

<p>Institution: Loughborough University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: C22 Social Work and Social Policy</p>
<p>a. Overview</p> <p>The Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University has, from its inception in 1966, supported research into social policy and criminology. Its research has influenced Government policy both in the UK and abroad. In 2005 the Department was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for evaluating and developing social policy related programmes. This Unit covers 11 members of staff with social policy and criminology research interests working in the Department as individual scholars, or as members of the Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP), the Centre for Child and Family Research (CCFR), and the Young Carers Research Group (YCRG). Staff, in various combinations, also collaborate in two interest groups, The Vulnerability and Inclusion Research Group (VIRG), and the Crime Science Group.</p>
<p>b. Research strategy</p> <p><u>1. Research Areas</u></p> <p>In the previous four Research Assessment Exercises, staff from all areas in the Department of Social Sciences (Sociology, Communication and Media Studies, Social Psychology and Social Policy) were returned to the Sociology Panel (D41) as one single unit. However, due to a clearer separation of research strengths and trajectories in the long-term research strategy of the department, we have decided that, for this REF, our staff in the area of social policy and criminology would be more appropriately evaluated by the C22 Panel. For that reason, reference back to the whole-department strategies described in the 2008 document would be misleading. The more bespoke strategy that developed post-2008 is outlined below.</p> <p>Our overall strategic aim in criminology and social policy has been to promote excellence in social research. Specifically, the aim has been to undertake high-quality research that will influence agents of change at the level of government and large institutions. Evidence of the success of this strategy is visible both in terms of academic output and in terms of changes in social policy at local, national and international level. Between January 2008 and March 2013, the staff submitting to this Unit of Assessment have published 13 books (monographs and edited collections), 44 book chapters and 56 refereed journal articles. With respect to social policy, staff have published 42 substantial social policy reports for governments and charities engaged in social welfare programmes and campaigns. The details of this evidence, and the prospects for the sustainability of the research and its impact, are given below.</p> <p>(i) Established Research Centres and groups.</p> <p>The continued success of these groups is evidence that our strategy of marrying academic research and applied policy recommendations is a fruitful one. The Centres' programmes have the common theme of analysing 'social and economic costs', inspiring a set of policy initiatives likely to be of continuing appeal to government and other funding bodies.</p> <p>a) <i>The Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP)</i>. Established in 1983 and now led by Donald Hirsch, CRSP is one of Britain's leading social research centres. Funded by external research grants, it has a particularly strong track record in qualitative research, in evaluation of government programmes and in the development of the "consensual" method of establishing household budget standards. That is the basis for its sustainability.</p> <p>Despite funding cutbacks which have resulted in operating on a smaller scale, the unit continues to play an internationally leading role in the development of Minimum Income Standards in a wide range of contexts. CRSP enjoys ongoing funding from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, worth an average of around £150,000 a year, to research and update <i>A Minimum Income Standard (MIS) for the United Kingdom</i>. The pioneering methodology from this study has made it the leader of its kind in the UK, both drawing on previous CRSP work and subsuming the earlier work of the internationally renowned Family Budget Unit at the University of York, which has now closed down. Projects in the Republic of Ireland, France, Portugal and Japan have all sought to replicate this method, using CRSP staff to advise on its implementation. The Organisation for Economic Co-</p>

operation and Development (OECD) has expressed interest in encouraging cross-national comparisons using this method, and CRSP has a long-term strategy to promote further usage of the methodology across the European Union.

CRSP will build on its body of work to undertake complementary studies on income-related themes, and play an active role in informing policy and practice. In a challenging funding environment, its track record of success, and the continuing vitality of its benchmark income measurement, will ensure its sustainability in the years to come.

b) Centre for Child and Family Research (CCFR)

The Centre for Child and Family Research (CCFR), led by Harriet Ward CBE, was established in 2002 with the aim of carrying out high quality research that informs, influences and supports policy and practice for children, young people, adults, families and communities. Since then it has developed a programme of national and international research on the effectiveness of services for vulnerable children, which underpins much UK policy in this area and has additional impact in Australia, Canada, USA and parts of Europe. CCFR produces a range of publications including journal articles; two academic book series; and a software programme (the Cost Calculator for Children's Services) that has won Loughborough University's Knowledge Transfer Award for Enterprise. As with CRSP, its success in effecting policy change on the basis of academic research is testament to the viability and productivity of our strategic framework.

CCFR is largely self-funded through research grants from government departments and charities. The Centre had core funding from the Department for Education/Department of Health for its outcomes for vulnerable children programme from 2002-2008, followed by programme funding to develop a childhood wellbeing research centre (2010–2014). The Centre's strengths are its ability to produce high quality, policy-relevant research; its innovative methodologies (for instance in costing children's services and in classifying risks of future harm); and its ability to undertake both complex longitudinal studies and short term responsive work to meet the needs of policymakers.

CCFR works collaboratively with researchers from the UK and abroad, and currently has a number of research grants in partnership with the Universities of London, Kent, Warwick, and Sussex, and with Oregon Social Learning Centre and the Child and Adolescent Research Centre, California. The Centre also manages an international research network involving sixteen countries (International Working Party on Transitions to Adulthood of Vulnerable Young People, INTRAC) and contributes to two other European research networks (European Scientific Association for Residential and Family Care, EUSARF; and International Association For Outcome-Based Evaluation, iaOBERfcs).

CCFR's well-established programmes of work on costs and outcomes of children's services and on outcomes for vulnerable children continue to attract new grants from government departments in the UK and USA and from a range of charities. We anticipate that the intense interest in these programmes from policymakers and funders, our strong track record of producing policy-relevant research to a high academic standard, our collaborative networks with other researchers and our well established and skilled staff group will ensure the future sustainability of the centre.

c) Young Carers research group. The vitality of the Young Carers Research Group (YCRG) is evidenced by its influence in shaping social and health care policy and practice in the UK, and abroad, over the last two decades. As an example of its international impact, in 2012, the YCRG leader, Professor Jo Aldridge, was invited by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide evidence on young carers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Committee. Pioneering YCRG studies have been used to inform and underpin changes in health and social care policy and practice in the UK; examples include the 1995 Carers (Recognition and Services) Act; the Carers and Disabled Children Act (2000); and the Department of Health's Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their families (2000, 2010). Aldridge played an important role in the lobbying group, the National Young Carers Coalition (NYCC), that successfully campaigned for an amendment to the Children and Families Bill that directly addressed the needs of Young Carers (this was announced by the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, on 8 October 2013).

Since the group's inception in 1993, members of the YCRG have contributed evidence and

expertise on young caring and the needs of vulnerable children more broadly. The YCRG will go forward by working closely with organisations such as The Children's Society, Carers Trust, Carers UK and Barnardo's, and, internationally, Children and Parents with Mental Issues (Australia) and the European Federation for Families Affected by Mental Illness. Its recognition as a world authority on young carers will help sustain its funding and sponsorship from both Government and charity-sector organisations.

(ii) Growth areas

Crime Science. The Crime Science group, jointly led by the Department of Social Sciences, is a new initiative, established in late 2012 as an interdisciplinary team bringing together core strengths from across Loughborough University. There are over thirty members of the group; around a third of them based in Social Sciences. The aim of the group is to improve prevention and detection of crime, and fits within the 'security' strand of the University's overall multi-disciplinary research strategy. Members of the group, who are part of this submission, are currently collaborating with Leicestershire Police in developing a grant portfolio involving research councils and other funders; and are working with West Yorkshire Police to find innovative solutions to its specific burglary problems. The unit is well placed to take a leading role in the development of this research area which we anticipate will grow in the coming years due to the increasing policy urgency related to security issues.

Vulnerability and Inclusion. The Vulnerability and Inclusion Research Group (VIRG) has recently (2012) been established by the unit. VIRG aims to bring together expertise on vulnerability and participatory research methods to contribute to theoretical, ethical and political debate. Specifically the aims of VIRG are to develop vitality in innovative participatory methods for conducting research with vulnerable groups (such as young carers, looked-after children and care leavers) in the UK and abroad through international networks such as (International Working Party on Transitions to Adulthood of Vulnerable Young People, (INTRAC) and the European Scientific Association for Residential and Family Care (EUSARF); to contribute to ethical debate in relation to including vulnerable groups in research; produce theoretical papers; to produce tools and practice guides for practitioners working with vulnerable groups; to build on and develop existing networks and organisations; and to use and test inclusive and participatory research methods.

(iii) Individual Work

The Department also supports research work in equal opportunities, domestic violence, gender and migration, explaining the crime drop, and medical regulation, among other areas of social policy and criminology. Our strategy is to encourage cross-fertilisation across these areas, with the Research Centres and research groups, and with external bodies and other Universities, by supporting group work that will eventuate in joint applications for research project funding to external sources. For example, earlier ESRC-funded work on the international crime drop (2007-2009) has led into the current collaboration between members of the Crime Science group and the Nottingham Crime & Drugs Partnership mentioned above and a recent application for an ESRC-Retail KTP project.

Future directions post-2014

Our overall strategy will be to continue to encourage the high quality research that is most likely to persuade policy-makers at all levels (from police authorities to national governments) to introduce changes in their practices, provisions or statutes. The Centre for Research in Social Policy will focus on consolidating the reputation of its Minimum Income Standard work, creating more systematic frameworks for applying it across Europe and beyond, and developing related studies that track the fortunes of low income households in difficult economic times. In addition to an ever-increasing programme of cost related research in England, and Scotland, the Centre for Child and Family Research will be developing its cost calculator for children's services for use in Scotland and America. Following a key meeting with US funders and researchers in Chicago in the autumn of 2013; the research team will build on established relationships with American colleagues to develop further their programme for evaluating the costs and outcomes of children's services with the objective of facilitating international comparisons. CCFR will also develop its research on safeguarding children, building on its track record of projects funded by government departments and an increasing number of charities (for example NSPCC, Action for Children, The Fostering

Network, Barnardo's Australia). It is now actively establishing research partnerships with a number of local authorities (such as Leeds, Bradford, Nottingham and Derby) which, over the next five years, will yield evidence of the benefit of the unit's recommendations and build deeper empirical foundations for its funding applications.

c. People

The unit of assessment strives to ensure a virtuous relationship between research and teaching, recognising the value that research adds to innovations in curriculum content and design. The Department operates a teaching workload model designed to ensure equity and transparency of teaching responsibilities across all staff and to optimise teaching outcomes without diminishing the high priority given to research performance. Department members involved in this submission teach on a number of courses, but especially on the Criminology and Social Policy undergraduate degree. Teaching timetables are constructed so as to maintain viable blocks of research time for all staff. This has allowed research to flourish.

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

The unit appoints all new staff on the basis of their performance as creative researchers able to thrive in an open and supportive research environment. Since well before 2008, and indeed over the last 25 years, the unit has appointed and retained a number of active scholars in social policy and criminology. Many of these figures have established world-wide reputations through the research they have undertaken at Loughborough University. The unit has an excellent record of rewarding research performance through promotion. Since the last RAE, Jo Aldridge has been awarded a personal chair, and Martyn Chamberlain to a Senior Lectureship. In 2013, the University further strengthened the unit's coverage of criminology by funding the strategic appointment of Professor Andromachi Tseloni as Professor of Quantitative Criminology.

Staff development is taken extremely seriously within the Department. Research performance is assessed annually through individuals' submission of a Personal Research Plan, which lists all outputs that have appeared in the year, conference presentations and other relevant indicators of research activity and esteem. The process is monitored by the University's Research Performance Monitoring Committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research (PVC(R)). The process is designed to nurture staff, promote research awareness and activity, and identify the need for support. Staff are also required to attend a Performance Development Review which allows them to discuss their wider career trajectory, needs and aspirations.

Emeriti and Associates

The Department has sustained links with retired colleagues through emeritus appointments. Several of these scholars still contribute to our research in this field and to the research culture of the unit more generally. As an example, Emeritus Professor Ruth Lister (now Baroness Lister of Burtersett) gave the Department's Inaugural *Government and Social Policy* lecture in 2012.

Institutional policy

Loughborough University undertook a comprehensive analysis of its alignment with the Concordat to support the Career Development of Researchers in 2009/10, and published an implementation plan in 2010, for which it received the EC's HR Excellence in Research Award. The plan was updated in 2012, as part of an internal review for the HR Excellence award. Specific outcomes from the plan include a continuing commitment to a University-wide Research Staff mentoring scheme, a revised Code of Practice for the Employment of Researchers, and establishment of the Loughborough University Research Staff Association. Monitoring takes place through participation in the Careers in Research Online Survey, and through the 2012 University-wide Staff Survey, for which the Research Job family had the highest number of positive responses (10% above the institutional average). Performance and Development Reviews have been put into place, and all staff are strongly encouraged to take part. The Research Centres both take responsibility for training new researchers and have well established policies to support the career progression of research assistants and associates. Time is made available for junior researchers to write and publish papers in academic journals following the completion of research reports.

The staff development strategy specifically includes Leadership and Management, and

programmes accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management are available to all staff, including PIs and research staff. Research staff can also attend courses run by the Graduate School, Careers and Employability Centre, and Staff Development courses.

Early career academic staff members undertake the New Lecturers Course, in which new colleagues are introduced to the University's research culture and support available from the Research Office. Such staff are also covered by a probation scheme, typically three years in length, and they have lighter teaching loads for its duration (year 1: 33% of normal teaching load, year 2: 50%; year 3: 66%). The Research Office provides one-to-one support for staff writing grant proposals, which further enhances the research culture. Improvement of research performance across all disciplines has been a key priority. Loughborough University, which is committed to achieving equality for all, included mandatory recruitment and selection training which embeds Equality and Diversity policy. In 2011/12 Research Staff and early career Lecturers were eligible to apply to participate in the Developing Future Research Leaders programme, an EPSRC funded-initiative that saw research staff and early career lecturers compete for leadership development grants, with dedicated coaching, participation in Action Learning and 360° Feedback.

ii. Research students

The international profile of the Unit's staff members results in a steady stream of interest from potential research students, and we are seeking to expand this over the coming period by funding Departmental studentships. Research students are at the heart of the unit's research culture and play a full and active part in all of the research groups outlined above. Since 2012, departmental postgraduate research students have taken responsibility for organising fortnightly research seminars, and have taken over the organisation and running of the media lab that the Department offers, jointly with others, as a facility to other parts of the University (described in more detail below, under Infrastructure).

Research student progress is monitored through regular supervisory meetings which are held at least on a monthly basis. The department follows the practice of keeping written records of these meetings. In addition a major academic progress review, against published criteria, is held at the end of each year of registration and students are required to produce a significant piece of written work and in some cases publications, as well as undertake an interview with an independent assessor before being permitted to progress to the next year of registration. Records of these meetings are entered on the University's central student record and re-registration is automatically blocked where an unsatisfactory review is entered. The unit has a member of support staff whose dedicated role is to administer the management of postgraduate degree programmes.

Academic support for the student is provided by the research degree supervisors, though students are able to contact other members of staff should they need additional guidance in a specific area. In addition to departmental facilities, the University offers a wide range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Research Student Office in the Academic Registry, the Maths Learning Support Centre and the English Language Support Unit. Each School also has at least one member of support staff whose role is to support the management of degree programmes.

The unit will look to sustain its strong track record of domestic and international PGR recruitment by increasing its profile in social policy particularly in the growth areas of crime science and the social science disciplines associated with the Vulnerability and Inclusion Research group.

The Graduate School. The students benefit from Loughborough University's campus-wide support. The Department of Social Science's engagement with graduate students is supported by the University's Graduate School. The School works alongside other University services and departments to enhance the postgraduate experience and support and encourage a vibrant graduate community at Loughborough University. PGR training and development is provided centrally by the Graduate School which works closely with other internal support services such as the Careers and Employability Centre and the Library. The Graduate School offers a comprehensive training programme that is mapped to the Researcher Development Framework, comprising face-to-face workshops, an annual research conference including poster competition (also open to academic and research staff) and the 'Café Academique' which is a forum where PhD students can debate the latest ideas from all areas of research. The Careers and

Employability Centre have a dedicated Careers Advisor for researchers, to support research staff and research students.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

The Department has attracted significant and prestigious research funding in the fields of social policy:

CRSP's Minimum Income Standards project (MIS) and spin-off studies have attracted the following major grants:

- MIS UK: £1.3 million from its inception in 2006; £1 million since 2008
- Other related projects: approx. £500,000, spread between 13 projects and 10 funders.

CCFR has raised approximately £2.5 million since 2008, mainly from grants from government departments in England and the USA, but also from charities (the Fostering Network and Action for Children) and from local authorities. Between 2008 and 2013, the unit has obtained £4.995 million of external funding. In addition, the unit also benefits from staff consultancies and project evaluations.

Organisational Infrastructure

The unit resides within the Department of Social Sciences, which is one of three Departments of the School of Social, Political and Geographic Sciences. We benefit from (and contribute to) School-wide facilities, including a news media archive, a technical support facility, and a suite of IT and AV facilities. Of these the most significant is Loughborough's Qualitative Digital Research Lab (the LiQuID Lab), a collaborative project developed between Social Sciences and Geography, and the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences. It is a multi-media facility which has created a community of qualitative researchers from across the university, holding workshops on qualitative research methods, such as interviewing and visual methods. Funding from the department helped organise a training day for staff, researchers and postgraduates students on how to use qualitative analysis software.

Operational Infrastructure

The unit uses the University Research and Enterprise Offices for assistance in the costing and pricing of research grants and contracts, for support in the drafting and writing of applications, and in the negotiation of ethical protocols and legal agreements.

Strategies for generating income

The unit has in place a rolling programme of networking and contacts with grant-giving agencies, especially within the social policy community, and members of the Centres (CCFR and CRSP) routinely tender for government and local authority grants to fund applied research. Their success (even in recent times of limited public funding) is evidence of the esteem in which they are held.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

The unit's research contributes to the academic research base of the discipline by dint of its publications in scholarly journals and in book (for details of the quantity of research outputs, see section b). The unit contributes to the profile of social policy research as an applied discipline by its engagement with public bodies in the UK and abroad. This latter engagement takes three forms, detailed below.

Indicators of success in contributions to applied social policy

Staff have been invited to tender, been commissioned or otherwise recruited by government agencies and other institutions, and in prizes and awards for their work. A sample of such contributions includes the following:

Oral evidence as expert witness to Parliamentary select committee, Child Protection (2011) [Ward]
Oral evidence as expert witness to Parliamentary select committee, Social Work Training (2009) [Ward]

Environment template (REF5)

Witness, Local Government and Regeneration Committee, Scottish Parliament, on Living Wage (2009) [Hirsch]
 Oral evidence to House of Commons Health Select Committee, long-term care funding (2009) [Hirsch]
 Witness to House of Commons Public Bill Committee on Child Poverty Bill (2009) [Hirsch]
 Witness to Social Security Advisory Committee on Minimum Income Standard (2009) [Hirsch]
 Evidence to the Department for Education, Department of Health and Ministry of Justice for the Comprehensive Spending Review (2010) [Holmes]
 Invited member of an expert working group to assess the future of national child level data collections (Department for Education 2010-2011) [Holmes]
 Partnership with Catch 22's National Care Advisory Service to develop a peer research methodology to involve care leavers in national research and evaluations. [Holmes]
 Equal Opportunities and Diversity Expert on the Department of Trade and Industry 'Strategy for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology' Implementation Group, 2009-2011. [Bagilhole]
 Evidence to the Scottish Government Social Care and Child Protection Network [Aldridge]
 Evidence on young carers and their families for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [Aldridge]
 Oral evidence as expert witness: House of Commons Select Committee on Children, Schools and Families ('Children Beneath the Radar', 2008) [Aldridge]

Collaborations with Working Groups and Professional Associations

Staff have contributed to the development of applied social policy research by taking active part in working groups, professional associations, and international networks. These include: Jo Aldridge: Member, European Federation of Families Affected by Mental Illness (EUFAMI); Member, Children of Parents with Mental Illness (COPMI, Australia); Member and Guest Speaker for the Social Care Institute for Excellence. Harriet Ward: Founder member: International Association for Outcomes-Based Evaluation and Research on Family and Children's Services; Member, University of Québec: Chercheur collaborateur équipe GRAVE-ARDEC (Groupe de recherche et d'action sur la victimisation des enfants; Alliance de recherche en développement des enfants dans leur communauté); Lead member: International working party on transitions to adulthood of vulnerable young people (INTRAC); Academic advisor; Department of Health / Department for Education Research Initiative on Safeguarding Children. Andromachi Tseloni: Chair of the Crime and Justice Statistics Network, Working Group of the British Society of Criminology; co-opted Royal Statistical Society. Member, Executive Committee of the British Society of Criminology.

Recognition of unit members' contributions to criminology and social policy

Recognition of staff members' contribution has come in the form of the following awards and prizes:

Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for Services to children and families (2012) [Harriet Ward]

Lifetime achievement award EUSARF 2012: (European Scientific Association for Residential and Family Care) [Harriet Ward]

The David Langford Commemorative Award (2010) [Barbara Bagilhole]

European Commission Erasmus Prize (Athena II, 2010) [Barbara Bagilhole]

House of Lords In 2011 Professor Ruth Lister, one of the Department's most eminent members of staff (now emeritus) was, on the basis of her distinguished work on poverty and social exclusion, welfare state reform, gender and citizenship, appointed to the House of Lords as Baroness Lister of Burtersett.