieve this, the overarching strategic aims for research in 2008-13 were to:

Aim 1.   Develop an innovative research agenda for knowledge of intersections between media industries, digital technologies and information preservation.

Indicators of achievement include:
- Research Centres were established in 2008 specifically to lead development of this agenda: the Centre for Cultural & Creative Research (CCCR) concentrated on media and cultural research, while the Centre for Cultural & Industrial Technologies Research (CITECH) focussed on applied research in digital preservation and video-gaming.
- Staff in areas of excellence in computing and in humanities have been connected through the alignment of cognate research themes - *Digital Transformations* and *Media Cultures* - to extend existing areas of expertise while maximising opportunities for innovative multi- and interdisciplinary knowledge.
- Research themes align with themes of national and international research priority including AHRC *Care for the Future: Thinking Forward through the Past, Digital Transformations in the Arts and Humanities*, *Science in Culture* & *Translating Cultures*; NESTA's *Creative Economy* and *Innovation Skill*s strands and the *Digital Libraries* initiatives of the European Commission.

Aim 2.   Develop a robust and sustainable research environment to identify and support high-quality, multi-disciplinary research within an innovative discipline base.

Indicators of achievement include:
- Increase in number of staff returned in a research excellence assessment, from 2 in 2008 to 12 in 2013.

- Increase in number of research active staff affiliated to the research centres: in 2009-10 59% of Centre members were assessed as research active. This has risen to 93%.

- Increase in number of quality, peer-reviewed outputs produced: Peer-reviewed journal articles and books have significantly increased during the assessment period with 8

submitted in 2008 to 46 in 2013. Over 75 funded national and international conference presentations, representing a five-fold increase on the previous period.
- Increase in successful applications to wider range of funding bodies.
- Sustained increase of external research income.
- Increase in PI/CIs on externally funded projects, from 0 to 5.
- Increase in registered Post Graduate Research Students (PGRS), with 17 doctorates awarded in the period, growing to current 25 registrations.
- Increase in staff expertise within PGRS supervision teams.

Aim 3. Prioritising research projects that address stakeholder challenges, involve key partners and include a range of impact activities.

The success of our strategy to support research that combines excellence with engagement with stakeholders to maximise collaboration and social value and impact, can be gauged from leading Theme projects:

- In *Digital Transformations*, the work of *Anderson* and *Delve* represents the maturation of world-leading expertise in digital preservation. The EU-funded consortium Keeping Emulation Environments Portable (KEEP) project, a European-wide project with multiple partners in universities and digital agencies, has developed emulation (rather than data transfer) techniques for preserving 'complex' digital objects: text, sound and image files, multimedia documents, websites, databases and videogames, The aim was to facilitate long-term universal access to cultural heritage through production of file formats, production of transfer tools and metadata models according to the specification of British Library, National Libraries of Australia, New Zealand, the US The National Archives and the Digital Preservation Coalition. The JISC-funded Preservation of Complex Objects Symposium (POCOS) extended knowledge via national events to a range of global thought-leaders in development of emulation and preservation. Further major European funding for global co-development of the Trustworthy Online Technical Environment Metadata (TOTEM) project has addressed the real-world issues of digital preservation, format registries and tools for format characterisation, recognition, validation and metadata extraction, globally recognised by the British Library, National Libraries of Australia, New Zealand, the US National Archives and the Digital Preservation Coalition.

- In *Media Cultures, Smith's* major research project funded by the AHRC engages directly with the preservation of the material base for institutional analysis of media industries. Working collaboratively with the British Universities Film & Video Council and Channel Four television, *Smith*'s work investigates the role played by the commercial broadcaster in British cinema funding since the 1980s. The production of a public website cataloguing the project's digitization of Channel Four's film press releases has created an original national archive, documenting the historical relations between British film funding structures, film production, exhibition and audiences. Other world-leading research within this cluster includes *Forster*'s use of television archives with the Southern Broadcasting History Group, *Harper*'s analysis of media institutions constructions of madness and British TV drama, *Ede*'s historical investigation into British film design, Gruner's into the British film trade in the 1920s and *Sonnet*'s work on historical conditions for film adaptation of women's bestselling fiction.

- Responding to both themes, *Pinchbeck*'s AHRC-funded multi-disciplinary research into digital storytelling, game modalities and user immersion utilised the technological capacities of narrative in virtual environments themselves to create innovative ways of generating research data. Developing a field-based rather than lab-based approach involved an interactive process for trialling how 'plug-ins' or 'mods' applied to an existing commercial game engine. This directly involved public 'users' in the identification of narrative potential for games freed from industry standard first-person gaming environments. The subsequent commercialisation through the Indie Fund of the research prototype game *Dear Esther*, illustrates the processes by which speculative research has successfully been translated

into significant commercial and aesthetic impact and value.

- Research expertise in material culture and the relationship between artistic and scientific investigative methodologies came together in *Kwint*'s curation of the Wellcome exhibition *Brains: the Mind as Matter*, London March-June 2012. This exhibition explored medical, artistic and scientific practices taking the human brain as a physical object and bodily organ. The exhibition narrated and questioned the contexts in which the brain has been experimented upon, probed, measured, collected and displayed as matter, as a condition of understanding its representation in popular, print and media contexts. The exhibition attracted record numbers of visitors (105,033 in 73 days) and garnered extensive media coverage while the accompanying online game, *Axon*, generated millions of plays within weeks - a revised version of the exhibition is touring to Manchester Museum of Science and Industry in 2013. Sir Mark Walport - Wellcome Trust Director and forthcoming Chief Scientific Advisor to the Government – stated that this exhibition was 'extraordinary' and it has been used in news reports to justify the current expansion programme for the Wellcome Collection.

These projects provide exemplary models for the future development of the research base within a robust infrastructure for the continuation of explorations into the 'cultural record', unofficial and official, ephemeral and physical, digital and analogue. Building on the disciplinary innovation produced by our strategy to connect digital cultures to the fields of media and cultural industries, our overarching strategic objectives for the future (2014-2020) seek to grow research activity of international quality, and to maintain development of a long-term sustainable research environment. This will be achieved by the following strategic aims:

- To continue to address issues of national and international priority for arts and humanities research by focusing on transformations in the material base of cultural knowledge. With a strategic focus on cultural preservation, production, exhibition, consumption, audiences and industry, researchers will be encouraged to demonstrate innovative responses to the major disciplinary shifts to the fields of inquiry by relocating the social construction of meaning (textual analysis) within the social, technological, commercial and institutional contexts in which they are created and circulated. This will be done through streamlining research to provide the agenda for an international centre of excellence in the rapidly emerging field of 'convergence'. Key areas will be: collecting/media merchandising, exhibiting culture, 'complex object'/digital information/gaming preservation, inter-medial adaptation and writing media industry and institutional histories.
- To review current internal organizational structures for research management and strengthening of collaborative and multi/interdisciplinary modes of research through convergence of two research centres into a single Centre for Media Industries & Digital Cultures Research. This will provide a regular, coherent framework for research management across the full range of research activities in the group and provide a forum for intellectual exchange through seminars, visiting speakers, symposia and conferences.
- To continue to prioritise the development of research projects that can secure external funding for collaborative and innovative projects of significant impact and value to a range of beneficiaries.
- To increase research active staff by 20% per annum in areas aligned with our key themes. This will be achieved through incorporating staff on collaborative research bids, and as members of PGRS supervisory teams, supporting staff through mentoring and training opportunities, monitored through annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs) and through the strategic appointment of new staff members.
- To provide excellent support for the development of early career researchers (ECRs) by identification of needs via annual PDR review, integration within the research community via coaching and mentoring by senior researchers, and by the establishment of a Research Forum (offering guidance, information and advice as well as regular presentation opportunities) within the new Centre.
- To enhance the PGRS community through a combination of bursary support and recruitment aligned to key themes and publicising research development potential to PGT

students. An annual PGR conference will be held to develop skills in communicating ideas through presentation and to facilitate multi-disciplinary exchange between the fields of media studies and digital cultures.

- To increase the volume and diversity of external income streams, particularly from commercial, philanthropic and charitable agencies.

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development   Our staffing strategy has focussed on developing areas of emerging excellence through staff development and recruitment. Researchers in this Unit range across all stages of research career, including Visiting Honorary Research Professor Vincent Porter and Professor Emeritus Sue Harper. It has been a major objective to increase the sustainability of the research base via strengthening and expansion of staff involved in mentoring, supervising and shaping research development across this career range. This has been achieved through:

- An annual research review process via which research aims are defined, reviewed and milestones/outputs confirmed with a research Director. Development plans are aligned with research strategies at School, Faculty & University levels, and an integrated PDR review ensures teaching, administrative, external duties and research activities are balanced accordingly.
- Support is provided for staff to achieve high-quality outcomes in line with their aims and objectives in the form of funding for travel, conference presentation, project development, scoping activities and publication costs. In particular, staff are encouraged and supported to develop collaborative networks and undertake research exchanges. For example,: *Shaw* has been awarded network funding to develop a collaborative project on 'European Funding Bodies and Global Arts Cinema' to assess European transnational film funding, in conjunction with regional academics, international film programmers, film festival organisers, the World Cinema Fund in Berlin and the Hubert Bals Fund in Rotterdam. Development support has been given for a NESTA bid seeking to engage public audiences in traditional theatre forms by employing interactive digital technologies. This network includes members of CiTECH and CCCR, the Kings Theatre Portsmouth, the University of Glamorgan and The Guildford School of Acting.
- New staff appointments of research-active staff that can contribute to our thematic areas and our research environment (e.g. *Gruner, Janicker*).
- Increasing the number of staff involved in doctoral supervision.
- Mentoring relationships between junior and senior staff to advise and guide ECRs in research management and project development. Through this, staff defined as ECRs (*Gruner*) have been supported to achieve research excellence.
- Research career progression: Five staff have been promoted by the University to senior research posts: four to Reader (*Geraghty, Pinchbeck, Shaw, Smith*) and one to Professor (*Anderson*) in the period, in recognition of advanced external esteem.
- Where appropriate and beneficial to the development of staff, and where their expertise can be utilised in research contexts outside of the University, we encourage secondment opportunities to facilitate knowledge exchange with external organisations. e.g. to support research into story-telling and digital games design and to underpin commercial knowledge exchange, *Pinchbeck* has been supported by periods of paid secondment to Sony (2012-14) to further develop applied research into 'users', narrative and gaming interfaces.
- The University's is committed to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. Following a gap analysis against the principles of the Concordat, the University has designed and developed a programme of career development workshops as part of a Researcher Development Programme – staff have already benefitted from Principal Investigator training as part of this framework.

ii. Research students   One of our key objectives has been to foster a supportive and inclusive environment for new and mature researchers, and to develop a thriving postgraduate community at the forefront of new knowledge production**.** To achieve this:
- Doctoral projects are aligned with key themes to ensure that PGRS are integrated within the

research culture and priorities of this UoA. As a result, 17 Ph.Ds have been awarded in the period under review. Thesis topics include 'Locative Narratives & Digital Games', 'An Investigation into Ambient Gameplay', 'Virtual Reality to Support Rehabilitation', 'A Conceptual Framework for Digital Preservation', 'British Animation Television', 'Censoring the 1970s: British Film Censorship & The BBFC' and 'Experimental Film Making in the 1970s'.

- The success of the development of the PGR infrastructure can be measured in the fact that the two Schools in the Unit now currently have 25 registered PGR students: 10 full time, 12 part-time and three internationally competitive Faculty FT project-based bursaries on the British Music Video Industry, Transnational Cinema and Anglo-American 'adaptation' film production industries.

- Doctoral students are supported with specific research training centrally through the University's Graduate School that administers and coordinates research training for the MPhil, PhD, and Professional Doctorate programmes. The Graduate Development Programme provides a range of both research and transferable skills training as recommended by Vitae and the RCUK. FT PGRS are required to undertake 10 days' training per year (pro rata for PT).

- PGRs are required to attend a University-provided instruction course, as preliminary induction for those new to teaching, with a mentor appointed to provide guidance on assessment, feedback and teaching styles. Regular tutorials are scheduled and clearly documented via the online SkillsForge process, with additional support dedicated to aid students through annual appraisals and milestones such as Major Review. This has contributed to very high completion rates.

- Team supervision is led by a specialist Director of Studies, with up to two further supervisors to provide academic depth and range.

- The University participates annually in the HEA Postgraduate Research Experience Survey that has identified significantly above-sector satisfaction in the Faculty for Responsibilities, Research Skills, Professional Development, Teaching Opportunities and for effective supervision to complete on time (PRES 2012/3).

- A conference allowance is awarded to all doctoral students, which has led to a significant increase in PGRS presenting their research to appropriate audiences during their studies, and to publications in quality journal publications before completion of award. Office accommodation and facilities have also been provided.

- PGRS are strongly encouraged to participate in regular research seminars and student-led work in progress presentations and to join staff for visiting lectures, conferences and symposia within the Faculty, University and beyond. CCCR have been joint sponsors of the annual University Humanities and Social Sciences Postgraduate Conference since 2009.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities
Income: External income to the Unit for the period was over £1.32 million. Key successes include:
- AHRC Channel 4 and British Film Culture - £ 411,076.24 (2010-14)
- AHRC Digital Storytelling - £14,427.56 (2008) with follow-on AHRC funding of £95,738.99 (2012)
- European Commission KEEP Project - £693,925.67 (2009-12)
- JISC - POCOS £130,00; Digital Preservation Projects £15,000
- European Commission Interregional Funding £47,239
- Indie Development Fund Digital Storytelling £55,000
- Parkinson's UK Creative Technologies £28,591
- Arts Council England £20,000
- Leverhulme - Commercial Contexts of Stardom £19,291.00
- Armed Forces Covenant - Perspectives £12,000
- Wellcome Trust - 'Brains' exhibition £7,426

Successful awards of numerous smaller grants from Leverhulme, AHRC and British Academy have encouraged more staff to apply for external research funding. It is nonetheless a strategic aim to increase both the range and value of externally funded research.

Diversification of income will be achieved through accessing funding from the partnerships with creative and cultural industries/agencies, such as museums, galleries, archives, external specialists, commercial media organizations, digital production companies and theatres. This will capitalise on the inherently collaborative nature of research within the media and creative industries. For example:

• *Geraghty's* COLLECT project on fandom and collections of media merchandise resulted in a co-partnered major public exhibition at Portsmouth City Museum 2010/2011.This included public lectures and symposia, bringing new audiences to the Museum through research expertise and informing museum policy about the preservation of contemporary popular cultural ephemera. Quality academic outcomes in terms of monographs and edited collections locate Geraghty at the forefront of new methodologies for relating film/tv and graphic texts to their communities of fans/readers via 'paratextual' merchandise commodities. Thus, as a result of focussed developmental support, the foundation has been laid for networked grant applications for partnerships with global toy manufacturers.

• Support resulting in the EU funded KEEP & TOTEM projects of Anderson and Delve has already secured a new £3m euro grant for extending the previous work in digital preservation protocols in a research consortium, E-ARK (2014-2017).

The University has invested heavily in top-class research facilities. Staff and PGRS directly benefit form world-class facilities required for research into the media and digital industries: Virtual Reality, green-screen, and motion-capture studios, analogue and digital film, photography and broadcasting facilities, industry-leading editing software, digital gaming and animation suites, cinema-quality projection screening rooms are all housed centrally within a new, purpose-built environment for the enhancement of multi-disciplinary research in the digital, creative and cultural industries.

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

As a result of targeted support, sustainable research networks and databases have been established. For example, *Shaw's* Latin American Cinema & Transnational Film Funding network, *Smith's* Channel 4/BUFVC project partnership, *Forster*'s Southern Broadcasting History Group, *Anderson and Delve* KEEP/TOTEM consortia of international libraries and digital preservation agencies, *Pinchbeck'*s commercial research development collaboration, and *Sonnet/Etherington-Wright's* publically accessible website and searchable database on US/British Film Adaptations.

We make wider contribution to the disciplines across the thematic areas, serving in a variety of roles and as expert members on panels, advisory groups, professional bodies and associations. For example:

Expert Peer Review: Four researchers (*Anderson, Delve*, *Shaw, Sonnet)* have been elected to the AHRC Peer Review College, with *Sonnet* made Panel D Chair in 2013. . *Anderson & Delve* also act as AHRC International Expert, Digital Curation Subject Expert and Technical Expert Reviewers. *Anderson* is European Commission Expert Advisory Panel Member for European Industrial Leadership in ICT & for Preservation Planning, Chair of International Federation for Information Processing, Chair: Program Committee for Preservation of Complex Objects: Gaming Environments and Virtual Worlds, Software-Based Art & Simulations and Visualisations Conferences, International Conference on Preservation of Digital Objects.

Membership of professional associations includes: Digital Preservation Coalition, Open Planets Foundation, BCS Computer Conservation Society, Institute of Historical Research, International Society for the Study of Literature on Screen, , IEEE Annals of the History of Computing, Association of Hispanists of GB/Ireland, HEA, MECCSA, BAFTSS, Cinema Theatres Association, Royal Television Society, Association of Internet Researchers, Institute

for Historical Research: Film History, Society for Cinema and Media Studies, American Culture Association, Science Fiction Foundation, Popular Culture Association, British Association of American Studies, International Society for Cultural History, Theatre & Performance Research Association, Royal Musical Association, Brighton and Sussex Sexualities Network. There are five Fellows of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures & Commerce (RSA).

Keynotes and presentations: Staff have been funded to present over 75 research papers, both nationally throughout the UK and internationally, including Australia, China, Chile, France, Italy, Holland, Spain Germany, Canada, USA, Japan and Serbia. Invited conference keynotes/plenaries have been given at Universities of: Bath Spa, Queen's University Belfast, Bristol, Copenhagen, Glasgow, Gloucester, Hertfordshire, Liverpool Hope, Lund, Bedfordshire, Newcastle, Oxford, Rostock, Southampton, Stockholm, Sunderland, and at the V&A Museum and Bradford Animation Festival.

We pursue active engagement to promote our emergent research agendas by **hosting major conferences symposia and exhibitions** including: *Merchandising and Media Cultures of Consumption* 2010; *Transnational Cinemas*, UoP 2010; *Articulating Practice: Practice as Research*, Courtyard Theatre, London, 2011; *Screen Test: What is the future for film and television research*? Royal Geological Society, London, 2011; *Popular Media Cultures: Writing in the Margins and Reading Between the Lines*, Odeon Cinema Covent Garden, 2012. Keynote address: Professor Henry Jenkins (University of Southern California); and *Latin American Women Filmmakers on the Global Stage*, UoP 2013. Exhibitions include: COLLECT Portsmouth City Museum 2009-10; *Brains: The Minds That Matter,* Wellcome Trust, London 2012; *A Nightmare on Elm Grove*, Portsmouth City, 2013.

Staff are highly active in **editorial roles** including **Journal Editors for** *International Journal of Society Systems Science, New Review of Information Networking, Archival Sciences, Transnational Cinemas, Studies in Musical Theatre and The London Magazine* and as **Series Editors** for *JISC, Preservation of Complex Objects Series, IEEE Computer Society, History of Computing Series*, as **Editorial Board Members** of *Journal of Popular Culture, Journal of British Cinema and Television, Studies in Hispanic Cinemas, Journal of Popular Television, Journal of Fandom Studies, Atlantis: A Journal of the Spanish Association for Anglo-American Studies, Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture* and *Celebrity Studies,* and as **Reviewers** for IEEE *Annals of the History of Computing, IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering, Journal of Advances in Engineering Software, Journal of Medical Systems, International Journal of Arts and Technology, Libraries and Cultural Record, Historia Mathematica, Global Business and Economics Review, Feminist Media Studies, Screen, Adaptations: The Journal for Literature on Screen Studies, Design Principles and Practices: An International Journal, Popular Communication, Science Fiction Film and Television, Scope: An Online Journal of Film Studies, Transformative Works and Culture, Journal of American Studies, Journal of Sexual Medicine* and *Sexualities: Studies in Culture & Society*.

Staff regularly act as **External Reviewers for publishers** such as Palgrave, Berg, Intellect, Southern Illinois UP, Iowa UP, Taylor & Francis, SAGE, Macmillan, IB Taurus, British Film Institute, Bloomsbury Academic Publishing, Routledge, Chester UP, Wiley-Blackwell, University of Wales Press, Manchester UP, Continuum, VDM Verlag, Rodopi.

Staff have been invited to act as **External Examiner in PhD examinations** at universities of Bristol, Cork, Kent, Manchester, Wales, Queen's University Belfast and Swansea Metropolitan.