

Institution: Manchester Metropolitan University

Unit of Assessment: C22 Social Work and Social Policy

a. Overview

The University opted for a transformational change in Social Work and Social Policy, following a careful consideration of the RAE in 2008. A regrouping and repositioning followed strategic investment around key areas of critical professional training (social work, forensic psychology and probation/police) in which we were well placed and already recognised as providing quality training, to make a strong contribution. This included a major investment in our criminal justice research with a series of strategic appointments (including two Chairs) and organisational restructuring (including the creation of a new applied research unit [the Policy Evaluation and Research Unit {PERU} – www.mmuperu.co.uk]). Building on this internal change we created a series of strategic partnerships with key criminal justice agencies in Greater Manchester and the North West that has resulted in MMU winning the contract to deliver the Probation Qualification Framework (professional training for probation officers) for the North West; strategic links with Greater Manchester Police resulting in collaborative research, teaching and professional training; and close links with Greater Manchester Probation Trust, including a jointly-funded research post. This work is on-going. PERU continues to expand, reflecting the success of these partnerships, and we are now developing new police training in the UK and abroad (Qatar).

Researchers in the MMU Social Work and Social Policy submission are affiliated to two research institutes – the Research Institute for Health and Social Change (RIHS-C), based within the Faculty of Health, Psychology and Social Change, and the Institute for Humanities and Social Science Research (IHSSR), based within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science. Research focus is around two overarching and distinctive areas: **Critical Disability Studies and Marginalisation**, and **Criminal Justice and Policy Interventions**. Major achievements in the period 2008-13 can be summarised as:

1. Expanding inter-disciplinary reach and strengthening the research base: Our 2008 submission relied almost exclusively on internationally recognised community psychology and critical disability research derived from RIHSC. This present submission also includes the work of researchers in criminal justice and policy development (n=8) who have added significant value to the vitality and sustainability of the research environment. This is evidenced by an increase in interdisciplinary collaborations (40 projects with 30 external partners) and increased relevance to the particular social and criminological challenges of our City and Region.

2. Diversifying and Increasing income: Total research and knowledge exchange income over the period is £2.5M with specific research expenditure at £1.3M from more than 20 awards. We have secured 4 x ESRC awards for our research into Critical Disabilities Studies – an MMU “niche” that is gaining national and international recognition and sourced further funding from NIHR, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Big Lottery and British Academy/Leverhulme.

3. Increasing high quality output: Publications relevant to UoA22 in 2008-2013 comprise 12-authored books, 9 edited works, 105 journal articles and 84 chapters. Submitted staff delivered 45 keynotes and over 200 reviewed conference presentations. We have made a significant contribution to the two areas of professional training organising 12 conferences, 75 seminars, and 60 workshops.

4. Methodological and theoretical maturity: Our research addresses the International Federation of Social Work view of social work as promoting social change, problem solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance wellbeing. All submitted research is characterised by the highest ethical standards and a commitment to social justice that has enabled us to develop a model for applied research with impact that has received recognition from Research Councils (ESRC report in impact case study) & the Higher Education Press (Times Higher Education award).

b. Research strategy

The 2010-2014 strategy for research in SWSP at MMU is:

- 1. To increase quality and further develop research which is responsive to professional training** – with a particular focus on expanding the reach and significance of **inter-disciplinary research**.
- 2. To sustain innovation** – developing approaches using a variety of research methods in partnership with national and international partners.
- 3. To continue to produce impact** – we aim to produce research that addresses the particular social and criminological challenges of the Northwest region and beyond, and produces appropriate and measurable change.
- 4. To support researchers at all levels, developing and investing in retention and recruitment** – providing career development opportunities and to selectively invest in the retention and recruitment of excellent research staff.

(1) Increasing quality and focusing on inter-disciplinary research. The disciplinary base of our submission has widened from 2008 to include community psychologists, sociologists, researchers in social policy and the different practices of social work, criminologists and youth workers. Researchers collaborate across two areas; **Critical Disability Studies and Marginalisation** (Lawthom, Grech, Runswick-Cole, Kagan, Lee-Treweek, McLaughlin, McLaughlin and Worley) employs an assets-based approach to disability, wellbeing, social work and poverty; and **Criminal Justice and Policy Innovation** (Fox, Smithson, Ralphs, Albertson, Ashby, Lowe, Bannister and Wright). This latter group specialises in programme evaluations and advising on the development of national (and local) evidence-informed criminal justice policy around crime reduction, young people and advice services and substance misuse (awarded £1.5 million in external contracts since 2008). Collaboration in practice includes policy development around the rehabilitation of offenders that draws on the concept of ‘personalisation’ from the social care sector and concepts of social justice that parallel work undertaken within critical disability studies. This focus has increased interdisciplinary research collaborations and we can evidence 40 projects with 30 external partners, yielding 40 reports for collaborators, in addition to academic outputs.

(2) Sustaining Innovation – Developing collaborative multi-method approaches to research SWSP research embeds innovative multi-method designs into its research. Critical Disability and Marginalisation researchers focus on critical analyses of policy, practice dilemmas, and the experiences of those marginalised through disability, displacement, and personal distress. Working collaboratively with commissioners and participants allows methods to develop which meet the needs of service providers and end-users appropriately. Criminal justice policy innovation (led by Fox) researchers have developed a cross-disciplinary approach that draws upon criminology, economics, policy studies and business studies. Collaboration with agencies across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to develop detailed delivery models is a key component of this work.

(3) Generating Impact – Research that addresses the Social Challenges of the Northwest and Beyond. We are located in Manchester in the North West, which is Europe’s 12th largest regional economy at £120 billion. The diverse North West region enjoys both pockets of relative wealth as well as high concentrations of poverty and attendant social issues. Our SWSP group works across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, has policy and practice at its heart, and incorporates principles of diversity, human rights and social justice. We engage with a range of international partners to compare practice and policy and bring that experience back to the North West. Work undertaken by the CJPI group on offender rehabilitation represents a distinct UK version of the Justice Reinvestment approach developed in the US. This work is underpinned by a series of evaluations of offender rehabilitation projects at regional prisons, including HMP Manchester, HMP Preston and HMP Forest Bank. We take a partnership, multi-agency approach to addressing social challenges. Examples include a jointly-funded Professorship we held with Manchester City Council (2008-2010) working on the evaluation of elderly care and a Joseph Rowntree Foundation-funded project that partnered with a Chinese social enterprise to explore forced labour experiences (included in REF3a). SWSP researchers were early adopters of the

impact and public engagement agenda (see REF3a) and we have won externally recognised awards from the Manchester Beacon for Public Engagement and The Times Higher for impact-generating activity. Our ESRC-funded project (Beyond Blair: Does Every Child Matter) was acclaimed by the Chair of the ESRC as a great example of impact in practice (REF3b).

(4) Supporting Researchers – Providing Recruitment and Career Development

Opportunities at all Levels. Sustainability of a vibrant and collegiate research environment within the SWSP area is critical to our future development plans. Providing opportunities to retain, recruit and critically to develop staff (at all levels) is therefore considered a vitally important crosscutting aim of our strategy. More details are included in section c (below) but since 2008 we have invested in strategic recruitment at different levels bringing in new Professors (n=3) with academic and practice knowledge, and mid-career and early career researchers (n=5). SWSP, supported through MMU's infrastructure has developed a portfolio of career development opportunities to move researchers through a clearly-defined trajectory and provide more networking and engagement opportunities, in order to complement our interdisciplinary aspirations and provide academic support. Externally facing Conferences, seminars, and workshops (see below) are balanced by internal brown bag lunches, roundtables around developing research themes (and an annual conference that involves major contributions from leading researchers as well as other research staff and students. This activity has proved effective and during the period internal promotions are evident- Lawthom to Reader and then Professor, Albertson, Smithson and Runswick-Cole to Reader/Senior Research Fellow.

Achievement of 2008 Aims and Objectives The aims provided in RAE2008 were to consolidate inter-disciplinary research in partnership; increase research active staff; maintain strengths; maintain degree completions whilst growing supervisory capacity and increase international collaborations to establish a focus for good practice and research. These aims were subsequently reviewed in late 2009 when a new research alliance was formed around the two groups represented in this submission. This alliance was constructed on a shared ethos and commitment to 'socially just' ethical practice. Whilst RAE2008 aims were used as a starting point, we also developed the 2010-2014 Strategy referenced above to focus on creating an environment that could sustain our fresh approach to SWSP research and support and (ultimately) realise these strategic aims.

Forward Strategy – 2014 and Beyond Planning for the future shape of SWSP research at MMU post REF2014 is already underway. We believe that our current aims (as referenced in our 2010-2014 strategy) are "fit for purpose" but recognise that we should consolidate and sustain the structures and environment around these aims. To enable this our specific operational plan over the next 5 years first of all requires us to retain the excellent researchers that we have included in this submission whilst developing and / or recruiting new researchers into SWSP to enable us to increase the numbers of "returnable" research staff by 50% (from n=16 to n=24). Mobilising research mindedness across the wider staff base is a strategic priority. We will continue to focus on high quality, high-impact interdisciplinary research and are already concentrating on developing specific strands of applied work that addresses current challenges (e.g. work on disability, tackling crime and social work practice link into the thematic priorities of Research Councils). We wish to continue building capacity around our Critical Disabilities Studies expertise including a focus on the internationalisation of this agenda (already underway through Grech and others). Social innovation and work undertaken by researchers in criminal justice such as Fox's Justice Reinvestment Framework is mapping directly onto social policy and is already beginning to generate an impact both locally and nationally, through the delivery of seminars and training sessions to a number of criminal justice organisations in the UK. McLaughlin's appointment (as a former Head of Social Services) is catalysing a new focus on social work that is practice related, already building research capacity for the next submission. The strategic appointment of Professor Bannister (Fellow Academy Social Sciences 2013) will strengthen the unit's projected income and publication outputs, within the areas of urban criminology and territoriality. Finally, SWSP research at MMU is being provided with a unique opportunity to sustain local partnerships with the university's £140M investment into a new "community" campus called Birley Fields (www.mmu.ac.uk/birleyfields) in the heart of inner city Manchester. This will provide state-of-the-art facilities and research

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partnerships are already being formed with local schools, healthcare centres and community groups. This move will further catalyse our commitment to real world research, and brings together education, social work, psychology trainings collocated with MMU academics and facing the community.

c. People, including staffing strategy and staff development**i. Staffing Strategy**

As indicated in section b our staffing strategy is simply to support researchers to become the best possible – to invest core funding into recruitment and to create a ladder of career development opportunities at all levels In RAE2008, 26 individual staff were submitted (FTE 19.5). The present submission represents greater research selectivity and quality. High quality researchers included in our submission (n=16, FTE- 14.45) are drawn from a broader pool of research-active colleagues (n= 35) who are at different stages of their career development. We have boosted expertise in Social Work and the emergence of an MMU “niche” in Critical Disabilities Studies by recruiting Grech (ECR) and Runswick-Cole (returned). We have continued to recruit heavily into the Criminal Justice and Policy Innovation area bringing in 2 x Professors (Fox, Bannister), 2 x mid-career researchers (Ralphs and Smithson) and 3 x early-career researchers (Ashby, Wright and Lowe). These posts are all QR funded and we have also committed additional external income to enhance the research environment and build capacity for taking on a larger portfolio of projects by recruiting 4 x research associates into the CJPI area. Staff included in the RAE2008 return that do not feature this time have either been promoted out, transferred to part-time status Professor Kagan (included) or are submitted by MMU in an alternative UOA (Batsleer into Education).

Career development and training All staff complete an annual personal development review where goals are discussed and career development reviewed. Research workloads are allocated in a research outcomes-based annual review, where staff evidence achievements in publications, research bidding, PhD supervision and related activities. All staff are affiliated to a Research Institute and strategic goals around research and knowledge exchange are prioritised and discussed. Individuals are supported to bid for money as either co-investigators or Principal Investigators (PIs). This approach is institutionally funded through internal researcher accelerator grants (c.5K start-up awards) which support the development of larger bids. Similarly, to enhance impact generation, internal knowledge exchange start up grants (5K) facilitate opportunities in this area. In addition to wider institutional training and development opportunities available to all researchers (e.g. research bidding, bibliometric notations, writing for success workshops, we have also sustained a rolling programme of discipline-specific training designed to help SWSP researchers to meet our strategic aims. Specialist methodological training has included data analysis, evaluation training, social return on investment methodologies, how to inform policy workshops and impact surgeries. Staff can take advantage of a ring-fenced budget allocation to create new partnerships, attend conferences, seminars and events. A dedicated budget is available for staff to develop relevant research strands and to finance time to explore work around external funding bids. Researchers submitted to this UoA, have organised 12 conferences, 75 seminars, and 60 workshops. The research and knowledge exchange culture is promoted by a host of International seminars and symposia such as annual conferences on ‘Child, youth, family and disability’, ‘Normalcy’, ‘Disability and the Global South’. There is also an annual conference for all researchers and academic staff; an annual research student symposium; and a full programme of public lectures including ‘Ethical Issues in Humanities and Social Science Research’. There is a seminar series featuring in-house speakers and presentations, brown bag lunches around emerging research and PhD work and roundtables around specific areas e.g. Migrant Research Day. We host regular forums including the North West Practitioner Forum (a forum for criminal justice practitioners and academics), The Ministry of Justice Academy for Commissioning (North) – MMU hosts the Northern branch of the Academy; end of project dissemination events such as JRF Forced Labour, ESRC Post Blair day.

Equality and Diversity HR policy around equality and diversity has supported research within the unit. In recognition of our commitment to celebrating equality and diversity, MMU has been awarded the Disability Two Ticks standard, Disability Standards Bronze Award, Athena SWAN Bronze Award and Investors in People Champion status. MMU is implementing the Concordat for

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researcher development including Swan In the present submission there is good evidence of excellent alignment of equalities issues as staff submitted contain 4 x ECRs, part-time staff and 3 x members with specific circumstances taken into account. Staff are supported through internal promotions, 5 x members of the current submission have been internally promoted in the period (Fox, Albertson, Lawthom, Runswick-Cole, Smithson). All staff undertake equality training and those involved in REF co-ordination undertook diversity awareness training. Policies and processes are transparent and research goals and outputs are considered through an equality lens.

ii Research students

Academic staff submitted here support c. 48 students undertaking doctoral work, through both traditional and professional routes. Students are often drawn to the part time route, as they embedded in practice and professions, which further enables impact upon practice. During the period, Research institutes, using QR money, strategically financed 10 studentships (6 x fully, 4 x partly funded) with research areas aligning strategically to research focus (disability, marginalisation). All postgraduate research students are inducted centrally and then located within disciplinary bases. There is a stimulating and supportive research culture for students, which is further enhanced by courses (e.g. ethics, writing) and a postgraduate conference run across the University. Methodological Workshops are available centrally and locally. All students can undertake the Professional passport, a scheme that enhances employability through the support of a team of Careers and Employability Advisors, academics and industry specialists in writing CVs, application forms, interviewing and presentation techniques. The completion rate of PhD students has continued to be strong with 26 students graduating during this period. Following completion, PhD students have obtained research fellow posts (e.g. Mills, Grech) lecturers (Slater, Bridger, Tosh) or key roles around research and practice in service delivery (McLean).

MMU has well-established and commended processes for inducting, supporting, and monitoring of research students, in particular “good practice...contributing to the academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities in the...comprehensive training and development opportunities provided for postgraduate research students” (QAA Audit, 2010). The central Graduate School and faculty postgraduate research teams have continued to develop and enhance the structures and systems to provide comprehensive support for students. All scheduled meetings with students are recorded and signed by supervisors and students. The University provides dedicated postgraduate learning and social environments for its students including: fully IT equipped shared office space, access to free printing facilities and access to social and kitchen areas. Postgraduate communities have representation of full- and part-time students on faculty research degrees committees, a Postgraduate Students Forum which works closely with the Graduate School, full access to on-line virtual learning on and off campus creating a postgraduate community supported by a full time e-learning manager in the Graduate School, Annual Postgraduate Conference Committee membership, office and meeting space within the Graduate School, and access to the Graduate School ‘Clinic’ for urgent issues. The support and training for MMU research students and staff is a major priority. The Graduate School and faculty offerings with more general research training in, for example, research methods and design, research ethics, writing for publication, presentation skills and other Vitae-aligned topics. Students identify and agree their training needs through the Annual Monitoring Process. A number of these activities strengthen students’ abilities to present their findings at annual University Postgraduate and Faculty conferences as well as external national and international conferences and Research Institute and Departmental seminars. All staff attend mandatory training in postgraduate supervision, examining and chairing vivas provided centrally by the Graduate School. As part of the sustainability and staff development strategy, and as further evidence of MMU’s adherence to the Concordat principles, early career researchers and staff new to research degree supervision are proactively recruited to all new postgraduate supervisory teams. They join experienced supervisory teams before progressing to mentored Directors of Study positions. An experienced member of the team is appointed to mentor.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income Within the 2008-2013 period, researchers have secured over £2.5 million of research and knowledge exchange funding. £1.3 million of this is included in this return as research income

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reported to HESA – the remaining £1.2 million consists of knowledge exchange funding which supported and underpinned applied research and the generation of impacts. HESA returned research has been funded through a range of research councils, charities and local authorities including: ESRC (4) British Council, BA/Leverhulme, Prince's Trust and Technology Strategy Board, Manchester PCT, Manchester City Council (2), British Adoption Society; National Institute Health Research; Big Lottery, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Scope. Knowledge Exchange funding has involved partnerships with a number of external local organisations and charities, such as Manchester City, Wigan and Cheshire Council, Greater Manchester Police, HMP Preston, Forest Bank, Manchester, Trafford DAAT, Salford DAT and Rochdale Connexions Trust; at a national level: Ministry of Justice, London Probation Trust, HMP Grendon, the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Commission of the Compact and London Criminal Justice Partnership. All of the above demonstrates a commitment to and significant success in engaging in external partnerships.

Infrastructure Institutional research infrastructure has been strengthened during the REF period. The central Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) office includes 4 x research development managers including 1 x social sciences specialist, 4 x key account managers and 3 x staff who are supporting the development of impact and engagement. RKE works alongside academics and Faculty-based research administrators (2 x research administrators, 2 x business development managers) to bring together research teams of internal and external partners, drafting and reviewing collaborative proposals for external funding, and assisting staff with project planning and costing of research proposals. To overcome increased competition and selectivity in the wider research environment we have built internal capacity to secure research funds by appointing specific project management and administration experts to support targeted funding applications and offering fellowships to run peer-mentoring courses around research funding opportunities and partnerships. The Research Accelerator Grant scheme places more emphasis on developing specific research proposals and 3 researchers from within the unit's research area have successfully gained this award. Other internal funds are directed at mid-career researchers – the Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (KEIF) fund has supported Runswick-Cole and Lee-Treweek. Smithson was awarded a competitive internal fellowship to build research capacity amongst early-career and mid-career research colleagues.

Facilities All staff have access to appropriate office space and facilities including MMU's various libraries – including digital research management tools. The future involves a move to a new inner-city campus (REF3a,) and this will sustain existing partnerships and a dedicated public engagement officer is working to build on networks.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

Critical Disability Studies and Marginalisation: This group has extensive collaborative links regionally, nationally and internationally which are both academic and practice oriented. The group has worked with international researchers (n=7) from 5 countries (Spain, Malaysia, Italy, Venezuela, Mexico, Iceland - who come to work alongside established community psychology practitioners and disability theorists. We continue to host the Community Work and Family Journal (Lawthom as co-editor). A research informed textbook (Critical Community Psychology) and an updated text in Qualitative Methods in Psychology continue to reflect the strengths of the group. We support the biggest critical mass of researchers in Critical Community Psychology in the country. Lawthom has an honorary position at UNSW (Sydney) is also Chair of the BPS Psychology of Women section, working to ensure psychology curricula remain inclusive. Critical disability studies with its associated blog (www.cds.wordpress.com) has established a recognised space for critical disability work. In the period, regular conferences have attracted professionals, activists and academics. A strand of this work – Disability and Majority World thinking - is original and innovative. A new journal has been established, *Disability and the Global South* and Grech's work noted in the WHO report on Disability. Other members are on editorial boards of key journals (e.g. Disability and Society) Runswick-Cole writes a regular column for Nursery World ensuring work reaches a practitioner audience. Goodley (in post 2008-2012) is a leader in the field of Critical Disability studies, leading conferences hosted at MMU and writing the definitive text *Critical Disability Studies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction* (2012). In the period, we have engaged in work

with academics and practitioners in the Global South (Guatemala and Malaysia, PMI). Within the disability and marginalisation strand, MMU hosted a prestigious TODAI conference (University of Tokyo) around disability, economics and development. MMU is a member of CARPE (Consortium of Applied Research and Professional Education), a network of similar universities to collaborate in bidding. Since 2008, group members have presented 35 keynote papers at National and International Conferences (e.g. ICCP, CPPE, and DSQ). *McLaughlin's* recent projects have included the evaluation of the Newly Qualified Social Work programme and Early Professional Development programmes for the Children's Workforce Development Council. He is a registered Social Worker, a Visiting Professor at the University of Salford, Chair of the Trustee Board for After Adoption and Trustee of the National Children's Bureau. He is editor of *Social Work Education*; a fully appointed member of the NIHR funded INVOLVE Advisory Group, Member of Social Care Institute for Excellence Partner's Council, an executive member of North West Partners in Research and a Social Care Education committee member of the Joint University Council. *Kagan* is a community psychologist with a specialism in evaluating participatory community projects and collaborates with colleagues in Latin America and Australia. She is an elected fellow of the Society for Community Research and Action, an Advisor to Independent Advocacy, a Director of Intergen (CIC), member of Somali and Yemeni Father and Sons Forum in Liverpool and a Fellow of the RSA and RSM and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Universidad de Morelos, Cuernavaca (Mexico). *Runswick-Cole* has a focus on the disabled lives of children and recent projects include the £255,000 ESRC-funded *Does Every Child Matter Post Blair?* and Scope project on *Resilience in the Lives of Disabled People Across the Life Course*. She is an advisor to Manchester City Council and Derbyshire County Council on provision for students with learning difficulties, an advisor to Mencap on various consultations. *Lee-Treweek's* recent work has been around *Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults* in Cheshire East and a £340,000 Lottery-funded action-research project investigating racism in Cheshire High Schools. She is editor to the *International Journal of Work, Organisation and Emotion* and a member of the editorial board of *Sociological Review Online*. *Grech* specialises in disability and poverty in the Global South and the application of critical disabilities studies to disability across different cultures. He is the organiser of the international conference *Disability and the Majority World* and coordinated and implemented an emergency healthcare programme for the disabled extreme poor in Guatemala. He is editor of *Disability and the Global South*. *McLaughlin (Ken)* writes regularly for an online publication (*spiked*) and contributed to *Radio 4's Moral Maze*.

Criminal Justice Policy Innovations: This group is nationally recognised for applied research and evidence-informed policy and has extensive collaborative links both regionally and nationally. International collaboration is further strengthened through Fox's membership of the Steering Group for the Consortium of Applied Research and Professional Education (CARPE). Group members are or have been actively involved in 20 trusteeships and advisory roles including: membership of the Ministry of Justice Evaluation Advisory Group (Smithson and Fox); Member of the Home Office Economic Research and Advisory Group (Albertson and Fox); Advisor to the Justice Division of InterserveFM Ltd (Fox); Member of the Greater Manchester Transforming Justice Steering Group (Fox); the Reference Group for SIAMPI – a Europe-wide project to measure the impact of research on society (Fox); Home Office Regional Advisor on Research and Analysis for the North of England (Fox); Member of Violence Reduction Unit (Bannister); Trustee of Urban Studies Foundation (Bannister); Member of the Eurogang Network (Smithson and Ralphs); Trustee of Mothers Against Violence Charity (Ralphs); Member of Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Homicide Working Group and the Criminal Investigation Research Network (CIRN) at the University of Glamorgan (Wright); and Trustee of Community Service Volunteers (Fox) Members are editors for two journals – *Safer Communities* (Fox and Smithson) and *Urban Studies* (Bannister). Since 2008, members presented 10 key-note speeches at inter/national conferences.