

Impact template (REF3a)

<p>Institution: Plymouth University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 25 Education</p>
<p>a. Context: Research within the scope of this UoA is undertaken within PedRIO (HE pedagogy), the School of Education (schooling and informal education in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities), and CAMERA (medical education in the Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry). This research impacts upon a wide range of beneficiaries including policy makers, educational institutions, voluntary sector organisations, community groups, clinicians, and clinical service-users. Impacts range from informing policy and practice through to stimulating public debate and discourse.</p> <p>The core approach to impact within UoA25 is based on long term capacity building with organisations and stakeholders, in which beneficiaries are embedded within the research process from the outset. PedRIO, as the strategic coordinating body for educational research, has developed a strong structural and managerial process that underpins impact activity and links actively with the University's central impact and enterprise agenda. Strategy for the unit is monitored continuously and developed in response to changing staff profiles and changes in the wider HE landscape. PedRIO is coordinating a review of impact strategy in the context of the new Plymouth University Strategy 2013-2020.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact Prior to 2008 the approach to impact was developed on a case-by-case basis, but the launching of a University-level Research and Innovation Strategy led to the adoption of a more strategic approach to educational research. This is now embedded in our structures and has enabled us to continue our ethos of interdisciplinary sharing of experiences, on-going research mentoring, and maximising opportunities afforded by the research infrastructure at Plymouth. This was boosted significantly with the formation of PedRIO in 2011 to undertake research and practice in HE pedagogy and also to present a co-ordinated central focus for educational research and engagement with external partners for all schools in the University. Educational pedagogy has been recognised as a key strategic area for University investment and PedRIO plays a synchronisation role alongside the School of Education, and CAMERA.</p> <p>Managerial and structural processes: PedRIO provides a supportive structure that enhances the impact of pedagogic research across the UK HE sector and beyond. Its Steering Group receives reports on key projects and aims to maximise their engagement/impact activities through regular monitoring and reporting to the University's Teaching and Learning and Research and Innovation Committees. This institutional wide monitoring process has ensured that pedagogic research within scope of UoA25 has fed into the practices of other UK universities. For example, the Future Fit Framework, developed by the PedRIO affiliated Centre for Sustainable Futures, has been promoted within the University of Leeds, Trinity St David's, and also the Government of Flanders. Within the SoE the Research Advisory Group monitors and allocates funding for research activity requiring recipients to build and demonstrate impact as a core part of their work. The School employs a Research and Enterprise Officer, who works with four full-time Research Fellows and two Research Assistants to search for strategic level opportunities that consolidate and collate impacts and benefits from completed and on-going educational research. Examples of impact achieved through this channel include the Comenius Regio project on inclusion that had direct impact on policy for special educational needs provision through the Ministry of Education in Cyprus. CAMERA reports on its engagement and impact jointly to the Research Committee of the Medical and Dental schools and to PedRIO.</p> <p>Central coordination of the impact agenda: The University's central Research and Innovation team has a dedicated administrator responsible for engagement and impact and has worked in accordance with the Concordat on Public Engagement with Research to ensure that the activity of PedRIO and Faculty Groups have a coherent approach that reflects the needs of the complex range of stakeholders. Educational research has benefitted from these new structures in a number of ways. For example, members of the unit have been successful in the Vice-Chancellor's annual Community Research Awards that support engagement with community groups as part of the</p>

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University's regional impact agenda. The research officer in SoE has facilitated researchers in gaining funds to run projects such as that with Lark Children's Centre (where research involved a realistic evaluation to inform their services to future users) and the Choices Consultancy Service (where research informs support services in schools for children with a parent in prison).

Collaboration with beneficiaries: impact on policy-makers and practitioners is achieved through working collaboratively with relevant decision makers and advisory groups from the outset of the research process. For example, as part of the CAMERA project for the GMC, which focused on feedback design for the revalidation of doctors, the principal investigator presented previously funded research to the Council before the start of the research project, thereby developing a mutually beneficial working relationship with revalidation leads. Through this effective early collaboration with the GMC, the revalidation and assessment work in medical education has benefited patients through assuring higher standards of practice and quality support for staff in the provision of medical care. Staff within the compulsory education cluster of the SoE work with over 300 schools through research on teacher professional development, national curricula, assessment frameworks and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy. Initial contact and on-going relationships with beneficiaries is via core registers of schools and teachers developed and held by the Royal Statistical Society Centre for Statistical Education (RSSCSE) and the Centre for Innovation in Mathematics Teaching (CIMT). The registers are networks of existing and potential beneficiaries (schools) allowing research to be directly fed into the development and implementation of policies and practice. SoE projects implemented through these channels include 'CensusAtSchool', which has been adopted in nine countries, and the Mathematics Enhancement Programme for primary schools which, is being implemented in the UK, New Zealand, Chile, and South Africa.

c. Strategy and plans

Future plans and impact strategy for UoA25 will be overseen by PedRIO in coordination with the SoE and CAMERA, and monitored through the Institute's annual reporting procedure. At the strategic level, impact to date has been driven by alignment with the University's Research and Innovation Strategies 2009-12 and 2012-15, and from niche approaches to impact discussed in section b. The PedRIO impact strategy involves

- (1) the introduction of impact plans,
- (2) the expansion of staff development work, and
- (3) the sharing of best practice across the UoA.

Looking to the future, PedRIO's strategy is to embed impact from conception to dissemination through introducing an Impact Plan as part of the research-bidding process for educational research projects that are submitted to the University in application for central funding. This strategy will ensure that UoA25 will have a rich variety of impact-generating research of real practical benefit. As part of its strategy of support for educational researchers, and particularly for ECRs, PedRIO has introduced staff development sessions, reinforced through the mentoring and professional development review systems, that embed the concept of evidence collation for the impact of their work at each stage of the research cycle. The strategy is additionally to share expertise and best practice on how to engage with practitioners and policy makers to ensure the maximum impact of research findings. This impact strategy complements the PedRIO Marketing Communications Strategy, ensuring that impacts are effectively disseminated among both internal and external stakeholders of the University.

In relation to HE pedagogy, PedRIO's provides strategically focused funding for nationally and internationally relevant research in HE pedagogy, particularly targeting that which has impact on policy and practice. Its funding cycle for 2013-14 will require applicants, where relevant, to clearly indicate how their research will impact on the delivery of education in other universities in the UK and beyond and ensuring that potential beneficiaries are collaborated with at an early stage. PedRIO's management structure already aims to ensure that its research projects maximise impact opportunities and are delivered within time and budget. Future plans are that the PedRIO Manager will 1) effectively coordinate with its Steering Group to ensure that the impact agenda and real world examples of impact generated are well-crafted and figure in the strategic planning of the Institute itself, and 2) further develop the consultancy function to attract external funding for

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academically rigorous research projects that are specifically tailored to impact stakeholders' policy and practice.

In relation to pre-compulsory, compulsory and informal education settings, SoE research is already 'applied' by its very nature. Its current impact strategy, enacted by its research clusters, is based on natural linkages emerging with stakeholders as the research process develops. Evolution of university structures in 2013 will re-position the SoE as the Plymouth Institute of Education (PloE) encompassing the University-sponsored academies and trusts: the Marine Academy Plymouth (MAP), the Mayflower Academy, and the Plymouth University Training College (UTC). The UTC focus on marine and applied manufacturing curricular, and the MAP curriculum, which incorporates marine-themed elements, both build on the University's strengths in world class research and teaching in engineering and marine sciences, for which the University was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize in 2012. Building on these developments, the PloE's future impact strategy will directly reflect the PedRIO ethos of building impact into the research framework. Along these lines, PloE plans to 1) continue to align the University's areas of world class research with curriculum design in the academies and 2) to incorporate the academies within PloE's overarching longitudinal impact framework, thus maximising every opportunity to deliver research that has a real world application.

Strategic planning by CAMERA involves targeting programmatic and collaborative national and international research in the revalidation and remediation of doctors and selection into medical training, primarily through targeted research and the dissemination of findings to policy makers including the GMC. In particular, CAMERA has identified the challenge of remediation for doctors as a key future impact area, working with the National Clinical Assessment Service to programmatically research related issues. CAMERA works closely with the Institute of Translational and Stratified Medicine (ITSMed) in the development of the essentially new PU peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry. Its plans include full participation in a university-wide structure of human sciences research projected by ITSMed.

d. Relationship to case studies:

The case studies are chosen to reflect the three research themes and strengths of UoA25: safeguarding policy facilitated through PedRIO (Phippen), informal learning practice by the School of Education (Waite), and, selection in the medical professions by CAMERA (Gale). They are exemplars of national and international impact. Phippen's work on sexting crosses both policy and practice boundaries, providing e-safety strategy advice to governments. It is typical of PedRIO's interdisciplinary approach to research, drawing on expertise from Phippen (Plymouth Business School), Furnell (School of Computing and Mathematics), and Witt (Learning technology). Members of the team have delivered a range of JISC projects and have co-led the University's former Higher Education Learning Partnership (CETL). Waite's research on learning outside the classroom arose from close collaboration with a number of forest schools during the early stages of the research process, which led to further research grants from the ESRC and Silvanus Trust to deliver a long term project that influenced national practice in England. The research represents a large number of projects on curriculum development within UoA25, such as that delivered by Davies in statistical education and Haynes in philosophy in education for children. Gale's work on selection to anaesthetist training posts impact on policy in UK National Health Service (NHS). The impact arose from Gale maintaining close links with the medical profession (GMC) through his role as a consultant anaesthetist in the NHS. His work is an exemplar of that carried out within CAMERA, with Archer also working closely with the GMC in providing revalidation and remediation guidance for clinicians and policy makers.

The impacts demonstrated in the case studies initially emerged through opportunistic and existing contact with beneficiaries and were gradually managed more proactively. It is our reflection on the successes of these studies that led us to appreciate the importance of managing research for impact and this has informed the development of our more strategic approach to engagement and impact. The importance of developing and maintaining close relationships with practitioners will be reflected and supported in the future impact strategy within UoA25, alongside more formal structures to collect and capture evidence of impact alongside the delivery of research stage.