

Institution: Heriot-Watt University
Unit of Assessment: D28 Modern Languages and Linguistics
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The Department of Languages and Intercultural Studies (LINCS), located in the School of Management & Languages, has consistently shared Heriot-Watt's (HW's) ethos of research that should deliver demonstrable benefits to society. The department has a substantial commitment to knowledge exchange activity through service provision, public and cultural engagement, industry and government liaison, and continuing professional development provision. Researchers in LINCS have contributed to public policy development by liaising with public authorities including the Scottish Government, police forces and the National Health Service, as well as with international bodies, such as the Australian Court Service, the World Federation of the Deaf, the EU Language Council, the EU DG Criminal Justice and the FBI High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group in Washington, DC.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Our work across the spectrum of languages and intercultural studies, informed by our overall research strategy, has enabled us to achieve impact in several spheres; to maximise impact, we have prioritised key areas in each sphere (see also Strategy and Plans). The decision was taken to concentrate efforts in those areas of our research with particular potential to achieve significant social and cultural impact. Thus our research has been able to influence policy and practice, with particular regard to: mainstreaming diversity and social inclusion; ensuring users gain better and fairer access to public services by helping providers comply with diversity and access policy requirements; and assisting the legal and interpreting professions in developing procedures and related codes of practice for investigative interviews and interpreter-mediated encounters.</p> <p>Outcomes of collaborative research projects have been incorporated into policy development and have resulted in enhancing provision or practice at national and EU level (e.g. Böser's dynamic contribution to EU-funded projects on police interpreting, or Turner's consultancy for NHS24, on interpreting and communication support). Perez and Wilson were founding members of the EU funded EULITA (European Association of Legal Interpreters and Translators) and were active in TRAFUT (Training for the Future), a project training legal professionals in preparation for implementation of EU-directive 2010/64/EU.</p> <p>Engagement with stakeholders has been spearheaded by Perez. Following her 2010 inaugural, calling for closer partnerships between academics and the public sector, Perez and Wilson were invited to join "Happy to Translate", a national initiative committed to diversity and equality, which offers practical guidance on communication assistance to service users. Chouc, Monteoliva and others have organised public fora on interpreting and translation with, inter alia, West Lothian Council and the Spanish Embassy. O'Rourke won a Fellowship (2010) from the Edinburgh Beltane (one of the HEFCE/RCUK-funded Beacons for Public Engagement) to develop public engagement activities around her research, including talks at the Scottish Parliament and with local schools and a workshop to establish dialogue between policy-makers, academics and practitioners, funded by a Public Engagement Challenge grant (2011).</p> <p>Public engagement and impact in education has been achieved through training and policy liaison abroad. Examples include O'Rourke's action-research project in Ireland and Scotland entitled: '<i>The World and its Languages in the Classroom</i>', awarded the <i>European Language Label</i> in 2008. Alexander was actively involved in developing the British Council's Pathways in EAP, while Chouc and Pfeiffer delivered training courses on good practice, facilitating knowledge exchange with interpreting trainers from other countries. A number of Tempus projects in Turkmenistan, co-ordinated by Cleary, were primarily joint curriculum development projects. OLEART (Online Learning and Resource Training) was aimed at the transport sector, making connections with the Turkmen Seaport Authorities via their training institute, as well as with Turkmen Airlines. Our research has also influenced practitioners in the private sector. Cleary, for example, has run regular CPD courses aimed at corporate partners, including Price Waterhouse Coopers and Deloitte & Touche (Moscow) branches. TTESP (Trainer Training English for Specific Purposes) was aimed at specialists in the energy industries. Cleary organised CPD training, sponsored by the</p>

Scottish Government, to raise the performance levels of Gaelic-English interpreters in Scotland, targeted at both freelancers and those employed in Gaelic cultural and media industries.

The **expansion of interdisciplinary research** is at the centre of the LINCS impact strategy. Strategic new appointments have expanded our capacity for leadership role in this regard, both within Heriot-Watt and beyond (see below and REF5). In the Co-Minor-In/QUEST project, for example, Böser is working with David La Rooy (Abertay Univ.) on interpreter mediated questioning of minors, employing an interdisciplinary approach in particular with forensic psychology.

Early-career researchers are encouraged to participate in both Heriot-Watt's own and the Scottish Crucible Research Leadership Programmes (see REF 5). Four ECRs have been awarded interdisciplinary project grants in Crucible. These include O'Rourke for work involving LINCS, the Built Environment, Marine Science and Petroleum Engineering; Liao for collaborative research on museums; and Strani for spatial research HW's Built Environment and Psychology at Stirling. O'Rourke facilitated a collaborative PhD project linking acoustics (Built Environment) and multilingualism as a result of Heriot-Watt Crucible. Wurm was on the 2011 winning team of 'Cruciblists' which aimed to combine quantum physics, sign language and computing to create a generic tool for authoring serious games based on concepts of verbs and actions.

c. Strategy and plans

With its broad research portfolio and strong collaborative networks, LINCS is well placed to address the challenges of impact generation in its fields of research. Our strategic plan **aims** to both increase our impact in key areas where we have established a track record (exemplified by our case studies), and achieve impact in new areas. Based on its established and emerging key strengths, LINCS is targeting the following interlinked priority themes for the next five years:

Public Service Interpreting and Translation (see REF 5). Building on our insights into face-to-face interpreting we will expand the scope of our research into other institutional contexts and public service sectors, such as medical interpreting and translating. Expertise in this field has been enhanced with the appointment of Angelleli (legal and medical interpreting) and Napier (Sign Language). Napier is on the expert group of interpreter trainers for the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters and will organise CPD sessions, collaborating with the Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters. Building on contacts with professional organisations such as the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters or the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters, and community associations such as Deaf Action, there is considerable scope for activities that impact on the Deaf community of sign language users internationally. A newer dimension of translation and interpreting in LINCS will be a focus on mental health. De Pedro Ricoy has published research with a view to developing a joint project with the Royal College of Psychiatrists, while Perez and Wilson are now working with the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland, offering annual seminars as part of their training programme.

Cultural Heritages (see REF 5) has been designated a new core area, building on links with national and international research users in the public, private and voluntary sectors. New initiatives with a range of research users will be encouraged, such as Kockel's election to the steering group of Learning for Sustainability Scotland (LfS). Recognised as a Regional Centre of Expertise by the United Nations University, LfS is working with communities across Scotland to enhance sustainability in all spheres of life, including utilisation of living cultural and linguistic heritages as resources for socio-economic development. McLaren-Hankin, Pfeiffer, Strani and others are engaging with the creative industries with a view to establishing good practice in the heritage sector. De Pedro Ricoy's survey-based research among management and commission professionals in the multimedia industry has been disseminated and well received among research users, and is influencing professional practice in the sector. Since Nic Craith's inaugural on Scottish heritage (2013), collaborative links have been established with bodies such as Edinburgh World Heritage, the Polish-Scottish Heritage Advisory Board and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. International links with the heritage sector (including museums and galleries) as well as with UNESCO, brought to LINCS through new appointments, will be further developed with a view to impacting policy and practice in the heritage industry internationally.

Language Policy and Planning is a growing focus of impact (see REF 5). Further to its work in Sign Language (see above), and a new Gaelic interpreting course, LINCS will consolidate relationships with migrant groups, with special focus on the challenges and opportunities for 'new speakers' of different languages in the context of a multilingual Europe. Target groups include private sector organisations with multilingual work forces as well as public sector organisations dealing with a multilingual customer base (e.g. hospitals, housing authorities, social welfare offices, schools). LINCS will also build on its good relations with national and regional governmental organisations responsible for language policy and planning, such as Bord na Gàidhlig, the Nordic Sami Institute, or the Xunta de Galicia.

Across these themes, the following **objectives** are stepping stones towards our aims:

1. To target support at research projects capable of a significant social and cultural impact
2. To prioritise external funding bids aimed at developing research in high impact areas
3. To acquire resources to enhance impact and allocate a portion of our recurrent budget to supporting events where our research is disseminated to a broad audience
4. To cultivate links with community organisations in spheres to which our research is relevant
5. To develop further our collaborations with industrial and commercial organisations
6. To enhance further our liaison with government bodies and NGOs in the policy arena

Structures and Mechanisms are in place to maximise our potential. Since 2008, LINCS has expanded its support systems, creating an environment that fosters impact by offering support and training to staff, and encouraging good practice. Recognising engagement with the wider society is a significant element of forward job plans and promotion applications for research-active staff. Impact-associated requests for staff development (Professional Development and Research) funding are given priority, and the School has established a Research & Knowledge Exchange Office with two full-time support staff. Researchers in LINCS can draw on a wide range of specialist support provided by the University's Research and Enterprise Services, relating to both knowledge exchange and commercialisation (see REF 5). Heriot-Watt's 'Research Futures' Programme offers training for researchers at all levels, including in relation to impact (see REF 5).

We have taken the initiative to work with a highly respected PR consultancy (PAGODA pr) to enhance our public presence. The adoption of the PURE system affords open access to specific publications and research reports; social media are used extensively (our lifeinlincs blog is used to engage with practitioners and members of the public, Napier is in the top 100 for PhD advisory tweeters); and public events (e.g. the annual Multilingual Debate) are streamed. Staff are regularly involved in major events programmes, such as the various Edinburgh Festivals or the Science Festivals (Manchester, Glasgow) and encouraged to take full advantage of the University's membership of networks such as Edinburgh Beltane.

Building on activities such as the BSL employers/organisations 'end-of-year-one celebration', industry events organised through the two LINCS-based Research Centres (see REF5) offer a platform for developing links with the business sector. To support impact activities, an advisory board comprising representatives of different stakeholder groups is currently being set up.

d. Relationship to case studies

Research in LINCS has consistently had an applied ethos and owes much to the leadership of Professor Ian Mason. Issues related to access to public services and social justice underpinned have been central in this research that has aimed to make a societal impact. The two case studies demonstrate strong evidence of highly developed relationships with community stakeholders and others, ways in which the research process has engaged users and indeed been shaped by user inputs. They highlight the particular contribution of LINCS in the field of **police interpreting**, and in relation to the **Deaf community**. By ensuring that all research-active LINCS staff benefit fully from the support structures and mechanisms mentioned above, we expect to see further case studies of this nature emanating from a wider range of staff in the future, consolidating existing strengths evident in the fields of sign language and interpreting as well as building capacity in newer areas of cultural heritages, language policy, and education.