



<b>Centre Director:</b>	Prof TM Devine	<b>Host Institution:</b>		University of Aberdeen				
<b>Title of Research Centre:</b>	The AHRC Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies, University of Aberdeen							
<b>Dates:</b>	<b>Start date of Centre</b>	1	1	2001	<b>End date of Centre</b>	31	12	2005

**Please note that your comments will be forwarded in an anonymised format to the Centre Director.**

**1. Changes**

With reference to the Strategic and Operational Plan (attached) and to any significant changes indicated in the end of award report, please comment on the impact of any changes during the lifetime of the Centre, particularly the extent to which such changes:

- might have been anticipated by the Centre Director at the time of application
- were due to factors beyond the Centre Director's control
- were made following appropriate consultation with the AHRC
- had an impact, positive or negative, on the outputs and outcomes of the Centre.

	Comment
Aims and Objectives	No change to remark on.
Research Programme and Activities	Project F. Diaspora studies - Quickly focusing the timeframe at the early point where the extent of the project was clearly overwhelming was wise. Project I. Gaelic Bible -Change of staff led to approved change of project to Gaelic MSS of Scotland with monograph projected for 2006/7. An excellent project. Project K. Radical Verse in Scotland and Ulster 1790-1830 - Dr McIlvanney's work on this in monograph, seminar series and co-edited book is very impressive.
Outcomes and Targets	Outcomes have multiplied beyond prediction in a way that emphasises the fertile ground with which the work of the Centre has been engaged. It is only right and proper that an open attitude to the number and quality of such outcomes be maintained and a flexible sense of what discoveries might prompt or lead to further research projects.
Dissemination/Exploitation	See 'Outcomes' above. The number of inter-related books,

and Outreach	<p>essays, research seminars and other recognised valuable forms of publication by which dissemination of research has been achieved is a remarkable testament to the value of the investment. Moreover, many of these have achieved considerable public commendation in both peer-reviewed and scholarly journals and in popular press and other media. Little more could be desired in the way of active work in dissemination of research to reach further into the public domain and as a site of scholarly research the Centre clearly fulfils its remit. It is rather that systematic exploitation of mass media, especially television and radio, must catch up with the rich resources the Centre has to offer. A familiar frustration.</p>
Collaboration	<p>The formal co-operations between staff working either in direct collaboration in simply alongside each other have clearly stimulated excellent work and productive outcomes. The informal range of connections has grown and continues to sustain a valuable network of scholars nationally and internationally. Links between the Centre and formal organisations such as the Association for Scottish Literary Studies, the Saltire Society and cognate Irish organisations, might be a way to develop further forms of dissemination publicly.</p>
Institutional Support	<p>It is remarkable and heartening, to see an institution of tertiary education supporting the Centre with such significant expansion in staffing.</p>
People	<p>Not to be faulted.</p>

## 2. Achievements

**A.** Please comment on the main achievements or highlights of the Centre **for the final project year**, relative to those anticipated in the Centre's Strategic and Operational Plan. You are asked to comment both on those achievements that relate directly to the Centre's Strategic and Operational Plan and to any that were not anticipated when the Centre commenced. If possible, please refer to each achievement in turn as identified by the Centre Director.

Achievements	Comments
(i) 13 research projects and major publications in 2005 (ii) programme of postgraduate training (iii) programme of conferences, seminars and symposia (iv) dissemination (v) long-term research and financial strategy	(i) The major publications are impressive: books, authored and edited, every one a valuable contribution to developing Irish and/or Scottish studies. (ii) The numbers of students, recruited postgraduates, graduating and continuing, and the conferences from which proceedings have been published, are impressive and speak of a continuing commitment. (iii) The seminar series, symposia, international seminars (both that held in Chicago and the series drawing on speakers from a number of different nations, all testify to the international stature and academic calibre of the Centre, and the respect in which it and its staff are held. (iv) Two public events reaching a primary audience of c. 400 people is impressive enough. (v) Continued funding granted by the AHRC for 2005-9 seems entirely warranted and the appointments of Professors Craig, Dumville, Crotty and Dr O'Connor are clearly evidence of the highest quality long-term vision for research and sustained financial organisation.

**B.** Please comment on the main achievements or highlights of the Centre **for the whole award period**, relative to those anticipated in the Centre's Strategic and Operational Plan. You are asked to comment both on those achievements that relate directly to the Centre's Strategic and Operational Plan and to any that were not anticipated when the Centre commenced. If possible, please refer to each achievement in turn as identified by the Centre Director.

Achievements	Comments
i. 13 research projects. Almost all projects have	Evidence of the extent to which the activities of the Centre have exceeded those outlined in the Strategic and Operational plan are clear throughout the report.

<p>been completed and objectives achieved. Monographs from Murdoch, Mackillp, Mackenzie, Mitchell, Harper, Delaney, Boll, Kirk, McIlvanney (edited collection) and Hooper have been published or are at press with contracts signed or substantial work has been done towards publication. In short, the ongoing work shows no signs of inanition and the presses with which the monographs have been lodged or contracted to are of high scholarly standing (Manchester UP, etc). Fellowship in Australia (Watson) and conferences (Kirk) display other aspects of achievement.</p> <p>ii. Graduate school recruitment The record of annual international postgraduate colloquia, with published proceedings, international representations, and 61 MLitt students with 9 follow-up PhDs,</p>	<p>Funding sources have been successfully gained beyond the AHRC grant, from the American-Ireland Fund, The Royal Society of Edinburgh, various prestigious Trusts, Agencies, Foundations and Councils. The degree of assiduous and sharp attention to funding sources beyond the AHRC grant would do credit to a not-so-small business and the way in which the funds thus gathered have been put to use suggests a coherent, intuitively progressive, developing vision with a comprehensive sense both of the traditional virtues of scholarship and of the innovatory pursuit of inter-disciplinarity represented by the work of the Centre in its comparative aspects, bringing together both Irish and Scottish studies and the central disciplines of the study of History and of Literature. The invitation from the Smithsonian to showcase the work of the Centre in Washington, DC is a signal and highly prestigious example of the interanational esteem in which the Centre is held.</p>
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is impressive.  
iii. Conferences and symposia  
17 international conferences, 27 one-day symposia, 91 seminars and 13 public lectures is more than sufficient testament to worthwhile activity  
iv. Disseminated results  
Refer to sections 3, 7A and 7B below.

### 3. Importance

Please comment on the Centre Director's self-assessment of the potential importance of the Centre's research activities and how its findings will advance creativity, knowledge and understanding. Taking account of the evidence provided in the report, your comments should incorporate an evaluation of whether you consider the Centre Director's self-assessment to be credible. You should, if possible, refer separately to the potential importance to the subject area(s) as a whole, to non-academic audiences and what the strategic impact of the Centre's achievements has been.

	Comments
Subject area(s)	There are three main areas in which the Centre has developed its work: the opening and exploration of the co-aligned study of Irish and Scottish historical and literary study, including political, religious, linguistic, ethnographic and other components. In itself this is a significant achievement both in particular instances but also as part of a larger contextual and relativist understanding. Secondly, the emphases brought about have been an important and valuable redress to the traditional, cripplingly normalised and impairing, anglocentric approaches to the history and culture of these islands. Thirdly, the work of the Centre has been international in its understanding of the diasporic history of the emigrant peoples of Ireland and Scotland, as well as addressing the indigenous aspects. The benefits of work which holds all these concerns in balance are enormous, both in terms of individual works of research on disparate areas and as a comprehensive scholarly effort which is neither dried out on the arid shores mere scholarly professionalism nor swamped by the liquid enthusiasms of unscholarly 'Celticism'. The Centre has effectively made connections that needed to be made between Ireland and Scotland and continues to address that neglected area of historical and literary concern, Northern Ireland. The connections that have been made with business, political and intellectual leaders, clearly indicate the value of the work done. And administratively, the running of the Centre looks like a thoroughly remarkable success story.
Outside academia	The evidence of the success of the Centre in open lectures by important high-profile speakers addressing the widest possible audience, both in person and through mass media coverage, as well as in publications, many of which have attracted widespread and appreciative review coverage, is abundant.

<p>Strategic impact of the Centre's achievements on the institutions' strategies for the research area</p>	<p>Staff investment has been the main impact in the institutions support for the research area, convincing and substantial through a number of disciplines and departments. Accommodation in the Humanity Manse provides an excellent base and the connections with Trinity College, Dublin and Queen's University, Belfast, are important developments. A question arises here: it would seem to be important, given the range and value of the Centre's activities, to keep a clear focus on these strengths of connection, but one wonders how far the network of sympathetic scholarship in other universities or indeed other tertiary institutions in Ireland and Scotland might not be developed? The success of the Centre is hugely impressive. Demographically, however, the quantity of people of Irish and Irish-Scottish pedigree in the west of Scotland around Glasgow University, for example, might be addressed as a clientele of particular interest and sympathetic disposition. Could this be pondered usefully? Noted under 4 (below) that collaboration with TCD and QUB will be extended to include Liverpool University and the National maritime Museum.</p>

#### 4. Continuation: projects and structures

With reference to the end of award report, please comment on the Centre Director's plans for the continuation of the AHRC-funded Research Centre after the end of AHRC funding.

Continuation into Phase 2 of the Centre's work includes continuing the range of activities already practised most effectively, selecting further 'associates' and developing the work of younger scholars, expanding the graduate school, directly engaging governmental, policy, media and other audiences to extend effective dissemination, sustaining the institutional and intellectual platform and expanding the Centre's resources beyond the AHRB core budget.

Moreover, the research programme is ambitiously and clearly set out:

- i. to create an International Diaspora Studies Network
- ii. to establish a Research Consortium on Comparative Literatures and Languages
- iii. to connect i and ii to effect interdisciplinarity
- iv. to expand the graduate school
- v. to establish more extensive outreach programmes to both academic and lay audiences

With regard to i, the Association for Scottish Literary Studies has developed an online international Scottish Studies database which may be of benefit to the centre in maintaining contact with the widest possible number of individuals and institutions concerned with Scottish Literary studies. A similar database remains to be constructed for Irish literary studies.

With regard to v work might be done to co-ordinate outreach programmes for schools and schoolteachers through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses, one-day symposia addressed to schoolteachers with appropriate anthologies, packaging and presentations to effectively encourage the work of the Centre to pass in an appropriate form into secondary educational institutions.

The detailed research projects are most impressive, particularly the 'Identity and Mobility' project with its components of Jacobite studies and Scotland, London and Empire; and the 'Ethnicities' project in literatures and languages. The planned programmes of seminars, symposia and research collaboration are all extremely impressive.

With regard to exploitation and outreach proposals, much is to be applauded here: the e-newsletter, public lectures programme, the Irish-Scottish Forum which would bring together politicians from Ireland and Scotland and the visiting scholar scheme. A great deal of strong and valuable potential resides in the Forum proposal.

5. People

A. Staffing

With reference to the end of award report, please comment on the extent to which the Centre has helped to realise the career potential of all those who were employed using funds from the AHRC Award, including both the more established academic staff working on projects/research activities, as well as researchers, project students and administrative and technical staff. Please also comment on the role of, and effectiveness of management and supervisory arrangements for, any post-doctoral researchers or project students (if applicable), including training provision.

	Comments
Academic, technical and other staff	Details of staff at all levels are provided and a range of expertise clearly evident.
Post-doctoral researchers	See above.
AHRC funded PhD students (for Phase 2 Centres only)	See above.

B. Interactions – Collaboration & Networking

With reference to the end of award report, please comment on the range and effectiveness of the formal collaborations and the less formal networking activities within the Centre. Taking account of the evidence provided in the report, your comments should incorporate an evaluation of whether you consider the Centre Director's self-assessment of the significance of these interactions to be credible.

	Comments
Formal collaborations	B. Interactions – Collaboration & Networking The range of institutions and locations, including government offices, the Smithsonian in Washington DC, connections with associations in New Zealand for furthering the study of NZ legacies of emigration, are important signals for future developments. Other major collaborative projects include work with Columbia University, Notre Dame, Chicago Universities, USA, Edinburgh, Strathclyde Universities, Lverpool University and the National Maritime Museum, London.

Less formal networking activities	
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## 6. Governance/Management

### A. Formal partnerships

With reference to the end of award report, please comment on the Centre Director's self-assessment of the strength and weaknesses in the relationship between the host institution and the partner institution(s).

#### A. Formal partnerships

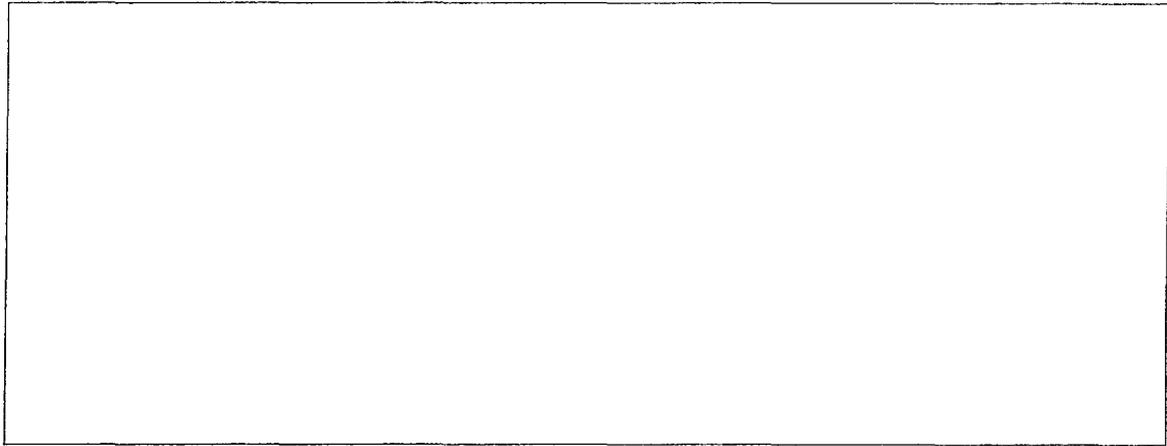
**Relations with TCD and QUB are clearly set out, successful and continuing. important than the Management Committee in this period.**

### B. Structure of the Management Committee

With reference to the end of award report, please comment on the Centre Director's self assessment of how effective the Management Committee has been at overseeing the management of the Centre.

#### B. Structure of management committee

**The management committee is clearly working extremely effectively.**

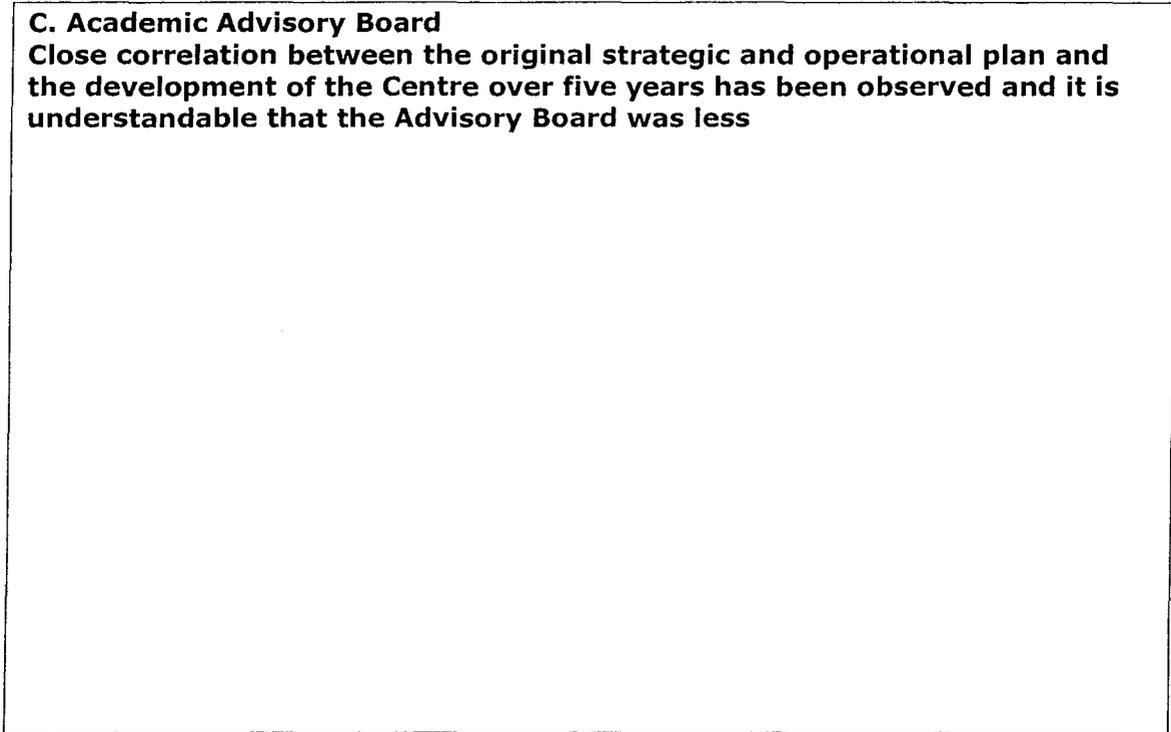


**C. Academic Advisory Board**

With reference to the end of award report, please comment on the Centre Director's self assessment of how valuable a contribution the Academic Advisory Board made in advising the Director and Management Committee on significant questions relating to the academic priorities of the Centre.

**C. Academic Advisory Board**

**Close correlation between the original strategic and operational plan and the development of the Centre over five years has been observed and it is understandable that the Advisory Board was less**



## 7. Outputs/outcomes

With reference to the end of award report, please comment on the delivery, nature and range of outputs and outcomes, considering both those that were anticipated in the original Strategic and Operational Plan (including any direct replacements) and those that were in addition to those originally envisaged.

You should also comment on the effectiveness of dissemination and knowledge engagement activities, in terms of whether they have been, or will be, adequate to make the research findings available to both the research community and any relevant audiences beyond academia. If you consider that there might be opportunities for further such engagement that could be considered by the Centre Director or by the AHRC, please highlight these below.

	Comments
<p>Outputs and outcomes indicated relative to those initially anticipated and/or any direct replacements (please refer to section 7A in the End of Award Report)</p>	<p>All outputs are impressively detailed, command scholarly respect, widespread popular attention and international recognition. It seems unnecessary to comment in detail on individual works of scholarship, publications, etc. Suffice to say that in quality, quantity and responsibility to both subjects and readerships, the outputs and outcomes of work from the Centre have been consistently significant and valuable across a wide range of different subject-specific areas. Above and beyond traditional scholarly forms of publication, the Centre's commitment to, and engagement with, disseminating information through popular and mass media such as television series, radio programmes, etc., remains exemplary and the promise of sustaining and developing this commitment in the years ahead is most encouraging.</p>
<p>Outputs and outcomes in addition to those initially anticipated (not direct replacements) (Please refer to section 7B in the End of Award Report)</p>	<p>See above.</p>

Effectiveness of dissemination and knowledge engagement activities	See above.
Please list any further opportunities for dissemination and knowledge engagement activities	See above.

### **8. Electronic Resources**

If the Centre Director has indicated one or more electronic resources as an output arising from the Centre's research programme and activities, please comment on the strategy proposed for their storage, dissemination and maintenance in the longer-term.

**The director's indicated use of electronic resources for future dissemination of research is exemplary, both in online publications (newsletters, journals, research-**

### **9. Value for Money**

In light of your comments in the sections above - particularly in relation to achievements, importance and outputs/outcomes - and the information on the total cost of the Centre in the end of award report (section 9D), please comment on the Centre's overall value for money. Do you consider that the Centre represents an effective investment of the AHRC's funding? You should not comment on the detailed budgetary information in the end of award report as this will be analysed by Officers of the AHRC.

It is to my mind unquestionable that the Centre represents excellent value for money.