

<b>Institution: Manchester Metropolitan University</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: D29 English Language and Literature</b>
<p><b>a. Context</b> The Manchester Writing School (which sits within the MMU English Department) has been the primary source of impact generation within this UoA in the last decade. Researchers in poetry, in particular, have produced research that aims to widen access to, and understanding of, contemporary poetry, with particular focus on schools, developing new audiences for poetry through collaborative work with other art forms, and encouraging new writing through initiatives like the Manchester Children's Book Festival (MCBF) and the Manchester Writing Competition. Since the introduction of the impact agenda, this UoA as a whole has sought to learn from the strategies (eg. media engagement, collaborative partnerships, public events and debates) and successes of the Writing School to develop impact-generation within new research clusters, notably The Gothic Studies Centre (led by Blake) <a href="http://www.hssr.mmu.ac.uk/gothicmmu">http://www.hssr.mmu.ac.uk/gothicmmu</a>, while developing the potential to generate impact in areas of traditional strength such as Film Studies, the work of Anthony Burgess, and Writing for Children. This impact-centred approach yielded great interest in the Gothic Studies Centre, prior to its official launch in October 2013 (see links below).</p>
<p><b>b. Approach to impact impact</b> In the fifteen years since the founding of the Writing School, English at MMU has engaged with the wider public in ways that have had marked benefits for society and culture. Before the introduction of the impact agenda, much of this activity came about as a result of the public profile of prominent writers in the Writing School. By the time the new Impact agenda was being road-tested in the second half of 2010, this activity had created a specific MMU brand of Public Engagement – i.e. Creative Writing in schools – which the new governmental agenda has encouraged us to broaden and refine. Creative Writing staff have extended their work in schools with projects such as 'AllWrite', an annual creative writing competition for pupils aged 8-12, established in 2005, and an accompanying anthology which has already published more than 600 young writers <a href="http://www2.hlss.mmu.ac.uk/schools-liaison/news/all-write/">http://www2.hlss.mmu.ac.uk/schools-liaison/news/all-write/</a>.</p> <p>Over the second half of the current assessment period our approach to public engagement and outreach changed in response to the new Impact agenda. Public engagement is now routinely integrated into the research process (most successfully in areas like poetry), exemplifying a broader shift at university level signalled by the recent launch of MMU's new Research and Knowledge Strategy in 2013. This strategy places knowledge exchange at the same level of priority as research and teaching, recognising that significant infrastructural and policy changes are required to sustain, encourage and reward growth in external income generation. All new knowledge created at MMU will have a cultural, social, environmental or economic, and interdisciplinary impact embedded throughout the research process. To best achieve this integration in English we have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. established research/impact clusters in and beyond the UoA (eg The Gothic, Space Place Culture ) to share impact strategies and foster new interdisciplinary initiatives;</li> <li>2. brought in specialist media training and sharing of extensive media contacts within the UoA, notably through the development by the MMU Press Office of an online 'experts' directory' [<a href="http://www.mmu.ac.uk/news/experts/">http://www.mmu.ac.uk/news/experts/</a>];</li> <li>3. established local and national Public Engagement initiatives [e. g. Poetry By Heart <a href="http://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk">http://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk</a>, Moss Side Stories <a href="http://www.moss-side-stories.mmu.ac.uk">http://www.moss-side-stories.mmu.ac.uk</a>, and the Manchester Children's Book Festival <a href="http://www.mcbf.org.uk">http://www.mcbf.org.uk</a>] to bring our expertise into schools and local communities;</li> <li>4. introduced further training (e. g. on use of social media and effective impact capture) at Faculty level and incorporated Public Engagement in the annual PDR staff review process.</li> </ol> <p>In 2008 the Writing School under the leadership of DuffyC and Writing School Manager James Draper founded a major new international competition for new writing. The Manchester Writing Competition [<a href="http://www.manchesterwritingcompetition.co.uk">http://www.manchesterwritingcompetition.co.uk</a>] began with a poetry prize, originally alternating biennially with a fiction prize. In its first five years the competition attracted entries from 6,900 writers from across the world. From 2014, due to the huge success of this competition, both fiction and poetry prizes will run each year. The first poetry competition in 2008 attracted entries of almost 4,700 poems from 30 countries, and DuffyC chaired the panel of judges. The first fiction prize the following year attracted more than 1,700 entries from over 40 countries and was chaired by Royle. Strong media coverage and consistently high numbers of entrants have led to the development and maintenance of a substantial mailing list of developing writers, educators and</p>

readers who receive regular updates and bulletins from the Writing School advertising forthcoming Writing School events, other competitions and CPD opportunities. Previous short-listed writers have gone on to win other awards and have had their work published.

In 2010 the children's writers at MMU (notably DuffyC and Ashworth – now retired – with James Draper (Manchester Writing School Manager) and Kaye Tew (Education Outreach Coordinator) founded a major new international festival of children's literature: the Manchester Children's Book Festival (MCBF) [<http://www.mcbf.org.uk>]. <http://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2012/jun/29/summer-manchester-childrens-books-festival-2012>. Other English researchers who have published on children's literature (Byrne, Wake) were also involved. The 2012 Festival saw footfall of over 8,000 participants at 79 events, and saw the launch of 'Mother Tongue', a series of workshops designed to develop writing in Manchester schools (attended by over 200 children) and the linked 'Mother Tongue, Other Tongue' multilingual poetry competition [<http://www2.hlss.mmu.ac.uk/mother-tongue-other-tongue/>], which received 550 entries in 41 languages from schools across the north west of England. The 2012 MCBF included a two-day programme of CPD workshops, lectures, debates and events for teachers, writers, librarians and arts practitioners to develop and challenge their understanding and teaching of children's literature. Corporate sponsorship partners for MCBF include Kids Unlimited, Barefoot Books, Blackwell, Commonword, Cornerhouse, Hilton, Imperial War Museum North, John Rylands Library, Manchester City Council, Puffin Books, Waterstones and the Royal Exchange Theatre. <http://2012.mcbf.org.uk/about/sponsors/>. MCBF is also developing a partner network [www.mcln.org.uk](http://www.mcln.org.uk) – alerting teachers to what is on offer for schools. They also host an annual schools networking event where partner organisations can showcase their work. All partners contribute to the MCBF programme and also purchase advertising space in the brochure. The database of MCLN (Manchester Creative Learning Network) contacts is growing into a valuable resource and the team plans to commercialise this in the next year by approaching corporate sponsors interested in benefiting from MCBF's educational links.

The UoA is also developing existing Public Engagement potential among its critical staff, including *The Centre for Gothic Studies (CGS)* <http://www.hssr.mmu.ac.uk/gothicmmu/>. October 2013 saw the launch of the Centre for Gothic Studies under Blake's directorship, supported by the recent appointment of a Research Fellow in the Gothic (Aldana) and Blake's CORE-funded research leave (2013). While the CGS draws on researchers from within CORE (Ní Fhlainn, Powell, Royle, Sears and Zlosnik) it also involves staff from Human Geography, Microbiology, and Art and Design, as well as postgraduate students and academics from other HE institutions. The Centre's launch comprised public-facing Gothic-themed events (including academic papers, creative writing workshops and film screenings supported by the BFI <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/announcements/bfi-unveils-gothic-dark-heart-film>) with a range of local and national stakeholders, and has already attracted significant national media attention <http://www.independent.co.uk/incoming/studying-great-works-with-a-gothic-flavour-8663452.html?origin=internalSearch> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2387676/Manchester-Metropolitan-University-launches-course-Gothic-horror-cash-Twilights-popularity.html>. The work of this new centre is supported by IHSSR (Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences Research), and its launch was firmly integrated into the IHSSR's new Humanities in Public (HiP) programme (details below). The Centre's foundational work includes coordinating a strand on 'Contemporary Gothic' in the 2013-14 HIP programme, the launch of an online MA pathway in Gothic Studies, and the inauguration of a biennial postgraduate conference and research symposium. It is envisaged that proceedings from the conference and symposium will be made accessible through an open-access online journal that will follow the model successfully pioneered by MMU's *A/V Journal* [[www.hssr.mmu.ac.uk/deleuze-studies/journal](http://www.hssr.mmu.ac.uk/deleuze-studies/journal)]. The Centre aims to position MMU at the forefront of both academic critique of the Gothic and its cultural production, providing a significant range of new opportunities for collaborative research and networking, impact and public engagement.

Burke's work in Literary and Cultural Disability Studies <http://cdsmmu.wordpress.com/events/> is intrinsically outward-facing and underpinned by a commitment to working with groups outside academia. As the organiser of the conference *Present Difference: The Cultural Production of Disability* <http://www.cornerhouse.org/art/art-events/present-difference-the-cultural-production-of-disability> Burke worked with the BBC, ITV News, The British Diversity Forum, Full Circle Arts and Outside Centre (disability arts organisations), and the Cornerhouse cinema to produce an event that was open to academics, students and members of the public. This international event was the

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first attempt to forge a dialogue between academics, broadcasters, disability arts organisations and disabled artists, bringing together participants from all over the world. One of its immediate outcomes was the adaptation of Lennard Davis's memoir, *My Sense of Silence*, about growing up with deaf parents on Radio 4, broadcast 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2012. As a result of the conference, Burke was invited to curate the Manchester element of the first national Disability Film Festival in the UK, held on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010 and supported by Oska Bright, The Media Archive for Central England, The Eveson Charitable Trust, the Emley Foundation and the BBC.

<http://disabilityresearchforum.wordpress.com/2010/11/16/love-work-and-ordinariness-1st-uk-disability-film-festival-day-is-announced-friday-3rd-december-2010/>

Staff within the UoA regularly organize academic conferences and events with clear economic and cultural impact for the region. Two of these conferences, 'Texting Obama' (Byrne, Mullaney, Schoene: 2010) <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/news/events/1382/> and 'The International Conference on Narrative' (Carpenter, Wake: 2013), <http://www2.hlss.mmu.ac.uk/conferences/international-conference-on-narrative/> were recognized by Visit Manchester as having significant impact for the city, receiving awards of £3,660 and £9,000 respectively from their competitive Subvention Fund.

**c. Strategy and plans** The UoA's future strategy is rooted in MMU and IHSSR initiatives. Since 2008 MMU has been a partner in the Manchester Beacon for Public Engagement project (funded by RCUK, HEFCE, Wellcome Trust). Our approach complies with the RCUK's Concordat for Engaging the Public in Research, and MMU is a signatory to the Manifesto for Public Engagement <https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/why-does-it-matter/manifesto/signatories/manchester-metropolitan-university> Within the University's new Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) agenda, effective public engagement is understood as a pathway to impact generation. To help build greater collaboration with non-academic stakeholders and research 'end users' we have provided professional media training for all IHSSR staff, provided by award-winning BBC journalist Trevor Barnes. A second step at Institute level is to ensure that all staff are fully engaged with social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) and professional networking (LinkedIn, academia.edu) as an effective medium for RKE activity. The forthcoming HiP public festival series <http://www.hssr.mmu.ac.uk/hip/> - in itself a significant public engagement project - will allow researchers, including English, to develop and widen access to their work.

Researchers in English are now required to build impact pathways into each new project, and the prioritisation of knowledge exchange is a vital element of the annual PDR process. Recent examples of impact in project design include Biswell's work on the restored text of Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*, which (in conjunction with MMU's Digital Innovations Project) included the development and sale of an accompanying iPad app, increasing its extra-academic appeal and circulation. Researchers in English will be active participants in the new IHSSR research clusters, which aim to get users and stakeholders involved at a very early stage. Cooper leads the cluster on Space, Place, Culture. The UoA's creative writers, led by DuffyC, will continue to achieve significant reach in knowledge exchange through their high public and media profiles. From this platform the UoA will develop further networks involving schools, educationalists, new writers and readers through established and growing brands like the MCBF and the Manchester Prizes.

**d. Relationship to case studies** The well-established impact generation activities of the Writing School - public engagement through readings, workshops, media presence, work in schools and with young people, developing new writing through mentoring and competitions - led directly to the 'Poetry Beyond the Page' case study, and is demonstrated here through the work of MMU's poets. Carol Ann Duffy's deep roots in the 'family' of poets in MMU's Writing School, and her work on their strategies for public engagement, helped enable her appointment in 2009 to the role of Poet Laureate. She employed the Writing School's impact strategies to forge a new brand of outward-facing, inclusive creative leadership rooted in the laureate role. The lessons learned from these writer-based impact successes enabled Professor Andrew Biswell, as a critical / creative researcher with a detailed knowledge of the Writing School (former Academic Director) to apply the same techniques of media communication, and local and national public engagement activities to revive the reputation of a neglected major English novelist. This case study also exemplifies (through the creation of the Clockwork Orange app) the awareness in this UoA of the potential of harnessing new technologies to generate impact.