

Impact template (REF3a)

Institution:	University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Unit of Assessment:	19 – Business and Management Studies
<p>a. Context</p> <p>Key areas of research enquiry within Business and Management Studies at Northumbria University fall within the main research clusters of: Entrepreneurship, Innovation and SMEs; Risk, Ethics and Governance; and, Organisational Behaviour, Leadership and Development. The UoA has produced research that improves organisational performance. Reflective of the inter-disciplinary, practitioner facing research conducted, the main types of impact demonstrated by these case studies relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using strategic marketing to drive up sales within an organisation utilising a framework that has been transferred to different type of businesses; • Introducing management information systems alongside cultural change to deliver sustainable business improvement within an organisation, an approach that has been transferred into the NHS; • Informing public policy by challenging assumptions around food localisation agendas. <p>The main non-academic users and beneficiaries of our research during the REF period have included: National Government (e.g. Defra), national companies (e.g. Sage (UK) plc, and Renown Engineering Group), together with regional SMEs, North East regional councils (e.g. Gateshead, North Tyneside, Newcastle, Sunderland and Northumberland), and national institutes and organisations such as UK Women on Boards, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), Institute of Directors (IOD), the Association of Coaching, Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) and the Public Service Academy.</p>	
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The Unit's strategic approach to impact has developed across the review period and has been built upon existing high quality practitioner engagement that has enabled an emphasis on sustainable and long term relationships. Engagement is in two key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnerships developed via the Corporate and Executive Development Centre (CEDC) with a range of external organisations including, for example, Procter and Gamble, Greggs plc, BAE systems plc, the British Army, and the NHS. 2. Interface with professional bodies and chartered institutes (e.g. CIPD, CIPS, CILT, CMI, CIM, ACCA). <p>Exemplars of our practitioner engagement Partnerships are provided through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs): innovative research within the Business School has underpinned the successful delivery of five KTPs over the REF assessment period. McLeay has worked with a number of organisations using strategic marketing initiatives to substantially improve business performance; this multi-organisational work is captured by our case study: <i>Using Strategic Marketing to Drive Business Development: The Impact of Research on Branding, New Product Development and Knowledge Based Communities of Practice</i> (which also features engagement with CIM). Similarly, Waring has focused on business information systems that delivered significant and tangible improvements to a single company that have subsequently informed an action research project delivered within the NHS. Her research is illustrated in a second case study: <i>The impact of systems integration research on business improvement: the creation of a strategic management information database</i>. Chartered Institute engagement through Chartered Institute of Logistics Transport (CILT) contributory funding for the study into farmers' markets is exemplified in Heron's challenge to government policy, whose research is captured in the third case study, <i>Directing policy interventions in local food markets and challenging assumptions around food localisation agendas</i>.</p> <p>Our engagement with non-academic users of our research recognises that these partnerships should be broadly conceived, flexible and offer different pathways to impact. An effective mechanism for impact has been achieved by combining researchers alongside practitioner-based colleagues to provide more effective translation of ideas and embed their application of the research. Impact is generated through a range of impact pathways whereby we interface with</p>	

businesses. For instance, this can include commissioned research; through our interaction with our business advisory panels, as well as through our doctoral alumni. This is especially the case with our part-time Doctor of Business Administration graduates, many of whom hold senior positions within their organisations, where they are able to apply their practice changing research.

Examples of each of these pathways include:

- Outputs from the sub-areas of gender, identity, leadership and diversity as well as from public sector management informing practical interventions particularly in the leadership management and development work undertaken within the CEDC, for example, management development with Northumberland County Council and Modern Gateshead Management programme. Similarly, gender in management outputs supported a joint presentation with a former contestant from the BBC's *The Apprentice* to 500 new women leaders on challenging gendered media representations. This research was also taken into Catalyst, the leading non-profit global research organisation with a mission to expand opportunities for women and business as well as into Sage (UK) Ltd.
- Commissioned funded research projects with organisations such as Sage (UK) Ltd, Newcastle City Council and North East Access to Finance (NEA2F). The last project resulted in the lead academic being invited to contribute to bi-annual North East Chamber of Commerce policy consultations. In a similar vein, outputs on disability led to the researcher being invited onto the advisory group for the Equality Challenge Unit, while research on global strategic marketing has been used by UK Trade and Industry to inform export marketing initiatives.
- The Business School has its own external Advisory Board while the Departments of Business and Management and Accounting and Finance have their own external advisory panels which provide further opportunity for both formal and informal influence and engagement nationally for the Business School and with key regional stakeholders (in the case of departmental panels). These relationships have a number of benefits through providing opportunity for commissioning of specific research or consulting projects, for sourcing problem solving KTPs, and for providing similar opportunities for collaborative working.
- The Unit has a successful track record of acquiring match-funded PhD studentships with external organisations which are viewed as particularly important in establishing long term impact relationships (e.g. Premier Foods, Associated British Nutrition, CIPS, NHS, Aurora Training) which typically endeavour to solve practical issues for the companies involved.

The final area of strategy is focused on building support and laying the foundations of future sustainability across a broader range of impact activity. This has been aided through (a) recognising the value of outreach and external engagement in workloads, (b) absorbing the costs of staff and provision of facilities for CPD and other external engagement events (e.g. with ACCA and CIPD) to promote collaborative working and (c) supporting staff attendance at external national professional networking events.

c. Strategy and plans

At the University level, research impact was introduced to the university-wide research planning process from 2011, with standardised workload hours introduced in the same year. Public engagement skills and experience and research impact forms (post 2010) part of the recruitment criteria employed for academic staff and the demonstration of impact is also now recognised in the University's reward and promotion criteria. Impact is supported centrally through Research and Business Services, which has a specific arm dedicated to knowledge exchange and public engagement activity to ensure consultation and collaboration with research users, and ensure results are communicated and used effectively by the end user to generate maximum impact. Higher Education Innovation Funds (HEIF) has been used to support user led research activities and promote research impact (e.g. an SME engagement project that funded a series of Business awareness workshops for SMEs and the recent first phase collaboration with Tharsus Engineering which is 50% funded through HEIF).

In addition to the support provided to all our academic staff (research banding workload support, funds for conference attendance etc.), the Unit will continue to support and develop research champions with a specific impact brief within departmental structures. The Unit has provided support and advice aimed at enabling the development of impact case studies through internal

Impact template (REF3a)

(external facilitator) and external (National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement) workshops (on form and content); and for attendance at external events where potential users have the opportunity to engage with research outcomes (e.g. CIM Great North East Brands workshops attended by over 250 businesses) or through hosting internal conferences (e.g. NEA2F interactive regional engagement conference attended by 73 external participants from SMEs, funders and professional service providers). Workshops also take place as part of our internal Research Development Programme which supports researchers in developing individual impact activity.

The Unit will continue to build on the relationships within CEDC, much of which has been underpinned by research undertaken within the RAE 2008 period within the area of *People and Organisations*. We will continue our strategy with respect to impact through building on established professional networks and business engagement. Building on our successful track record, the Unit will continue to support academic engagement with Knowledge Transfer Partnerships that, in line with the funding requirements of the TSB, deliver a high level of innovation, economic and/or societal impact. Looking to the future, early stage impact activity arising from the SME funding study undertaken for NEA2F is expected to develop more fully and is of particular significance given that SMEs have traditionally found it difficult to access universities and research. The Unit has recently invested in two important facilities that aim to further enhance engagement and outreach. The first of these is the new Student Business Clinic that has been modelled on the highly successful Student Law Office (<http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/academic/law/slo/>). The second is the newly constructed Student Engagement Centre, the commitment to develop this being publically made as part of our contribution to changing SME access to finance (Conference video web link: <http://nea2f.co.uk/?s=re-think+access+to+finance>).

d. Relationship to case studies

The selected case studies exemplify external recognition of the Unit for its ability to deliver research informed timely solutions for specific end-users or to public bodies. Across the case studies and within each project impact is delivered via multiple pathways in ways that demonstrate not only *significance* but also *reach* of research impacts beyond the direct and immediate recipients. These include influence on policy within one government department that has influenced policy setting in other areas; and in relation to innovation within partner organisations, the transfer of strategic changes that have impacted organisational performance, into other companies where similar improvements have also been achieved.

- The case study: *Directing policy interventions around local food markets and challenging assumptions around food localisation agendas* has directly informed public policy focused on the food miles debate and food localisation challenging established policy. Indeed, in relation this, the Economic Adviser as Defra commented: “it sent a clear message to Defra that the economic and environmental case for Government intervention in this area was very weak”.
- Two case studies have been selected that demonstrate the Unit’s research informed KTP activity delivering significant business improvement to a range of companies. *The impact of systems integration research on business improvement: the creation of a strategic management information database* drew from an established research tradition over many years in relation to information policy development and systems integration. Similarly, *Using Strategic Marketing to Drive Business Development: The Impact of Research on Branding, New Product Development and Knowledge-Based Communities of Practice* was underpinned not only by multi-disciplinary work in strategic management and marketing but also by knowledge outputs transferred from and to three other KTPs. Both demonstrate how research activity conducted in the UoA has influenced practice and business performance of considerable significance and reach.