Institution: University of Durham

Unit of Assessment: 28 (Modern Languages and Linguistics)

a. Context

The School of Modern Languages and Cultures has expertise in an extensive range of foreign and historical cultures; in diverse modes of textual and visual cultural production; in social, cultural and political history; and in issues of inter-cultural and trans-cultural communication and translation. Its research has broad linguistic, geographical and historical scope, from China to Latin America and from the medieval period to the present. The School draws on this breadth to work with national and international partners with the aim of contributing to cultural life, public understanding of world cultures, and civil society.

Since 2008, the main beneficiaries of our research have been:

• Cultural organisations and institutions including film festivals, theatres, art galleries and cinemas in North East England, more widely in the UK, and abroad
• Professional bodies across Europe responsible for education policy and curriculum design
• Audiences at events organised with those institutions, and other public lecture audiences
• Artists and other creative practitioners
• National and international radio and television audiences

The main types of impact have been:

• Contributing to cultural enrichment and public understanding and appreciation of world cultures
• Assisting cultural institutions in the UK to fulfil the aims and objectives of their public mission through programming informed by academic research
• Enhancing the profile and dissemination in the UK of art, film and culture from the non-English-speaking world
• Influencing the development of professional bodies through expert consultancy
• Shaping training and education policies relating to translation in the European Union

b. Approach to impact

The School has had two key aims during the census period: first, to enhance public understanding of world cultures, and of the ways in which cultural production illuminates social, historical and political concerns; second, to help partner institutions to meet their own objectives of public engagement and education, and to exploit their resources by ensuring that they are informed by the latest academic research.

   The School's approach to research impact has been both strategic and responsive. As well as seeking out and developing partnerships with non-academic organisations, the School has capitalised upon any unenvisaged opportunities arising from its research. In following up these opportunities, the School has identified various types of public benefit and devised the structures and mechanisms needed to facilitate, support and develop them. Measures initiated by the School have included: visitor numbers, audience statistics, website hits, economic benefits as calculated by tourist boards, and qualitative evaluations of impact activities.

   A particular focus has been to develop partnerships with cultural organisations with a regional and national remit. Some activities were planned as part of broader research projects. From 2008 to 2012, as part of his AHRC-funded project on theatre censorship in Spain, **Thompson** gave public lectures and chaired discussion sessions on the topic, accompanying new productions of Lorca's theatre at Northern Stage (Newcastle), Washington Arts Centre (Tyne and Wear), and Belgrade Theatre (Coventry). As part of his AHRC-funded project on the visual representation of France and Algeria, **Welch** was co-curator of a public exhibition of contemporary visual art at Cornerhouse (Manchester) in 2011 (cf. CS1). The School's research into cinema and visual culture has led to more informal partnerships, which have generated public benefit in the form of the enhanced dissemination of work from the non-English speaking world. **Long** collaborated with Photoworks North (Belfast) to make a documentary film on W. G. Sebald. **Noble**'s role as a juror at an international film festival in 2012 arose out of her research on Mexican cinema (cf. CS4). In partnership with New Italian Cinema Events, **Federici** has organised three festivals of Italian cinema in Durham since 2009; these events included audience discussions with directors, scriptwriters and editors. **Ní Dhúill** and **Pérez Marín** have collaborated with the Tyneside Cinema (Newcastle) to promote understanding of independent, world cinema through introductions to film screenings and question and answer sessions. As part of **Barnet**'s own collaboration with the Tyneside Cinema celebrating 50 years of Agnès Varda's cinema in 2012, she secured a rare UK

appearance by the director to talk about her work; and in 2010 **Fouz Hernández**'s research on Catalan filmmaker Ventura Pons led to a public lecture and film premiere in the Gala Theatre, Durham (cf. CS4).

School staff are frequently invited to undertake advisory work, and their impact has international reach. **Fouz Hernández**'s research on the representation of male bodies led to consultancy for UK public relations company Space Doctors in 2010 on advertising and male nudity. In 2012 **Roberts**'s research on modern Venezuela's cultural politics led to his contribution to Monitor 360, a US strategic planning consultancy; his advice fed into documents used for foreign policy development by the US government. **Wynn** was an academic advisor to Proper Television for a programme on the Marquis de Sade (History Channel, 2012). Alongside public engagement through national and international media (**Renfrew** on relations between Poland and Russia on BBC Radio 5 Live in 2012; **Newman** on the Middle East on Al-Jazeera television in 2011 and Voice of America in 2012), such opportunities offer public dissemination platforms, a crucial first step in the realisation of impact.

The School has exploited the potential of short-term collaborations to become longer-term relationships with regional and international institutions. Initial engagement by **Cracolici** with the Bowes Museum (Barnard Castle), including public lectures on Canaletto, facilitated the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the museum and the University in 2011. **Long** has collaborated with the National Media Museum (Bradford), on a project dealing with photography, propaganda, and World War I, and has secured an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) commencing in 2013. **Byford**'s research into child science has led to an extended collaboration with child psychologists in Russia (cf. CS2), and **Federici**'s research has resulted in his involvement with drafting policy on translator training for the European Union (cf. CS3).

These activities are facilitated by – and in turn inform – the School's mechanisms for generating public benefit from its research. Since 2012, the School's Deputy Director of Research has had responsibility for developing and implementing the School's impact strategy. The School pursues a co-ordinated approach to staff development: mentors offer personal guidance; annual impact away days provide focus for collective reflection and the sharing of information and good practice; the Annual Staff Review identifies individual training needs. Impact is integral to recruitment, probation, appraisal and promotion processes. The School's research groups provide a forum in which specific impact plans can be discussed: for instance, **Byford**'s work with the Moscow State Pedagogical University was developed through the Literature/History/Theory group. The School includes impact training in its support for PhD students. As a result of this integrated approach, a PhD student in Italian organised a festival of Italian silent film in collaboration with Durham City Library in 2011; and a current PhD student in Translation studies is collaborating with Opera North on the development of opera surtitling for audiences with hearing disabilities.

Support for impact-related activities is available through the School's Strategic Research Fund, the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and the University, which has created a £250k fund dedicated to enhancing the public benefit of the University's research (see section d). The University Research Office provides further institutional support; its Impact Co-ordinator assists in developing and recording impact-generating activities.

c. Strategy and plans

The School recognises that, due to its mix of cultural specificity and broader interdisciplinarity, research in Modern Languages can bring unique benefit to the wider community. Alliances with non-academic partners in turn benefits scholarly research, as researchers take unanticipated perspectives, reassess assumptions, and try different working methods. Over the next assessment period, the School aims to:

- Take the insights and benefits of its research to a wider range of individuals, communities and institutions
- Pioneer new research by exchanging ideas and best practice with non-academic partners
- Help to ensure the long-term sustainability and visibility of Modern Languages as a discipline through building strategic alliances

As noted in section b, the School acknowledges that impact-related activities arise at different points in a research project's lifecycle, and can emerge over an extended period of time subsequent to its completion. In the next assessment period the School will combine proactive and responsive approaches in its focus on five key areas:

1. Staffing. Potential for impact has informed our recruitment strategy, as reflected in recent

appointments: **Bellem** is a consultant for the BBC pronunciation unit; **Moore**'s work with the French philosopher Bernard Stiegler will include collaboration with the Pompidou Centre; **O'Brien** is developing new projects with the National Trust. This strategy will be continued and complemented by the annual Personal Research Plans (cf. REF5); with the School's Deputy Director of Research for Impact, staff will be encouraged to identify and develop a long-term programme of appropriate activities.

2. Partnerships. As a discipline characterised by an international and trans-cultural outlook, Modern Languages are uniquely placed to make new partnerships in the UK and abroad. School staff have already advised companies and institutions in Russia, Canada and Venezuela; the School will build on this shared knowledge to pursue further alliances in the UK and around the globe, supported by the University's International Office.

3. University institutes and centres. The School's involvement in University research institutes and centres will be a key vehicle for developing partnerships with non-academic organisations. The Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies leads the development of a research framework for Durham's UNESCO World Heritage Site, and will also lead our emerging relationship with the National Trust. The Centre for Visual Arts and Cultures is the lead centre in collaborating with the Bowes Museum; a research project led by **Beresford** on the museum's collection of early modern Spanish painting is in the preliminary stages of preparation. The Durham Centre for Advanced Photography Studies will develop its partnerships with photography galleries and agencies, including Impressions Gallery, Photoworks North, and the National Media Museum.

4. PhDs. To enhance the profiles of our PhD students and to contribute to the long-term sustainability of the discipline, we will further embed impact training in our PhD provision, in the context of the University's doctoral training programme.

5. University structures. The School will exploit new institutional resources for impact capture. The Faculty Advisory Board (established 2012), for example, brings together prominent Durham alumni from a range of relevant organisations (including Tate Britain, National Galleries of Scotland, Foreign and Commonwealth Office). This Board's advice on impact strategy for the humanities at Durham will enhance the School's own impact planning. School staff developing external collaborations with non-academic partners will also benefit from the appointment of the new Senior Engagement Manager with responsibility for arts and culture (to be in post from early 2014), as well as from Durham Business and Innovation Services (DBIS), which brokers relationships with external organisations and advises on consultancy and research commercialisation. In addition, staff will be trained in the Research Management Information System, a new means of measuring and monitoring public benefit, which comes on stream in 2014.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies emphasise the range of beneficiaries of and partners in the School's research, and the international scope of its impact-related activity.

• CS1 exemplifies our collaborations with artists and cultural institutions which also bring benefits to the local tourist economy. It demonstrates how impact activity planned as part of broader research projects can produce unanticipated outcomes and new collaborations between participants. This project benefitted from the University's Seedcorn Fund.

• CS2 illustrates the international reach of the School's research on education policy development. It shows how a relatively small-scale, short-term opportunity for impact was developed into a long-term, strategic partnership secured through internal and external funding.

• CS3 is an example of high-level strategic engagement that enables research insights to exert long-term influence on translation policy, quality assurance, and accreditation for postgraduate training in translation in the European Union.

• In CS4 the School's expertise in visual culture has had two related effects. Durham academics have collaborated with regional organisations to bring the work of independent filmmakers to wider audiences, and thereby assisted cultural institutions to fulfil their public missions. Internationally, research has led to jury membership at a film festival whose objective is to raise the profile of independent filmmaking in Ibero-America, and to provide financial support to encourage further film production.