

Institution: University of Aberdeen
Unit of Assessment: 30 - History
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The written, material and visual past permeate contemporary life. Through these connections, research in the unit generates transformations and benefits for a diverse range of beneficiaries locally, nationally and globally. By catering to an inherent and broad public fascination with the past, the unit's research has proved of particular value to the heritage sector; galleries; auction houses; the media; students and teachers; publishers; and local history societies. Research has been translated into impact through engagement, consultancy, and publication, in addition to the independent uptake of our research by various users. The benefits are focused on cultural life, public discourse and civil society, economic activities, and education.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The unit's impact in the assessment period has emerged both from interactions between researchers and users, and through further users independently drawing on research. Generally these activities cluster in five main areas underpinned by the full chronological, geographical, and thematic range of research undertaken in the unit. Examples of the interactions between the unit and of impacts in these areas, as well as details of the support provided by the unit and university infrastructure more broadly, are outlined below.</p> <p><i>1. The Past On Show: Stimulating Tourism and Enriching Cultural Life through Heritage, Museums and Galleries</i></p> <p>The insights of research in the unit have led to a wide range of collaborations with museums, visitor centres and galleries. Typically these collaborations enable these organisations to fulfil their missions to produce fresh and vivid displays of the past, enriching cultural life, as well as enhancing the quality of these attractions. Members of the unit have worked with over 20 different heritage organisations in Scotland, the rest of the UK, Ireland, France, Sweden, Italy, and Russia including English Heritage, Historic Scotland, the National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland. In addition to the examples in the Case Studies, several of these interactions have proved significant. Mackillop has acted as consultant and steering group member for the <i>Tasglann nan Eilaeon Siar</i> (Hebridean Archives) project. In 2011 this received a £4.6 million Heritage Lottery Fund Award to create a new civic infrastructure, facilitating interest in the area's distinctive history to practical economic benefit. The insights of research produced in the unit have also led to beneficial transformations through exhibitions. In addition to Case Studies 2-3, the digitization of the 12th Century St Albans' Psalter by a team of researchers led by Geddes between 2001 and 2003 inspired an exhibition in Dombibliothek Hildesheim, Germany (Sept. 2009 to Jan. 2010) which attracted c.15,000 visitors. Similarly, the <i>Research Institute in Irish and Scottish Studies (RIISS)</i> collaborated with Trinity College Dublin (TCD) in a major project to digitize 19,000 pages of depositions concerning the 1641 Ulster rebellion (see REF5). This work inspired a major exhibition at TCD (Oct. 2010-Oct. 2011) which attracted 120,528 visitors (including the Irish president, Mary McAleese, Lord Bannside and Queen Elizabeth II). At the exhibition's opening McAleese reflected on the violence recorded in the depositions, expressing hope that the resource would 'inspire us to keep on working to ensure an end forever to such suffering'. Research based in Aberdeen's English department on the depositions has generated further impact (see UOA 29, REF3B).</p> <p>Investment by the University increasingly facilitates the public display of the past locally. In 2011 the University opened a new museum (<i>King's Museum</i>) to exhibit its collections of material and visual culture. Heritage Lottery funding for the new <i>Sir Duncan Rice Library</i> and the restoration of the 18th Century <i>Town House of Old Aberdeen</i> (which from September 2013 houses the <i>King's Museum</i>) have provided considerable exhibition space. These are continually filled with displays showcasing the University's extensive and diverse collections, accompanied by packages targeted at local schools. In the assessment cycle, members of the unit have drawn on the unit's research findings to supply advice and script for exhibitions on the Jacobites (see Case Study 3), 'the Elements', the Aberdeen Bestiary, Aberdeen Harbour, the Book of Deer, and Bishop Elphinstone.</p> <p><i>2. Public History: Creating Cultural Capital through Local Societies and the Media</i></p> <p>a. Local History. By working with local history societies and other interested groups the unit's</p>

research enhances cultural life in ways that are highly significant for those involved. **Armstrong** acts as co-investigator with staff from cognate disciplines in a collaborative project with the Bailies of Bennachie local history organisation (the project received £19,857 through the AHRC Connected Communities Call (2012) and a further AHRC Development Grant of £79,793 (80 per cent FEC) in January 2013). This interactive project generates public benefits by enabling academic researchers to help local amateur historians frame and research projects that are relevant to the community, drawing on the University's rich archival collections. The fruits of historical research are also shared with local audiences through the more traditional medium of the public lecture. In the census period, members of the unit have delivered over 150 public lectures in locations across the world. Members of the unit are prominent participants in institution-wide engagement activities. **Frost** and **Harper** delivered public lectures at the *Elphinstone Institute* which engages the public in the human traditions of Northern Scotland. *RIISS* in collaboration with Aberdeen City Council established a public lecture series: 'Great Aberdonians'. Launched in 2011-12 and continuing, these lectures are predominantly delivered by members of the unit and seek to promote civic pride and share research accessibly through the medium of biography. A book aimed at a non-academic audience based on these lectures is forthcoming. As well as traditional public lectures, dedicated 'Café' events enable the public to interact with academics in an informal context. In 2010 Naphy led at the 'Café Controversial' on 'Science, Faith & Biblical Interpretation'.

b. History in the Media. Through radio and television appearances, and consultancy work, members of the unit facilitate the cultural production of history in the media and hence economic and public benefits (see Case Studies 1 and 2). Members of the unit have featured or acted as consultants on over 50 occasions for broadcasters including the BBC, RTE (Ireland), National Public Radio (US), the Australian Broadcasting Company, and Sveriges Radio (Sweden). For example, **Marsden** acted as consultant and interviewee for a German documentary on James Watt produced by Engstfeld Film GmbH (broadcast in 2008), and also featured on BBC2's 'Genius of Invention' (12 Oct. 2012) and on BBC Radio 3's 'Nightwaves' (24 Jan. 2013).

3. Economic Gains: Publication and Commercial Consultancy

As well as these broader benefits to public discourse, the unit's research also creates economic benefit for private sector users. The publishing industry benefits from the unit's production of books which have reached significant non-academic audiences. **Weber's** *Hitler's First War* has, as of September 2012, been translated from English into 9 other languages and sold approximately 20,000 copies. As of 1 July 2013, **Bartlett's** *Ireland: A History* had sold over 11,000 copies. Major publications by colleagues have also stimulated creative works leading to cultural and economic benefits. For example, **Davidson's** monograph *The Idea of the North* (2005) inspired **Davidson, Mealor and Stollery** to compose a well reviewed opera, '74 Degrees North' that was premiered by Scottish Opera in 2010 (see UOA35, REF3B). Members of the unit also support the fine art market. **Gash** and **Stevenson** provide advice and catalogue entries to Sotheby's (London and New York), Christie's (London), and the Chicago Art Institute (see Case Study 2).

4. Enriching Learning: Schools and the HE Sector

The unit's research generates impacts on education in HEIs and schools. At HEI level, **Friedrich** produced a significant textbook on eighteenth-century Prussia. **Macknight** has coordinated an interdisciplinary Knowledge Transfer Project (receiving £108,913, chiefly from the Scottish Funding Council, the ESRC, and the Co-operative Education Trust Scotland), which produced three open access publications aimed at HEI students as well as a Virtual Learning Environment platform. The project was nominated for the UK Government Technology Strategy Board's Britain's Best KTP Partnership Award. Her new project with a budget of £183,684 from the Scottish Funding Council, Technology Strategy Board and Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society Ltd was confirmed in October 2013. In the Schools sector, **Macdonald** acted as an expert commentator for a web-resource produced by Learning and Teaching Scotland in 2009 on the Scottish Wars of Independence. From 2011, 10 teachers' packs have been produced based on the 1641 depositions project (see above) funded by a grant of €20,000 by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Programme for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. 100 hard copies were disseminated to schools in Northern Ireland and the packs are available online. **Macdonald**, as the unit's Schools Liaison Officer, facilitates connections with schools in our region.

Impact template (REF3a)

5. The 'Good Life': Contributions to Public Discourse, Civic Society and Policy-Making

Frequently members of the department draw on their research to contribute to public and civic discourse. In 2012, Naphy's book *Born to be Gay* was translated into Serbo-Croat and distributed free in Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of a Norwegian Government initiative to promote tolerance in the region. In recognition of its profound significance for German society, a special issue of the German edition of **Weber's** *Hitler's First War* was brought out by the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* (the Federal Agency for Civic Education, funded by the German Interior Ministry) in August 2012. For a nominal fee, this special edition is distributed to public libraries, schools and the general public. A range of institutional supports are provided in this area. For example, *RIISS* runs an 'Irish-Scottish Forum' bringing together policy makers and researchers for private discussions of policy. On 17 August 2012, *RIISS* inaugurated a series of complementary public events when **Brown** convened the first 'Scottish-Irish Conversation' on 'sectarianism' at the Scottish parliament. These are conceived as a pathway for research to enter public discourse in Scotland. Major institutional infrastructure has been developed during the census period to facilitate future impacts on public discourse and policy. For instance, the new *Centre for Global Governance and Security* (directed by **Weber**) is building networks to connect researchers and policy-makers.

c. Strategy and plans

Strategy: The unit has formulated an Impact and Engagement Strategy, and appointed an Impact Lead (**Dilley**) to oversee implementation. This strategy seeks to ensure that excellent research has the maximum possible impact in two main ways. *First*, the unit places emphasis on 'building out from research', acting to ensure that potential impacts are identified and realised as a part of the research process. To this end, we monitor research plans and outputs and the activities of research centres (see REF5) to identify potential impact and highlight best practice. Colleagues can then be supported to realise these impacts through a range of mechanisms: relief from teaching and other duties, leave, internal financial resources, training within or beyond the University, assistance in securing external funding, and help with identifying outside collaborators. Here they can draw on the expertise of the University's RCUK-funded *Public Engagement with Research Unit* which offers help with generic skills provision, development and delivery of events, partnership building and applying for funding. *Second*, the unit is strengthening its pathways to impact by cultivating relations with research users, particularly the local and Scottish-level heritage and education sectors, and with policy-makers. This element of the strategy seeks to ease the outward passage of research in these sectors, and to connect colleagues with a range of potential partners. Overall, this strategy aims to facilitate impact, acknowledging the complex and unpredictable 'pathways to impact' of historical and art-historical research.

Plans: In addition to the ongoing local public history and display activities outlined above, a number of plans are underway to generate impact in the next cycle. For instance, **Heywood** is co-investigator in a global research project on Russia's Great War which is developing a centennial web resource for Schools and the HE Sector. **Brown** has a contract with Routledge to write a major university-level textbook on the 'Birth of Modernity'. **Weber** has been consulted by the German production company Teamworx for an 8 part TV mini-series on Hitler to be broadcast in 2015, and Oxford Films are also developing a documentary based on his book.

d. Relationship to case studies

Historical and History of Art research tends to generate a range of impacts simultaneously. As a result the case studies all incorporate several of the elements detailed above in section B. *Case Study 1* (Dover Castle) illustrates the impact of medieval art-historical research generated through collaborations with the heritage and media industries. *Case Study 2* (Edward Burra) shows how historical research on twentieth-century art has generated cultural benefits, and economic gains in the fine art sector. *Case Study 3* (Jacobites, Hanoverians, and the Making of the British State) shows how research on Scottish History has benefitted tourism, cultural life and entered public discourse. All emerged from the outward passage of monographs or significant bodies of research, informing our decision to make research the starting point of our impact strategy, and highlighting the centrality of a vibrant and sustainable research environment in generating impact (see REF5).