

Impact template (REF3a)

<p>Institution: Leeds Trinity University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: History</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The History team at Leeds Trinity consists of a small but highly qualified and committed complement of staff, with research specialisms in gender and women’s history, and the Victorian period, the latter of which is undertaken within the interdisciplinary research centre, the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies (LCVS). The body of research produced by the department has had considerable impact on heritage providers’ planning and delivery of heritage interpretation. It has enabled non-specialists to reflect on the ways in which the past has been presented and re-presented, and deepened the public’s appreciation of history. The unit also has a substantial commitment to engaging members of the public with their research. Team members have acted as consultants for external educational and heritage projects since the 1980s, and have provided continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers through the Schools History Project. As a result, the History unit at Leeds Trinity has a sustained record of impact through public engagement, knowledge exchange and children’s education, undertaken with and alongside independent, regional and national providers.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Leeds Trinity has had a strategy for developing research as part of its aim to become a University (a goal that was achieved when the Privy Council granted it University status on 10th December 2012). A central part of this strategy was to raise the profile of the institution locally, nationally and internationally, and this was a key driver of impact-related activities. The institution has a strong community ethos grounded in respect, reflecting its foundation principles, and part of this is to be known for our contribution as a community partner, in a manner that contributes to the evolving social and cultural setting. Impact is therefore embedded in the character of the institution. Impact activities have been supported by the institution’s involvement with CREST (the Consortium for Research Excellence, Support and Training). CREST is a sub-association of Guild HE, a network for small and specialist institutions. Through CREST, Leeds Trinity has benefited from the dissemination of policies related to impact and specific impact workshops for staff. Prior to the REF assessment period, the institution was awarded HEIF funding for the creation of several Business and Community Fellows who supported knowledge transfer. In 2008 this impact-related activity was devolved to the Enterprise and External Engagement Group, an arm of the Research Committee. Pathways to impact have also been supported by Leeds Trinity’s Marketing and Communication team who have publicly disseminated research undertaken at the institution. This support has been utilised by the History team in their approach to impact, which was to further develop an academic culture that values impact. Such a culture has been evident within the department for several decades since the inception of the Schools History Project (SHP). Established by Ian Dawson in 1972, the SHP was based on his research interests in the interpretation of history. SHP is still based at Leeds Trinity and over the last four decades, many of its principles have been written into the National Curriculum for History, and in GCSE and A level criteria. The unit therefore has a long-standing commitment to the continuing professional development of school teachers, which in turn impacts on school children’s history education.</p> <p>To further build upon this impact-engaged academic culture, during the REF assessment period, the unit have focused their attention on particular issues. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engaging the public with research carried out at Leeds Trinity; • enabling non-specialists to reflect on the ways in which the past has been, and is, presented and re-presented; thereby widening understanding of the ethical issues raised by the study of history. • to build a deeper understanding of historical period, and of historical enquiry through

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respect for and engagement with the evidence.

In order to achieve impact within the areas listed above, the unit has concentrated on particular activities that create opportunities for impact. Activities relating to impact on public engagement have been based on a communication strategy that included public lectures, media appearances, and publishing in accessible formats, with each activity aiming for a local, national and international presence. Although Leeds Trinity offer a series of public lectures throughout any academic year (held in the evening to provide members of the public increased opportunity to attend), the history team have placed priority on talks beyond the physical location of the institution by engaging with local history groups and addressing audiences at museums. Such talks have influenced and enriched peoples' knowledge of the period. These activities have been on a local and national scale. The unit have also been encouraged by Leeds Trinity as an institution to take up any opportunities for media appearances to discuss their research. Professor Karen Sayer has had a sustained involvement, through her research on rural domestic life and technology, in several television series produced by Lion TV; *Victorian Farm*, *Edwardian Farm*, and *Wartime Farm*, broadcast nationally and internationally. Dr Rosemary Mitchell has appeared on The One Show (BBC1) being interviewed (in 2009) in relation to her research on gender roles and identities. She has also spoken on BBC Radio Leeds (April 2011), discussing artistic representations of St George and BBC Radio Teeside (Feb 2013), discussing Victorian child poverty in response to the publication of a report by End Child Poverty that analysed the effects of the 2013 Budget.

To further aid public engagement with their research, the unit have communicated their research outcomes in accessible formats, targeted at members of the interested public. This has included articles published in popular subject-related magazines that have a national and international readership. More substantial accessible publications have been supported by the institution through the provision of 20 research days. This enabled Dr Di Drummond to publish the work *Tracing Your Railway Ancestors: a guide for family historians* (2010) which is aimed at those interested in discovering their railway ancestors. Through their research into gender and women's history, social and cultural history, the unit has also been able to make contributions to *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004 -), which has advanced public knowledge and stimulated public interest in a range of early modern and modern subjects. During 2008-2013, the unit has contributed 26 articles, with Mitchell being the leading contributor submitting 14 articles (whilst at Leeds Trinity). Mitchell's own contributions have had a considerable impact: her entry on Penelope Boothby was one of those dispatched by the *ODNB* to over 5,000 users via Twitter; and her article on Henrietta Marshall was the feature article for the day in May 2008 when the Queen visited the *ODNB* and was referenced on the website of the organisation Civitas.

Working with exhibitors and curators on the latter two issues listed earlier, team members have been involved with local museums. Drawing on expert knowledge they have made non-specialists aware and enriched their knowledge of the complexities of social history, continuity and change over extended time spans, and across different cultures. These collaborative partnerships were part of a strategic decision of LCVS to work more closely with external cultural and heritage providers. In 2009 a questionnaire was sent out to local heritage bodies and institutions, asking how they would like to be involved with the research centre and whether they had any specific ideas for projects. Results from this showed that organisations were particularly keen on LCVS staff providing public talks that they could promote as part of their series of events. Others also offered access to particular archives and suggested areas of research that would be beneficial to exhibitions. Following this, a pilot collaboration with Abbey House Museum (Leeds) was carried out, which was then widened by developing a similar partnership with the Mercer Art Gallery (Harrogate). To strengthen these relationships and add longevity, collaborating partners in the heritage sector, such as Jane Sellars (Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate) and Kitty Ross (Abbey House

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Museum, Leeds), were made associates of LCVS (in 2012) as part of the already established Associates Scheme.

c. Strategy and plans

As a new University, Leeds Trinity is focusing on protecting and building on areas of research excellence whilst encouraging the broadening of the research base into new areas of research activity. Within this vision, we have an expectation of research impact and seek to embed impact as part of the research cycle. Research schemes funded by the institution, such as the Research Fellowship scheme, will require applicants to consider who might benefit from the research (beyond academia) and how these users might be engaged. The University recognises however that not all research will have impact in this manner and will still continue to fund such projects. The future inclusion of impact in the institution funded schemes aims to support researchers to consider the specific benefits of their research and identify particular user groups. This emphasis is evidenced by the replacement of the University's Research Committee by a Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee which will now be monitoring impact in addition to research activities. The increased work involved in creating impact will be factored into staff workload planners and flexibility in subject teams (for example rearranging or covering teaching responsibilities) will be encouraged. The Marketing and Communications team will be more involved in research projects from the beginning so that research findings can be disseminated effectively to targeted audiences at any appropriate point. Though many staff are 'impact literate', the institution will focus on staff development to ensure that all research active staff are fully versed in impact and how this can be created.

To support impact from research in the future, the History team will utilise the above institution support, and work towards developing international links and build on existing regional and national relationships, widening the reach of their impact. Having identified a key user group of their collective research as arts, cultural and heritage organisations, the unit plan to continue to develop links with the sector, with each member of staff establishing at least one new contact per year (e.g. through attendance at events or through correspondence). Each staff member will also develop at least one sustained relationship with an arts, cultural or heritage organisation over the course of the next five years by, for example, consulting on redisplay, or the enrichment or interpretation of catalogues. This continued relationship could be established via one of the numerous existing contacts the department already have. To underpin such projects and ensure these activities are sustainable, staff will bid together with organisations for collaborative grants. In line with the institution approach to impact, History staff will work closely with the Marketing and Communications team to produce news releases (or blogs) relating to their impact activities (in the form of a miniature or brief impact case study). This will promote such work and attract additional organisations to future collaborations.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies exemplify how the unit have engaged the public with their research (i.e. the first of the issues listed in section b). One case study details the impact research undertaken in the LCVS has had on public understanding and appreciation of the Victorian era, particularly enriching peoples' knowledge of the period. It illustrates the collaborations History staff have developed with local museums, the public talks carried out and how their work has been published in an accessible format. The other case study provides a further example of the unit's approach to public engagement with research. This case study details the consultation work Professor Karen Sayer has undertaken with television researchers and producers at Lion TV, and museum staff at the Yorkshire Museum of Farming. It shows how her research has informed and enriched three popular television series (*Victorian Farm*, *Edwardian Farm* and *Wartime Farm*) and an exhibition on the Women's Land Army.