



Department of Politics and Public Policy Research Excellence Framework 2014

Every few years, the UK government commissions a peer-led review of academic research quality – the Research Excellence Framework (REF). In December 2014, we learned the outcome of last year’s assessment, which showed our research in a very positive light.

The Department’s work epitomises the University’s mission to deliver excellent research, which also makes a positive contribution to the public good. The REF praised the impact of our publicly engaged scholarship and commented on how greatly we have improved since the last evaluation in 2008. We are consistently among the best post-92 research universities, and compare favourably with many “traditional” institutions as well. Sixty-four percent of our research was classified as ‘world leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’, an enormous improvement on 2008.

With a strong report from the REF, the Department is in an excellent position to build on its research in the next few years. Since the REF concluded, we have already won an additional £600,000 in research income. One major project funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, led by Professor Jo Richardson, explores partnership-based approaches to conflict resolution over the development of Gypsy and Traveller sites. Another, funded by the ESRC and led by Professor Jonathan Davies, will scrutinise how austerity policies develop in eight countries, looking at how the voices of citizens and voluntary groups are heard in shaping and contesting the outcomes of reduced public spending.

Our research continues to influence the world of public policy and politics. Professor Colin Copus is working with the Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee on a statutory code of relationships between central and local government, with a view to enshrining the constitutional rights of local authorities. Professors Rob Baggott and Steven Griggs have developed a self-assessment tool for local health and wellbeing boards, “Ensuring Health and Wellbeing”.

Moving forward, we will further enhance the breadth, depth and quality of our research in politics and public policy, contribute to the public good and apply our cutting-edge research in cutting-edge teaching.