

Institution: The University of Huddersfield

Unit of Assessment: 19 Business and Management Studies

a. Context

We want our research to be relevant to practice and inform management thinking. The main non-academic users, consumers and audiences for our research fall into three groups. First are senior managers looking to improve practice in their organizations particularly in relation to responsible leadership and operations management. Cowton's research on professional ethics has influenced the leading professional body for accountants and, in-turn, the training and examination of accountants. Second, our sustainable livelihoods research, benefits marginalised communities who produce forest products, product purchasers such as The Body Shop and crucially the natural environment itself. Wood and Meaton's research has influenced approaches to the conservation of natural resources and has changed public awareness in Ethiopia in relation to natural resource usage. Third, our research is influencing education providers by shaping policy on enterprise and entrepreneurship education in the UK as well as business start-up and by influencing Islamic educational institutions to redesign the ways that programmes are delivered in the UK and Malaysia. Our research has both regional and international reach and significance as demonstrated by our impact cases.

Two additional but unused case studies were produced demonstrating impact via supply chain modelling in ports and on Islamic education. Other examples of research not appearing in our case studies include Leach's modelling of distribution operations commissioned and funded by a FMCG manufacturer. The project report *Impact Assessment: High Capacity Vehicles* was submitted to Members of Parliament and Peers with transport portfolios. Leach also presented this research at two meetings with Peers at the House of Lords and at a meeting with the Under Secretary of State for Transport and Department for Transport officials. The work was widely reported in the practitioner press and on Radio 4 and BBC Look North. Warnock-Smith's research on the socio-economic impact of airline deregulation has been used by senior officials in the Caribbean countries to support their policy discussions and decisions. D Bamford's research has influenced changes in service delivery and working practices, particularly in the National Health Service. Swaby's research on fraud and how companies deal in 'good faith' was singled-out by the Law Commission in respect of its contribution to their report *Reforming Insurance Contract Law*, 2012.

b. Approach to impact

Given the applied nature our research we believe that impact is built upon strong relationships with practitioners and users. We collaborate with potential users at as many stages as possible from problem formulation to dissemination of findings. We believe that it is important to disseminate our research to practitioner audiences to ensure valuable dialogue that enables recipients to determine the relevance to their setting and academics to evaluate their approaches. Working closely with policy bodies (e.g. Cowton's membership of the Ethics Standards Committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, ICAEW) enables us to contribute to the formation and implementation of policy and to refine our research agenda. Other staff serving on external bodies in our user communities include Teviotdale who is an elected member of the governing Council of the ICAEW and a director and trustee of the Association of Accounting Technicians. Fellowes is on the Mid-Yorkshire Hospitals Ethics Committee. C Bamford sits on the Logistics Research Network of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport and provides summaries on national television and radio. As a result of her research in handling complaints, Ferris is an Independent Chair of Complaints Panels in Social Care.

Several formal mechanisms are used to support impact. A School Advisory Board has operated since 2009 comprising 12 practitioners and chaired by a Visiting Professor. Advisory Board connections with the South West Yorkshire Partnership Foundation Trust were used to jointly design short courses that accelerated D Bamford's research findings into health care practice while the research was taking place. Other advisory groups include the School's Partners in Accountancy (formed in 2008) drawn from nine accounting firms and our Leadership & Management Advisory Board (formed over 15 years ago) comprising 10 practitioners drawn from a range of public and private organisations. A second mechanism targeting public engagement is the

University's annual three-day Research Festival. Selected projects are explained and findings are disseminated to cross-University and external audiences alongside invited guest speakers. Thirdly, a School Enterprise Development Manager works with organizations to explore ways of matching our expertise to their business problems. Over 100 tangible contacts are handled each year and while most do not lead to research, some do including Anchor's funded work for a multi-national company on its economic contribution over the past 100 years and Swailes and Davies' research on skills in engineering which is feeding-in to succession planning strategies in local businesses working with Kirklees Council. D Bamford's research on Lean thinking and decision making was applied in the Bradford and Airedale NHS Trust's transport system. Savings surpassed £1 million and follow-on research led to further savings which gave a gross cost saving of £2.5m. To spread the knowledge, methods and changes behind these improvements, further dissemination was funded through ESRC grant ES/K000667/1 value £95,631. Matched funding was obtained from the South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to assist implementation in a wider network of healthcare organizations evidencing our collaborative approaches to dissemination. Other partners included Manchester Business School, NHS Bradford and Airedale, Connecting for Health and Community Solutions. Dissemination began in January 2013 and occurred via direct facilitation by Business School staff within the NHS, presentations to NHS regional organizations, external seminars were held with other Trusts via provider relationships. Multiple social media platforms, such as video podcasts, an active LinkedIn group, and a bespoke website for real time discussions were established. These engagements with health practitioners across both a wide geographical and skill/experience level continue to lead to improvements in the relatively low levels of healthcare access by minority groups across the region. A fourth support mechanism is the University's Research and Enterprise Directorate which allocates £100K a year to encourage academic networking and user engagement with research. This funding is used to explore the potential for new research projects and to disseminate completed and ongoing research. It forms part of a continuum of research engagement and we have used the 'International Networking Fund' to develop links with a Logistics centre in South Africa and to establish ties with the Dutch Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute on research into ageing and retirement which shaped the design of commissioned research (Davies). The 'Collaborative Ventures Fund' has supported a range of projects including collaborating with staff in our Human & Health Sciences faculty to work with staff in a large social housing association to work on a new business model for the Association (Bishop, Swailes); applying operations management theory to a major professional Rugby League club (D Bamford); using research on ageing and retirement to design a workshop for local businesses (Davies); helping one of the UK's largest specialist museums to develop a business model (Thompson); developing a business model for a fair trade social enterprise company (Day); and, enabling two local manufacturing SMEs to develop trade links with Russia (Williams). Due to Williams' specialist knowledge of Russia she became an advisor to the American Council for International Education on the assessment of research and entrepreneurship in Russian universities.

c. Strategy and plans

The University's strategy shift emphasises the importance of conducting applied research that has impact on user communities, a commitment demonstrated by the £12 million 3M Buckley Innovation Centre opened in 2012 and endorsed by world-leading technology company 3M (the 3M BIC). This ambitious venture demonstrates our response to the government's Innovation and Research Strategy for Growth which emphasised how the interface between universities and business must improve. External recognition is evidenced by the Entrepreneurial University of the Year Award 2012 and The Queen's Award for Enterprise to Towns-Andrews (Professor of Innovation). The 3M BIC operates on a co-location model to stimulate collaboration with the businesses located within it. Researchers in this UOA are beginning to work with start-up businesses in the Centre to deliver advice and services. For example, Williams uses the Researcher Development Fund to provide business planning consultancy. Current and future strategy relies upon collaboration. For example, to leverage our investment in the 3M BIC, Williams brokered a fact-finding visit to the Skolkovo Innovation Centre in Moscow. We expect enterprise and entrepreneurship researchers to interact closely with businesses locating in the 3M BIC in future. At School level, our strategy for maximising impact will continue to leverage the support mechanisms described above and continue building close relations with research users especially

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in the context of funded research, for example, with managers in the NHS. We will continue to produce books targeting and assisting the transfer of research into practice. Examples include Wood's co-edited *Wetland Management and Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa* and Yeadon-Lee's *Action Learning: Managers' accounts of being in an action learning set*. However, in-light of the rapid growth of business and management research at Huddersfield it is necessary that we respond by putting additional mechanisms in place. We intend to strengthen impact by bringing greater oversight to the research that we do and this is likely to involve one or both of a dedicated externally-constituted Research Advisory Board or a small number of practitioner groups that connect to our main research themes. The co-production of research will feature more strongly in the future and in 2012 a leading researcher in this area advised us about co-production strategies. We have filled a new permanent post in the Business School to better promote business and public engagement with our research. This initiative will eventually use internet-based media to host short explanations of research projects. We also plan a series of practitioner-oriented conferences to complement our annual Research Festival. We will continue to use central University funding to work with organizations to explore the potential for new projects.

d. Relationship to case studies

The submitted case studies demonstrate our work in three areas. In the sustainable enterprise development case, collaboration with research users was, and continues to be, undertaken at all stages from problem formulation through to dissemination. Impact in this large and complex case had a long gestation time and involved direct discussions with government agencies and extensive work with forest users over ten years. As lead researcher, Wood worked with the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation 2007-2011 as a lead consultant and has held advisor/researcher roles with the World Bank and UK AID/DFID. He has also worked with the governments of Zambia, Ethiopia and Malawi, and with the World Conservation Union. Three DVDs were produced to explain the projects and to support impact via dissemination of findings. The new Centre for Sustainable and Resilient Communities (CSRC) headed by Professor Wood is designed to better co-ordinate our research in this area and provide a better environment for bidding and project management. Drawing on the human-centred nature of the past research by Centre members, the focus is on consultative action research which is closely linked with beneficiary groups as well as policy makers. The CSRC has international links with not-for profit organisations working in Africa, notably Wetland Action and Self Help Africa, as well as bilateral and multi-lateral organisations, including the European Union and the World Bank. Links with these actors ensure that the lessons from the Centre's research are applied and developed further. The Centre's work informs a Masters degree on Disaster and Risk Management whose 20-30 graduates each year have applied lessons and disseminated findings into their agencies in 15 different countries.

The other cases show how institutional support encourages and enables staff to influence Committees and Boards in order to catalyse impact. As such, Cowton will maintain his relationships with end-users via the Ethics Standards Committee of the ICAEW and thus continue to influence accounting ethics via the examinations for aspiring Chartered Accountants worldwide and his involvement in the production of thought-leading reports such as the ICAEW's *Acting in the public interest: a framework for analysis*, 2012. Cowton is a regular keynote speaker on accounting ethics. He has advised researchers for the BBC's *The Moral Maze* and *The Big Questions* as well as giving interviews for local radio.

In relation to the enterprise & entrepreneurship case, Smith and Thompson were members of Enterprise Educators UK (EEUK) (Smith was Chair in 2011/12) which, as the national body for enterprise and entrepreneurship education, shares best practice and responds to/informs national policy. Thompson was a board member of the Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship from 2006 to 2011 and on the Board of UK Business Incubation from 2007 to 2009. This case also shows how we use evidence-based practice to secure large grants that support business start-up and growth. These impact cases demonstrate how institutional commitment enables our staff to show leadership through involvement with international and national bodies and informing policy.