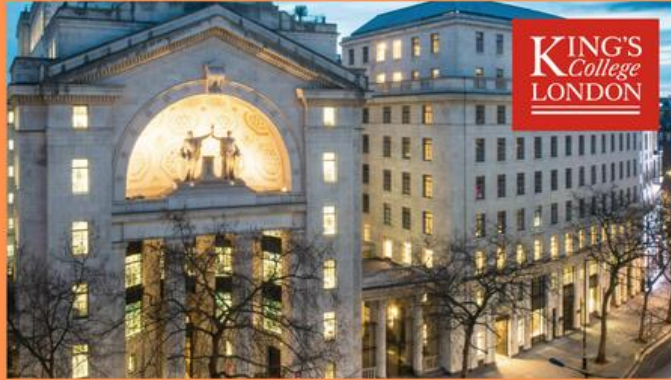# School of Politics and Economics Strategy

Peter John and Virginia Preston

6 June 2023

# Table of contents

# Executive Summary

- With its four departments/institutes, 172 academic staff, 25 professional services staff, highly successful undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes recruiting the brightest and best, and its budget of £36.6 million, returning £21.76 million back to the faculty and university, the School of Politics and Economics (SPE) is a massive success story.
- Strains are: limited office space, high staff-student ratios (SSRs) for DPE, a dip in research income during COVID, low numbers of research students overall, lack of faculty/university representation/influence, need for more progress on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).
- Proposals for change include:
    - A revamped school-wide PGR progress and administration committee to deliver better services for PGRs and to link to the faculty's plans for more studentships, helped with some school funds.
    - Use three-year IPP planning round framework to make significant progress on EDI for academic staff.
    - Further work on communications to reach further across university and to policy-makers, better connections for research groups within and outside SPE.
    - Diversify education offerings and income sources to include professional education with the pilot at Institute for Middle Eastern Studies (IMES) and an online MA in public policy.
    - Encourage better faculty and university representation through mentoring of applications for vice deans and other roles.
    - Further work on research facilitation to support large grants through mentoring and communication about incentives.
    - A nudge to encourage applications for research grants attracting overhead support.
    - More transparency of school decisions via revamped heads meeting and structured reporting to departmental meetings.
    - Social events (afternoon teas) to help professional services and academic staff to get to know each other better.

# Main Report

## 1. Introduction and vision

This document sets out a strategy for the School of Politics and Economics (SPE) at King's College London. It aims to set in place plans and aspirations for the period 2023-2028. The strategy reviews the activities of the school, celebrates what has been achieved, assesses performance along key indicators, reports a staff and student consultation, and identifies weaknesses or threats. It seeks to put into place changes that address these weaknesses and to take advantage of likely opportunities. It is also important to consider any changes being made in the faculty, the university, and the wider policy environment. This document ends with a plan to take the strategy forward and a timeline to implement its recommendations.

To this end, the strategy is led by the Head of School, Peter John, helped by the Head of School Administration, Virginia Preston, Steph Harrison, Linda Summers, Alix Mortimer, and Chloe Humphreys. It is a desk review of documents and reports on one-to-one interviews with members of staff, on questions posed to student representatives on 29 March 2023, and on the collection of school-wide data to examine changes over time. We also benefited from the visit by the Executive Dean to the school on 7 March 2023, using notes we took of staff and student views.

It is important that the school strategy *complements* not competes with the setting of academic priorities for teaching and research which are rightly the domain of departments. Key for the school is the smooth running of support for a range of activities provided by professional services, which includes support for teaching and applying for and running research grants. Another important area for the strategy is external relations, which includes publicity support for events, as well as establishing cross-faculty collaborations within King's. It is here that the intellectual identity for the school is important: what it means to be a school of politics and economics. SPE needs to bring the study of politics and economics together into one entity, even though there is much politics and economics being taught and researched in other parts of King's, as well as taking different shapes in the Department of Political Economy, the Department of European and International Studies, and the two institutes that focus on specific regions. Research on politics and economics is grounded in concrete empirical realities in different parts of the world and relies on rigorous methods of analysis, which can link its study both within and outside SPE. The school can support the broad-based research and teaching on politics and economics occurring in its naturally interdisciplinary departments both within King's and beyond. In so doing, SPE becomes a voice for the interdisciplinary study of politics and economics in King's and beyond. It is here that wider questions about the future role for the school and the activities it carries out become important to assess.

# 2. History of the school and challenges faced by institutes and departments

Formed in 2016, the School of Politics and Economics is one of four schools in the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy (SSPP). The key change it introduced was the pooling of professional services staff support into one unit, headed by a Head of School Administration (HoSA) and an academic Head of School (HoS), supporting the Department of Political Economy (DPE), the Department of European and International Studies (EIS), King's Russia Institute (KRI), and the Institute for Middle Eastern Studies (IMES). The school had to be set up at a time of rapid expansion, especially of new undergraduate programmes. With this growth, the school has needed to appoint additional professional services staff and build up a team with responsibilities at different levels. This has taken time and inevitably took a while to ensure SPE had a full complement of staff. SPE has also adapted and reorganised the teams in recent years. In particular, the education team, which had grown significantly, has been reorganised into post-graduate and undergraduate teams, each supporting all departments under a programme manager, with a separate and highly successful student engagement team under a manager reflecting the growing importance of this area. The business support team has also been reorganised in response to larger numbers of staff in the school and new human resources and finance processes, with a deputy school business manager and senior business officers. The changes have given a better structure for professional services staff as well as more resilience for department support. Research support, however, is still supported mainly by one school research manager, and this area is increasingly under pressure particularly with post-award management. With the return to campus, hybrid working for professional services staff is in place in line with university policy, so most now work on site two days a week. This work pattern supports staff recruitment and wellbeing. It also makes better use of the space whilst still providing an excellent service.

The school employs 172 academic (including research and teaching staff) and 25 professional service staff – see Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table 1: Academic staff grades (as of 29 March 2023)**

| Lecturer | 47 |
|---|---|
| Senior Lecturer | 24 |
| Reader | 19 |
| Professor | 31 |
| Teaching only (mainly part-time) | 40 |
| Researcher | 11 |
| Total | 172 |

**Table 2: Professional services staff (as of 29 March 2023)**

| Grade 4 | 7 |
|---|---|
| Grade 5 | 8 |
| Grade 6 | 6 |
| Grade 7 | 3 |
| Grade 8 | 1 |
| Total | 25 |

**Budget and turnover**

In 2022-23, the school's income is forecast to be £36.6 million, with an expenditure of £14.8 million. Most income comes from tuition fees, at £32.6 million in the current year, and the largest expenditure is on staff, at £13.35 million. The school currently returns 62 per cent of its income to the College, £21.76 million in 2022-23 (see more details on school finances in Section 4).

# 3. Other strategies at KCL – the potential for synergy

It is important to formulate a strategy in full knowledge of other strategies in King's and beyond. This is not the place to set out these strategies in detail, but to pick out key themes as they relate to SPE.

Key is *King's College London Strategy 2026*, which is drawn up under the current Senior Leadership Team and is the best articulation of the current priorities of King's.

Key themes highlighted in this report are:

- Focus on staff wellbeing, post-COVID – p3
- Funding challenges with fixed undergraduate fee p3
- Key themes (p5):
    - Enabling student success
    - A thriving King's staff community
    - Sustainable research and innovation excellence
    - Knowledge with purpose: service and impact
- National Student Survey (NSS) challenge p8
- Renewed focus on inclusion and diversity p8
- Under sustainable research – 3.3 'digital, AI and data-driven research across the university' p10
- Research challenge of environmental sustainability needs the social sciences p11
- Impact focus pp11-12
- Importance of improvements to central services p14
- Focus on new ways of work re the estate p15
- Financial sustainability and links to planning process p16

The key takeaways for SPE are links to digital/AI and also environmental themes, need for attention to sources of income, and the importance of central service reform to help solve many problems around efficient programme delivery by school professional services staff so as to enhance student engagement and improve satisfaction.

Other strategies to take note of are:

- King's Strategic Vision 2029 https://www.kcl.ac.uk/about/assets/pdf/Kings-strategic-vision-2029.pdf -
    - Key themes around research and education, innovation, and the civic university.
- University research strategy (01 December 2016) (https://www.kcl.ac.uk/assets/policyzone/research/research-strategy.pdf
    - Links to 2026 ambition for greater partnerships and impact
- Faculty research strategy
- Faculty vision (November 2022) and *Informing and Promoting Fairer Societies. SSPP Plan for 2023-2026*

Pull-out themes for SPE:

- Takes 2026 plan as touchstone (see above)
- Diversity of student recruitment from different parts of the world

- Importance of developing executive education
- Support for post-award research grant administration
- Developing large centre bid or bids
- Importance of donation and philanthropy
- Centrality of early career researchers (ECRs) and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in all activities

# 4. Analysis of key data and trends in finance, education, and external publicity, a five-year snapshot

In this section, key trends in the performance of the school are reported. It is not a comprehensive assessment but reports key measures to illustrate the main trends.

<u>A. Education data</u>

This is not the place to analyse all education data, but to pull out key indicators. Picking up on the 2026 strategy's highlight of National Student Survey (NSS) scores, we present the scores for the school. School-level data is not available so those of departments in the faculty are set out in Figure 1. This also allows a comparison of two departments across the faculty. Particularly important is the trend data that show EIS and DPE in the mid-range of satisfaction, with relatively stable scores over time, if with declines in the COVID period. As has been often commented, both departments score lower on the learning community dimension, which the student engagement team and academic staff are currently tackling, such as by increasing student-academic connections.

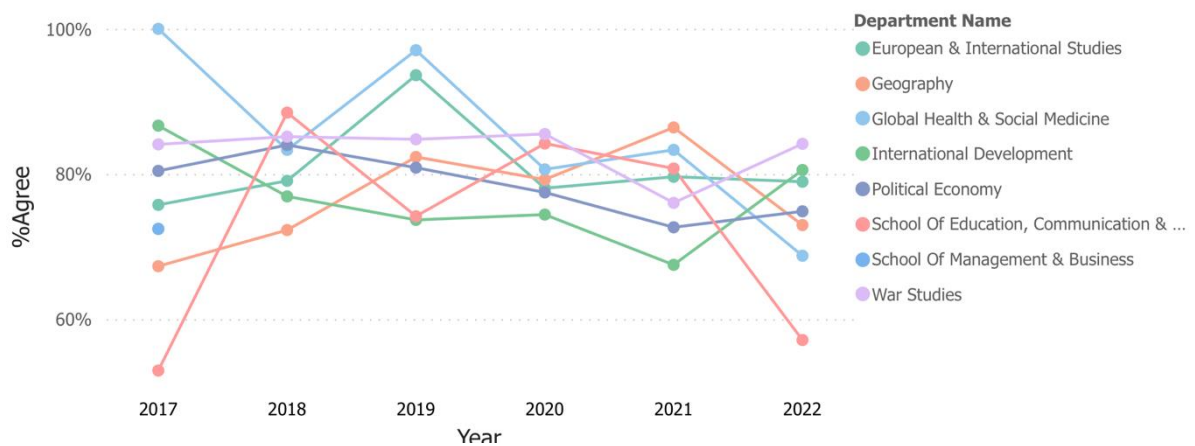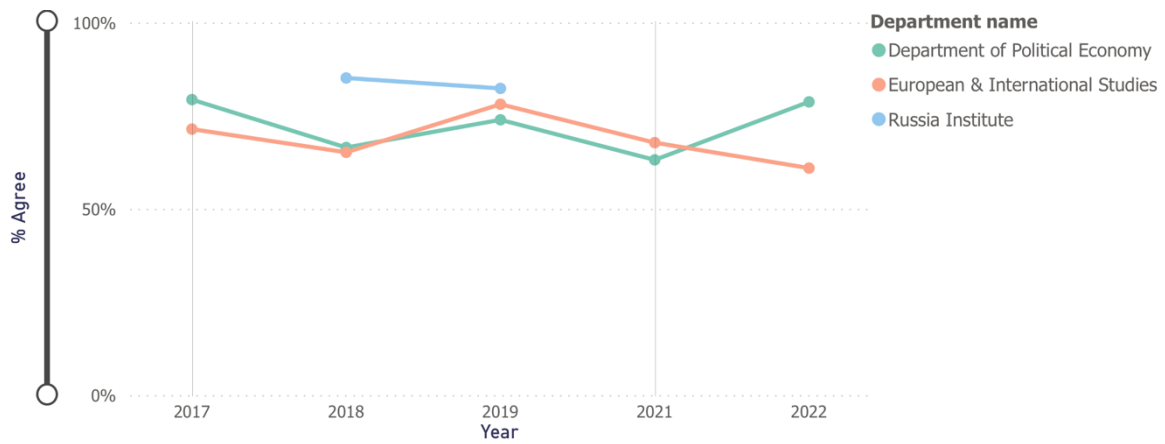**Figure 1: NSS data for departments across SSPP, per cent satisfaction**

**Figure 2: PTES data in SPE by department, per cent satisfaction**



With the large number of PGT students, satisfaction with these programmes is high and stable as revealed in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) survey in Figure 2.

It is instructive to look at the performance of different degrees, and the best way is to dig into the kinds of students we have. We recruit among the highest achieving students and have very high levels of applications, especially for the core politics and economics degrees, increasing over the years as Figure 3 shows.

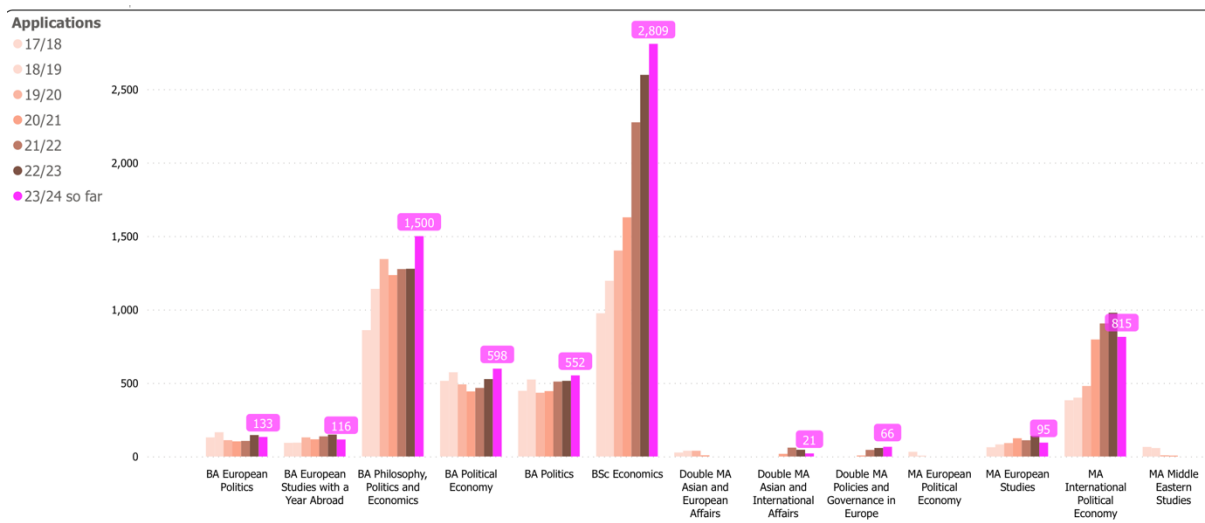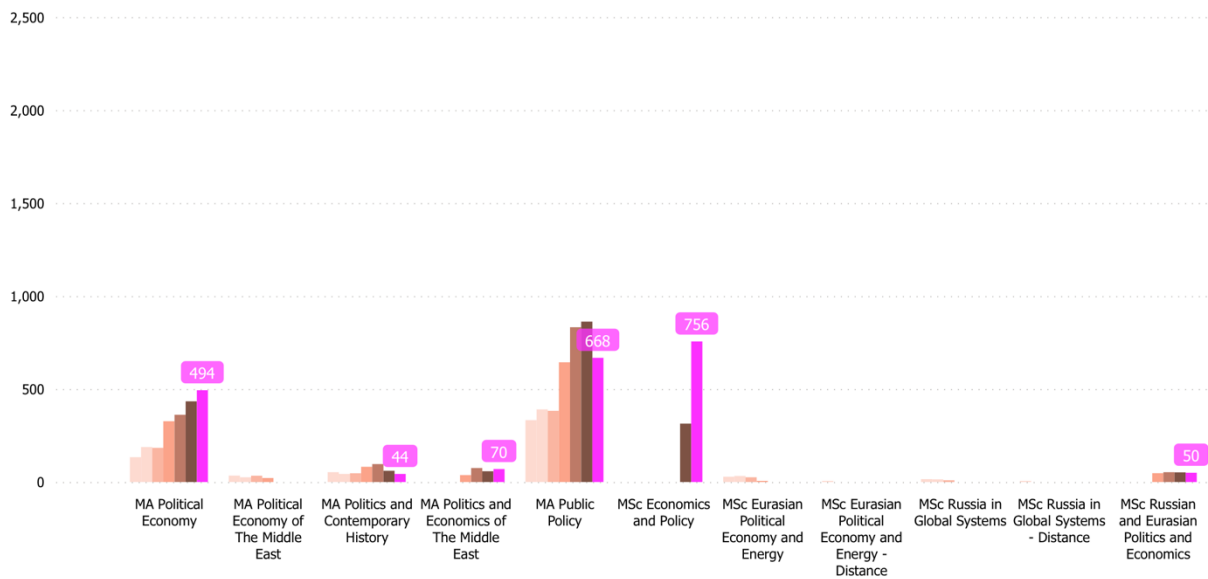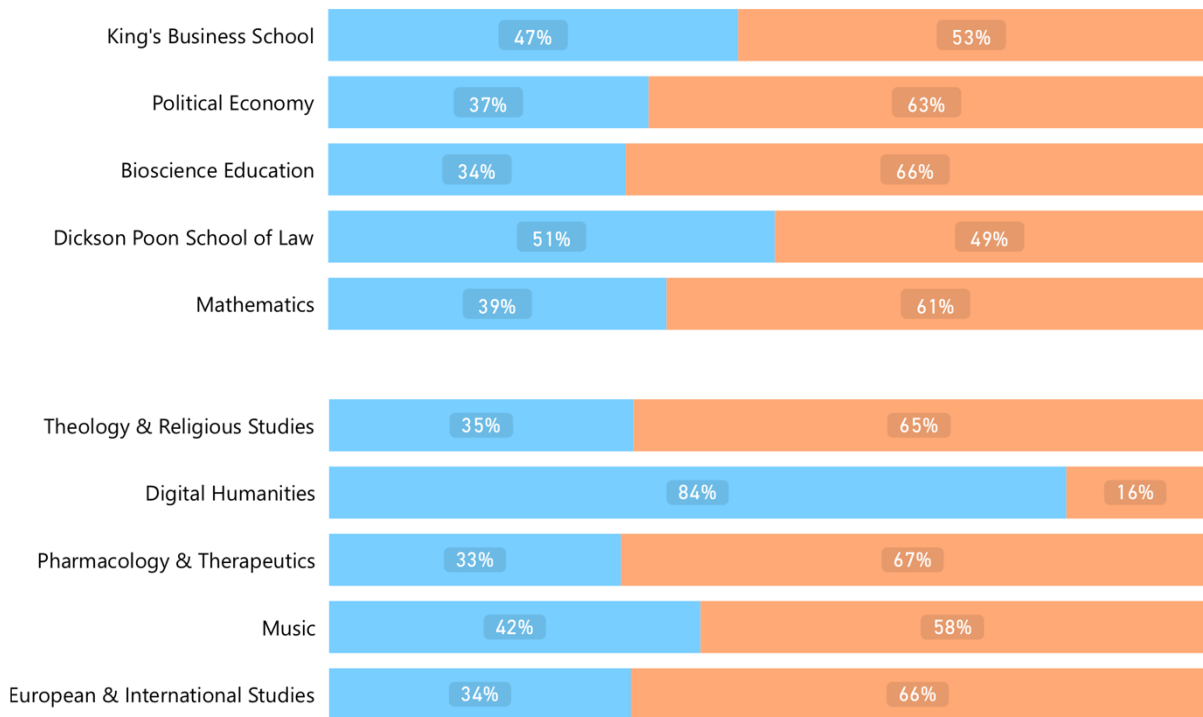## Figure 3: applications to SPE programmes



## Figure 3 (continued)



It is useful to get a sense of how popular King's is compared to other universities, and one way to look at this is whether applicants put King's as a firm choice or as insurance. Figure 4 shows this compared to a selection of departments across King's.

**Figure 4: Offers by whether firm or by insurance, by selected King's departments**

Decisions: ● KCL Firm, other Insurance: FI  ● Other as Firm, KCL as Insurance: IF

| Department | FI | IF |
|---|---|---|
| King's Business School | 47% | 53% |
| Political Economy | 37% | 63% |
| Bioscience Education | 34% | 66% |
| Dickson Poon School of Law | 51% | 49% |
| Mathematics | 39% | 61% |
| Theology & Religious Studies | 35% | 65% |
| Digital Humanities | 84% | 16% |
| Pharmacology & Therapeutics | 33% | 67% |
| Music | 42% | 58% |
| European & International Studies | 34% | 66% |

Here the picture is good, but other departments in King's get more of these top-preferred applications.
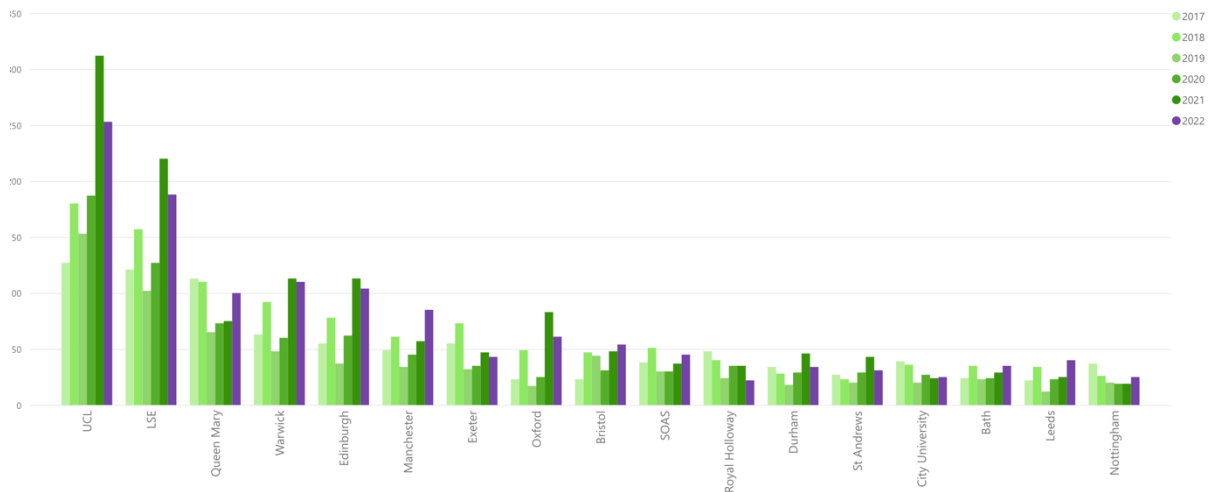
Figure 5 shows that SPE partners with other highly-ranked institutions for these students.

**Figure 5: total number of applications shared with KCL by other institutions**

**DPE**
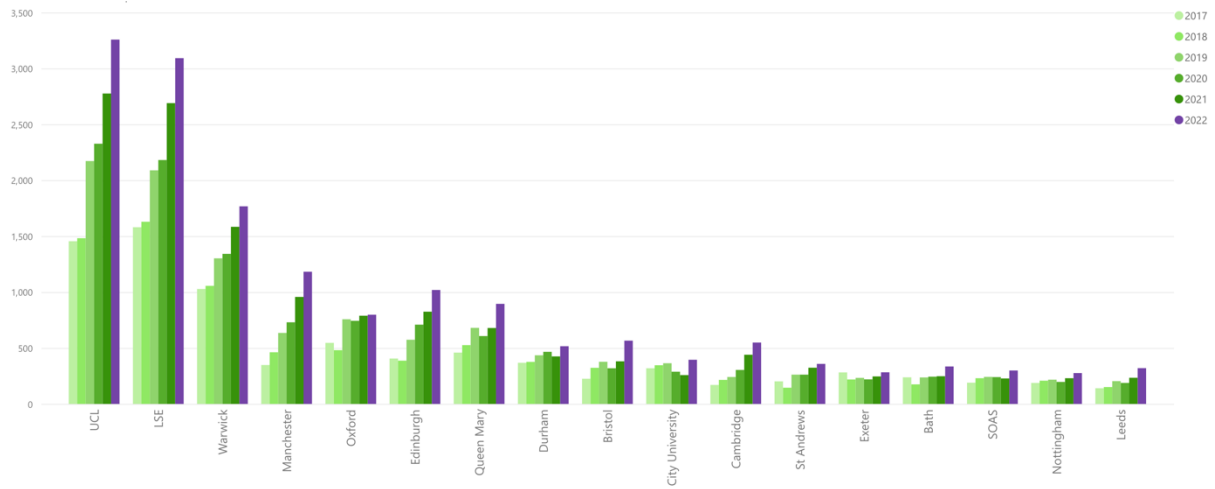


**EIS**



Finally, we comment on the grades that students from the school have been producing, which shows the high achievement of our students, with 44.3 per cent getting firsts, and 91 per cent getting firsts and 2:1s. Figure 6 shows the results for the school, combining firsts and 2:1s as well as reporting firsts. It shows the rising numbers of firsts in the school.

**Figure 6: 1st and 2:1 degrees, by academic year in SPE**
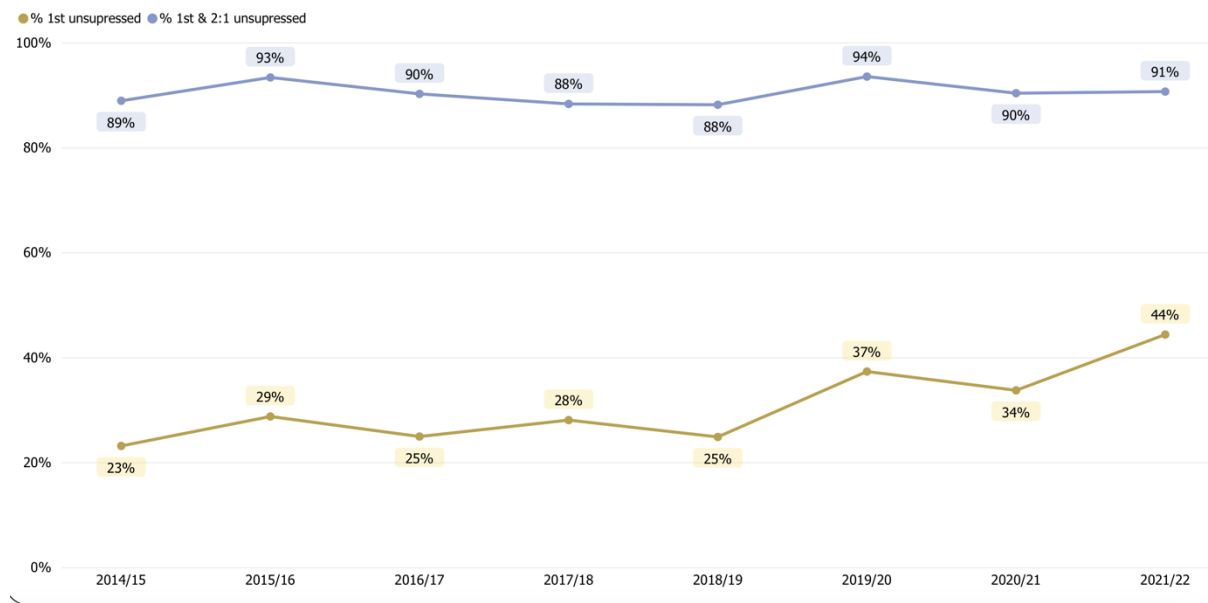


For PGT, 30 per cent of PGT students across SPE get a distinction, with 59 per cent receiving a merit. Figure 7 shows the breakdown by department.

**Figure 7: PGT classification in SPE by department**
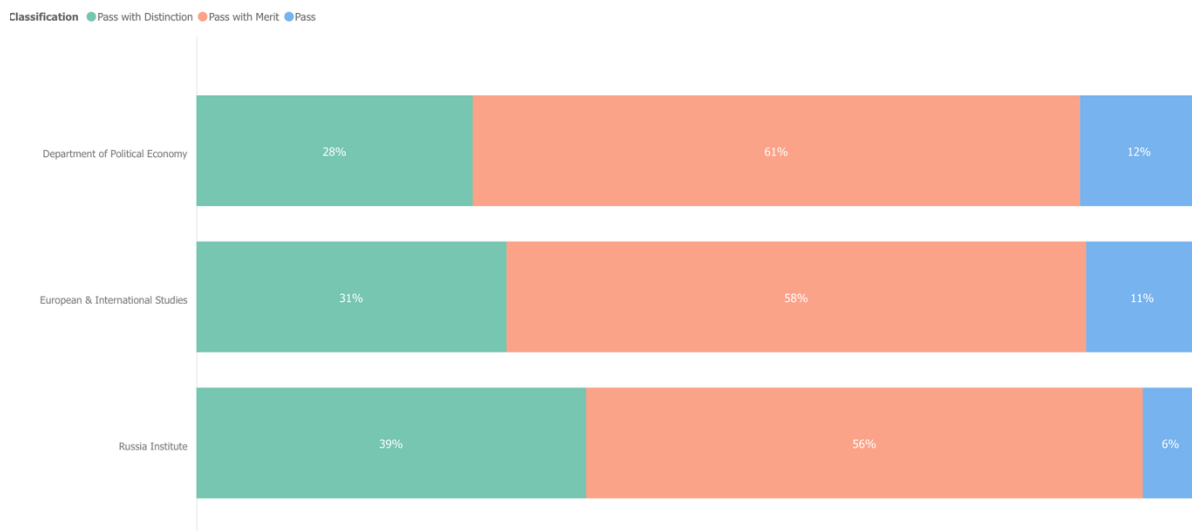


Finally, it is important to dwell on the differences in attainment by EDI, which was reviewed in two reports for SPE led by the current Head of School.[1] Figure 8 reports a snapshot, with the Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) differences across results per module. As these reports show, there is a small but persistent difference of about two marks. Our survey analysis pointed to the

---

[1] Andrew Hunter and Peter John, *Report on the BAME Attainment Gap In SPE*, Spring 2021; Lina Kramer and Peter John, *The Attainment Gap In SPE: Report of a Student Survey*, 17 September 2021.

importance of high attaining groups among BAME students who believe they are not getting enough support to achieve the highest grades.

**Figure 8: average marks per module in SPE, by BME status**
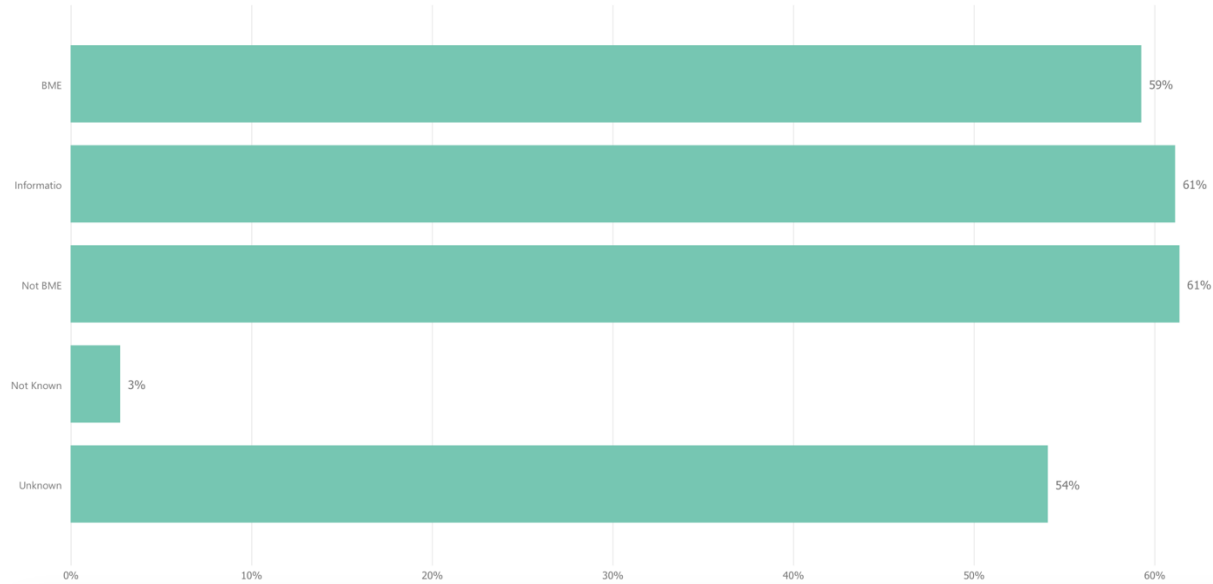


## B. Staffing

This sub-section is about staffing in SPE, first discussed in Section 2. Key is the staff-student ratio (SSR). While these data are not now not used in the university's planning round for new posts, is still key for staff wellbeing and their ability to do their jobs. Figure 9 reports the basic figures for the departments in the school for permanent academic staff, with a faculty average of 15.0 and SPE average of 16.0. DPE has the higher ratio of 16.7.[2]

**Figure 9: permanent academic staff- student ratios in SPE by department as at 1 April 2023**

---

[2] Note that there are different measures of SSR using different combinations of filters and assumptions about who academic staff are. The takeaway for readers of this figure is differences between departments in relation to the faculty average. King's Russia Institute is low probably because of the larger amount of service teaching for other departments in the school it carries out.

| | |
|---|---|
| Department of Political Economy | 16.7 |
| European & International Studies | 15.1 |
| Russia Institute | 9.0 |

Student Staff Ratio
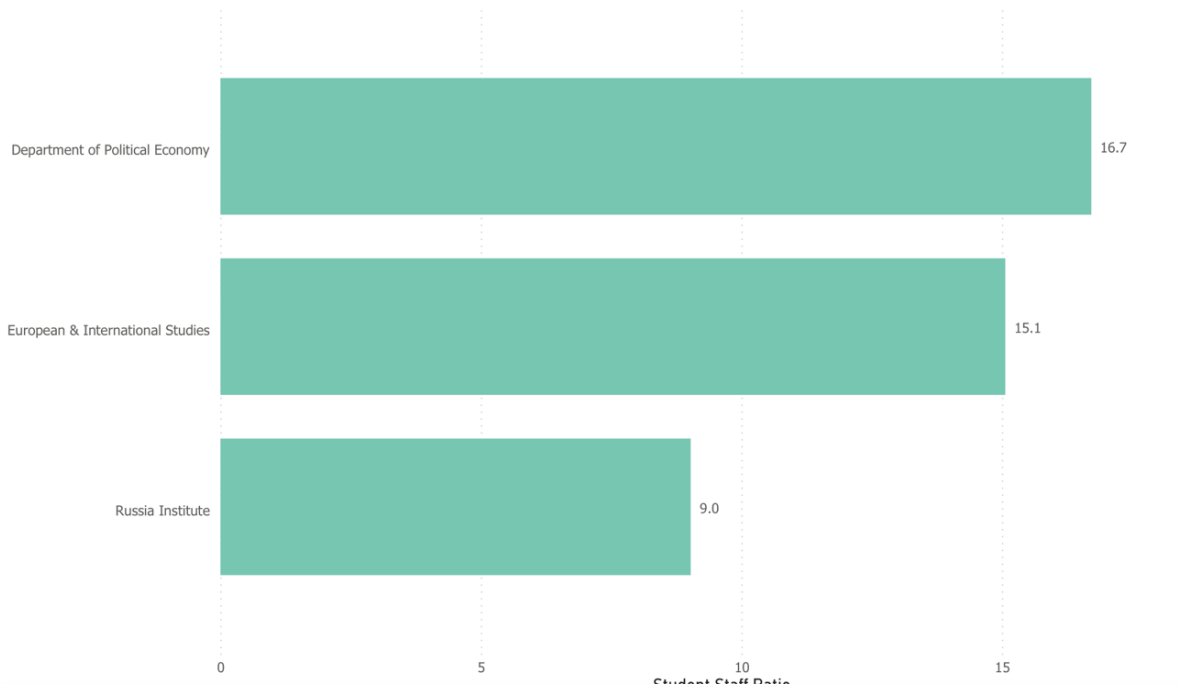
The staff-student ratio for professional services staff is 76.1, the same as the faculty average.

The other key aspect of staff is representation from different groups. First is representation by gender. Figure 10 gives the representation for permanent staff in SPE, showing a relatively static picture over the last few years. It is lower than the faculty average, which was 38 per cent women in 2020/2021.

**Figure 10: academic staff in SPE by year and gender**
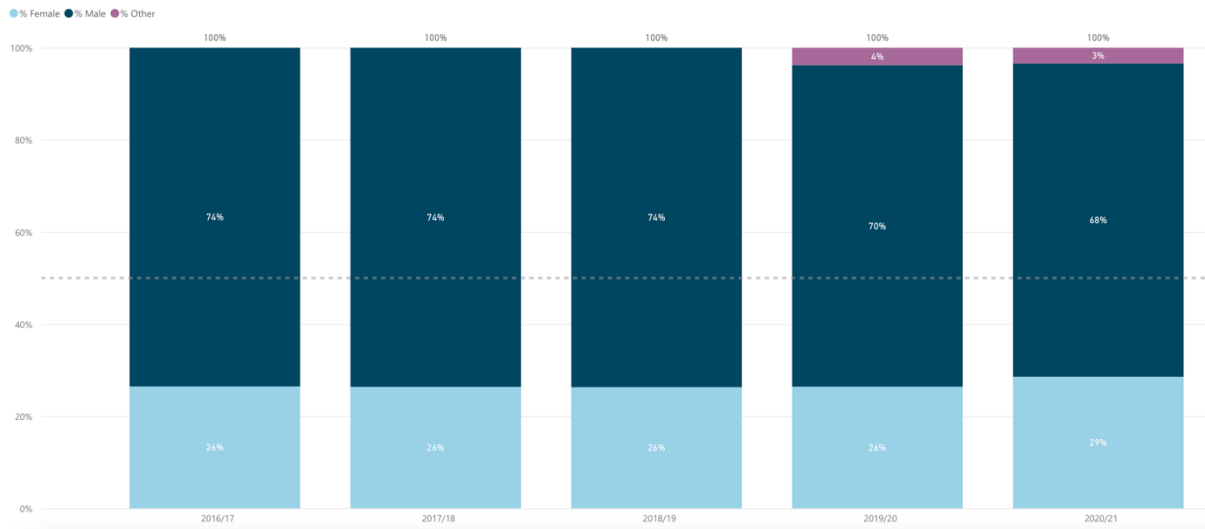


In Figure 11, for professional services staff, the picture is reversed.

**Figure 11: professional services staff headcount in SPE by year and gender**
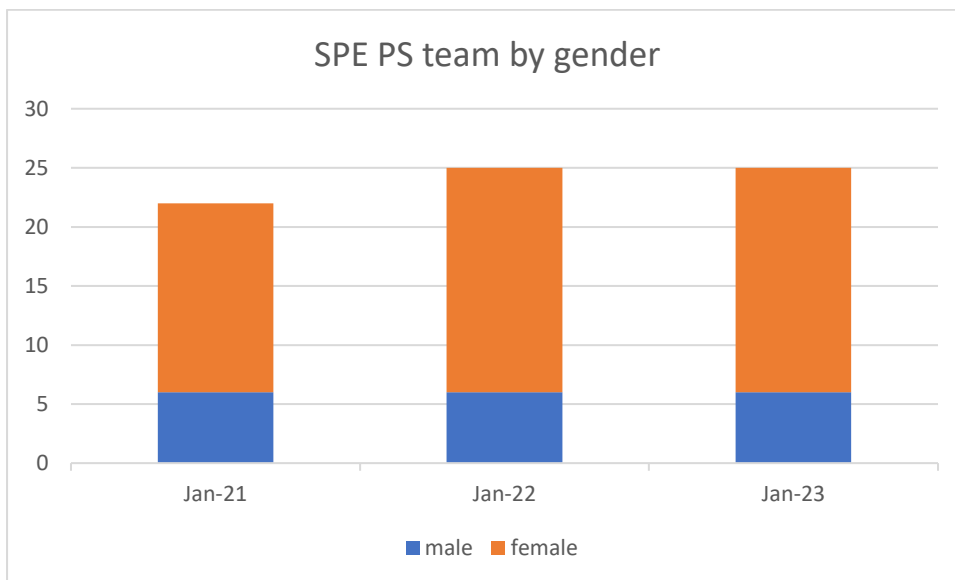


Figure 12 displays the same data for ethnicity for academic staff and Figure 13 for professional services staff. For academic staff the figure is low at just over ten per cent and relatively stable, whereas there is a slight drop for professional services staff (note that where the numbers are small, small changes reflecting non-systematic factors can have a large impact and not imply a trend).

**Figure 12: academic staff in SPE by year and ethnicity**

| | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| % White | 85% | 81% | 84% | 85% | 81% |
| % Prefer not to say / unknown | 3% | 7% | 5% | 5% | 7% |
| % BME | 12% | 13% | 11% | 10% | 13% |
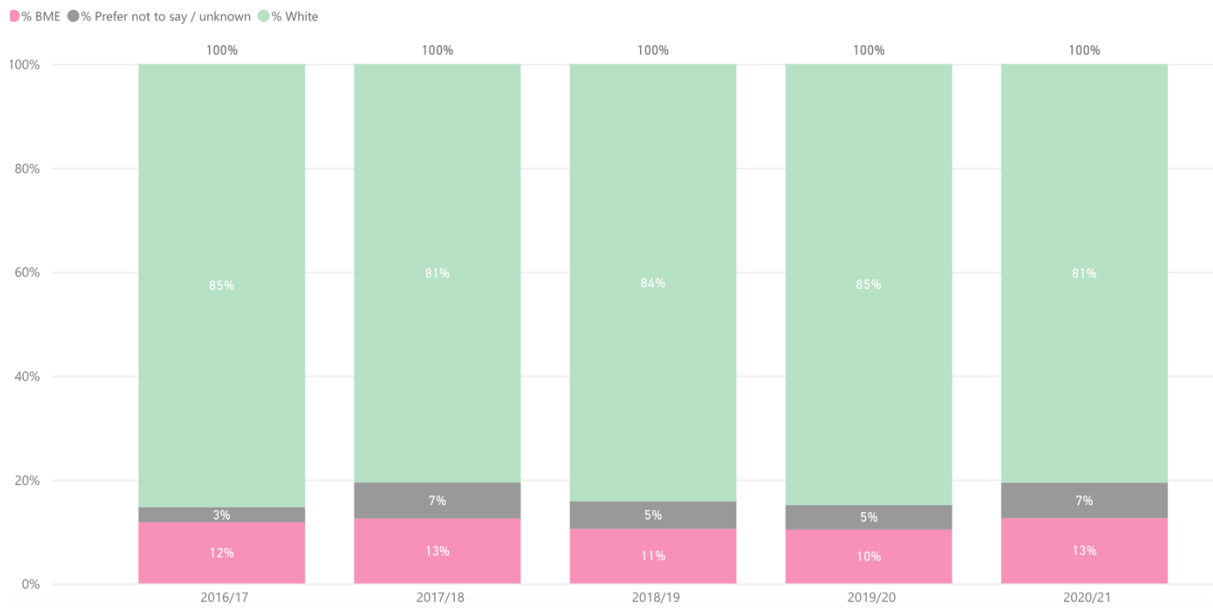
**Figure 13: professional services staff headcount in SPE by year and ethnicity**

SPE PS team by ethnicity

| | Jan-21 | Jan-22 | Jan-23 |
|---|---|---|---|
| White | 17 | 19 | 20 |
| BAME | 5 | 6 | 5 |
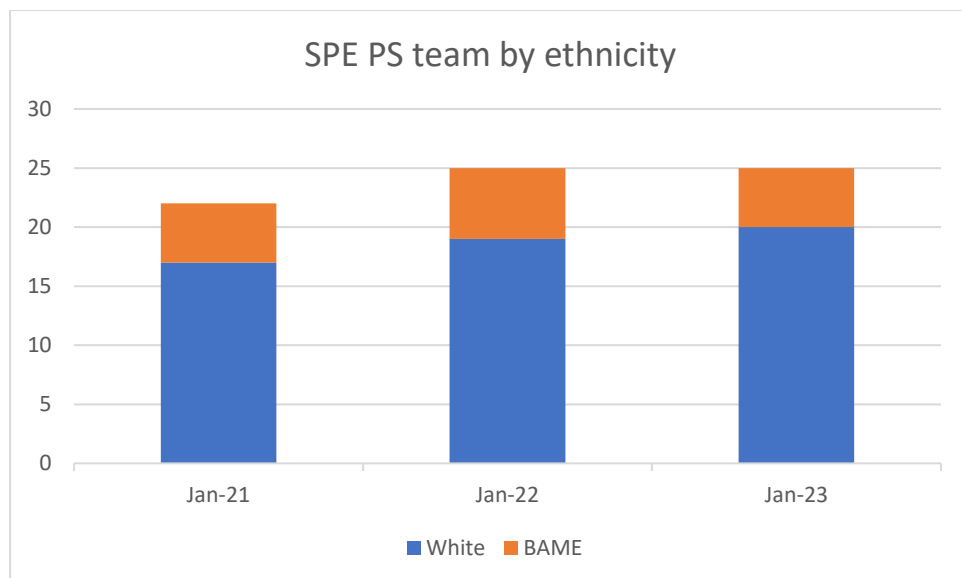
## C. Research student data: numbers and completions

Finally, there is research student data. As noted elsewhere in the report, PGR students provide a number of benefits to departments. As well as providing income, they contribute to the research culture and vitality of departments, and many members of staff value working with PGRs. They make a massive contribution to teaching. The number of PGRs contributes to key KPIs, such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

Figure 14 shows applications across SPE.

**Figure 14:  applications for PGR by year and programme**
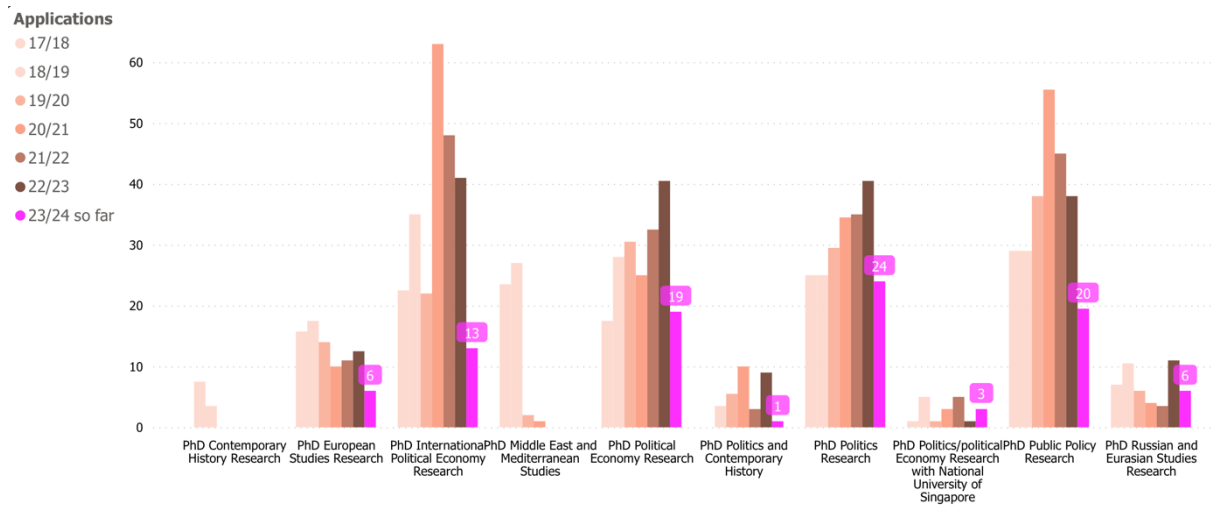


These totals are low and may reflect the lack of funding opportunities, though might also reflect speed and efficiency of processing applications, as well as lack of a general market.

Figure 15 shows the enrolments which are low as to be expected from the numbers of applications.

**Figure 15: enrolled PGR students in SPE by year and programme**

## D Finance data

As noted in Section 2, the finances of the school are in good shape with a high level of income. The surplus generated helps fund central services and other in the faculty. This income generates a significant school 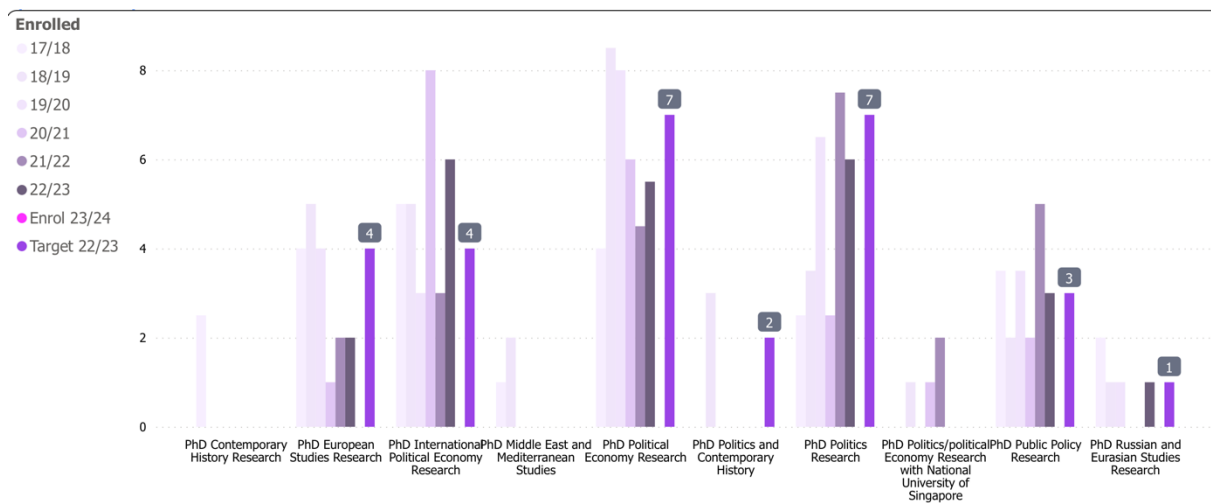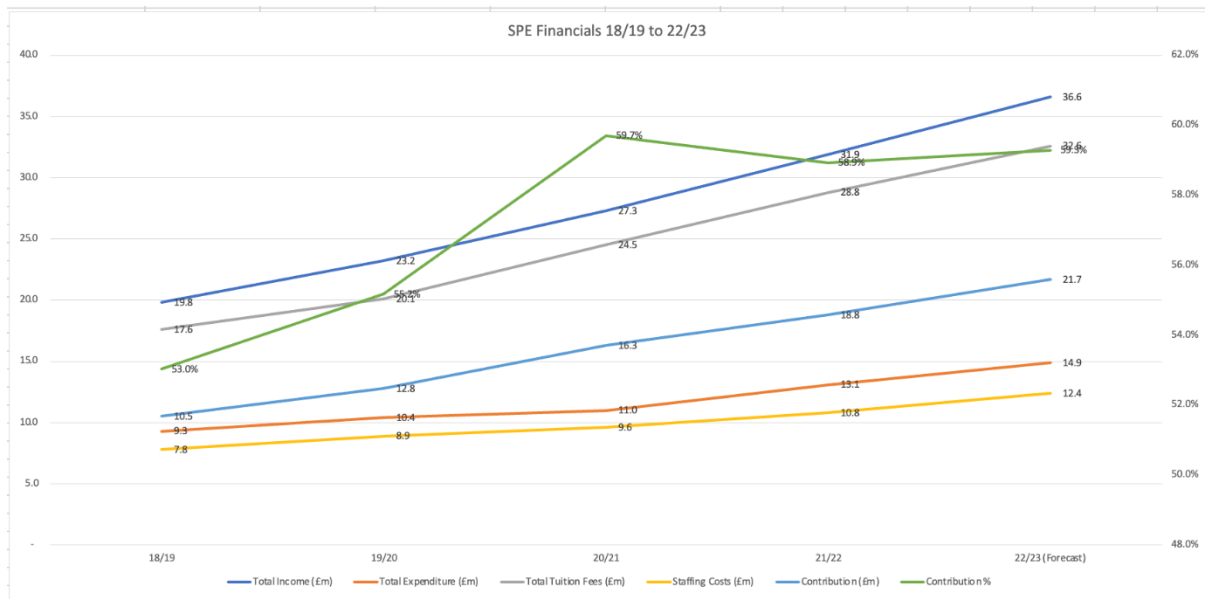non-pay budget to fund other activities that help the departments and the research of academic staff. Figure 16 shows the historical data over time.

**Figure 16: historical finance data for SPE, £m.**



The different coloured legends show the totals, showing the growth in income in this period. It also shows the growth of the contribution to the faculty and thence to the university, effectively doubling over a five-year period from £10.1m to £21.1, which is impressive even when taking into account inflation, and reflects the growth of student numbers and changes to fee levels. Expenditure on staffing of course has increased too, as well as other costs.

## E. Research income data

Research income is a key performance indicator (KPI). Figure 16 shows total income over the last five years, first in total and second just the core research council funders. It looks like 2019/20 was an unusual year, but excluding that creates an income of about £1.2 million per year average. It is important to take into account the decline in income during the COVID years and now the return to previous levels. Overall, the performance of the school is fair and there are some signs of increasing numbers of grants coming forward, but there is not yet a step increase in research income, remaining at about three per cent of total income. As well as more income overall, there needs to be more grants bearing overhead to ensure long-term financial sustainability.

# Figure 16: SPE research income since 2017-21

**The value of awards made per org unit**
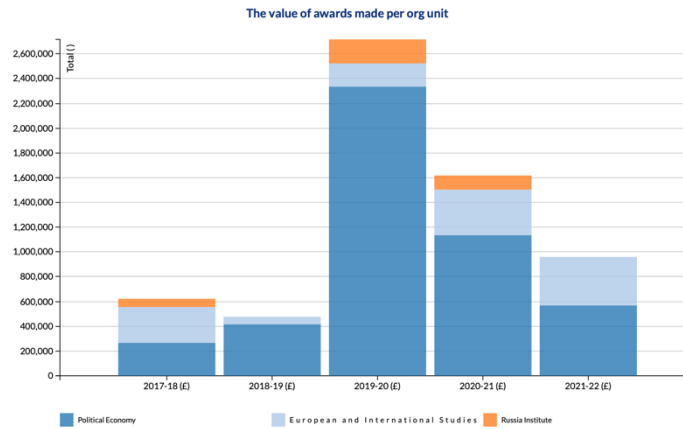
| | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Political Economy | £267,323 | £418,274 | £2,335,288 | £1,134,707 | £568,489 | £4,724,080 |
| European and International Studies | £290,307 | £57,736 | £186,103 | £370,120 | £393,792 | £1,298,058 |
| Russia Institute | £67,096 | £0 | £195,000 | £112,345 | £0 | £374,441 |
| **Politics and Economics** | **£624,726** | **£476,009** | **£2,716,391** | **£1,617,172** | **£962,281** | **£6,396,579** |

**The value of awards made per org unit**
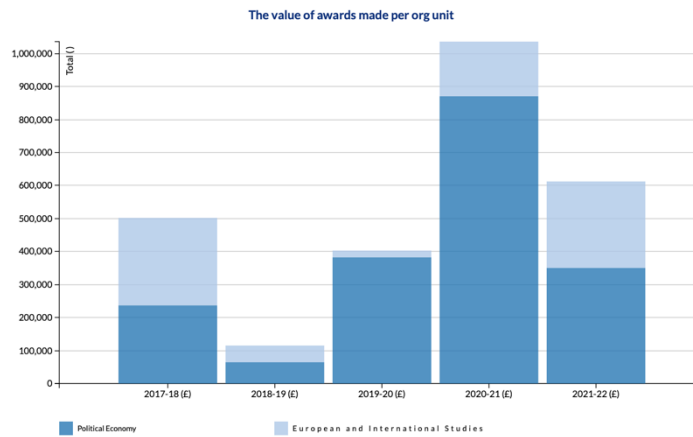
| | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Political Economy | £236,691 | £63,596 | £381,498 | £870,717 | £349,226 | £1,901,728 |
| European and International Studies | £264,496 | £51,547 | £22,512 | £165,690 | £263,962 | £768,207 |
| **Politics and Economics** | **£501,187** | **£115,143** | **£404,010** | **£1,036,407** | **£613,188** | **£2,669,935** |

20

## E. Publicity and communications data

Figure 17 shows media coverage of SPE over the course of *2022* which shows a cyclical pattern.

**Figure 17**



Figure 18 shows reach across areas of the world, with the US and UK prominent.

**Figure 18**

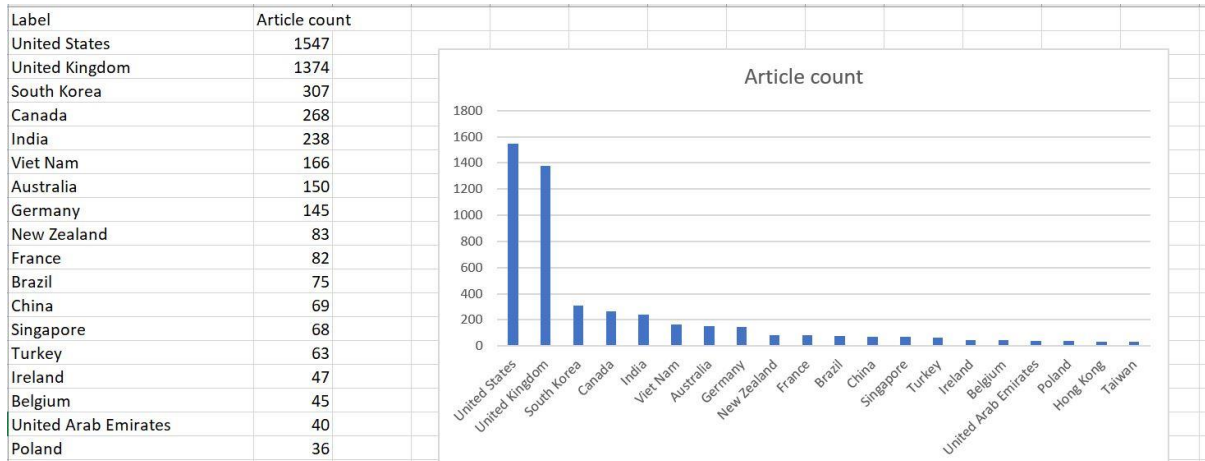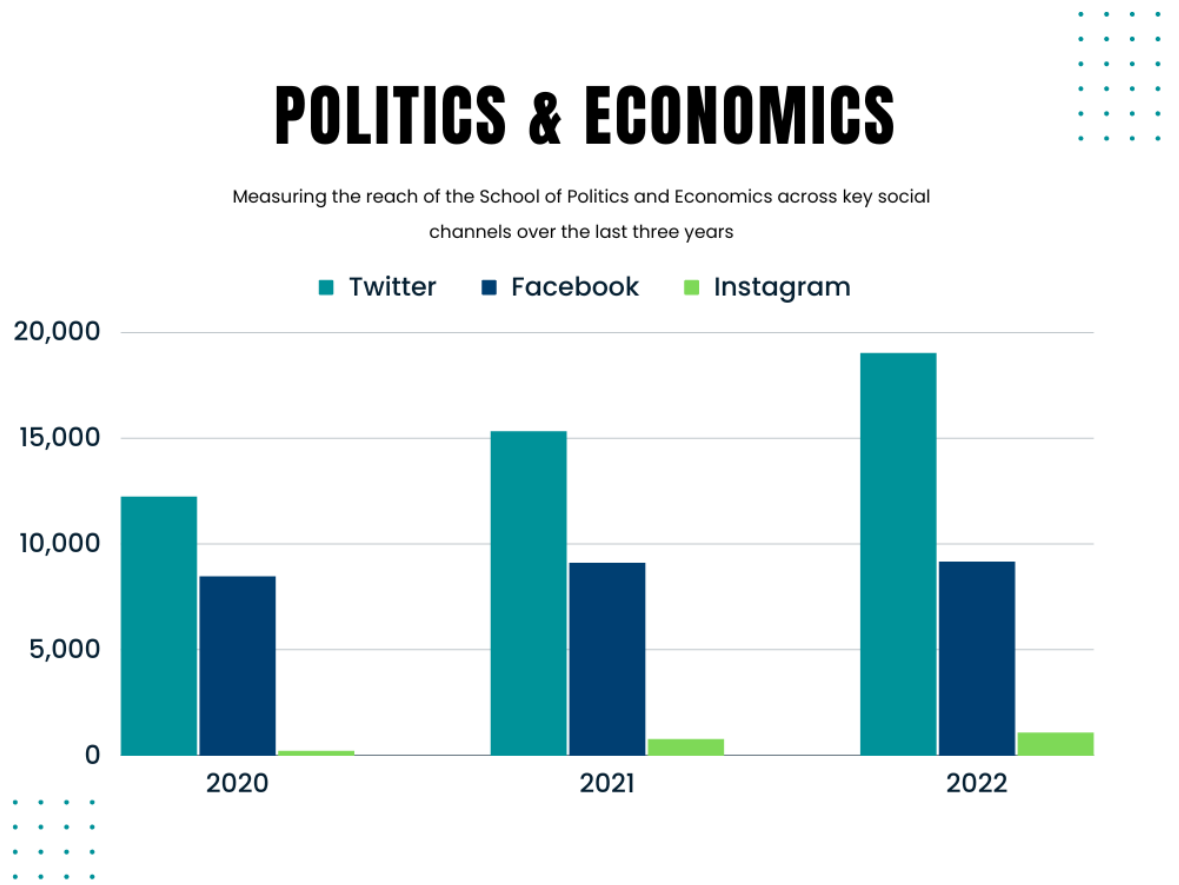| Label | Article count |
|---|---|
| United States | 1547 |
| United Kingdom | 1374 |
| South Korea | 307 |
| Canada | 268 |
| India | 238 |
| Viet Nam | 166 |
| Australia | 150 |
| Germany | 145 |
| New Zealand | 83 |
| France | 82 |
| Brazil | 75 |
| China | 69 |
| Singapore | 68 |
| Turkey | 63 |
| Ireland | 47 |
| Belgium | 45 |
| United Arab Emirates | 40 |
| Poland | 36 |

Figure 19 shows gradual increases in numbers of followers over the last three years on key social media channels.

**Figure 19**

# POLITICS & ECONOMICS

Measuring the reach of the School of Politics and Economics across key social channels over the last three years

■ Twitter   ■ Facebook   ■ Instagram

# 5. Views of stakeholders

A consultation with academic and professional services staff was carried out by the Head of the School. Faculty stakeholders, such as vice deans, and research students, also participated. It was not possible to interview all staff so there is a selection from across the school and from different levels and roles. Readers need to be aware of self-selection of interviewees as they put themselves forward or responded to a direct request. They were also carried out with a manager. But the interviews were very informal and there were frank conversations that were not recorded or attributed. See Table 3 for the numbers of interviewees.

**Table 3: numbers of interviews by HoS with SPE staff**

|       | PGR | PS | KRI | IMES | EIS | DPE | Faculty | University | Total |
|-------|-----|----|-----|------|-----|-----|---------|------------|-------|
| Total | 4   | 8  | 1   | 1    | 7   | 21  | 4       | 1          | 47    |

Overall, the consultation shows satisfaction with the performance and activities of the school. Particular praise goes to professional services staff, and many academic school members commented about how they rise to challenges of providing high quality service when coping with the difficulty of working with central services, such as timetabling. There is pressure on professional services staff from churn, which leads to disruption and loss of institutional knowledge. Staff realise that the school provides a support structure to deal with staff turnover to ensure continuity and the building back up of that institutional knowledge.

In terms of school-based activities, there is no particular demand for change or ways of working, such as new division of tasks between professional services and academic staff, either from academic or professional services staff. There was one call for a reduction in e-mail chains, but it is hard to see how that could be achieved.

Academic staff are also relatively happy with the level of financial support for research through the Personal Research Allowance (PRA) and in particular the innovation of PRA+ (whereby staff can request more funds), which can double the PRA from its base of £1,500 to £3,000, as well there being additional research funds for application for projects or activities.

There were a number of key themes that emerged more generally where the school can make an input.

- **PGR community** There is a general view that there could be a larger and better organised PGR community, with more students, especially in DPE, needing funding for studentships or guaranteed teaching income, but also better coordination and outreach, such as on progress. PGR students interviewed, as well as others, comment on how PGRs across the school tend to work together and know each other, liking the provision in Bush House NE where many of them have desks. The challenge is how to improve the conditions for and numbers of PGRs without the likely large increase of funded students from The London Interdisciplinary Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership (LISS) and other external funders.
- **Space** This is an issue of strong concern, especially the potential loss of two-person offices for new staff and overspills into larger shared areas in 2022/2023 year. There is the criticism about lack of communication from the school about space planning the

decisions. There is also worry from occupants of the Virginia Woolf building about the end of the lease in 2025. There is overwhelming agreement that personal offices are essential for an academic department, and to have meetings with students, and can be especially important for junior staff members who have constrained working space at home. There is also understanding from many staff about the concern about underuse of office space in the post-COVID period, and that staff have different needs and at different times. Staff believe that larger offices, where three or more colleagues share, could be in much better shape in terms of décor and the quality and speed of computers located there.

- **Support for upping media and social media presence** as well as praise for current work on comms, getting our voice out there and translating our work to practitioner communities, such as policy-makers, is an important goal. There are ideas for improving the web presence, e.g., improving the staff bios and linking research pages to other sources, such as social media feeds and Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier (ORCID) profiles. Research staff pages could be updated.
- **Admiration for work on research support,** in particular the work of Anthony Senior and other staff around research facilitation, such as David Newsome, but staff want more support and realise the amount of work involved from professional services staff.
- **Acknowledgement of common research themes across SPE and beyond.** There is great interest in the work of colleagues across departments and recognition that there are common interests. People attend events run by research groups outside their departments (e.g., Quantitative Political Economy); and many network to other research groups outside SPE, such as in the Department for International Development and War Studies. More can be done to encourage cross-working within King's, with better communication about events and activities.
- **Concern about governance and review.** The split of responsibilities between school and departments generates a potential accountability deficit, as decisions can be made at school level but not directly facing departments.

There was an SPE Away Day of heads and senior professional services staff on 22 November 2022 which produced a number of ideas:

- **Research support** – more professional services support is needed to cope with growth in income, already seeking to cost in professional services staff time into large bids.
- **Size and shape** - how to make smaller programmes viable, help develop new successful PGT programmes (e.g. Economics and Public Policy) to emerge; support new offerings, e.g. International Political Economy (IPE) online and new online PhD programme.
- **New research areas for future investment**: possible areas are Data Science, Populism, Global South, Democracy, History and Political Economy, Commodities/Energy, Climate and Sustainability.
- **Critical need to consider environment of research and teaching, especially physical space**.

We consulted student representatives to gauge the student voice:

- Other departments have a lot of outside speakers coming in – would be good for SPE to do more that is similar.
- Allow those on BA degree such as Politics to take Economics modules where appropriate.
- Module selections are much better this year – lots of flexibility.

- Difficulty of modules varies massively across modules and across years – needs more reviewing.
- Exam content is often too far removed from what is taught in lectures.
- DPE students do not feel connected to DPE, only SPE – would be good to have more departmental socials as well as school level events (This is the opposite to the usual feedback and could be linked to the introduction of the SPE Student Engagement Ambassadors this year).

Finally, various sources, such as heads and other staff in the school and faculty, identified various threats and challenges SPE faces:

- **Competition with other units in Kings** for discipline ownership, and competing offerings of PGT courses.
- **Lack of space** means that appetite for growth in student numbers in DPE is limited.
- **Loss of income** from classic domestic undergraduates means that more overseas students need to be recruited. These need to be targeted and we need to keep the identity of King's as a local/national university with good access for students from a wider variety of backgrounds.
- **Research income growth has costs** from not meeting all overheads. How much room is there for income sources that pay no overheads (e.g. charities)? But then large benefits of grants from non-overhead bearing costs, such as esteem, promotion criteria, and creating a pathway to getting larger grants that do bear overhead.
- **Student dissatisfaction** on some dimensions.

The simple conclusion is that SPE is in good shape. In terms of research and teaching, its departmental degree programmes have massively strong recruitment, which feed into a healthy financial performance. SPE has a solid record in terms of research income, and in the main student satisfaction with its programmes. But there are things can work better and significantly are (partly at least) within the control of the school which can help departments and also assist the work of professional services staff.

**Recommendations and action points**

The boxes below sum up the issues we wish to address, the main changes we wish to introduce, and how and when we plan to introduce them. We will delegate some matters to relevant department committees for further decisions e.g., Education Committee. Peter John and Virginia Preston will be responsible for oversight of actions and reporting/raising issues to Faculty.

*Also, an implementation group in the school will meet once a month to review the strategy and its progress. In a year's time, a short report on the progress of the strategy will be sent to relevant stakeholders.*

*Key points*

**A. Education**

There is a strong base of highly regarded undergraduate programmes recruiting exceptional students, e.g., Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE) and Economics. European Studies is a key programme.  Christoph Meyer's review of European activities is currently taking place to find out the best way forward to maintain European Studies/European Politics programmes. There are excellent post-graduate taught (PGT) programmes, such as International Political Economy (IPE), Public Policy and the new MSc Economics and Policy. SPE is not looking to expand campus teaching further, instead the plan is to diversify into professional development and executive education, and online teaching, such as the new MA Global Political Economy. Overall, in five years from now, the vast amount of teaching will remain on campus, but hopefully enhanced by these other modes of delivery.

| Point to address | Action point | How to deliver | Timeline |
|---|---|---|---|
| Diversify education provision | Invest in more online provision, e.g. MAs | Consult over a new public policy online MA, deploy experiences from other online masters in the faculty to design the new degree | Consult in 2023/24 academic year |
| " | Invest in professional education | Develop programme in IMES, expand out e.g. to King's Russia | Modules to be tested in 2023/24 |
| How to provide education on Europe post-Brexit | Reform undergraduate programme in European Politics | Do market research, engage in programme reform and renaming, link to Meyer review | Renamed degree to be available in 2025/26 |
| Foster a more active and efficient PGR programme | Create new School PGR Progress and Administration Committee to track applications and student progress, promote more cross-school events, lobby for more studentships, school-based scholarships to support fees | Set up committee, link to PS support, set aside funds for school PGR events, link to new SSPP PGR strategy<br><br>Stay in touch with university plans including possible relocation of PGR to Research function, with implications for PS support<br><br>Identify any other areas for improvement and actions from the PRES 2023 results | In place during 2023/24 |
| Address attainment gaps re EDI | Work of department education committees | Reconstitute school EDI committee | In place for 2023/24 |

**B. Research**

There is a strong base for research in the school and SPE is overcoming the dip in income experienced during the COVID period, but there is still a need to develop larger research bids and build on successes, and anticipate new developments in income, in spite of not expecting a large expansion of the school in terms of new programmes and posts. Given that politics and economics happens in King's both within and without SPE, it is important to nurture links and make sense of this spread of expertise institutionally, and to support a good environment for the politics and international studies REF submission.

| Point to address | Action point | How to deliver | Timeline |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overstretched support on research facilitation | Increase PS staffing for research support, more support for larger bids | Cost in PS support in all bids unless funder-excluded, also provide some support through business services, try for a new PS post in the planning round | 2023/24 |
| Overcome difficulty of making research connections within King's | Enable research groups to work across the school and beyond, such as to War Studies, School of Global Affairs, and the Policy Institute | Encourage membership of groups outside departments, extra school funds for cross-school events, link to work on REF, start of year brainstorm for research group leads | Current |
| Address future direction of research on Europe | More coverage of Central and Eastern Europe | Seek external funding for posts on central Europe, link to Meyer review | Current |
| Develop capacity to bid for large research grants | Increase PS staff, more mentoring of junior and mid-career staff through research leads, communicate benefits such as buy out of teaching time | HoS to communicate with heads and research leads | 2023/2024 |
| Focus more on grants attracting overhead | Introduce a new box asking for a rationale for applying for grants that do not attract overheads, a nudge designed to prompt thought about overheads and future grants | A new box to be created on the Grant Application (GAF) form, not intended to discourage applications, intended to nudge and prompt reflection (nudge+) | For 2023/2024 |
| How work in area studies links to economics and political economy | Enhance work of King's Russia, Institute for Middle Eastern Studies (IMES), work of Meyer Europe initiative, better links to War Studies and Defence Studies | .2 post for KRI for Tracey German from Defence Studies to start in 2023/24, fund a research fellow for IMES based on professional education income | Current and forward |
| Anticipate new research areas | Consider data science (might link to change in PGT degrees, e.g., a new route in within | Consult with departments | Planning rounds 2024/25 and beyond |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| the Public Policy MA); also, environmental sustainability to link across the college, more work on central Europe, populism, and energy | | | |

## C. External relations

Key aim of the school is to promote understanding of its work, and a better understanding of politics and economics inside and outside the university. There is a need to enhance the work of the comms and engagement teams, and do more work with alumni.

| Point to address | Action point | How to deliver | Timeline |
|---|---|---|---|
| Need to enhance external profile and visibility, enhance impact | Extend work of comms team to include more direction translation to policy to engage external audiences, and to translate research | Allocation of PS time for more direct translation, link to work of Policy Institute | From June 2023 |
| Consolidate and achieve more scale economies from student support and work with alumni | More school-based focus for events while keeping essential departmental work, more work with alumni | Refresh events schedule, more events with alumni, identify a PS link for alumni, closer links between student engagement and comms teams | In place for 2023/24 |
| New international partnerships, weakened by COVID, and when current ones come to an end | Search for new partners linked to mission of SPE | Follow up North American links, partnerships in Europe, set up meeting with new SSPP Vice Dean International | From 2023/24 |
| Improve web presence and impact | Need for a redesign and refresh | Up to date staff bios with better links to online links to draw traffic | 2023/24 |

**D. Staffing and support**

| Point to address | Action point | How to deliver | Timeline |
|---|---|---|---|
| Continuing need to address EDI in staffing | Support junior colleagues for promotions | Better support for mentors/training and guidance especially for probation mentors Mentoring, led by heads of departments, linked to faculty guidelines | Current |
| | New posts for the IPP three-year planning round, targeted to EDI (e.g., gender, ethnicity, social policy post descriptions), aim to significantly increase representation of all categories by 2027/28 (no target) | HoS to work with DPE and EIS to produce a plan for posts, consult with other HoSs about their plans, work with the Executive Dean | Autumn 2023, for 2024/25, 2025/26 and beyond |
| Address disparity of SSRSs in DPE | Plan for new EDI-focussed posts to address gap in DPE | As above | As above |
| Lack of space | Need to fit staff needs to limited space available | Working groups within departments to consider options and to respond to college policies, DPE's conversation of some meeting rooms to 2+offices | Current, summer conversations |
| Quality of larger offices | Have a look at desks and space in 3+ offices, modernise computer support | SPE business support team to review, need for resources to create state of the art spaces | Summer 2023 |
| Improve school governance | Greater transparency of decisions at school level | Formalise school management committee, by providing minutes and considering action points from departments, have a regular Q&A slot for HoS and HoSA at each department meeting (five mins) | From September 2023 |
| Financial sustainability | Develop new sources of income | Develop professional education and incomr | Current |

| | | from donations (with overhead) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Encourage more sociability, especially between PS and academic staff | Institute regular afternoon teas 3 academic and 3 PS staff, at a local hotel, at the start of autumn term | A PS staff member (business support) writes and puts together the groups, and makes the bookings | Planned from August 2023 |
| Training | Encouraging mentor training, awareness of other training that academic and PS staff should/could be taking, e.g. on diversity, PGR supervision, interviewing, management | PS staff have introduced personal training budget, working to monitor and promote this. HoSA working on Faculty provision. Academic staff – review PDRs, better information on training and what's essential/desirable | 2023-24 |