

<p><b>Institution: University of Northampton</b></p> <p><b>Unit of Assessment: 34 - Art and Design: History Practice and Theory</b></p> <p><b>a. Overview</b>          Art and Design at the University of Northampton (UoN) forms part of the School of The Arts, one of six Schools in the University. Research in Art and Design is focused structurally in the Centre for Practice-led Research in the Arts (CPLRA), one of two University approved research centres in the School, the other being the Centre for Contemporary Narrative and Cultural Theory. The two centres provide the School with a wide base of research subjects, groupings and themes, inter and cross disciplinary opportunities in Art, Design, Performance and Music, and in English, Creative Writing, Screen and Broadcast Media. Performance and Music are also part of the Centre for Practice-led research in the Arts. The School of The Arts' associated and coordinated leadership, organisation, direction and support, provides for a rich culture and environment for staff and students that has facilitated the growth and enhancement of research during the assessment period.</p> <p><b>b. Research strategy</b>          The strategic objectives of Art and Design, aligned with those of the University and School are to (1) generate research excellence, with high impact; (2) develop collaborative, interdisciplinary research; (3) sustain a robust research culture; (4) ensure momentum through financial viability and capacity; (5) increase and diversify income sources.</p> <p><b>Research Strategy- Building on RAE 2008</b>          Following RAE 2008 a number of steps have been taken to achieve the strategic objectives, by strengthening the areas of excellence and extending the range of research in history, practice and theory across subject areas in art and design, increasing the numbers of research active staff; engaging collaboratively with others, forging national/international links and networks; and enriching the research culture through programmes of exhibitions, symposia, seminars and lectures; and supporting funding applications.</p> <p>The appointment of Middleton as Dean of the School (2009), a lead researcher, and the introduction of a university wide project on 'Raising The Bar' (2010- ) in research, learning and teaching has provided a clear focus and line of sight for all staff as part of Personal Development Reviews on the major objectives for research in the School. Further appointments to Deputy Dean, Bingham, with responsibility for research and new posts of Subject Leaders (eg Darbyshire;- Fine Art ; Leet-Photography) with clear responsibility for leading and developing research has resulted in growth and development in meeting the indicators set out in the strategy:</p> <p><b>Research Strategy 2008-13</b>          Research in Art and Design as part of the Centre for Practice-Led Research is focused in two Research Groups: The Design Research Group ( Middleton, Puzzovio, Schaber , Taylor) and the Fine Art and Photography Research Group ( Gallery, Darbyshire, Evans, Gant, Hollinshead, Leet, Leahy, Love, Middleton, Staff) .</p> <p>Research in art and design engages in practice-led, theoretically engaged, and applied research. Theoretical and practice based research are interconnected, with research in art and design history and theory forming integral parts of research in each of the groups. Each group (led by a Subject Leader) fosters the publication and dissemination of research; develops funding bids, organises research seminars conferences and encourages collaboration between researchers in and beyond the institution.</p> <p>Research outcomes continue to take different forms, extending beyond those registered at RAE 2008, and include exhibitions and installations of practice and design, (including sculpture photography, typography, painting and printmaking), publications (as books, book chapters, exhibition catalogues, journal and conference papers, web sites), curation, typeface design and in</p>
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the application of design to commerce and industry.

The range of research and the number of researchers has been extended and increased during the assessment period - in Design (**Schaber, Puzzovio, and Middleton**), Photography (Darbyshire, **Leet and Love**), Printmaking (**Love, Leahy**) and Drawing (**Gant, Love, Staff, Cureton**) in addition to research in Painting (Gallery, **Evans, Middleton**), in Illustration (Taylor) and Curation (Cureton, **Staff, Hollinshead**).

A further demonstration of the achievement of the strategic aims lies in the range of themes researchers have engaged in. Central themes include **Drawing**, a varied but fundamental strand in the work of both groups, seen in the collaboration between **Cureton** and **Staff** with outcomes as exhibitions, papers and outreach programmes (documented in the Impact Case Study); central to **Middleton's** research into the pictographs of the Naxi people in China and in a different form in his drawings in Normandy; vital to **Puzzovio** in the development of the Armenian digital font; tested in the innovations of **Taylor's** Illustration; and extended in the videos of **Gant**.

**Landscape** has been a dominant theme for researchers at Northampton, and known for the previous insights (Harper- retired) but now challenged in the work on contested landscape in the photography of **Darbyshire** and paintings of **Middleton**; by **Callery** working with archaeologists to challenge assumptions about landscape as enduring and to register the impact of changing landscape on landscape based painting; and with **Leet**, who explores photography's relationship to nature, specifically, the theoretical, historical and interdisciplinary dimensions of ecocriticism and photography.

The number of **historical and theoretical themes** has increased with research in the application of Jungian Theory to Painting (**Evans**) and formerly Parker (left 2013); Modernity and Painting (**Staff**); the Critical Readings of Photography (**Leet**), aspects of Visual Communication and Semiotics (**Middleton**), and Product Design (**Schaber**), Contemporary Abstract Painting (**Evans**) and the History of the Armenian alphabet (Puzzovio). **Curation** has become a significant research outcome (**Cureton, Staff, Middleton, Hollinshead**), as have forms of **Public Art (Hollinshead)**.

### Research Strategy 2014-19

The strategy for Art and Design in the period 2014- 2019 will focus on the key objectives of extending the research base, further enriching the research culture, developing collaboration, achieving financial sustainability, enhancing the quality of research, achieving excellence with impact.

The Centre for Practice based Research in the School of Arts has seen and supported a growth in the range and quality of research during the assessment period. The Centre will sustain the research environment, mentoring experienced staff to make successful applications for Readerships, Associate and full Professorships, developing their research, and mentoring new research staff in making funding applications and in collaborative projects with others nationally and internationally. As experienced staff are able to assume greater levels of leadership they will mentor staff who are at this point only have aspirations towards research. They will extend the supervisory base and contribute to an expansion of the post graduate research environment. The Centre will continue to work across the School with the Centre for Contemporary Narrative and Cultural Theory for the benefit of the entire school and audiences of research. The processes and functions that have nourished research to date will be strengthened ensuring that the momentum gained during the REF 2014 period will be sustained.

In common with other centres in art and design there are constituent disciplines that remain under represented in research, notably the design fields of Fashion and Textiles, Footwear, Interior Design and Graphics, all of which are areas of strength at undergraduate and taught masters levels at the UoN, with the potential for development at postgraduate research and research levels. A major aim therefore is to build on the steps taken to develop research in these areas by introducing staff to research through a programme of seminars and mentoring, utilising collaborative links and opportunities to foster research, and strengthening the postgraduate base

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as a foundation for emergent researchers (Staffing Strategy and Development).

The Centre will continue to engage in a full programme of research events in the form of a Collaboration and Development Forum, a 'First steps in Research' programme, Seminars, Symposia and Conferences to develop, stimulate and engage with staff and external audiences; to take command of identified research topics and themes, confirming the Centre for Practice-based Research in the Arts at the UoN as a recognised centre in key fields of research activity and a strategic partner with others in collaborative research networks in the history, practice and theory of art and design.

Increasing the level of research income won from external sources is important to the future sustainability of research. Steps will be taken to increase success in this, making effective use of bid writing training and the information on funding opportunities provided by the University through the Research and Strategic Bidding office, and managing targeted applications to research councils, trusts, arts organisations, and to industrial and commercial partners, which have to date been successful, utilising the experience across the School and University.

A key objective is to increase the number of PhD registrations and completions to sustain the growth in research that has taken place to date in the assessment period. During the REF assessment period the number of completions (2) by staff has increased in line with the strategy and will contribute to the supervisory base for an expansion in registrations, develop emerging strands and create opportunities for those new to research. A number of bursaries will be introduced to attract suitably qualified applicants.

Staff will continue to engage in research for the social, economic and cultural benefit of our audiences, communities and partners. This will continue to feature as a key objective in all research plans and personal development reviews.

Staff will continue to collaborate with colleagues at other institutions and develop new and existing networks in line with plans in place for the period beyond 2014 .

**c. People,**

The selection, development, support and management of research staff is in line with the guidance set out in the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and aligned with University policies governing diversity and equality, staff development and appraisal and reflected in a framework of support and monitoring mechanisms at University, School and Research Centre levels. Research leadership comes from the School's DoR (**Wilson**) who chairs the **School Research & Enterprise Committee**, advises on bidding activity, research projects, staff research plans, and develops research strategy

**c.i) Staffing Strategy and Development****Recruitment strategy**

Recruitment of new staff has aimed to strengthen the two research groups, encourage new areas of research, or meet strategic aims within the subject area and the School: e.g. New appointments are in place in Illustration( ECR Taylor), Printmaking (**ECR Leahy**) and Fine Art ( **ECR Darbyshire** and **ECR Cureton**) and importantly, in the the design area of Product Design, Interior Design and Architectural Technology , and to lead the Design Group, a new appointment (James Engel) with new staff (Liana Psarologaki) to develop this area post 2014. In Fashion and Textiles ,an important area for development, a new appointment is due to be made in December 2013 to capitalise on emerging research in Footwear ( Schaber) and practice based research Fashion and Textiles. With **Symposia on Textiles**, and **Creative Cutting** planned for 2014 to aid networking and collaboration.

**Staff Development.**

The Director of Research (Professor Wilson) together with Readers, Associate Professors and

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research coordinators oversee the work of the Centre for Practice led Research in the Arts. The strategy has involved a programme of support and development for those new to research, the selection of staff with research potential in the recruitment to key subject roles, together with assistance in the form of research leave and funding for those with research projects of worth to improve the quality of them. This strategy has resulted in a number of staff undertaking PhD's, and resulted in a number of completions and registrations: **Parker** – Fine Art Painting, (completed 2012, left 2013), **Chapman** Fine Art Painting- (completed 2012, left 2013), and **Langford** - Photography (due for completion 2013) have been supported in studying for PhD's. Staff have also been supported in achieving PhD's at other centres: **Evans**, (London Met University, completed 2011), **Love** (Chelsea, University of the Arts, completed 2012); joining **Leet** and **Staff**, and new staff **Darbyshire**, **Hollinshead** and **Cureton** with doctorates. Other staff currently registered include: **Child** (In Sustainable Fashion at Chelsea, University of the Arts, adding incrementally to the numbers of staff with a greater understanding of and engagement in research, widening the research base, increasing the numbers eligible to supervise, and contributing to the sustainability and vitality of research in art and design at Northampton.

Support is available for all members of staff, and to recognise and reward research success, for example through research-based promotion to the University's schemes for Reader (Staff), which included a one-term sabbatical. Workload allocation is carefully monitored by Subject Leaders to ensure an equitable distribution of teaching and administrative roles to facilitate research. Funding from the University's REF Investment Fund has been used to provide support for specific projects (Staff and Cureton- Impact Case Study in the Uses of Drawing). Staff can apply to the School research budget (approx. £20K p.a.) for funds to cover conference attendance, visiting speakers, exhibitions and cost of mounting symposia and colloquia. Funding bids of over £1200 are considered by the School Research and Enterprise Committee. During 2008-13, staff have been supported in this way: e.g. **Darbyshire's** research project and exhibition in France.

### Research Training.

A range of training workshops is provided by the University's Research and Strategic Bidding Office in bid-writing, the Freedom of Information Act, giving presentations and getting published. This is amplified within the School of the Arts through collaboration with the Graduate School by seminars dedicated to topics such as research publication and design. The training is targeted at ECRs, but is open to all members of staff. ECRs receive support through the probation period with active mentoring by a senior colleague in keeping with the guidance set out in the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. All new staff can undertake the Supervisor's Development Programme and experienced supervisors are required to attend annual update training. PGR supervision is carried out in teams and ECRs are paired as second supervisors with more experienced first supervisors; the roles of supervisor and Director of Studies are supported by a workload allocation of 40 hours p.a. per supervisory team.

### Monitoring research.

In 2009 the **Performance Development Review** (PDR) process was aligned to a new research support system called Academic Interactive Mapping (AIM), whereby staff members agreed their research aims and plans over three years with the School's then Deputy Dean of Research. Funding opportunities, resources and support by which to accomplish and disseminate outcomes were identified as part of individual staff development. Annual meetings with Subject Leaders and the School's DoR (**Wilson**) occur for all staff as part of the University's appraisal system to set specific research objectives for short and medium terms, and agree a plan for their successful delivery. The AIM/PDR process is one way in which School targets for research income are devolved to individuals and/or groups; additional support is offered through the School Research and Enterprise Committee, and seed funding (from Santander and the School's research funds). In these ways the number, size and success of funding applications have been increased, and research income augmented. Staff are encouraged to partner colleagues within the Unit and the School on major research bids, and to actively develop research networks. The process of securing external funding has been facilitated by allocations of QR money deployed by the University's REF Investment Fund (Staff, Cureton and Schaber.) These practices, with closer management of research strategy through monitoring, implementation and evaluation and annual

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Research Away days, have led to increased and enhanced research outputs. The success of our staffing strategy and staff development policies is evidenced in the fact that one staff member (**Schaber**), not included in RAE 2008 is represented in this REF submission.

**Research Students**

The number of Research students during the assessment period has increased on RAE2008 with 4 registrations and 2 completions.

Research students are recruited and supported in accordance with the Concordat to support the Career Development of researchers. The Graduate School coordinates a programme of monitoring, support and training.

Students have presented at conferences: Research Narratives, Chelsea College of Art and Design 2009; Methodologies, Camberwell College of Arts, 2011 and The Practice Exchange, Chelsea College of Arts, 2012.

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

A total of £332,351.88 has been earned by researchers through KTP's and other funded projects with Research Councils, EU government bodies, UK government bodies, industry, commerce and charities. Funding has also been awarded by other galleries, exhibition organisers and other organisations and universities for research projects.

**Infrastructure**

The infrastructure supporting research is organised at University, School and Research Centre levels in the form of the Research Committee, the Research and Strategic Bidding Office (RSBO) and the Graduate School at University level, at School level by the Research and Enterprise Committee, and through the research centres, the Centre for Practice-led Research in the Arts and the the Centre for Contemporary Narrative and Cultural Theory.

The RSBO, staffed by 3 full time administrators, communicates information and coordinates opportunities for training and funding through the Research Support Hub, an online blog which provides a one stop shop for researchers and students, listing the latest news on funding, conferences and other events, and on training and support. The Graduate School plays a central role in providing a University-wide framework for training, support, career preparation and administration to help all postgraduate research degree students and early career researchers achieve their potential. Support for research students includes a 'tool kit' guide to the process of registration, study, training and opportunities together with a newsletter and a student committee.

The School Research and Enterprise Committee (SREC) takes an overview of the organisation and operation of research receiving reports from all active research agencies from university and centre levels, leading on action required to manage and support research in the School.

The two research centres in the school coordinate mutually supportive activities through the Research Forum made up of representatives from each centre and organise support for research students, providing mentoring for those new to research and assistance in other activities such as advice on bid writing and applications, in running school wide lectures and seminars on Cultural Interpretation featuring invited speakers- for example Mark Lawson from BBC's Front Row radio programme, Anthony Spira from the Milton Keynes Gallery. Researchers from both Centres regularly present, are required to present, on their research, in a series of seminars organised by the Director of Research

The Centre for Practice-based Research in the Arts manages and coordinates the work of researchers in the areas of Art and Design, and Performance through Unit of Assessment and Research Group leaders, Professors and Readers. The Centre works to develop research and supports a wide range of researchers, prospective researchers and PhD students and facilitates cross-disciplinary dialogue on research issues, methodologies and forms of dissemination,

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providing a regular newsletter to communicate the activities of researchers and promote opportunities.

**Facilities**

All research staff and students are equipped with facilities in the form of IT equipment and office space. Projection and darkroom facilities together with a digital imaging lab are available with technical support as required for researchers in art and design.

A valuable resource is The Avenue Gallery in the School of the Arts, supported by a full time gallery administrator and part time technician.

(<http://avenuegallery.org/A%20Gallery/avenuegalleryhome.html> <https://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/Avenue-Gallery/110911768248>) The gallery provides a space to exhibit practice-based research in art and design by internal and external researchers. A full programme extending throughout the assessment period has offered an opportunity for established, new and emerging practice-led research to test outcomes and engage with an audience, enriching the research culture. Exhibitions and accompanying talks and seminars have been held by researchers in art and design, eg **Love - Dust**, (2013); **Middleton- Love British Books**, and *China's Forgotten Kingdoms* (2013); **Evans, Viewfinder** (2012); and other researchers from the centre for Practice led research, e.g. **Prior (Performance) Colour my Well Being** (2012); **Bacon and Middelow – Sensualities** (2011); together with exhibitions by external researchers; **Kardasis, One Skin Beyond** (2011); **Angela Rogers An encounter with Drawing** ( 2012); **David Maclagan: Signs of Life** ( 2010); **Emma Powell Rejecta Resololution- Sustainable Design** (2009) ; and a range of exhibitions curated by UoN researchers and invited researchers from other institutions: *Land and Water-* with researchers from Plymouth University (2010); Olympic Posters from the UoN Osborne Robinson Collection (2012); Artists Books (2008); Diary Drawing (2008); and exhibitions of work by local colleges and community groups and individuals on related research and impact: **Leon Martindale: Illness and Epiphany** ( 2009) ; *A Place in Time*, a community of artists at Tresham College (2013); *Hear my voice*, an exhibition of adults with learning and physical disabilities (2011); *Vintage Interiors* , curated by the local Centre for Community Volunteering (March 2011).

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

A contribution to the discipline and research base has been in a number of research events in art and design featuring UoN researchers and by involving invited external researchers. Notably: a series of research lectures, under the title, The Articulation Lecture Series, ( John Hilliard, David Maclagan, Chris Drury, Ian McKeever , Richard Wilson, Penelope Curtis, Mark Francis, Ian Davenport, and Susan MacWilliam) together with Symposia: 'The World at your Feet ( March 2013) , a Symposium on Footwear in collaboration with the Northampton Museum; The Insistence of Drawing, a Symposium featuring Anita Taylor, David Rayson, Gavin Delahunty and others, (June 2013); and on Psychology and Art in the Psyche and Arts Network Symposium, (May 2013) , and the Land 2 colloquium at UoN on Landscape and Photography (2009). Langford ( PhD student 2013) and Harper (retired 2010) at UoN and other researchers at University of the West of England and the University of Plymouth have collaborated through the Land 2 network, realising a joint project as 'Nature On Site' at Leeds City Gallery (2012). Research exhibitions and video conference on landscape and the arts held between staff at the University of Plymouth and the University of Northampton: *Emerging Landscapes: Between Production and Representation*. A Symposium hosted at the University of Hertfordshire. Researchers contributed to a series of public lectures within 'What is Contemporary Art?' (2012), sponsored and hosted by Milton Keynes Gallery included UoN researchers: *Cureton – Drawing the Landscape* (2012); *Evans- Landscape towards Abstraction* (2012).

Interdisciplinary and collaborative research takes place between the two wings of the Centre for Practice-led Research in the Arts and with researchers at other institutions. Links between Art and Design and Performance in the centre provided opportunities to investigate The Arts and Well Being in the Conference and Exhibition, 'Colour- my Well Being' in association with the Journal, Applied Arts and Health, ([www3.Northampton.ac.uk/arts and health](http://www3.Northampton.ac.uk/arts%20and%20health)).

The network 'Psyche and the Arts' was created by Parker (left 2013) at UoN and Professor Jane

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Bacon, formerly at the UoN at the University of Chichester, with links to the International Association of Jungian Scholars and San Francisco Jung Institute. The Psyche in the Arts Research Network has created an online space for critical debate, sharing the interrogation of 'depth experience' and arts/performance practice and research. It makes a contribution in developing new modes of theorising from the experience of psyche and the processes of creation. Professors Midgellow (Middlesex) and Bacon (Chichester) both formerly at UoN and who devised and ran the Choreographic Lab in Performance have continued to collaborate across the Centre for Practice led Research.

Love at UoN and Devison from Anglia Ruskin University collaborated in establishing the 'Print Research Network' ([www.printresearchnetwork.org.uk](http://www.printresearchnetwork.org.uk)).

Researchers have continued to collaborate with a number of established researchers from other centres, including Professor Paul Coldwell (Camberwell, University of the Arts), Professor Ian McKeever (University of Brighton), Professor Basil Kardasis (Royal College of Art), Professor Christine White (NTU), Professor Alison Oddey, (NTU) and Fellow, Anthony Spira (Milton Keynes Gallery).

At a School level the School Research Forum (SRF) comprising all Readers, Professors and Associate Dean (research) considers the processes and initiatives concerned with strategy and development. Members of the Forum represent the School on all key research committees across the institution. The Forum enables communication between the various research groupings across the School, coordinates all common research ventures and training activities and shares examples of best practice. In this context Art and Design continually evaluates its development and standing by comparison to other supported research units and contributes to future research direction and management.