

<p><b>Institution: Arts University Bournemouth</b></p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment: 34: Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory</b></p>
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>The main non-academic user groups, beneficiaries and audiences for the Arts University Bournemouth's (AUB) research include: members of the public attending events including exhibitions and arts and media festivals at which the research is demonstrated and disseminated; theatre audiences (e.g. those of the Royal Shakespeare Company); charities (e.g. the Big Issue); and museums.</p> <p>The main types of impact that are specifically related to the AUB's research are those that seek to engage the public across a number of different venues and that in so doing, impact on their understanding of complex and sometimes controversial issues actively through the mediums of, for example, art and photography. Such issues include joblessness and homelessness, the impact of road traffic accidents (both on the victims themselves and on their families and friends and on the wider public); the culture of minority groups such as travellers; the reception by children and adults of new technology. Some projects are designed specifically for the purpose of engaging with the public, e.g. Liam Birtles' 'Glowing Pathfinder Bugs' project for Portable Pixel Playground.</p>
<p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>When the concept of quantification of research impact was developed and subsequently disseminated by the REF, it would be fair to say that AUB did not have a comprehensively articulated approach or mission, so it would be inaccurate to argue that there was a defined strategy (from 2008) in anticipation of the REF approach, which could not of course have been predicted by the institution. It would be truer to say that the research that was selected for our first RAE submission in 2007 was non-linear and diffuse in terms of the intended 'impact', although this was not the term employed at the time. It was related to the discipline in which the research had been undertaken and also the particular established and developing links that an individual and / or course team had built up with employers and user groups (through, for example, industrial liaison groups) and towards close collaboration with the creative industries, which has been a particular strength of the academic offer at AUB as it has developed over the last decade.</p> <p>In the assessment period 2008-13, all AUB staff on higher education contracts received the same allocation for research over the academic session. In addition, there is an annual call for research fellowships and staff can apply for one of these. Fellowships give research time of up to a maximum of the equivalent of 0.5 of a full-time contract over a period of an academic session or full time over six months. In the application form, staff are asked to explain how the research will achieve impact, encouraging the applicant to plan the research very much with the reach and the significance of the impact in mind. Staff making applications for research support in terms of financial assistance with specific projects are also required to comment on the predicted impact of the research and this is taken into consideration when funding decisions are made by Research Committee (from 2012 'Research, Enterprise and Knowledge Transfer Committee). It should be noted that Paul Wenham Clark's project, 'The Westway' was supported by a Research Fellowship (2012-13). He presented his research to the AUB Research Forum (April 2013) and used this mechanism as a means of disseminating to colleagues the particular way in which research impact was planned and utilized.</p>

**Impact template (REF3a)**

This interaction between courses / disciplines and potential employers and the creative industries has been extremely successful (in, for example, securing excellent opportunities for graduate employment) and has characterized the approach that we, as an organization have prioritized and that forms an important part of our mission.

**c. Strategy and plans**

The 'pre-impact assessment approach' as summarized above informs the basis for our developing strategy and future plans. As outlined in our account of the Research Environment during the REF review period, discussions of both of our institutional strategy and mission in general and our Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy in particular for the next period are well underway. For the latter, this has begun with broad staff consultation and a subsequent decision made to align two key branches of our work into one defined area at both management and committee level. In practical terms this has so far resulted in the bringing together of our Research Committee and our Enterprise and Knowledge Transfer Committee with a view to incising a sharper focus on maximizing the impact of what we do and, just as crucially, how we achieve it - for the benefit of user groups, beneficiaries and audiences. This development illustrates our commitment to maximizing impact in the future: we envisage that the potential in reach and significance pursued via enterprise and knowledge transfer will inform and feed into reach and significance in research, and vice versa.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The two case studies exemplify aspects of AUB's current, all be it limited, approach to impact. Staff supported by the University are invited to consider the likely impact of their research at the outset and to plan for this. The case studies also demonstrate how utilising established relationships within the creative industries supports far and wide ranging impact in that staff are able to secure excellent venues for the dissemination of their practice –based research. For example the exhibition of work in galleries and at festivals as demonstrated by the *Hard Times Exhibition* at St. Martin-in-the-Fields Gallery, London (Wenham-Clarke) and *Living Walls* at the Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-on-Avon (Birtles) ensured that the research impacted beyond academia through large-scale public engagement. Drafting the case studies has highlighted the need for the University to put in place mechanisms to effectively capture and record the impact of research as it occurs as collecting this retrospectively proved challenging.