

<p>Institution: The University of Northampton</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 29 English</p>
<p>a. Context In line with the University's Strategic Plan, research within English, Media and Creative Writing engages with a wide variety of user groups, stakeholders and beneficiaries. These include departments within local and national government, charities, the press and broadcasting, local and regional ethnic organisations, embassies and high commissions, international learned societies, literary festivals, as well as local and national school groups, choirs, museums, theatres and art galleries. The impact of the Unit's research on these groups falls into four main types (discussed under 3b as 1-4): [1] providing outreach to schools and other community groups that lack institutional access to higher education; [2] informing public policy and third sector practice at local and national levels; [3] raising public awareness of cultural heritage; and [4] influencing public opinion. In bringing research to non-academic user groups through its strong engagement with social and cultural heritage, educational opportunities, and practices of the press and media, the Unit ties the University into its region, and enhances its national and international contexts.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Engagement with users and beneficiaries. Members of UoA 29 (English) have engaged in outreach activities through different modes: theatrical performance, reading groups, public lectures, curation of exhibitions, radio broadcasts, judging competitions, websites and social media. 1. Educational activities have involved primary and secondary school children as well as community groups that lack access to higher education. Ukaegbu and Dr Jumai Ewu's performance project, <i>Who can Tell?...!</i>, about black people's personal and collective histories in Northampton was adapted in a special version for young people and staged at Grendon (3 October 2008; audience c. 30). As the focus of a residential project to raise school attainment levels and reinforce young black peoples' self-confidence (3–11 October 2008), it was accompanied by school workshops led by Ukaegbu and Ewu which dealt with related issues such as bullying, racism and homelessness. Also engaging with promoting young people's confidence through literacy, Mackley volunteered at Brixworth Primary School, Northamptonshire, to assist Year 2 children with their reading (2010-11), and C. Bennett talked on poetry to Summerfields School, Oxford (28 July 2013). With History UN Dr Richard. Chamberlain co-organised and presented a seminar at a World War One Study Day (Avenue Campus, UN, 25 February 2009), to 70 sixth formers from Milton Keynes. Dr C. Ringrose (Lecturer in English & Creative Writing to September 2010, Visiting Fellow, October 2010 – October 2013) as Judge of "Imagination/ Creation", Melbourne Poetry and Short Story Prizes for Young Writers (24 July 2013) confirms the Unit's commitment to gifted young creative writers. Staff engagement with reading groups also evidences educational outreach to adult learners: Mackley established and chaired a group in Brixworth, Northamptonshire (2008-10); Kimber and Wilson have addressed a London-based New Zealand group, and Wilson one in Harleston, Norfolk. Working with non-conventional learners, Ewu facilitated 'Drama Beyond the Academy' workshops at Northampton's Hope Centre for the Homeless (January-March 2010).</p> <p>2. Members of the Unit have engaged with public bodies or third sector organisations within and beyond the UK in promoting informed public debate about sensitive issues in regards to health, social integration and coming to terms with negative pasts. For example, Ukaegbu and Ewu's public talk and rehearsal of <i>Who Can Tell?...!</i> to c. 40 (5 March 2008) included members of the Northampton Black History Association, the Primary Colour Project (London), and the Centre for Ethnic Minorities and Race Action, Northampton; the play inspired the first act of <i>Such a Long Journey</i>, a new theatrical work by co-writer, Oladipo Agboluaje, which contributed to the 65th anniversary of the Windrush (2013); Allwork, was invited by the Imperial War Museum and the Lithuanian Embassy, London, to discuss Holocaust commemoration issues with Lithuanian representatives of the Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum and the Museum of Genocide Victims (24-25 September 2012), so stimulating British/Baltic intellectual relations; Canning presented at 'HIV/ AIDs through the Social Sciences', University of Sheffield (20 June 2013), to c.150 academics, students, employees of South Yorkshire hospitals and patient care groups.</p> <p>3. The Unit raises awareness of cultural heritage at all levels through engagement in learned and literary societies, community organisations, and festivals, the curation of exhibitions and participation in public events. P. Bennett Vice-Chair of the William Morris Society (c.1295 members globally, see http://www.williammorrisociety.org.uk/) has guest lectured to the National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies, Nottingham branch (12 June, 4 September 2012, c. 35 people at each). Kimber is Chair of the Katherine Mansfield Society (c. 170 members), co-</p>

founded with **Wilson** and others in 2008, whose website she coordinates (<http://www.katherine-mansfieldsociety.org/about-us/>); together they convene the Society's annual Katherine Mansfield Birthday Lecture at Birkbeck, University of London (c. 70 attendees). **Kimber** has spoken on Katherine Mansfield to the Bath Royal and Literary and Scientific Institution (March 2013, to c. 50 people) and to the Oxford Literary Festival (17 March 2013). **Wilson** co-founded the Postcolonial Studies Association (2008), the New Zealand Studies Network (UK & Ireland) (2010) (NZSN), and is a Trustee of the NZ-UK Link Foundation (2012-present). As NZSN's Deputy-Chair (2013-present) and an events organiser she co-convenes and chairs seminars, poetry readings, colloquia and conferences on New Zealand topics (c. 53 members). See <http://www.nzstudies.com/events/>. She has addressed the NZ Women's Association and the NZ University Graduates Association (May, June 2012) (c. 50 attendees). **Simmons** is a founding member of the Kurt Vonnegut Society (c.150 members); **Ringrose** presented a keynote address to the 2009 AGM of the BB Society (celebrating the work of English nature writer 'BB' or Denys Watkins-Pitchford); **Mackley** lectured (2011, 2012) to the Medieval Siege Society (<http://www.medieval-siege-society.co.uk/Home.aspx>), one of the UK's largest medieval re-enactment groups with a membership of c. 550.

UoA 29 members have also embraced opportunities for enhancing public awareness of culture by speaking as specialists on the broadcast media. Examples include **Andermahr** on Eva Figes ('Last Word', Radio 4, 28 September 2012); **Kimber** on English grammar (BBC Radio Northampton, 4 April, 2 May 2013), newly discovered Katherine Mansfield archives (TVNZ, 13 February 2013), and a new-found Mansfield sketch (Radio New Zealand, 13, 17 February 2013; BBC Radio 3, 21 January 2013). Other members have promoted cultural life and heritage in Northampton and Northamptonshire: **Ringrose** was Judge of the Northampton Literature Group Poetry Prize (2008, 2009, 2010), **C. Bennett** talked on Northamptonshire poet, John Clare, at the Althorp Literary Festival (14 June 2013); **Wiseman-Trowse** had a key role in curating 'Mod' (Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, opened 13 July 2013), an exhibition on the history of the music movement which featured oral history interviews with Northampton Mods (23,000 visitors according to Northampton Museum and Art Gallery); **Ukaegbu** and **Ewu**, founding members of the Jawi Theatre Collective, which includes members of the Northamptonshire Black community and has made accessible through dramatic performance archival materials from the Northampton Black History Association, were interviewed about Oladipo Agboluaje's new play, *Such A Long Journey* on Northampton's multicultural radio station, Inspiration FM (17, 18 July 2013). **Jowett** introduced Joss Whedon's film adaptation of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* at Northampton's Errol Flynn cinema (12 July 2013) and with **Simmons** convenes cult film nights.

4. The Unit influences public opinion through **talks, newspaper articles** and **videos**. **Ewu** gave talks on 'Theatre as a strategy for conflict management and resolution: the case of Nigeria' at an In Place of War (IPOW) Network in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (July 2011) to c. 25 delegates. At other Nigerian community venues, she reached over 100 adults and young people. **Wiseman-Trowse** and **M. Starr** organised the 'Magus: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Work of Alan Moore' conference (2010), resulting in a video of Moore viewed 8525 times on You Tube by 31 July 2013. Moore's comments in relation to an aborted collaboration with musician, Damon Albarn, and artist, Jamie Hewlett, were reported in the *Guardian*, the *Independent* and the *NME*. Members also engage with the public through **websites** and **social media**: **Kimber** tweets for the Katherine Mansfield Society; **Wilson** contributes to the NZSN website; **Jowett** and **Simmons** write for the website *Twisted Tales*, **Jowett** blogs for *Critical Studies Online*; **Allwork** reviews art for online journal, *Itch* (Richter article, 180 views; Pop Worlds article, 7091 views by 31 July 2013).

The Unit has also encouraged sustained critical reflection on the media's public status. **Mair's** UN 'Northampton Chronicles' series (November 2012- May 2013), 45 lectures by major figures in broadcasting, journalism and cultural life made significant interventions in areas of contemporary debate such as regulation of the press: e.g. Mark Lawson (Presenter, BBC Radio 4, 6 December 2012), Jo Whiley (Presenter, BBC Radio 2, 5 February 2013), Matthew Engel (*Financial Times* Columnist, 27 February 2013), Barney Jones (Editor, 'The Andrew Marr Show', 1 March 2013), Sir Peter Bazalgette (Chairman of the Arts Council, 19 April 2013), and Robert Fox (former BBC War Correspondent, 25 April 2013). All 'Chronicles' attracted between 10 and 100 people and can be downloaded at the UN's I-Tunes account. Roy Greenslade's *Guardian* blog on politics, news and the media also serialised **Mair's** edited volume, *After Leveson* (February and March 2012. For the first extract see <http://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2013/feb/18/leveson-report-news-of-the-world#start-of-comments>). The extracts provoked public debate on issues raised by

Impact template (REF3a)

<p>Leveson, as comments illustrate (see Greenslade's blog, 18-20 February, 21-22 March 2013).</p> <p>Identifying and supporting impact. Impact is identified through formal feedback at events, and informally through discussion and attendees' opinion. Feedback through questionnaires includes the children who sang in the <i>Angry Planet</i> Prom, performers in Ukaegbu and Ewu's <i>Who Can Tell?..!</i>; audiences at Mair's <i>Northampton Chronicles</i>, the KMS Annual Katherine Mansfield Birthday lecture. Businesses, charities and public sector organisations such as Oxford University Press and the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery have also been approached for sales or audience figures. Staff are encouraged to identify impact in their research by the Director of Research, Wilson. Activities are reported in Allwork's blog for the UN Research Support Hub: e.g. audio recordings of talks by Bennett and the broadcast of the Ukaegbu/Ewu produced radio play, <i>Such A Long Journey</i> (http://research_supporthub.northampton.ac.uk/2013/07/01/such-a-long-journey-new-radio-play-recording-and-call-for-feedback/). Staff are also supported through the advice provided in relation to REF Impact by the Research and Strategic Bidding Office and in creating publicity for their events by the School's Marketing Business Partner and Communication Officer for Social Media and Online Communities. During 2011-12 Unit members secured £21,611 from central University funds to support activities relating directly to identifying current impact, and fostering future impact for projects which lacked such funding. For example, a research coordinator was employed to assist with public outreach and enhancement activities for Smith and Bennett's impact case studies, including developing dissemination strategies.</p>
<p>c. Strategy and plans: As part of the Unit's research strategy, we seek to enhance our engagement with the wider public as beneficiaries of our research, and so increase the significance and reach of our research impact, regionally, nationally and globally. Our plan for meeting these ambitions is to: 1) Raise the UN's profile outside the HE sector as a centre of research excellence in contemporary fiction and cultural theory, creative writing and the media. Given the Unit's development and the UN's 'Raising the Bar' strategic plan (2010-15) we have prioritised communication of our key research strengths and their potential impact. We will [i] improve our web pages to include a clear profiling of the Unit's research expertise and an interactive public-facing section (Q&As, resources, etc); [ii] support staff in, e.g. organising international and national conferences, engaging in festivals and exhibitions that involve non-academics; [iii] engage in both traditional and new media, creating effective external links for blogs and web pages. The HR team, Communications Officer, Research Information Specialist and the UN Research Support Hub administrator will support us in gaining these goals; (2) Ensuring that impact is embedded in the research plans of individual staff members. The PDR process ensures that all staff are given opportunity to plan their research according to agreed objectives with the School. These plans continue to incorporate goals for research impact as well as income and outputs. In line with initiatives stimulated by the AHRC and other grant-awarding bodies, we will ensure that impact plans are embedded in all grant applications, and will be even more prominent in the future; (3) Actively seek partners and users for our research. I.e. by advising and assisting the School of the Arts Research and Strategic Bidding Officer to identify potential partners and research users both in the UK and overseas; and building on pre-existing and recent appointments to strengthen the Unit's profile, reinforcing its current impact activities and extending impact into new areas, e.g. with public engagement through societies, lectures and events, as well as new initiatives related to exploring issues of public interest associated with literature, gender, sexuality, trauma and postcolonial/diaspora studies and contemporary narratives. The Unit will also build on and strengthen its pre-existing links to local and national organisations.</p>
<p>d. Relationship to case studies: Both case studies are the most developed instances of the Unit's practice and reflect our wider approach: they involve sustained partnerships with a variety of agencies and individuals at local, national and international levels. They exemplify how impact comes from (1) extending educational opportunities to the disadvantaged, (2) influencing public policy, (3) raising public awareness of cultural heritage, and (4) informing public opinion. Bennett's case study highlights links between choral education, social integration and musical creativity with outreach to schools, and Smith's case study draws attention to the issues of education and prison with outreach to the penal services. Both have raised levels of public awareness, demonstrate a commitment to ensure that impact is felt by 'end users' (i.e. local, national and global publics) and both utilise the range of media identified in this template (websites, conferences, broadcast media, publications, lectures, readings and face-to-face meetings) to achieve their impact.</p>