

**Environment template (REF5)**

<b>Institution:</b> Swansea University
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 3b - Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy: Nursing
<b>a. Overview</b>

Research in Nursing and Health Care (NHC) at Swansea contributes to and enhances both processes and outcomes of care, benefitting nurses, midwives and service users. Our research agenda is integrated with research-led teaching to ensure high-quality, safe practitioners, both locally and more widely through our textbooks and professional journal papers. Research activity is mainly located in the College of Human and Health Sciences (CHHS), while also including staff from the College of Medicine whose work is closely aligned with the research activities in NHC.

This **multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary** research structure is based on a number of thematic groupings supported by staff at all levels with complementary interests and expertise. They are:

- **Health Humanities**, led by Borsay and Edwards (4 staff, 4 PGR students), promotes healthcare research within and across the humanities disciplines, including history, philosophy, law and ethics. Projects include **Disability and Industrial Society: A Comparative Cultural History of British Coalfields, 1780-1948**, which involves co-investigators in the College of Arts and Humanities and at the Universities of Aberystwyth, Northumbria and Strathclyde; a project to **scope documentary and visual sources for the history of the drug Thalidomide** and to undertake an **oral history of thalidomiders**, which will be made available online and used in various exhibition contexts; an AHRC-funded project on **moral theory** with colleagues from USA, Germany, UK and Sweden; and a Wellcome funded project on **brain death**.
- **Health Technology Assessment/Health Economics**, led by Phillips and Fitzsimmons (4 staff, 9 PGR students), delivers ground-breaking research on the development and delivery of health-care interventions and services by combining qualitative skills, expertise in real-world data mining and analysis, and health policy. Projects include **frequency of screening for diabetic retinopathy** funded by National Institute for Social Care and Health Research (NISCHR); **oral steroids for resolution of otitis media with effusion in children**; **rehabilitation of memory following brain injury**; and **health impact and economic value of meeting housing quality standards**, all funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). This grouping also incorporates the Swansea Centre for Health Economics (SCHE), established in 2011 to provide robust high-quality research, training and consultancy services in health economics.
- **Medicines Management**, led by Jordan (3 staff, 1 PGR student), undertakes research and scholarship on medicines administration, medicines monitoring, student preparation and identification of adverse drug reactions. Funded projects include **pharmacovigilance database work** in collaboration European partners, clinicians and the College of Medicine, supported by European FP7 funding; a **comparison of medicines for people with bowel disorders**; **trials of nurse-led medication monitoring** (both funded by NISCHR); and ESRC funded work on **breastfeeding**.
- **Nursing and Practice Development**, led by Rolfe and Jasper (11 staff, 14 PGR students), has a remit for making a professional and academic contribution to the discipline of nursing, healthcare practice and education. Projects include the **nutritional needs of Bangladeshi immigrants** funded by grants from ESRC and the Welsh Government; and NIHR funded work on **care planning in community mental health**. This research grouping also incorporates the **Wales Centre for Practice Innovation (WCPI)**.

Our researchers have collaborative links with other research groups across the College and University and other universities, and have **close working relationships with healthcare providers** within local Health Boards in Wales. They **assist pharmaceutical companies, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and the medical devices industry** in developing submissions to NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) and other assessment agencies, **contribute to policy development and evaluation** alongside policy makers in the Welsh Government and have international links with academic and provider organisations.

**b. Research strategy**

The research strategy that underpins and supports NHC facilitates vital and sustainable research programmes that make a positive and measurable difference to policy and practice. The **vitality** of our work derives from a strategic decision to allow and encourage researchers to develop inter- and multi-disciplinary areas of inquiry that have personal and professional meaning and relevance. The **sustainability** of our work is ensured not only through successful bids for external funding, but also by forming strong and mutually beneficial partnerships with practitioners and policy-makers in order to collaborate on jointly resourced projects. For example, the **Wales Centre for Practice Innovation** (WCPI) is a collaboration between the Nursing and Practice Development grouping and our two local Health Boards, with a commitment to conducting research and practice development work by sharing resources and working within existing budgets and contracts. In this way, programmes of research that would not normally attract external funding can be developed, and the long-term sustainability of our work is assured even in times of financial austerity.

**Our mission is to combine research, scholarship, teaching and community involvement into an integrated research and impact strategy that both informs, and is informed by, teaching and learning, and which engages actively and directly with healthcare providers and policy makers to conduct high-impact research and scholarship in nursing and healthcare.** This supports and is supported by the mission of the University to become internationally recognised as a research-intensive university in the UK top 30 by 2017. This strategy will enable delivery of three key components of the University's integrated mission, namely world-leading research, excellent student experience and the promotion of growth in the knowledge-led economy.

Organisational changes at University level resulted in the integration of the School of Health Science and the School of Human Sciences to form the College of Human and Health Sciences in 2010. This provided opportunities for the consolidation of existing strengths such as our **broad interdisciplinary scope** and our commitment to **professional and practice-based projects** in a context and culture where research has greater prominence. This has enabled us more fully to **integrate our research activities with educational programmes for healthcare professionals**. Each research group involves multi-disciplinary staff and research students across the College, and NHC staff also engage in projects with other research groups and centres across the University, including colleagues from the disciplines of arts and humanities, economics, engineering, medicine, social work and sports science.

We also support the research activities of our local health boards by engaging in collaborative research projects (for example, through the WCPI) and providing advice and expertise through membership of various Health Board groups, committees and management boards (see section e).

The **strategic plan for NHC** has been developed from the research aims identified in the Nursing submission to RAE2008:

*a) To capitalise on investment in research leadership and growth in national and international profiles, giving priority to early career researchers (ECRs) and postdoctoral staff.*

We aim to pursue a **philosophy of inclusivity and engagement in research activities** through the integration of research, teaching, innovation and clinical work. We believe that opportunities to engage in meaningful and productive research and scholarship should be made available to all academic staff, whether in the fields of pure research, pedagogy or practice development. Professors, Readers and other research leaders work alongside junior colleagues to help develop their potential as **early career researchers (ECRs)**. For example, Brown, who had previously worked as a researcher, was employed as a lecturer in 2011, thereby providing opportunities to establish her research career in childhood obesity and infant feeding, resulting in the award of an ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowship. Coffey is currently the only nurse on the Welsh Crucible scheme (a programme of personal, professional and leadership development for highly promising research leaders of the future who are building their careers in Wales). In addition, each research grouping includes a number of more senior academic staff who may have recently chosen to pursue a research pathway and who do not have sufficient outputs for entry to REF 2014, but are being academically mentored and financially supported as '**rising stars**' and future academic leaders.

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*b) To recruit and retain high-quality research students, focussed on externally funded studentships*

During the REF period, Nursing and Health Care won **11 externally funded studentships** from the National Institute for Social Care and Health Research (NISCHR) (the Welsh Government body that develops strategy and policy for research in the NHS and social care in Wales), the Research Capacity Building Collaboration (RCBC) Wales (focused on fast-tracking new graduates into PhD programmes whilst enabling them to consolidate their professional skills), Tenovus (a leading cancer charity) and the Foundation for Sociology and Illness. For example, Gabe has been funded to continue her postdoctoral research in medicines management with an early career PhD fellowship from RCBC. The University and the College have also invested in research training during this period, with Nursing being awarded **a further 11 PhD studentships**.

*c) To optimise the international impact of research policy, practice and education in health and social care through increased global collaboration with policy makers, practice and education*

Examples of the international impact of the work of NHC staff include honorary appointments with overseas universities and invitations to present keynote papers and to facilitate workshops and seminars across the world (see section e).

Future strategic aims and goals for the next five years include: (i) to **further integrate research with healthcare practice and policy-making** in order to facilitate high-impact research and scholarship, through extending our programme of honorary joint appointments between the CHHS and our local health boards (see c.I. below), and by continuing to develop our programme of collaborative research projects; (ii) to continue to **support individual staff in identifying and pursuing their personal research goals** by taking full advantage of the new set of academic career pathways (see c.I. below), through the implementation of the University Strategic Equality Plan and Athena Swan (see c.I. below), and by identifying, encouraging and supporting early career researchers and rising stars; (iii) to **increase our external research funding** by strengthening the existing infrastructure and support for funding bids (see d. below); and (iv) to continue to **develop a cohesive and supportive community of research students for each thematic grouping** through internally and externally funded studentships (see c.II. below).

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

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

The staffing strategy for NHC has been developed specifically to support our mission to combine multi-disciplinary research, scholarship, teaching and community involvement into an integrated and coherent research strategy for nursing and healthcare. The College actively supports staff to publish and disseminate their work through the provision of **financial assistance to attend conferences** and for **academic leave**, including **sabbaticals**. Applications for sabbatical and conference leave are considered by the Academic Leave Panel. Applications for leave and funding are closely monitored to ensure an equitable distribution of resources across research groups and staff grades. Poster presentations, courses and workshop attendance are considered by a separate panel which reports to the Human Resources Committee. **In the year from August 2012 to July 2013, 21 conference leave applications were approved, including 8 overseas.**

The wider College staffing policy has been shaped at a local level to meet the specific needs of researchers working in each thematic grouping, including the early career researchers and 'rising stars'. This individualised approach has been facilitated through Swansea University's award winning 'Performance Enabling' process, which provides support, training and feedback to all employees to enable them to perform to their optimum level. The introduction of alternative career pathways within the University also affords opportunities to integrate teaching, scholarship, research, innovation and engagement with external stakeholders in line with our strategic aims, and for individuals to be **recognised and rewarded for research activities related to their educational and clinical roles**.

For example, the Wales Centre for Practice Innovation was established to promote and facilitate practice development and research, working closely with many practising professionals in the two local Health Boards. Approximately 20 NHS-employed active researchers hold honorary contracts with the University and contribute to the research profile of NHC. In return, **8 academic staff hold**

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**honorary positions with the Health Boards, including a Chair in Practice Innovation and Development for Rolfe.** As a result of this strategic collaboration, academic staff at all levels can engage in action research and other collaborative clinical research projects, and early career researchers and rising stars can present their work at the annual WCPI research conference.

Collaborative initiatives such as these are extremely important in taking our research mission forward, and discussions are currently in hand at an Executive level with local Health Boards to explore mutually relevant research and development agendas and deliver on our strategic aims.

### ***Career Development and Implementation of the Concordat***

The University-wide Development Officer for research staff provides support through the enhancement of employment experience and the provision of generic skills training, and all staff in the College are encouraged to avail themselves of suitable training opportunities both within the University and elsewhere. Those undertaking clinical research are supported to complete and maintain their Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training. Jordan received external funding from ESRC and MRC to complete ESRC training in Research Methods, and the College supports staff to undertake training in specific research methods when necessary.

### ***Equality and diversity***

The first and most important aim of our strategic plan is **to pursue a philosophy of inclusivity and engagement in research activities.** We believe strongly in equal opportunities in what has traditionally been a predominantly female academic discipline, and actively and purposively employ the Strategic Equality Plan in support of this belief.

The **University Strategic Equality Plan** forms part of continuing efforts to provide high quality research and education to the widest possible constituency, for example through the provision of onsite nursery facilities and a childcare voucher scheme. All academic vacancies are advertised as suitable for job share, with part-time or flexible working as the norm, enabling those with caring or parenting responsibilities the opportunity to balance work and home requirements. Promotions data for academic staff are monitored annually by protected characteristics and any emerging trends are highlighted for action where appropriate. The University is a member of Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme - the UK's good practice employer's forum on sexual orientation.

**At College level, we strive to create an inclusive institutional culture where differences are shared and valued and the needs of all employees are supported.** The University's Flexible Working Policy affords parents and carers the opportunity to request to work flexibly. A number of staff in Nursing and Health Care have taken up this opportunity, including some senior research staff who have 0.9 FTE contracts that reflect school-term working.

Swansea University is a charter member of **Athena Swan** which recognises excellence in the areas of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine for women in the Higher Education sector. The University secured the Bronze Award in 2009, and the College of Human and Health Sciences is **proud to have secured its own Bronze Award in 2013.**

There is an ongoing commitment to support existing and new staff to develop their research by undertaking doctoral studies (currently 7 staff), including through alternative routes such as professional doctorates and doctorates by publication. The assignment of mentors to ECRs is given high priority and a number have been involved in the University-wide research mentorship scheme. Brown participated successfully in this scheme and has taken over as University co-ordinator.

## **c. II. Research students**

The University has established an Academic Board Research to co-ordinate the management of research students and to improve the research-student environment. The Board has appointed an Associate Dean for each College within the University to facilitate and exchange information and views, and to disseminate good practice, review and streamline committee structures, streamline procedures and policies, conduct total in-depth review and update regulations and guidelines.

Within the College, the progress of Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs) is carefully monitored, and structured requirements for probation and progression are in place. There is a

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dedicated research students' administrator within the Research Support Unit and the Research Students Committee reports to the Academic Board, or Postgraduate Research Progression Boards, where regular monitoring and PGR progressions are considered.

Nursing and Health Care provides a lively and diverse academic community, with **each thematic grouping having a critical mass of research students**. Since RAE 2008 there have been 40 successful PhD completions. There are currently 59 PGR students registered (30 F/T and 29 P/T, including 9 professional doctorate students), of whom 10 are funded from external studentships, 4 from university studentships, and a further 7 from College funds. Our ratio of PGR FTEs to academic FTEs is well above the upper quartile figure for all HEIs within our HESA cost centre, with an average 1.2 PGRs per academic over the past 4 years. The welfare and monitoring of all PGR students within NHC is overseen by the College Director for Postgraduate Research, with assistance from a dedicated administrator from within the Research Support Unit.

In addition to the traditional PhD, the Doctorate in Professional Practice has been offered since 2010 and is open to nurses and allied professionals, including academic staff. This programme offers an opportunity for students to critically examine their own practice, and requires them to undertake 3 practice-based research projects.

### **Research student culture**

Nursing and Health Care provides a **planned induction programme for all new PGR students and supervisors**. Existing PGR students participate in the induction process and this facilitates the integration of new PGR students within the research student culture. All research students have at least two internal academic supervisors and many benefit from wider supervisory teams comprising additional members (who may offer specific expertise) from outside of the College, or from another institution. The postgraduate research students benefit from access to **regular seminar series** held throughout the University as well as **their own seminar programme** at which students can present any aspect of their work or a trial run of a conference presentation to their peers. This has proven to be very popular and allows PGR students to develop presentation skills in a friendly and supportive environment. The College runs **an annual *Conversazione* event** during which PGR students from across the university have the opportunity to present and discuss their work with their peers, academic staff and healthcare practitioners. Nursing and Health Care funds three prizes awarded for best poster presentations at this event. Students also have the opportunity to present at the **annual Wales Centre for Practice Innovation conference**.

Training is offered to PGR students via a portfolio of courses in the College and as part of the Research Skills Training Programme at University level. The Skills Office, working within the Academic and Professional Enhancement Centre (APECS), co-ordinates a **comprehensive skills development programme for research students**, which has been elaborated to correspond with the areas identified in the Vitae Research Development Framework. The course is available without additional cost to all students currently enrolled on postgraduate research degrees and is taught by Swansea University staff and external trainers. Training is also available via pathways offered as a benefit of **membership of the ESRC All Wales Doctoral Training Centre**.

PGR Student representatives from NHC are elected by their peers to facilitate communication and regularly attend the University-wide 'Student Engagement Window' meetings in which research students engage in and contribute to the discussions affecting research student issues. The University is continuously improving engagement with students on different levels internally, nationally and internationally. Scores from the recent **PGR survey** suggest high levels of satisfaction from PGR students within NHC, **indicating 93% satisfaction with overall experience of research programmes compared to an 86% national average**.

### **d. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

The College provides infrastructure support for research through its Research Support Unit (RSU), which coordinates research-related activities such as research-student supervision and progression, and the provision and maintenance of the research infrastructure. The RSU is staffed by a research manager, two research administrators and two additional administrative staff from within the finance section of the College. The research office assists with key administrative duties

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to ensure the effective and efficient processing of bids for research grant funding, from costing and setting up grants, to post-award financial and administrative support. In addition it assists with PGR student administration from recruitment to award and other support as required. The research office provides the primary liaison point between NHC and the Department of Research and Innovation, which works in partnership with researchers across the University to support the academic community to be competitive in securing funding to undertake research, interact with business and industry, develop ECRs and deliver a high-quality PhD student experience.

Full-time research students benefit from their own desk space in purpose-designed PGR rooms and each has their own PC and state-of-the-art IT equipment. Part-time research students are allocated shared desk space and PCs and have access to the same IT facilities as those available for full-time students. Library resources are continually updated and monitored. NHC has its own research ethics committee to consider proposals that may not require full consideration by Local Research Ethics Committees. The director for postgraduate research has strong links with local Health Board R and D committees, and NHC is working towards a standardised procedure for gaining research passports for PGR students who require them.

NHC implements **rigorous research monitoring and governance procedures** co-ordinated by the research office and the University Department of Research and Innovation. Researchers whose work requires additional funding are encouraged to apply for research grants from external bodies. Demand management procedures are in place to select competitive bids to Research Councils and for the approval of bids at College and University level. These strategies have helped NHC to secure £3m in research grant capture since RAE2008. **Our 2011/12 research grants and contracts income per academic FTE is well above the upper quartile figure** of £15,160 for all HEIs, and has seen a **sharp rise** from £11,300 in 2008/9 to £17,800 in 2011/12, **placing us in the top 20 institutions for our HESA cost centre.**

Our researchers have **collaborated on large research bids** with other HEIs including Nottingham, Cardiff and Liverpool Universities, and Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry.

**Grants awarded** include principal investigator on a £934,000 Wellcome Trust programme award and smaller grants from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Department of Work and Pensions, Economic and Social Research Council (ESCR), GNC Trust, Medical Research Council (MRC), NIHR, NISCHR, RCBC, Welsh Government and pharmaceutical companies.

<b>e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base</b>
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The research strategy for NHC aims to maximise impact, capacity, capability and international standing. This aspiration is facilitated at University level through initiatives such as the EPSRC-funded Bridging the Gaps and Building Global Engagements in Research (BGER) programmes, Welsh Crucible, and the Swansea University Research Forum (a community of research activists at Swansea University who are committed to enhancing the research environment, and to encouraging interdisciplinary networking).

NHC is a multidisciplinary group that includes researchers from the arts and humanities, bioscience, economics, healthcare practice, philosophy, psychology and social science. We collaborate across disciplines and Colleges within the university, with other universities across the world, with industry and business, and with colleagues from healthcare practice disciplines in the local area, the UK and internationally.

**Local contributions to nursing and healthcare scholarship, research and practice**

Working in partnership with local healthcare providers is an important strategic aim of NHC and is a key element of our mission to combine research, scholarship, teaching and community involvement. The **Wales Centre for Practice Innovation** plays an important role in bringing together academic staff and practitioners at all levels in their respective organisations to work on joint action research and practice development projects and to disseminate their findings through journal papers and conference presentations. Borsay has worked closely with the **National Waterfront Museum** in Swansea, which was the location for a disability history road show in March 2013, and will host a future professional workshop and industrial disability exhibition. The Clinical Trials Unit, based in the College of Medicine, facilitates clinical trials of nurse-led

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interventions, including methodological expertise provided by **Qualitative Enquiry Supporting Trials (QUEST)**, which is directed by Rapport.

On a strategic level, Phillips serves as the Swansea University representative on Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University (ABMU) Health Board and Rolfe chairs the ABMU Health Board Education Research and Development Group. Murphy and Jordan sit on the R&D committee of Hywel Dda Health Board and the South West Wales Regional AHSC Hub. Rance is a member of the Powys Health Board R&D committee, Jordan and Fitzsimmons sit on the ABMU Joint Scientific Review Committee, Jordan and Darra sit on the ABMU maternal and child health group, and Bloodworth and Patel are members of the ABMU clinical ethics committee.

## International contributions to the discipline

We are involved in collaborative research and practice development projects across the world, with colleagues in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden and USA.

Researchers from NHC have received invitations to present **keynote papers** at international conferences in the UK and across the world, including Canada, Ireland, Portugal, South Africa, Turkey and USA. In addition, **seminars, workshops and lecture series** have been delivered in Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal and USA. Rolfe is **Visiting Professor at Trinity College Dublin** and Jasper is **Visiting Professor at University of Ilorin, Nigeria**. Merrell is a founding member and President of Upsilon Xi at large chapter of the international nursing society *Sigma Theta Tau International* and established the UK's first chapter.

## Editorships and editorial boards

Members of all 4 NHC research groups make a significant contribution to the publication and dissemination of knowledge and good practice through journal editorship and board membership. Jasper is **Editor-in-Chief** of the *Journal of Nursing Management* and Rolfe is **Assistant Editor** of the journal *Nurse Education Today*. Members of all four research groups from Nursing and Health Care sit on the **editorial boards** of a range of journals including *Disability and Society*, *Educational Action Research*, *Health Care Analysis*, *International Breastfeeding Journal*, *International Journal of Practice Development*, *International Nursing Review*, *Journal of Ethics and Social Welfare*, *Journal of Health, Organisation and Management*, *Journal of Nursing Management*, *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, *Journal of Mental Health Training Education and Practice*, *Neo-Victorian Studies*, *Nursing Ethics*, *Open Nursing*, *Pharmacoeconomics and Therapeutic Pathways*, *Sport Ethics and Philosophy*. Jordan has edited themed editions of the *Journal of Nursing Management* on EBP and adverse events, and an edition on medicines management is being compiled. Edwards has edited a special issue of the *Clinical Ethics* journal. Borsay sits on the **editorial panel** of Manchester University Press's *Disability History* Book Series.

## Professional associations and learned societies

Members of NHC sit on the **Wellcome Trust's Expert Review Group** for Medical History and Humanities (Borsay), Chair of **Mental Health Nurse Academics UK** and Chair of the Scientific Committee of the **RCN International Network for Psychiatric Nursing Research** conference (Coffey), Chair of the **Heads of Midwifery Education/LME** group in Wales (Darra), **Department of Health Organ Donation Taskforce** (ethics sub-committee) (Edwards), **European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer** Quality of Life executive group and **NICE Health Economics** Group (Fitzsimmons), **Board of the European Association of Centres of Medical Ethics** (Hewitt), **NICE stakeholders' panel** and **Cochrane Adverse Events Methods Group** (Jordan), **Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group** (Murphy), **Bevan Commission**, the **1000 Lives+** Programme Board, **NICE Public Health Guidance Development Groups** for physical activity and the environment and **All Wales Medicines Strategy Group** (Phillips). Members of NHC also sit on **grant committees** for NIHR, NISCHR, MRC, ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme, Tenovus Innovation Grant Scheme and the Big Lottery Fund.