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BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

FORWARD THINKING

**A CELEBRATION OF THE RESEARCH
COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN STAFF AND
STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL OF LAW**



WELCOME



NOTE FROM THE CO-LEADS OF STAFF AND STUDENT RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS AND JOURNAL EDITORS LAURA SMILLIE & DR. ALICE STOREY

Welcome to the third issue of Forward Thinking, the journal that showcases the fantastic research collaborations between students and staff in the School of Law. In 2020/21, despite another challenging academic year, the School of Law continued to offer a wide range of research opportunities to our students, including participating in conferences and helping to shape teaching materials. Getting involved in these projects will not only develop your research skills, but will allow you the opportunity to work alongside active researchers and improve your time management and interpersonal skills. We look forward to offering more opportunities to students!



NOTE FROM THE SCHOOL OF LAW'S DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH DR. SARAH COOPER

The third issue of Forward Thinking continues to showcase the innovative suite of scholarly collaborations between staff and students at BCU's School of Law, with projects cutting across research, teaching and practice; connecting with a range of disciplines; and exploring several jurisdictions. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, students and staff have worked together to achieve excellent results, including publications, conference presentations, UPR reports, and, in some cases, laid groundwork for exciting future research! Warmest congratulations to all involved.

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VOLUNTARY RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS (VRA)

The Voluntary Research Assistantship Scheme (VRA) is a BLSS Faculty-wide initiative, which enables students to work alongside academics on active research projects. These projects range from traditional research, including data collection and literature reviews, to practice-led research, such as improving engagement with Moodle, and exploring the new routes into practicing as a solicitor. The VRA works on a merit-based system – you must have a 2:1 or above average grade across your modules to apply. The scheme aims to celebrate high achievement and to enable selected students to develop advanced skill-sets.



LEGAL TECHNOLOGY AS A TEACHING MODULE

Student Researchers: Fatemeh Naderi, Natasha Lawrence and Turan Avkeson
Staff Lead: Dr. Alan Ma

This project invited students to work on materials for an exciting new Level 6 option module scheduled to start in 2022. One objective of the teaching delivery is to enable students to see how the law of legal technology is to be applied in practice. A broad range of practice areas will be covered including handling of information and data in a criminal investigation, litigation, and case assessment. This project has allowed students to have their views included in the teaching materials.

“



This project enabled me to take part in a unique opportunity to deliver a presentation about technology in the legal sector to the prestigious British Computing Society.

I have gained a wide range of skills from taking part in this research project, including; the ability to conduct research on a niche topic, presentation and public speaking skills, communicating and coordinating with team members, and the ability to adapt to new challenges.

Turan Avkeson (Level 6 Student)

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“



This topic was so interesting to take part in and I developed my IT skills, research skills, teamwork and time management taking part in this project.

Fatemeh Naderi (Level 5 Student)

”

“This VRA project provides an example of how teaching is a two-way process and how working with the students is a win-win situation. The students researched the current legal practices focusing on the digital-enabled technologies, many of which are still in their nascent state. They then disseminated their findings before a subject-specific audience. We had an entire evening showcasing this project with students delivering a presentation, followed by a lively and interactive Q&A. The branch’s chair commented “I just wanted to praise how well Natasha and Turan came across under pressure too. It’s frightening enough for experienced public speakers, so it’s good skills to have as newbies.”

Dr. Alan Ma, Lecturer in Law

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA, THAILAND, AND SYRIA: THE UPR PROJECT AT BCU

Student Researchers: Maria Eduarda Loureiro Oliveira, Darcie Kilmartin and Izaura Krasniqi

Staff Leads: Professor Jon Yorke, Dr Alice Storey and Dr Amna Nazir

The UPR Project at BCU facilitates the submission of Stakeholder Reports direct to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review. These reports focus on international human rights issues in the country being reviewed. The project supervisors were submitting further reports to the UN for the UPRs of countries including PNG, Thailand, and the Syrian Arab Republic. Students were asked to collate information from the previous UPRs of these countries on the issue of capital punishment in these three countries.



I really enjoyed working on this project for a variety of reasons, but mainly, it gave me an opportunity to grow my passion for human rights! I was able to become more knowledgeable on an important issue and gain confidence in my research skills.

Darcie Kilmartin (Level 7 Student)



I enjoyed taking part in this research project and having the responsibility to identify and select important information. It was a great experience and enabled me to understand the role of the UPR as a mechanism that promotes human rights. Taking part in this project also developed my confidence as I was able to work with some amazing academics from the university.

Maria Eduarda Loureiro Oliveira (Level 7 Student)



I enjoyed working on a project that complimented my United Nations module. Whilst I focused on UN sanctions for my UN module, this project allowed me to delve deeper into the field of human rights, in particular focusing on the controversial and much-debated topic of capital punishment. It was interesting to explore the recommendations put forward by several countries in an effort to suspend the death penalty.

Izaura Krasniqi (Level 6 Student)



RETHINKING THE LAW: DECOLONISING THE LAW

Student Researcher: Samarya Abid

Staff Lead: Raxona Khanum

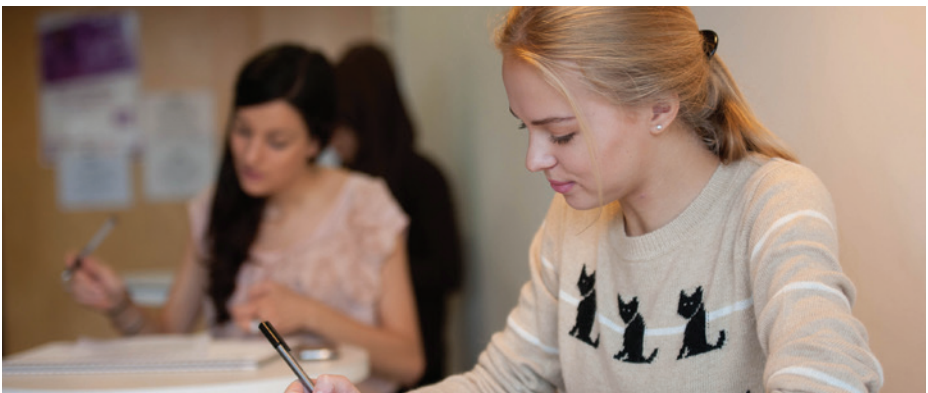
This research project required one student to review the scholarship in Decolonising the Law and Legal Education. They were asked to undertake research using academic journals and carry out a literature review, in order to enhance and develop their knowledge of a radical theory and improve their critical analysis skills. This literature review will contribute to future research and teaching in this area.

“ My role was to review the scholarship in Decolonising the Law and Legal Education. My role involved locating journal articles on Lexis and Westlaw to develop a literature base as to how the law should be decolonised. This project has allowed me to expand my knowledge on a different subject area. I have developed my legal research skills from researching areas of law I have not done so before e.g. law in legal education. ”

Samarya Abid (Level 7 Student)

“This project will inform teaching materials for a brand new module and allowed a student to gain research skills relating to an under-researched area of legal education. A fantastic project that will start some fascinating conversations and teaching materials!”

Alice & Laura, Co-Leads of the Staff and Student Research Collaborations



PREVENTING DOMESTIC ABUSE IN THE USA

Student Researchers: Sahar Aamer, Georgia Cartwright and Frankie Flannagan
Staff Lead: Dr. Alice Storey

This project engaged three students in a two-fold research task. First, the students were asked to research a different strand of feminist theory. Second, they were asked to conduct a literature review on domestic abuse in the USA. This included looking for federal and state laws on this issue and collecting, reading, and summarising scholarly articles. The findings of this VRA project will be used as part of a wider project regarding preventing domestic abuse across the world.

“ The skills I obtained from this project will help me a lot in my future, for example my team-working and communication skills improved as I worked alongside 2 other students whom I was unfamiliar with prior to the project. My problem solving skills were developed, as I reached a place in my project where I was unable to find any journal articles. However, after a discussion with my research lead, I was able to solve the problem and continue to develop my knowledge, research and referencing skills.

Sahar Amar (Level 5 Student)

“ I have loved being a VRA for the past three years, and the BLSS scholar for two years in a row (2018-2020). I hope to continue my researching as I enter my LLM with the goal of pursuing a PhD at BCU.

Georgia Cartwright (Level 6 Student)

“ I enjoyed combining my interest of law and feminism and expanding my knowledge on the two subject areas further. It was interesting to see how feminism plays a part and influences law making in the USA. I also enjoyed researching different scholars and exploring their points of view. One scholar that I found particularly interesting is Catherine MacKinnon and her work on Dominance Feminism, which is closely linked with

Radical Feminism. It was interesting to read her view on the law surrounding domestic violence.

Frankie-Jay Flannagan (Level 5 Student)

“The students did a fantastic job on what was a challenging project - well done! Their findings have already contributed to a presentation I delivered at the SLSA Conference and are being used to inform multiple publications in the pipeline.”

Dr. Alice Storey, Senior Lecturer in Law and Associate Director Centre for Human Rights

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND THE UPR

Student Researchers: Ethan Read (BLSS Scholar) and Jacob Morrow
Staff Lead: Dr. Amna Nazir

This project feeds into a larger research project being undertaken by the lead researcher on freedom of religion in OIC states within the Universal Periodic Review mechanism. The OIC states reviewed, for the purposes of this project, were Iran and Saudi Arabia. It required the students to undertake a literature review of the selected states' UPR cycles to date with a focus on issues pertaining to freedom of religion. This project will inform a publication being developed by the research lead and future stakeholder submissions by the BCU Centre for Human Rights.



My role consisted of discovering relevant and reliable sources relating to the death penalty and researching which international treaties Iran had ratified or implemented. I have been able to develop an understanding of areas of international law previously unknown to me, as well as understanding

of process of publication of an academic article.

Jacob Morrow (Level 7 Student)



“This VRA involved the students undertaking a literature review of the UPR cycles of Iran and Saudi Arabia with a focus on issues pertaining to freedom of religion. The work undertaken was comprehensive and thorough, demonstrating their excellent research skills. Well done to them! The findings will be used for future stakeholder submissions to the UPR by the BCU Centre for Human Rights.”

Dr. Amna Nazir, Senior Lecturer in Law and Associate Director of the Centre for Human Rights



LAW SCHOOL SCHOLARS

The Law School Scholars are attached to the VRA scheme. These projects provide an additional, paid project opportunity for the students applying to the VRA scheme who hold the highest grade-average in their year. Again, this scheme aims to celebrate and further high achievement, but also provides a paid opportunity to support students financially. This year, our Law School Scholars have collaborated on different projects with Dr. I-Ju Chen and Dr. Anne Richardson-Oakes. Read on to find out more about the 2020/21 Law School Scholars and the VRA projects the student researchers have worked on.



LEVEL 5 LAW SCHOOL SCHOLAR SAHAR AAMER

VRA Project: Preventing Domestic Abuse in the USA

Staff Lead: Dr. Alice Storey

I found this project interesting as I have a passion for feminism, and believe that the law should reflect this. My understanding of the topic increased after I reflected over Karen Offen's definition of relational feminism which stated, "While men and women are fundamentally different, the distinctive contribution women make to society, specifically as women, entitle them to equal rights." The concept behind relational feminism was that the "spiritual motherhood" characteristic in women should allow them to work/influence in the economy, society, culture, and politics.

Sahar Aamer

“ Law School Scholar Project:
The Impact of COVID on Global
Administrative Law

Staff Lead: Dr I-Ju Chen

I learnt a lot of things from this project, from developing my research, public-speaking and professional skills to the strong impact that a leader has.

Sahar Aamer (Level 5 Law School Scholar)

LEVEL 6 LAW SCHOOL SCHOLAR RACHEL WILLIAMS

VRA Project: Rethinking the Law: Critical Race Theory

Staff Lead: Raxona Khanum

I was keen to gain some experience in research to see how much I would enjoy it as I thought this could be something I want to pursue later down the line. With my VRA project I had the responsibility of reading articles from LexisNexis and WestLaw and summarising them within a MS Excel document. I have worked on two research projects alongside my degree, which overall has helped me to improve my time management and organisation skills.

Rachel Williams

“ Law School Scholar Project:
The Impact of COVID on Global
Administrative Law

Staff Lead: Staff Lead: Dr I-Ju Chen

I particularly enjoyed the ability to learn more about different topics and areas when summarising articles and expanding my knowledge on different areas of law. It was enjoyable to see how real life situations such as COVID can have an impact on areas of law like global administrative law, which I would not have considered or thought of otherwise. I would definitely recommend these projects to students who have an interest in research!

Rachel Williams (Level 6 Law School Scholar)

"My project explores and evaluates the impact of COVID-19 on the development of global administrative law. I am very grateful for research assistance provided by the two scholars, Sahar Aamer and Rachel Williams. They identified global administrative challenges caused by COVID-19 and collated available literature relating to a discussion on COVID-19 and its impacts on global administrative law. Owing to their excellent assistance, I finished a 2,500-word conference paper to present at the Law and Society Association virtual conference in May 2021. In this staff-student collaboration process, they showed research enthusiasm and independence. In addition, they have organisation skills and can clearly present research outcomes. I enjoyed working Sahar and Rachel! I therefore recommend students to participate in this Law School Scholars scheme!"

Dr. I-Ju Chen, Assistant Lecturer in Law

LEVEL 7 LAW SCHOOL SCHOLAR ETHAN READ

VRA Project: VRA: Freedom of Religion and the UPR

Staff Lead: Dr. Amna Nazir

“ My Role was to collate all the important information (recommendations, stakeholder reports) relating to Freedom of Religious Belief within Saudi Arabia to help inform Dr Nazir’s work on freedom of religion in OIC States. This project has helped me to further develop my research skills, in particular, engaging with the differing legal databases, especially the UNHRC’s UPR database and UPR Info’s table of recommendations. ”

LAW SCHOOL SCHOLAR PROJECT: COMPENSATION TO SLAVE OWNERS FOLLOWING THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY: THE BRITISH AND US APPROACHES

Staff Lead: Dr. Anne Richardson-Oakes

“ The Law School Scholar Scheme enabled me to get involved with a topic that I had not had much chance to engage in before, and I really enjoyed the comparative aspect of the project, looking at the differences that the US and UK took towards the same issue. ”

Ethan Read (Level 7 Law School Scholar)

“PGR Ethan Read took on this project as a Law School Scholar. His task was to research the literature dealing with the issue of compensation to former slave owners following the loss of their ‘property’ following the abolition of slavery and the emancipation of enslaved peoples to demonstrate the differences in approach between the UK (which did pay compensation) and the US (which did not). Ethan’s findings in relation to the US were to the effect that the Fourteenth Amendment prohibited payment of this compensation. This opens up additional research enquiries into the debates that surrounded the drafting and adoption of this particular clause. Ethan’s work on this topic was discussed by me with Judge Greenaway of the US Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in connection with identifying a topic for the second lecture in the Greenaway Lectures on Law and Justice. The Judge’s interest was piqued and shaped the title of his talk: Transatlantic Justice: Slavery in the Judicial Imagination. Ethan then worked with the Judge and fellow PGR Sabah Athar to provide research assistance. The Judge acknowledged their help in his talk which will be published in the British Journal of American Studies. The intention is to take the project forward by researching contemporary debates on both sides of the Atlantic on this issue.”

Dr. Anne Richardson Oakes, Associate Professor and Director of the Centre of American Legal Studies

BRITISH JOURNAL OF AMERICAN LEGAL STUDIES STUDENT EDITORS



The British Journal of American Legal Studies (BJALS) is a peer-reviewed academic journal within the Centre for American Legal Studies. The Editor-in-Chief is Dr. Anne Richardson-Oakes. Each year, BJALS recruits students to work as Student Editors on the papers accepted for publication in BJALS. The Student Editors edit the footnotes of journal articles, to ensure that the requirements of the Bluebook citation manual have been complied with, just as law students in the US do.

The 2020/21 Student Editors:

Melisa Oleschuk

Olga Krzyszton

Joshua Foulds

Turan Avkesen

Jordan Johnson

Tom Nicklin (Team Leader)



I was selected to be a BJALS Student Editor in 2020/21 following positive feedback from my overall performance on the LLB. I am interested in American Legal Studies and wanted to learn more about the US legal system and its rules of citation. I was responsible for ensuring all individual footnotes were BlueBook compliant and ready for publication. This included

researching legal databases to check all cases were cited correctly. The skills I gained include organisation, effective communication, and attention to detail.

Olga Krzyszton (Level 7 Student)



“I have been hugely impressed with the way in which the students have worked this year. In particular, students have painstakingly researched the formatting requirements for a variety of non-standard material ranging from blog posts and other online media material to really arcane historical records, taking in Congressional materials at both state and federal level. It is clear that a great deal of effort and research has gone into their work and that they have applied themselves with considerable professionalism. The work that these students do is modelled on the pattern of US law school student edited law reviews. However, the US students who undertake this work have usually spent a whole year learning the requirements of Bluebook formatting. I have worked with some of these students in the past and I am pleased to say that our student teams have performed to an equivalent high standard.”

Dr. Anne Richardson-Oakes, Editor-in-Chief of the British Journal of American Legal Studies

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP EXTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR JURIS DOCTOR CANDIDATES

Staff Leads: Dr. Sarah Cooper and Thomas Nicklin

In 2019/20 the School of Law launched a new research partnership with the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University (ASU), which sees ASU law students join BCU as Visiting Scholars to collaborate on centre based research projects. In 2020/21, we welcomed Michael Bayhan to work on this project. Correctional facilities quickly emerged as "COVID-19 clusters" — places with the largest number of known infections — in the United States (US). Noting calls for state (and federal) authorities to 'slow the spread' through inter alia reducing correctional populations, this project, led by ASU Law student, Michael Bayham, with direction from Dr Sarah Cooper and BCU PhD Candidate, Tom Nicklin, investigated what, if any, statutory mechanisms exist to support such efforts. Michael's research identified 84 such statutes across all US states and D.C, deconstructing each statute to reveal: title; citation; year of first derivative/enactment; language pertaining to removal/disease/emergencies necessitating removal; criteria for procedural initiation; and decision-makers. The project was shared at the 2021 Law and Society Association Conference and is being worked up into several publications.



This project was an incredible opportunity to work closely with Dr. Cooper and Tom. Our weekly meetings were instrumental in allowing me to truly understand research design and hone in on the process. In the end, we created a detailed statutory catalogue on each states' removal procedures. We analyzed this data and performed a case study to determine if the laws had been implicated in response to COVID-19. I am extremely thankful for having Dr. Cooper and Tom's support and guidance throughout the 8-month journey. Our goal was to create a data-set and report designed to inspire discussion, scholarship, use, or reform, and I think we succeeded in doing that.

Michael Bayhan, Arizona State University



What an amazing project! Because of Michael's tenacious research we now have a nationwide picture of what statutory powers exist to support states to reduce prison populations during a pandemic. We can use this data-set to generate discussion, reform and model practices.

Dr. Sarah Cooper, Reader in Law

2020/21 STAFF AND STUDENT RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

VRAS

Freedom of Religion and the UPR | Staff Lead: Dr. Amna Nazir | Student Researchers: Jacob Morrow and Ethan Read (Level 7 Law School Scholar).

Preventing Domestic Abuse in the USA | Staff Lead: Dr. Alice Storey | Student Researchers: Sahar Aamer (Level 5 Law School Scholar), Georgia Cartwright and Frankie Flannagan.

The Role of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women | Staff Lead: Dr. Alice Storey | Student Researchers: Natalie Mahoney, Shakiba Alizada, Olivia Moyle and Lillie Fisher.

Wrongful Convictions in the USA and the UN's Universal Periodic Review | Staff Leads: Dr. Alice Storey & Dr. Sarah Cooper | Student Researchers: Melisa Oleschuk, Jamie Langley and Jessica Holloway.

The United Kingdom and the EU's Evolving Common Security and Defence Policy | Staff Lead: Yasser Mahmood | Student Researchers: Carson Lloyd and Magreth Reuben Kanev (was magreth involved?)

Development of the concept of EU citizenship and the CJEU | Staff Lead: Dr. Ewan Kirk | Student Researcher: Zaynab Khan.

Rethinking the Law: Critical Legal Theory | Staff Lead: Raxona Khanum | Student Researchers: Samuel Miah and Rachel Williams (Level 6 Law School Scholar).

Decolonising the Law | Staff Lead: Raxona Khanum | Student Researcher: Samarya Abid.

Legal Technology as a Teaching Module | Staff Lead: Dr. Alan Ma | Student Researchers: Fatemeh Naderi, Natasha Lawrance and Turan Avkeson.

A Dworkinian Justification for Piercing (or Lifting) the Corporate Veil | Staff Leads: Keith Gompertz and Anil Matoo | Student Researcher: James Southwick.

The Procedural Concerns regarding Disabled Inmates in Prolonged Solitary Confinement | Staff Leads: Rhiannon Frost & Anil Matoo | Student Researcher: Success Osatohumbhan.

Local Democracy in the United States | Staff Leads: Dr. Ilaria Di Gioia and Dr. Anne Richardson-Oakes | Student Researcher: Shahena Begum.

Capital Punishment in Papua New Guinea, Thailand, and Syria: The UPR Project at BCU | Staff Leads: Professor Jon Yorke, Dr. Alice Storey & Dr. Amna Nazir | Student Researchers: Maria Oliveira, Darcie Kilmartin and Izaura Krasniqi.

Editing of book on Law and Custom | Staff Lead: Professor Luke Mason | Student Researchers: Bilal Hussain and Sumiyah Farid, Sara Saleem.

A Review of the Academic Literature On Experiential Learning | Staff Lead: Samantha Gargaro | Student Researchers: Sabbah Hussain, Natalia Matyszczyk, and Sohray-Tai Allen

Examining why Overriding Interests were deemed necessary in Registered titles from 1925 and any related rationale | Staff Lead: Keith Gompertz | Student Researchers: Adeola Adenugba and Lydia Larose

Exploring Law & Regulation of the Rag Markets in Britain | Staff Lead: Dr. Liviu Damsa | Student Researcher: Kara Meah

Capital Punishment in the United States: Tracking Engagement with the UN Treaty Bodies | Staff Lead: Dr. Alice Storey | Student Researchers: Georgia Ellen Cartwright and Reece Hunt

LAW SCHOOL SCHOLARS

Level 5 Law School Scholar: Sahar Aamer
Staff Lead: Dr. I-Ju Chen

Project: The Impact of COVID on Global Administrative Law

Level 6 Law School Scholar: Rachel Williams
Staff Lead: Dr. I-Ju Chen

Project: The Impact of COVID on Global Administrative Law

Level 7 Law School Scholar: Ethan Read
Staff Lead: Dr. Anne Richardson-Oakes

Project: Law School Scholar Project: Compensation to Slave Owners following the Abolition of Slavery: The British and US Approaches

Congratulations to all students who have been involved in research collaborations with staff in the School of Law and beyond in this particularly challenging academic year. We wish all the very best to those who graduated this year and look forward to welcoming more students to join our research opportunities in 2021/22!

Alice & Laura

@BCU_Law @myBCUresearch

INDICATIVE SCHEDULE OF 2021/22 STUDENT RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SCHOOL OF LAW

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY	WHO CAN APPLY?	WHEN TO APPLY?
Voluntary Research Assistantships (VRA)	Open to Levels 5 and 6 students with a 2:1 overall average in their previous academic year.	Level 5 callouts = Semester 2. Level 6 callouts = Semester 2. Level 7 callouts = Semester 2.
Law School Scholar	Levels 5, 6 and 7 can apply to be a Law School Scholar through the VRA scheme. The student selected for the Law School Scholar will be on a grade-merited basis, and will have achieved the highest grade average from their level.	Levels 5, 6, and 7 callouts = Semester 2.
School of Law Research Seminars	Students working on research projects can discuss this with their supervisor.	Ongoing.
British Journal of American Legal Studies Student Editors (BJALS)	Applicants from Level 5, 6, and 7 can apply to be a BJALS student editor.	Applicants should express interest to the Editor-in-Chief: anne.oakes@bcu.ac.uk
Specially Funded Projects (SFPs)	Applications for SFPs are usually ongoing throughout the year. If a member of staff obtains funding for a research project, they may wish to employ student researchers to assist them.	Staff will communicate this to students via email/ Moodle.

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