

Institution: University of Chester
Unit of Assessment: 19 Business and Management Studies
<p>a. Overview</p> <p>Research in Business and Management Studies takes place within the Faculty of Business, Enterprise and Lifelong Learning (BELL). This comprises Chester Business School, Warrington School of Management and three research-focused centres: the Centre for Labour Market Development (CLMD), Centre for Work Related Studies (CWRS) and the International Centre for Corporate and Public Affairs Research (ICCPAR). Research is conducted under the leadership of Harris, Rowland, Stokes and Moss. These groupings are supported by the wider Professoriate, including Faculty research fellows and visiting professors from China, Germany and the USA. Research is clustered around a number of active groups of researchers operating in key focal areas including: Responsible and Sustainable Management; Public Affairs Management and Regional Business; Work Related Studies; Performance; and, Management Learning and Leadership.</p>
<p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>BELL was formed in July 2008 by the amalgamation of the University's Business School, its Commercial Development Unit (Management/Leadership) and the Centre for Lifelong Learning into one strategic faculty focused on business, management and work based learning. Following the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise and the subsequent formation of BELL the University's strategic plan identified BELL as a crucial development area for research. Strategy would focus on three key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing research capability and capacity • Establishing research focus groups and centres • Engaging with business and academic communities to produce high quality research outputs <p>Growing Research Capability and Capacity</p> <p>Since 2008 the recruitment of all Faculty staff has focussed on research active scholars. An Executive Dean (Harris) with international research and business experience was appointed in 2009 to lead the cultural change necessitated by this strategy. The Faculty has an Associate Dean (Rowland) responsible specifically for leading, coordinating and managing research and development. The role is allocated a substantial dedicated budget with which to promote and support research work. This is aimed at underpinning teaching and learning, making a contribution to respective international disciplinary fields and fostering innovative practice in support of the regional economy.</p> <p>The Centre for Work Related Studies and the Centre for Labour Market Development were established in 2009 and 2011 respectively. The International Centre for Corporate and Public Affairs Research was opened in March 2013. BELL is now developing plans for a Centre for Responsible Management and Sustainability and also a Centre for Tourism and Events Management. These centres are seen as one of the mechanisms that will consolidate, capitalise on and accelerate the research work in these areas. Since 2010 five new professors and a senior research fellow have been appointed in order to increase capacity and strengthen the focus and quality of the pivotal area of research for the university and its businesses community. Capability has been augmented by a further eight key staff appointments at senior lecturer level during the period. These additional staff have a strong research focus and are in the process of informing and developing the research strategy. A key priority within the strategy is to inform, develop and enhance active partnerships in regional businesses; with an emphasis on economics, policy-making, infrastructure and competitiveness. This work has made a number of strategic recommendations to sustain the region's business, most notably its work on Bank of America and SME development which has been commended by policy makers.</p> <p>Work based learning, is an important emergent area of research and development for the Faculty, with informed research being developed to enable the learner to be able to adapt and make informed decision-making in a changing workplace. The Work-Based and Integrative Studies</p>

(WBIS) programme is tailored to provide academic recognition of learning undertaken primarily in the workplace. Research in this area is growing and this is evidenced by, for example, the highly regarded work produced for the Department for Work and Pensions (Perrin, Brodie, Thompson and Weston - evidenced in the impact case study). The growth of research to underpin this dynamic and innovative area is one of our future and on-going priorities. In 2011 and 2013 respectively two active researchers have been recruited to drive this development.

Establishing Research Focus Groups and Centres

These groups have been referred to and addressed in the overview (Section a) and also in the Research Strategy above.

Engaging with Business and Academic Communities to Produce High Quality Research Outputs

The establishment of an innovative annual Chester Forum in 2010 has also assisted in fostering and underpinning much of the research work in the Faculty. The Chester Forum involves regional, national and international decision makers from the private and public sectors and has been an effective method of promoting dialogue with business leaders and strengthening the cohesion of the regional economy. The Forum is hosted by the Bank of America in its corporate boardroom and is sponsored by EA Technology. It acts as a vehicle that informs public policy (as evidenced by the Public Affairs Management impact case study). It has also provided an opportunity for regional industry to gain insight into current research issues and potentially develop joint projects with the University. Chester Forum themes have addressed:

2010 Global Perspectives of Public Affairs, Lobbying, Innovation and Leadership in Government Business and Service

2011 Sustainable Business and Public Affairs

2012 Strategic Competitive Advantage through Innovation: Radical Thoughts and Conversations

2013 Growth Through Exports & International Trade: Challenges, Opportunities & New Horizons

The forum proceedings are summarised and published annually.

A core area of work for the Faculty is Public Affairs Management which, with the establishment of the International Centre for Corporate and Public Affairs accomplishes research and practice of national and international importance. This research is conducted by **Harris**, Moss, **Millar** and Adderley. It encompasses the editing and publication of the prime international journal in the field the Journal of Public Affairs by Wiley, which is in its 13th year. In addition, in 2013, **Harris** edited the four volumes, Public Affairs Management (Sage) which codifies the development of the discipline. In addition, an international survey is being co-authored on behalf of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). A major public affairs conference was co-organised, co-ordinated and sponsored in Beijing (June 2013). This was the 1st International Conference on Public Policy: Public Policy, Theory and Practice of Governance. It was convened jointly with Beijing Normal University, Seoul National University, Korea and the University of Hong Kong (evidenced in the case study for references). This examined ways in which China can strengthen public sector management, governmental communication and decision making.

A number of high quality journals have been successfully targeted by staff and refereed conference papers have been presented at the Academy of Marketing Science (US), British Academy of Management and European Academy of Management amongst others. In addition, substantial work on regional public affairs and economic issues has been produced. In particular, this has involved work on the Financial Service sector (**Uzonwanne**), small business (SME) generation, exports and medium-size business developments, which has, in turn, resulted in reports being presented and evidence requested by Parliamentary Select committees and BIS (**Harris**). Work in the field of Performance, Human Resources, Management Development and Managing Education has resulted in journal publications and refereed conferences such as: the British Academy of Management, the Universities Forum for Human Resource Development, the Society for Research in Higher Education and the European Mediterranean Research Forum (**Rowland**, **Warhurst**, **Millar**). Responsible and Sustainable Management issues are well represented in both journals and at similar conferences (**Stokes**).

Further key achievements during the census period include:

- 2009 Economics and Business Education Association, national conference - keynote

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lecture (**Rowland**)

- 2010 British Academy of Management Doctoral Workshop on Performance Management at the University of Chester (**Rowland**)
- 2011 Academy of Marketing, Political Marketing Symposium on the 2010 General Election and resulting in a special issue of Journal of Marketing Management based on best papers (**Harris, Moss and Rowland**)
- Review into Financial Services Sector in the Cheshire Region (**Harris, Pyke and Adderley**)
- Confidential Report on Economic Impact Assessment of MBNA Europe Card Services (**Harris, Adderley and Russell**)
- Fellowships and track chairs have been attained by staff including **Harris, Rowland** and **Stokes** (Academy of Management and Euromed)
- Visiting Professorships in Finland (Aalto) and Russia (St Petersburg) have been received (**Warhurst**)

The Faculty currently has 50 doctoral students (43 part-time) and has produced 80 journal articles and 23 books in the unit of assessment during the reporting period. This, in conjunction with the above-mentioned structures and work, has established a significant research platform for the continued evolution and growth of future research in the Faculty.

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

BELL and the University are strongly committed to the academic development of all staff. This was recognised externally by the recent award to the University of the HR Excellence in Research Award which demonstrates a commitment to implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

During the reporting period, BELL has appointed five new professors, a senior research fellow and a further eight active research staff in order to strengthen its on-going research development. These staff have been purposely selected and situated in the centres that have been established to focus on key areas of research expertise. Recruitment has focussed on research active staff. Recruitment has been informed by both Faculty research strategy and succession planning ensuring a healthy mix of experienced research active academics and emerging scholars and researchers to enable continuity of projects and excellence of student experience. Staff development has focussed on nurturing staff development through sponsoring attendance at seminars, conferences and undertaking research projects. Allowances are made in terms of remission of teaching and fees (up to £1500 per annum) for additional studies. Staff are also provided with supervisory training via both the Graduate School and the Faculty. Staff development on a Faculty wide basis is co-ordinated by **Rowland**.

The University has established (through the Research Committee) a forum for early-career staff to enable networking across subject and discipline boundaries and to help identify and address common problems and allow issues to be raised at policy-making level.

All new academic staff of the University are supported through an accredited programme leading to a Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. A particular feature of the Chester programme is that the compulsory core modules provide developmental support helping and encouraging newly appointed staff to understand the demands and opportunities of research supervision, and encouraging them to study a further optional module that develops skills in supervision (with **Rowland, Stokes** and Moss having led master class sessions during this module).

In addition all senior staff mentor new colleagues and emergent researchers to develop their research and associated agenda.

The probationary and induction programmes are interlinked and ensure that all new members of staff are introduced to a wide range of facilities and policies. These include access to colleagues from the Research and Knowledge Transfer Office who can provide assistance in applying for grants and setting up R&D contracts. In addition, colleagues in the Graduate School assist through advertising research projects and interviewing and processing admissions for potential research students.

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The overarching strategic direction of research is informed at senior level by the Faculty Research Policy Committee. Operations are informed and supported by staff at all levels by means of the Faculty Research Committee, and Faculty Ethics Committee. These mechanisms have established a clear, transparent policy with staff participation at all levels.

In addition, the Professoriate meets on a termly basis and takes an active interest in research, scholarly activity and knowledge transfer. A recently established Faculty Research and Knowledge Transfer action group continues this work. Representatives from the Faculty, including the Faculty Management Group and all Faculty members (by means of away day workshops), are consulted and involved with developing the Faculty Business Plan which includes the Faculty Research Strategy. This reflects the Faculty's development and staffing needs in research, scholarly activity and knowledge transfer. A transparent mechanism for approaching research allowances and conference attendance was implemented in 2009 by **Rowland** and is reported annually. The Personal Development Review process is utilised to assess development needs and targets in support of academic development and research. Targets and objectives are agreed against the Faculty Research Plan.

The University's Annual Staff Conference is an all-day event held each year. Research is featured within the conference through several parallel sessions which showcase successful projects, opportunities to develop impact, and a sharing of good practice in grant applications and management, collaborative initiatives, and understanding good research governance.

In addition to this the Faculty has established a full programme of monthly research seminars and occasional public seminars to underpin the growing research culture. During the reporting period seminars were held which included presentations on current research being undertaken by staff and invited researchers from several national and international institutions including Leeds, Manchester, Surrey, Dublin, Birmingham, Stanford, Berkeley and Maine (USA), Pforzheim (Germany) and CEFAM (France).

The Faculty is in a strong growth phase of its development of research and knowledge transfer. The current Faculty's staffing policy is to recruit new staff that are able to contribute immediately not only to the teaching of students but also, where possible, who have experience of research and industry. Research is further strengthened by identifying and recruiting high quality visiting professors to the Faculty who have good business or research experience. During the reporting period we have recruited twelve visiting professors to the Faculty with either substantive research or professional experience to work alongside emergent and key staff to foster knowledge transfer and research publication and dissemination.

Staff are strongly encouraged and supported to develop their research and publish in quality journal publications and conference presentations. Faculty researchers hold substantive roles in national and international research communities. **Stokes** is Track Chair of the British Academy of Management Special Interest Group on Sustainable and Responsible Business. He is also the UK County Director for the EuroMed Business Research Institute. In 2011 he was the invited key-note speaker at the AIMSEC Conference in Zheng Zhou, China and in 2012 was the Emerald Publishing sponsored inaugural speaker at the Faculty of Management Studies in Delhi and invited speaker at IIM Ahmedabad, IIT Delhi and JNU Delhi doctoral seminars. He is editor of the *International Journal of Organizational Analysis* (Emerald Publishing).

The University of Chester supports activities promoting equality and diversity. There is a long-established annual University Diversity Festival to which all staff and students are invited. The University has a Disability Policy Staff Group that has been operational since 2007 and ensures a safe and supportive environment in which to discuss issues relating to disability. The Human Resources Department monitor regularly for equality issues as part of the recruitment process for staff and funded research students, and the University is currently working towards an Athena Swan award.

(ii) Research students

Training and support for postgraduate research students (PGR) students is a responsibility shared at Chester, between the Graduate School (with responsibility for providing generic training and

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support) and the subject centre which provides supervision and specialist training and support. PGR students are offered face-to-face training sessions by the Graduate School, supported by a Moodle site providing on-line access to training materials written and contributed by academic staff from across all subjects and faculties. Students experience both a central University induction, and a local induction within the Faculty, so that they have a full understanding of the regulations and services provided by central support departments as well as of the local support staff and facilities in the building where they are studying. All students undertake a skills audit to help them to identify their training needs, and they are encouraged to attend seminars and training sessions specifically designed for PGR student needs. Students who will be involved in teaching are expected to undertake specific training to prepare them for this activity, and may, if they wish, undertake modules leading to Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, which provides a good basis for future applications for academic posts.

Every student is supported by a team of at least two approved supervisors, one of whom is designated Director of Studies, and who has supervised at least one student to successful completion of the award. Face-to-face supervision meetings take place frequently, with at least one meeting per month being recorded with outcomes and targets. Following a probationary period of 6-9 months, student progress is reviewed formally. If the student’s registration is confirmed at the probationary review, a termly meeting of the full supervisory team reviews progress with the student subsequently and an Annual Progress Review (chaired by an independent academic staff member) reviews progress against objectives and expectations on an annual basis before the Annual Progress Board meeting. Students must submit a report, give a seminar and attend an interview before their upgrade from MPhil to PhD can be confirmed. There is a similar rigorous process to consider applications to transfer to ‘writing up’ status. Each Faculty has at least one Faculty PG tutor who is available to see PGR students by appointment and to resolve any issues or questions they may have. Faculty tutors represent their Faculty and its students at the regular Graduate School meetings and also represent the Graduate School as appropriate in their Faculty.

The University recognises the value of conference participation for all PGR students and has established a fund to provide a contribution to conference attendance. Each year applications are invited and all successful applicants are provided with financial support. Students have attended both national and international business and management conferences including BAM and Ashridge during the reporting period.

Since 2008 there has been a rapid growth in doctoral students from a base of zero to fifty students. The majority of these are part-time (43). There is a valuable equal balance between PhD and Professional Doctorates (DBA and DProf) within the Faculty and this has considerably helped enrich and strengthen the research culture and its development. The Faculty achieved the first University of Chester PhD by publication award in May 2011 (see below).

Doctoral degrees awarded	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	TOTAL
PhD	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	2.00
Professional doctorate	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

The growth of doctoral studies has been challenging in terms of building adequate supervisory capacity. However, overall it has proved motivational and has been used to inform and establish a progressive and supportive culture which informs staff development strategy. The doctoral programmes continue to grow and generate international interest, currently notably from Austrian, German, Israeli and French institutions. The professional doctorate programmes started in the academic year 2009/10 and it is anticipated that there will be a minimum of 6 completions in 2013/14.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

The Faculty is in the early stages of developing its research income. It has existed as an entity only since July 2008 and had not made submissions for earlier research assessment exercises. It has consequently relied upon a combination of small grants and business sponsorship of research to underpin its agenda and work. An example of this is the Unilever sponsored research project on Global Public Affairs in 2010/12 which helped stimulate a longitudinal study of public affairs practice. This was significant in moving forward the development of the International Centre for

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Corporate and Public Affairs.

The work of the Chester Forum is sponsored by Bank of America and EA Technology Limited. In 2012 Cheshire West and Chester Council sponsored commissioned research into the Chester financial services sector. In addition small University of Chester research grants have been gained by a number of staff. Furthermore, the Faculty successfully secured a Knowledge Action Network – ERDF bid which conducts development work in small to medium sized businesses and from which a number of research projects are being developed.

BELL utilises the Business Advisory Council chaired by the former Director of Skills Policy for the North West of England. Members provide strategic advice on research priorities and focus. Current members of this body include the CEOs of Marks and Spencer Money, Bank of America and Ureco and a Director from Airbus. In addition there are 19 senior decision makers from medium sized businesses and individual regional stakeholder interests.

There are two sponsored professorial chairs in the Faculty. These are the Grosvenor Trust sponsored, Westminster Chair of Marketing and Public Affairs (**Harris**) focused on regional business and public affairs; and the Bank of America, Chair of Consumer Financial Services (Pyke), which focuses on assessing the changing skills needs of the financial sector. The overall Professoriate possesses considerable local and international business experience and offers critical and strategic advice on the development of the Faculty research strategy.

The University of Chester Library subscribes to over 1,000 printed journals and more than 13,000 electronic journals which can be accessed online. The Library has approximately 260,000 printed volumes in its collections and books can be borrowed from across the libraries on the University's different sites. The collections also include 15,000 e-books which are core academic texts plus access to many other online materials. The Faculty has a designated expert librarian to help students and staff access research journals and help with referencing. Technicians are available during weekdays.

At the main campus library there is 24 hours access 7 days a week to computers, printing and quiet study space throughout the year and extended access to all collections across all sites is provided during term-time and at peak periods. There is a designated Postgraduate work room supplied by the Graduate School.

The Faculty is located on three prime sites. The Centre for Work Related Studies, The Centre for Corporate Business Enterprise (CBE) and all doctoral studies are located at Bache Hall, Chester. The Chester Business School and Work Based Learning are located at the Westminster Building, Chester. Warrington School of Management is situated in the Tucker Building at the Warrington Campus. All buildings have modern facilities and good internet and library access in order to allow for quality research. Access to Professional libraries is also available through Institutional memberships including access to the largest electronic management journal library in Europe.

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

BELL has developed a strong interdisciplinary and practitioner orientated research approach designed to produce quality inputs for its regional stakeholders as well as producing and disseminating research at UK and international academic conferences.

Interdisciplinary research has taken place with colleagues from a number of disciplines most notably from Education, Theology and Geography. This research has been in areas of: Management Education (**Warhurst**, Black, **Rowland** and Hulme); Sustainability (**Stokes**, Alexander and Adderley); Faith and Leadership (**Rowland** and Thomas); and Values (**Stokes** and Baker).

Existing networks and clusters have been utilised to underpin the University's relationships with business and commerce and to strengthen national competitiveness and regional cohesion. An illustration of this is the Chester Forum the annual gathering of key academics, decision makers and stakeholders who are committed to seeing their communities succeed and develop a sustainable society for the benefit of all. The research environment has been enriched by the research collaborations resulting from the exchange of ideas at the Forum. Some examples of this work are located in the Centre for Labour Market Development (CLMD). Research within CLMD

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includes the development of the Business Hub linking the University's Business Support and Incubator Programme, projects at the Cheshire West and Chester Council Development Teams and research for the Chamber of Commerce.

In 2011/12, **Harris** and Pyke and Adderley published the Review into the Financial Services Sector. This was a commissioned piece of research by a number of interest groups including the Mersey Dee Alliance. This was a well-received piece of original research and, consequently, the Centre was asked to undertake an economic impact assessment of Bank of America's operations in the UK. This was a high profile piece of work coming, as it did, in response to the threatened closure of the operation.

Other research projects include two research projects on behalf of Wirral Citizen's Advice Bureau: a 360 degree review and a value-added report highlighting issues within the organisation regarding management structure. Further projects in other centres include undertaking a review of Marketing Cheshire's visitor strategy, a project with Warrington Borough Council to support and inform their submission to the Future Cities Demonstrator competition and survey of 140 businesses for the North Wales and West Cheshire area. This survey (published as 'Exporting Goods and Services from West Cheshire and North Wales Survey Results 2012') measured barriers to exporting experience and has directly informed UKTI. This helped inform the research evidence submitted to the House of Lords Enquiry on SME Exports (Adderley, **Harris** and Russell).

Staff from all centres regularly contribute to national and international academic research communities by leading and promoting scholarly research at conferences, examples being:

- American Marketing Association Global Marketing SIG, Board Member (**Harris**)
- BAM, Sustainable & Responsible Business SIG, Track Chair, EuroMed Track Chair (**Stokes**)
- BIS, Business School/Mid-Sized Business (MSB) Task Force, Member (**Harris**)
- International Public Relations Research Symposium, Co-founder and Chair (Moss)
- BAM, Performance Management SIG Committee and EuroMed Track Chair Organization Behaviour (**Rowland**)

Members of staff are also actively engaged in the editing journals and preparing conferences (some of these roles have been referred to in previous sections) other examples are Journal Editors; *International Journal of Organizational Analysis* (**Stokes**); *Journal of Public Affairs* (**Harris** and Moss). Conference Organisers; Slovenian Academy of Management (**Stokes**), **Rowland**, **Stokes** and Moore have collaborated with a wide range of international colleagues through the EuroMed Business research Institute (EMBRI). This has seen the production of a range of conferences, publishing and research projects with colleagues from international institutions such as: University of Nicosia (Dimitrios Vrontis), Hochschule Pforzeim, Germany, (Bernd Britzelmeir) and Radboud University, Netherlands (Max Wisser).

A large number of staff are members of Professional associations in the area of Management, HRM, Marketing, Tourism and Finance. The majority of Professors are Fellows of at least one professional body.

The Faculty is committed to growing, developing and enhancing research capacity and capability through both staff and students (see section c). Specific emphasis on postgraduate research training is realised through personal development review, self-assessment, and mentorship. The University provides centralised development by means of the Graduate School yearly training programmes some resulting in teaching qualifications and professional memberships. The Faculty provides mentorship for both staff and doctoral students in areas of teaching and research methods by means of research seminars, scholarly activity master classes and special interest research groups. Wednesday afternoons are given a priority and timetables are arranged to give maximum availability for staff to attend seminars. Close collaboration takes place between BELL, the Graduate School and the Faculty of Education to maximise opportunities for participants to gain knowledge, skills and certification.