Institution: Queen's University, Belfast
Unit of Assessment: 22 – Social Work and Social Policy

a. Overview

Social work sits within the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work (SSPSW) which includes staff from psychology, social policy, sociology, and criminology. SSPSW hosts the *Institute for Child Care Research* (**ICCR**), an internationally recognised children's research centre); **ARK** (the Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive), and an international *Cochrane Developmental, Psychosocial and Learning Problems Review Group* (**CDPLPG**). Queen's submission to UoA22 comprises 27 staff. A further 24.6fte are submitted to UoA23. All SSPSW staff, including those from **ICCR**, belong to 1 of 5 multidisciplinary research clusters: i) *Family Policy and Child Welfare*, ii) *Identities, Lifestyle and Culture*, iii) *Social Divisions and Conflict*, iv) *Contemporary Social Issues and Policy,* and v) *Life Course Research.*

b. Research strategy

Family violence, substance misuse, mistreatment of vulnerable children, disability and mental health problems, carry significant social and economic costs and serious consequences for those who experience them, their families and communities. These difficult challenges for policy makers and service providers shape social work's research strategy at Queen's. We seek to bring high standards of scholarship and intellectual resources to better understand the nature of these problems, and develop the evidence base for effective prevention and intervention. To this end, our research encompasses longitudinal studies, experimental designs, observational and qualitative studies, the secondary analysis of data and systematic reviews. We aim to maximise the relevance of our work to people who use services; to engage with important theoretical debates in the field, and address policy and practice issues in robust and, where appropriate, innovative ways. The research clusters provide a coherent way of organising and focusing the research activities of tenured staff. The institutional structure of **ICCR** is adapted to maximising the strength and continuity of a group of experienced contract researchers and further building capacity in social work research. **ICCR** has particular strength in longitudinal research, randomised trials, and the analysis of secondary data. It currently employs 19 research staff. **CDPLPG**, led by **Macdonald**, spearheads evidence synthesis relating to 'what works' in improving outcomes for children in the areas covered in its scope, which includes health, education, social care and criminal justice.

Strategy RAE 2008: In 2008 the **School strategy** was to establish 4 *multidisciplinary* research clusters, in order to: i) augment areas of existing strength; ii) increase research capacity, income and profile (further diversifying funding sources and increasing research council funding); iii) contribute to the development of future generations of social researchers, and iv) be responsive to, and shape, future policy and practice agendas in Northern Ireland (NI), the UK and internationally. **The strategy for UoA22** was to develop a programme of research that built on our strengths and achievements and addressed the needs of policy makers and service providers. Specifically we aimed to develop:

1. the evidence-base needed to secure good outcomes for children;
2. a programme of multidisciplinary research on a family violence, and
3. capacity in evidence-based practice, encompassing systematic reviews, experimental studies, participatory research, and research on human rights, citizenship and social welfare.

RAE2008 Achievement of strategic aims: We established 4 multidisciplinary research clusters in 2008, and in September 2012 a 5th cluster was proposed, arising from cross-cluster interest on life course amongst staff from UoA22 and 23. The following provides evidence that UoA22's strategy has been successful in delivering against our aims and objectives.

1.   IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN remains a policy priority in the UK and internationally. The reputation of Queen's for innovative work in this area is well deserved. Since 2008 we have completed a number of studies within this theme, and secured funding for others in progress. The programme has four main themes.

- *Children in need*: Research to better understand the needs of children is a longstanding area of strength at Queen's. We said we would focus this work on the occurrence of multiple and co-occurring needs and their impact on longer term outcomes. **Pinkerton** (PI)**, Spratt** and **Devaney** secured funding to undertake secondary data analyses of the profiles and referral patterns of families in long-term contact with social services, integrating health and social care

datasets with census data in NI (£15k). This on-going collaboration has produced a number of outputs in prestigious journals, and provided the basis for an exploratory study to better understand how siblings with the same exposure to early childhood adversity can experience very different outcomes. With NSPCC, **Hayes** completed a Department of Justice funded study on the experiences of young witnesses (£30k). He is now evaluating the implementation of special measures for this group (£8k). **Bunting** is working with **Hayes**, **Lazenbatt**, **Spratt** and **Davidson** on the impact of early childhood experiences on adolescent suicide and child deaths.

- *Children in the public care*: Since 2008 **McSherry** has completed two major studies: i) an Event History Analyses of a longitudinal cohort study of children under 5 and in care on March 31st 2000, and ii) a study of the outcomes for children returned home whilst subject to a Care Order. With funding from, respectively, the *Health and Social Care Research and Development Division* (HSC RDD) of the *Public Health Agency* and the *Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister* (OFMDFM), **McSherry** is now exploring the nature and reasons for regional variations in placement across NI (£190k), and investigating the physical and mental health needs of looked-after children and how the care system in NI is meeting these needs (£244k). **Macdonald** and **Devaney** have investigated the impact of mobile phone technology on the welfare and placement stability of looked-after children (£174k). **Houston** and **Macdonald** have each conducted studies of the impact of introducing therapeutic approaches to residential care in NI (£10k, £60k resp.). Giving children a voice continues to be a priority for UoA22 staff, whose work is at the forefront of policy and practice development in NI. **Winter** completed research on communicating with young children in care, which has made a significant contribution to the concept of relationship-based social work, and to the implications of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child for social work with very young children in care. The UNCRC has also been central to **Pinkerton's** conceptual modelling of care-leaving as part of a global social ecology. He is working with **Kelly** and **Davidson** on a study of transitions and outcomes for care leavers with mental health and/or intellectual disabilities (£306k).

- *Drugs, alcohol misuse and lifestyles:* In **ICCR**, the Belfast Youth Development Study (BYDS) underpins a group of studies on adolescent development and the transition to adulthood, with a particular focus on drug and alcohol misuse. Since RAE2008 the BYDS team secured funding to investigate the dynamics of teenage peer group drinking culture, using case history analyses and in-depth qualitative interviews (£54k), and to use the BYDS data to assist in early identification of, and intervention with, young people at risk of problematic drug use (£35k). **Higgins** completed a study of over-time variations in adolescent behaviour. The study identified a range of psychological, social and environmental factors that shape the development of drug use, pinpointing those that enhance risk or promote resilience. **ICCR** secured funding for a further sweep of BYDS (£1.5 million), and now has linked social network data on some 5,000 adolescents over 7 waves from ages 11/12 to 20/21. This has provided the basis for other successful funding applications. Examples are a pilot study (£5k) of socio-economic differences in the onset, establishment and consequences of adolescent drinking patterns (**McCann,** Alcohol Research UK). **Perra**, **Higgins, McLaughlin, McCann** subsequently secured £240k (OFMDFM) to examine the interaction between neighbourhood, family, school and peer processes and offending behaviour. Other studies that exploit this rich dataset include a project to investigate family, peer and school processes in the development of resilience amongst those exposed to parental alcohol misuse (£117k, HSC R&D), and £35k to examine parenting and school-level effects on substance use in the context of parental monitoring and school environment. **McCann** and **McLaughlin** also conducted a pilot study of the effectiveness of community gardening as a form of rehabilitation for people with alcohol misuse problems (£5k).

- *Parenting:* This continues to be a major research interest. We have established expertise in randomised trials (RCTs), and in research into the needs of parents and children. Examples of the latter include **MacDonald's** study of the parenting experiences of families who have adopted a child from care, and, in particular, the influence of birth family contact on their parenting practices (originally a CASE studentship). Prior to joining Queen's, **Perra** worked on the role of maternal antenatal depression, and other parental characteristics, in predicting adolescents' antisocial behaviour. Examples of completed trials include **Macdonald's** trial (with Miller, UoA25) of *Lifestart*, an early years home visiting programme (£990k); **Higgins's** RCT of *Parenting UR Teens,* a parenting programme for the parents of adolescents (£185k).

Macdonald completed a major systematic review of home visiting interventions, and is collaborating with Barnes (Birkbeck) on an RCT of group-based 'Nurse Family Partnership'.

2. FAMILY VIOLENCE encompasses work on intimate partner violence, child abuse and neglect. The former is a new area of work within the School, led by **Devaney** and **Lazenbatt**; the second builds on an already considerable body of work.

- *Intimate partner violence:* **Lazenbatt** and **Devaney** have undertaken research into the lifetime experiences of domestic violence (DV) amongst older women (£10k). **Carr** (with Buckley, Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and Whelan, UoA23) has examined the experiences of service users caught up in the child protection system following DV and acrimonious separations, and **Anand** (with colleagues at U. Ulster, Age Concern and South Eastern Trust) conducted a study of older people's views of the support available to those who experience elder abuse (€25k). **Devaney** supervises a doctoral fellowship examining men's readiness to engage with DV treatment. **Lazenbatt** and **Devaney** completed an evaluation of the *Contact Sexual Violence Public Awareness Campaign* (£20k) and (with colleagues in U. Dundee) are researching healthcare access and wellbeing, of disabled women who have experienced domestic abuse (£69k).

- *Safeguarding:* is an area of considerable strength at Queen's, with staff contributing both theoretically and empirically to our understanding of child abuse and neglect, and how best to intervene to safeguard children. **Lazenbatt** has completed research on how midwives, and allied professions, identify and intervene with child abuse and neglect (£40k), and is supervising a doctorate on safeguarding practice for GPs and Health Visitors. **Devaney** and **Lazenbatt** undertook a Delphi study to identify how the process of conducting reviews following the death of a child could be improved (£20k). They also conducted two influential studies on non-accidental child deaths (for the NI Commissioner for Children and Young People, and the DHSSPS). **Houston** was funded by SWAP to evaluate how universities in NI transmit knowledge on serious case reviews and child abuse inquiries to qualifying and post-qualifying students (£5k). **Hayes** completed research on vulnerable young witnesses (£30k) and is PI on a study evaluating *Safety in Partnership* – a strengths-based, safety-organised approach to child protection (£119k). **Macdonald** and **Houston** completed a study examining the quality of social work assessments in care proceedings (£262k). **Macdonald** (with Churchill, U. Bristol) secured HTA funding for a systematic review of the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions for children who have experienced maltreatment. She is also conducting a trial of the effects of a structured approach to child protection assessments (DfE £300k). **Hayes, Spratt and Houston** have made significant contributions to the theoretical debates on safeguarding, and **Winter and Kelly** are currently undertaking a study exploring the *Over-Representation of Disabled Children and Young People in Public Care in Northern Ireland* (£218k).

3. DISABILITY, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING: As planned in RAE2008 **ICCR** developed a programme of work, designed to 'examine mental health problems and disability amongst children and young people and the quality and accessibility of current services to meet these needs'. We now have a strong profile in this area, strengthened with the appointment of **Anand**, **Davidson**, **Coulter**, **Carr**. Whilst there is some overlap, studies fall into two main groups.

- *Disability:* Using participatory methods, **Kelly** collaborated with Milner (Dunedin, New Zealand) to shed important light on the limitations of spatial indices of inclusion and what matters to people with disabilities. With others at Dunedin, she has published innovative theoretical work on the social inclusion of children in educational settings. **Davidson, Macdonald, Anand** and **Kelly** undertook three systematic reviews of the State of Evidence on Disability Policy and Practice (£90k, National Disability Authority). **Kelly** also completed a study of disability, identity and transitions to adult life (£5k). At the behest of a group of disabled young people **Macdonald, Kelly** and **Lazenbatt** undertook an in-depth, qualitative study of the emotional wellbeing of disabled adolescents and the quality and accessibility of services provided to meet their needs (£153k). **Lazenbatt** supervises a doctoral fellowship on promoting the wellbeing of young people with cancer receiving hospital care (£181k). **Roulston** is studying end of life care decision-making by patients with lung cancer (€6k, Irish Hospice Foundation). In 2012 **Kelly** and **Winter** began a 3-year study of disabled children living in and leaving public care, a study that will significantly extend the portfolio of disability research.

- *Mental health and wellbeing:* **Macdonald** completed a cluster randomised trial of a literacy

programme for children and their parents (Barnardo's, £450k). **Carr** (with Maycock, TCD) worked on a study of the mental health and wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people. **Davidson** conducted a number of studies relevant to the mental health system, including an audit of assessment of Approved Social Workers, and a longitudinal study of the effects of childhood trauma on the functioning of people with severe mental health problems. **Davidson** and **Mulholland** conducted a number of studies examining the effects of childhood trauma on individuals who develop severe mental illness as adults. **Roulston** undertook two studies in Bolivia. The first was an exploratory study to assess the psychosocial needs of patients with cancer in Cochabamba; the second used Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis to explore end-of-life care decision-making by professionals working in oncology and palliative care settings in the National Oncology Institute, Tiquipaya. **Macdonald, Davidson** and **McSherry** produced **a Rapid Review** of evidence designed to inform the prioritisation and commissioning of primary research by HSC RDD (£30k). **Duffy M** reviewed the evidence base of psychological therapies in use in NI. This informed a needs analysis and set of recommendations for future commissioning (£30k). **Coulter** had a British Academy Small Grant to study mothers' narratives of trauma and its impact on them and their families.

Strategic aims and goals 2014-2019: Our overarching aim is to continue to make significant contributions to social work policy and practice, informed by critical theory and rigorous research. To achieve this, we plan to retain our core themes (*Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People, Family Violence and Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing*) as these reflect our strengths. Within each theme, our programme of research will be informed by: **i)** priorities for our key stakeholders; **ii)** what we perceive to be important policy and practice issues, and **iii)** what we consider to be important contributions to the intellectual underpinning of the discipline. To ensure the international, as well as national, relevance of our work, we will further develop existing links with colleagues in the UK and globally, extending the multidisciplinary nature of our work (see section **c.**). We will continue to seek funding from a range of sources, including government, charities, NIHR, HTA and the research councils.

Main objectives and activities 2014-2019: Our plans are as follows, within each core theme:

Improving outcomes: Appointments **Dill**, **Campbell** and **Bunting** bring new expertise to this area.

- 'Practice-near' research. <u>AIM</u>: to better understand the operation and effectiveness of management and supervision at all levels of children's services; to foreground the experience of disabled children receiving services and to develop social work practice with young children.
- Children in residential care. <u>AIM:</u> to address the needs of a neglected group, that risks further marginalisation given the emphasis on 'early interventions'.
- Evaluation of services and interventions. <u>AIM</u>: to improve outcomes for children and adolescents.

Family Violence: We have enhanced our capacity in this area with the appointment of **Bunting** (previously NSPCC). We will use our national and international networks in this area to:

- Expand primary studies of safeguarding. <u>AIM</u>: improve understanding of decision-making.
- Develop proposals for trials of promising interventions. <u>AIM</u>: improve service provision and outcomes for victims of family violence.

Disability, mental health and well-being: We will use our particular strength in theoretical work (**Houston**, **Kelly**), the analysis of large scale data sets (**ICCR**) and qualitative work (**ICCR**, **Kelly**, **Davidson** and others) to:

- Continue to produce theoretical work of international excellence. <u>AIM</u>: address an under-developed dimension of social work.
- Continue secondary analyses of the BYDS study. <u>AIM</u>: advance our understanding of the role of social networks in drug and alcohol misuse; identify potential interventions.

Priority areas for development: In summary form, these are as follows:

- Establish a European Centre for Child Protection Research.
- Secure funding for research on adverse consequences of multiple and co-occurring adverse events in children's lives (newly identified in 2008, and a new cluster established in 2012).
- Increase numbers of international students working within our three core themes.

Monitoring and attainment of goals: Clusters develop work-plans with targets for research student recruitment, publications, proposals etc. **ICCR** has a business plan. Individuals set research goals aligned with those of the School and University. Staff appraisal ensures that goals are appropriate and individuals have the necessary support and resources. Individual progress is monitored twice a year. Clusters, each led by a senior academic, ensure that opportunities for networking, dissemination and impact are shared and offer an important forum for the development of skills (see **c**.). This approach will provide the basis for monitoring our future research objectives.

c. People

i) Staffing strategy and staff development

Relationship to research strategy: Capacity building in social work research reflects Queen's strategy to develop an international research profile in this area. Success is reflected in recruitment, promotions, and awards; and research funding. For example, **ICCR** has been responsible for generating approximately 50% of the School's research income. Queen's supported the **ICCR** by funding its former director (**Macdonald**).

Equality and Diversity: Queen's has a well-developed Equality and Diversity Policy that forms part of the formal contract of employment for staff. Training is a requirement for all staff involved in recruitment, irrespective of previous experience. Recruitment panels must be balanced in terms of gender and religious affiliation. UoA22 includes 12 men and 14 women; with 5 from outside of NI. There are appropriate grievance procedures to deal with discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Staff can request variation of contract for reasons of work-life balance (including caring responsibilities); two research staff have taken advantage of this.

Sabbatical leave Staff are eligible to *apply* for one semester's sabbatical leave after completing six successive semesters in which they have made a full contribution to the School's teaching and administration (pro rata for staff on less than full-time contracts). The School facilitates sabbatical leave for up to 4 members of staff annually. Since 2008, the following UoA22 staff have had sabbatical leave: Campbell and Skehill (now left to professorial posts at Goldsmiths and NUI Galway); **Pinkerton** (Sep 2010-Jan 2011)' **Houston** (Feb-Aug 2011); **Kelly** (Feb 2012-Jan 2013) **Duffy, J (**Feb-Aug 2011); **Devaney** (Sept 2012-Jan 2013), **Wilson** (Sept 2011-Jan 2013).

Research staff: Queen's adopted the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* in 2008. It subsequently developed an implementation plan which provided the basis for a successful application for the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research award. This recognises adherence to the EU *Charter for Researchers* and *Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers*. Within UoA22 the majority of research staff are employed within the **ICCR**. They are provided with opportunities to broaden and deepen their skill base and experience, including opportunities for teaching, to develop their publication record and generally to avail of opportunities (planned and unanticipated) to undertake continuing professional development. Research staff are encouraged to submit research applications in their own right or in conjunction with senior staff. The University can provide bridging funds to cover gaps between contracts.

Recruitment: Since 2008 we have retained a full complement of staff, appointing **Anand**, **Bunting**, **Campbell**, **Davidson**, **MacDonald**, **Roulston** to lectureships; **Kelly** and **Duffy M** to senior lectureships, and **McCann**, **McLaughlin**, **Perra**, **McAneney** to research posts in **ICCR**. All new appointments are required to have/be about to submit) a PhD. The current staff group comprises 3 professors (**Macdonald**, **Pinkerton**, **Houston**), 2 readers (**Higgins**, **Lazenbatt**), 19 lecturers and 4 independent researchers. The demographic profile of UoA22 staff is balanced, with **Macdonald**, **Pinkerton**, **Houston**, **Higgins** and **Spratt** providing leadership, supported by a strong middle tier of senior staff (**Kelly**, **Perra**, **McSherry**, **Lazenbatt**). Evidence of the success of this strategy can be found in the profile of research income and the quality and range of our outputs. All staff are involved in writing research proposals, and the majority (including some early career researchers) have succeeded in securing research grants. All staff other than some research staff (see below) are on permanent contracts. **Lazenbatt**'s joint appointment with the NSPCC (from 2007) was renewed for a further three years in 2012.

Promotions and personal research fellowship: High quality research is an essential element in the promotion process. Staff are expected to secure external funding to support their research activities and produce high quality publications. Since 2008 **Devaney** has been promoted to Senior Lecturer and **Houston** promoted first to Reader and then to a Personal Chair. **Devaney** and

Davidson secured Winston Churchill Fellowships, **Kelly** a British Council Award, and **Roulston** a *Higginson Leadership Award*. Seven **ICCR** researchers, including **McLaughlin**, secured competitive, peer-reviewed *Cochrane Fellowships* to undertake systematic reviews relevant to internationally salient policy areas. In 2010 and 2013 **Macdonald** received the *Leonard Gibbs Award* for 'the finest systematic review in social welfare' published by the Campbell Collaboration. **Spratt's** paper **'**The influence of child protection orientation on child welfare practice' was included in '*Influential Publications in Social Work Discourse: The 100 Most Highly Cited Articles in Disciplinary Journals: 2000–09'* (Hodge et al., 2012).

Supporting all researchers: There is an induction programme for new staff. Newly appointed lecturers are assigned a mentor (an experienced academic to advise and support them) and a 'buddy' (someone who has just completed probation). Feedback has been very positive, and the arrangement helps staff successfully to negotiate their 3-year probationary period. New staff receive a £4k start-up grant, to be used in any way that best establishes the foundations for research activity at Queen's (e.g. conference, international visits, pilot studies). Plans are agreed with the mentor. New staff join a research cluster. Led by a senior academic, clusters provide a focus for intellectual exchange, skill development, the nurturing of research collaborations and development of research proposals, and capacity building in areas such as writing for publication, planning and documenting impact etc. Probationary staff carry reduced teaching loads and have no specific administrative responsibilities. Appraisal identifies individuals' development and training needs, and how best to meet these. When appropriate, training events are arranged to address issues common to a number of staff. The overall success of our staffing policy, infrastructure support and mentoring can be seen in the increased numbers of staff returned on this occasion.

In support of School-based activities, all researchers – including early career researchers – have access to a central professional and career development programme. This provides a series of workshops alongside one to one support from a dedicated staff developer and careers advisor. Approximately £150k annually is invested in this programme. Additionally, researchers can apply for individual support (up to £500 per year) to attend conferences and external courses. Other funds are also available e.g. there is a Business Alliance fund which supports knowledge translation. Researcher-led activities are supported via the Researcher Training and Development Fund. Since 2008 UoA22 staff have made effective use of this fund e.g. organising training in secondary data analysis, in communication skills with children with complex needs, and use of statistical software. We have established a School-based Researcher Society, which enhances the integration of ECRs by providing networking, professional development support and advice. Through the society ECRs meet researchers from across the University. ECRs have been provided with opportunities to learn about applying for fellowships, e.g. a two day event on Developing Research Proposals**,** May, 2013. Commitment to the Concordat to support career development of researchers is demonstrated via the University's related action plan, already discussed.

Prior to submission, all research proposals are reviewed internally, and no proposal is submitted without the approval of the relevant Director of Research. We seek independent review of major proposals. Staff must ensure that their research activities conform to appropriate ethical research standards. Compliance with these, notably the University's Code of Research Conduct, is ensured through the School's Research Ethics Committee and, where appropriate, externally e.g. Office of Research Ethics (NI). Authorship protocols are developed at the start of research projects, based on the Code of Publication Ethics. **ICCR** has an external Scientific Advisory Group to advise on the content and scientific rigour of its work, and a Professional Liaison Group that ensures relevance and effective dissemination and impact.

ii) Research Students

Post-graduate research (PGR) students play a central role within the School's research culture, and recruitment reflects our research strengths and reputation. Across the School (UoAs 22+23) we currently have over 100 full-time and part-time research students. Doctoral students must have either an ESRC recognised Masters' degree or complete the School's *Masters in Social Research Methods*. All students belong to a research cluster, where they regularly present their work, as well as at School-wide seminars. PGR students organise an annual conference where they profile their research. This event is a highlight in the School's calendar, and is well attended by staff and students. Each PGR student has 2 supervisors, chosen on the basis of methodological and content expertise. Staff can only be a student's primary supervisor when they have successfully supervised

a PhD student to completion. In this REF period, 18 PhDs + 1 MPhil have been awarded to students supervised by UoA22 staff, and 2 others passed their PhD Vivas after July 31st. We secured 2 prestigious HSC RDD Fellowships (**Mooney** and **Mahon**) and 4 Queen's Strategic Studentships designed to promote interdisciplinary working (**McAleese, Mallon, Hamenoo, Jeffers**). We recruited 10 overseas PGR students and a post-doctoral fellow from South Africa (**Graham**) visited to work with colleagues in the **ICCR**. Since RAE2008 we have introduced an interdisciplinary Doctorate in Childhood Studies, which now has 50+ part-time students and 1 full-time student. The first DChild student graduated in 2013.

Queen's has invested in a new International and Postgraduate Student Centre. The University has a dedicated PGR training team, providing a broad, professional development programme that complements research training within Schools. The Postgraduate Researcher Development Programme (PRDP) provides students with transferable skills, and enhances their career development and employability (during 2011-2012 there were 275 training workshops). It is designed and delivered in line with the National research Development statement and framework. There is a peer-mentoring programme to assist advanced PGR students to support others make a successful transition into the research environment. Students can order books for the library and have access to inter-library loans. The School provides support for non-scholarship-funded PGR students to attend conferences etc.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Infrastructure: Since 2008 the Queen's *Research and Enterprise Directorate* (RED) has been the subject of significant investment, using University funding and funding from external sources, with 30+ new staff providing specialist support to academics and researchers across a range of areas, from research applications to knowledge transfer. The investment in social work (reported RAE2008) has been sustained. The RED administers competitive central conference and international liaison funds to support the work of Schools.

Facilities: UoA22 staff have pleasant offices in a refurbished Victorian terrace (3,500 square metres), connected to a new-build teaching block with large lecture and tutorial rooms, and well-equipped common rooms for staff and students, and adjacent to the award winning McClay Library (2010). PGR students have dedicated workspaces either in the School or in the purpose-built SRIF funded Faculty Graduate Research Centre nearby, and have access to telephones, workstations and full internet and library electronic resources. The School has a generous equipment budget, used to support students as well as staff. PCs are renewed on a 3-year cycle, and a wide range of software is available to staff and PG students, together with access to specialist resources in the Computing Centre e.g. poster services, high performance computing facilities. In addition to general administrative support for research, the School has (i) a designated accountant to assist in preparing and costing proposals and monitoring project budgets, (ii) a dedicated IT advisor who provides technical support, and (iii) a dedicated librarian.

Income generation: Research clusters, and the **ICCR**, support staff in the development of high quality research proposals (see **a.**). Research leadership is provided by those with an international reputation in their fields, which benefits colleagues and PGR students. **Macdonald** leads the *Family Policy and Child Welfare* research cluster, specialising in evaluation, evidence-based policy and practice, and child protection; **Pinkerton** leads on family support and care leavers; **Spratt** is leader of the *Life Course Research Cluster*; **Houston** provides leadership in relation to residential care and theoretical work, and **Kelly** in disability. All have strong international links in these areas, and use these to network colleagues with researchers elsewhere. More generally, senior staff are active in helping develop the careers of early career colleagues and those contracted to work with them on individual projects. The effectiveness of this approach is evident in the success of early career researchers in securing research grants and studentships in recent years e.g. **Davidson, McCann, McLaughlin** and **Winter**, our outputs, and the profile of funded research (see above **b.**).

Research funding: The success of our income generation strategy is evident from the fact that almost all grants have been secured via a competitive/peer review process, from a wide range of funders including *ESRC, MRC, NIHR/HTA, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, SCIE, British Council, HSC RDD, Atlantic Philanthropies* (*AP*), OFMDFM, and charities such as *Parenting NI* and *Barnardo's* (see **b.**). A £600k grant from Queen's further promoted inter-disciplinary work in children's research (see **e.**) and was used to leverage £1.6 million pounds from *AP* and *HSC RDD* to build further capacity in randomised trials, systematic reviews and secondary analysis of data.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

Interdisciplinary research and collaboration: This is one of Queen's strategic priorities and an area of strength for UoA22 (see outputs and **a.** and **d.** above). Queen's provides strong incentives for interdisciplinary research, such as the strategic studentships, initial funding for cross disciplinary work e.g. on 'The Child' (see above, **d.**). Since 2008 we have collaborated on research initiatives with colleagues from: Architecture, Criminology, Education, Geography, Law, Management, Medicine/Psychiatry, Nursing, Pharmacy, Psychology, Public Health and Sociology. UoA22 staff have been active members the *Forum for the Child* (an initiative designed to promote interdisciplinary children's research within Queen's). *Improving Children's Lives* (see above) illustrates the Forum's success in supporting multidisciplinary work. Three UoA22 staff are members of the ESRC Peer Review College. Most provide peer review to other funders and/or journals. **Macdonald** and **McSherry** are members of the *Child Health and Welfare Recognised Research Group*, one of the multidisciplinary, cross University networks funded by the HSC RDD Office to support translational research. **Macdonald** and **Kee** (QUB UoA2) bid successfully for a 4-year MRC Fellowship to examine inter-relationships between social networks and health (drug and alcohol misuse) with a view to informing the design and delivery of social interventions. **Winter** has collaborated with **Connolly** (QUB UoA25) to examine educational achievement amongst looked-after children, and **Carr** has collaborated with **Maruna** (UoA20) on a critical analysis of the impact of the 'Troubles' on probation practice. Beyond Queen's, UoA22 staff have enjoyed successful interdisciplinary collaborations with colleagues in the UK and internationally. The ESRC Transforming Social Science grant (see **d.**) resulted from collaboration between **ICCR**, Sociology, Geography, Public Health and Electrical Engineering and Nursing.

National and international academic collaborations: Since 2008 we have 'grown' our collaborative research, both nationally and internationally. Some examples: **Pinkerton** is a member of the *International Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood from Care*. **Macdonald** is a member of an international network of Children's Policy Research Centres. **Lazenbatt** works with colleagues across the UK on the NSPCC's survey of child abuse and neglect; she is a member of an NSPCC funded UK network of University researchers. **Devaney** collaborates with colleagues from the U. Bedfordshire and U. Bristol (an ESRC funded project to enhance the teaching of quantitative skills amongst social work students) and **Duffy J** is working with colleagues at Penn State investigating the legal advice needs of older adults, and leads a consortium of academics from the Universities of Ljubljana, Slovenia and Alicante on a study of service user and carer expectations of social work knowledge (IIASW funded). **Duffy J** and **Hayes** are collaborating with colleagues at U. Birmingham on the long-term impact of service user and carer involvement on the practice of newly qualified social workers. **Macdonald** is on the Steering Committee of the International Campbell Collaboration, and a member of several multidisciplinary teams, from multiple universities in the UK and Europe, working on funded research in the areas of Autism, Home Visiting, and Psychosocial Interventions for maltreated children. The *Cochrane Developmental, Psychosocial and Learning Problems Review Group* (**CDPLPG**) collaborates with over 800 authors around the world, and has an editorial board comprising members from India, Pakistan, Australia, USA, Norway, Germany, UK, Greece and Argentina. **CDPLPG** works closely with WHO to produce reviews relevant to their Guidelines e.g. on nutrition (see Impact Statement).

Networks and collaborations: We see our collaborations with users and other stakeholders as crucial and these take a variety of forms. For example, much of our research examines social problems in NI, and UoA22 staff enjoy strong links with key stakeholders within policy, practice and user communities here. Such networks enable us to identify priority topics, ensure relevance for users of our research, and maximise impact.

All of our studies have advisory groups comprising key stakeholders from those commissioning the research, and those policy makers, practitioners and users for whom the research is relevant.

Our research is strengthened and enriched by partnerships with users of research e.g. NSPCC, The National Autistic Society, Barnardo's, the Trusts; collaboration with commissioners, providers and users of services is one of our strengths. For example, the research team working on **Kelly** et al.'s study of transitions and outcomes for care leavers with mental health and/or intellectual disabilities includes members from *Voice of the Child in Care* (VOYPIC), Mencap, Praxis Care and the Health and Social Care Board. Where appropriate, projects have young people's advisory groups. Collaboration with *Sixth Sense* (a Disabled Children and Young People's Participation

Project) and VOYPIC has been particularly important. Both have helped to identify research priorities, and assist in their development, delivery and dissemination. Our research on service user and carer involvement is widely recognised as excellent and has produced definitive practice guides. The *Child Care Research Forum,* hosted by **ICCR** and convened by **Higgins**, is an important network that fosters a cross-cutting research culture between academics, policy makers and practitioners in NI through collaborative action. **Devaney** and **Lazenbatt** co-convene the domestic violence Special Interest Group (SIG), which has a membership of over 200, mainly from across the Island of Ireland. **Devaney** secured funding to host the European Conference on Domestic Violence in 2015. **ICCR** is a member of Child Watch International. These networks ensure that our research is relevant and widely disseminated (see **REF3a**).

Other national and international collaborations: The **ICCR** is a member of an international network concerned with evidence-informed practice. In 2012 **Higgins** (with Canavan, NUI Galway) hosted an International Invited Workshop on *Evidence-Informed Practice, Innovations and Creativity in Challenging Times*. This brought together 13 teams from across the world, building on earlier work undertaken in Dartington (2007) and Ontario (2010). The proceedings of this meeting are in a volume *in press*. **CDPLPG** works with academics and clinicians from relevant health and social care disciplines across the world. **CDPLPG's** productivity is in the top 20% of all Cochrane Groups and its reviews are used in a number of NICE and WHO Guidelines. **Macdonald** was a member of the Department of Health panel mandated to advise the Department on the funding of Policy Research Centres in the areas of Child and Maternal Health. **ICCR** (**McCann**) led a successful bid to ESRC under its first *Transforming Social Science* call. This resulted not only in a grant to develop an innovative approach to the collection of survey data, but an Institutional award to support the development of digital tools to support transformational research across social science disciplines. **Macdonald** and **Pinkerton** were part of the larger consortium of children's researchers within Queen's to secure funding for *Improving Children's Lives* (http://www.improvingchildrenslives.org). This capacity building initiative enabled UoA22 staff to recruit research fellows in Systematic Reviews, Statistics and Qualitative Methods. Working with senior colleagues, these fellows have helped to generate additional research income *e.g.* **Livingstone** worked with **Macdonald** to secure an HTA grant to investigate the use of outcomes and outcome measures in research in childhood Autism, and to profile the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions for maltreated children.

Seminars, conferences and CPD: UoA22 staff have been active in hosting seminar series and conferences, and providing research-based CPD for social work managers, practitioners and policy makers. For example, **Devaney** organised the 2012 BAPSCAN *8th National Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect*, attracting 700+ delegates from 28 countries. He also organised 'learning events' for those concerned about Domestic Violence, including a 1-day conference with international speakers. **Higgins** organised 2 very successful conferences, entitled '*Made in Northern Ireland*: local research with children and young people: an evidence base for policy and practice'. Organised around the outcomes of the Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People, the conferences attracted a wide range of research users. **Macdonald**, with **Connolly** (UoA25), organised a series of seminars under the *Improving Children's Lives'* banner, helping policy makers and practitioners embed policy and practice in research, and develop capacity in the use of research. **Houston** and **Macdonald** worked with Guardians ad Litem to enhance the quality of their Court Reports, based on research and critical appraisal skills. **Wilson**, **Kelly** and **Duffy J** have developed specialist training in user and public involvement based on their research. With others, **Duffy J** organised a conference marking 20 years of the UNCRC, and – with Prior (UoA23) – organised the 4th US-UK Medical Sociology Conference in 2012.

Journals: In 2010 **Pinkerton** and Campbell (then at Queen's) were appointed editors of the *British Journal of Social Work*. **Macdonald** is a member of the Cochrane Collaboration's Editorial Board and Co-Ordinating Editors' executive (advising the Editor in Chief and shaping publication policy). Established by UoA22 staff, and now in its 16th year, *Child Care in Practice* continues to be housed by the School (Iwaniec Patron; **Devaney** Editor). Board members include **Duffy J** (1994-1998) and **Kelly** (2007-to date). This journal originally aimed to develop evidence-informed practice in NI; it now attracts UK and international contributors and readers. **Devaney** is Associate Editor with *Child Abuse Review.* In addition staff have served on the editorial boards of; *Social Work Education* (**Campbell**); *Practice* (**Pinkerton** and **Hayes**); *Child: Care, Health and Development* (**Macdonald**).