

## Impact template (REF3a)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Liverpool
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 29 - English Language and Literature
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>The Department of English, and its associated researchers, conducts research in three main areas: literature, language, and creative writing. Impact is achieved in the following core areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Widening, deepening and challenging public understanding of literature</b> and its cultural contexts, particularly through public service broadcasting, national exhibitions, and live literature events;</li> <li>• <b>Development of impacts and potential impacts of literature on health, well-being and quality of life</b>, delivered primarily through long-standing links with <i>The Reader Organisation</i>;</li> <li>• <b>Stimulation of cultural and creative activity</b> and an extension of the reach and possibilities of language and the imagination, through public lectures, workshops, and live literature events;</li> <li>• <b>Assessing, shaping and changing literary and cultural value.</b> Researchers have acted as judges for international literature prizes, e.g. Man Booker, National Poetry Competition.</li> </ul> <p>The <b>main beneficiaries</b> of the impact of the research of this unit of assessment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Secondary and primary schools</b>, specifically in the North West, but also nationally, through workshops delivered in partnership with the Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse Theatres (Das, Davies); and <b>other international educational specialists</b> e.g. consultancy to Edexcel (Baines, Chapman) and the Spanish Ministry of Education (Gonzalez-Diaz);</li> <li>• <b>Health care providers</b>, health professional and their patients/clients (<i>The Reader</i>; Billington);</li> <li>• <b>Cultural institutions</b> and their 'publics', including: libraries through lectures, such as the Athenaeum Library, Liverpool (Lynall; Baines; Bradley); Gladstone Library, North Wales (Bradley); but also the Wordsworth Trust at Grasmere (Baines, Lynall, Roberts, Rudd); National Museums Liverpool (Lynall, Baines); The Royal Society (Lynall); The National Trust (Peverley); The National Gallery (Harris); Waterstones, Liverpool (Baines, Birch, Chapman, Rudd); the BBC (Birch, Das, Harris, Peverley).</li> </ul>
<p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>At an institutional level, the Department has engaged with the University's strategy to establish research themes which seek to enhance knowledge and ideas in relation to pressing regional, national and international concerns. <b>We actively foster and develop strategic partnerships</b>, particularly with local and national culture organisations, to gain access to potential beneficiaries and user groups for research impact (e.g. Everyman and Playhouse theatres, FACT; British Library (BL), National Gallery). Our close link with <i>The Reader Organisation</i> provides mechanisms that enable researchers to connect public audiences with literature through shared reading, events and written contributions to <i>The Reader</i> magazine.</p> <p><b>We support a high level of public engagement</b> as a means to support and generate impact. Besides encouraging staff involvement, the Department is alert to opportunities to access non-staff resources for public engagement, including internal and external funding, for example to support pump-priming for projects (through Knowledge Exchange Vouchers, HEIF funding). We actively promote a range of <b>live literature events</b> that reach a wide audience to deliver new writing, and to develop new audiences in the region. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2008, as part of its contribution to Liverpool's status as European Capital of Culture, the University contributed £52,000 to fund a high-profile international literature festival <i>Shipping Lines</i>, based on the University campus. An outreach programme run by <i>The Reader Organisation</i> was set up involving four local primary schools and St Edwards College; support was also given by Starbucks and Walker Books for several pre-Festival family/children events. Philip Pullman, Malorie Blackman, David Almond and Frank Cottrell Boyce delivered sessions to young people identified as 'least likely to attend a literary festival', in partnership with the Bluecoat Arts Centre.</li> <li>• In 2010 University KE vouchers supported Das's work by funding a three day festival to mark 400 years since the first production of <i>A Winter's Tale</i>, working with The Everyman Theatre and local schools. The festival concluded with a reading by the Poet Laureate; new poems were commissioned from internationally renowned poets (Draycott, Morley, Rees-Jones).</li> </ul>

## Impact template (REF3a)

- In 2012 University KE vouchers enabled Parmar to initiate [Port of Call](#) an annual series of free, public poetry readings by international writers (from India, Morocco, Singapore, Canada, France and the U.S.).
- The Kenneth Allott Lecture, revitalised by a new partnership with *The Poetry Society* (co-funders and promoters), is committed to bringing international writers to the city (C. K. Williams 2011; Anne Carson 2013) and draws a diverse audience of over 200 from across the North-West region, broadening regional knowledge of international writing and opening up the potential for exploring cultural difference and international literary value. These lectures are now published annually in [Poetry Review](#) (circulation 4200 each issue).

**We support staff involvement in outreach and knowledge exchange activities designed to increase the impact of their research.** Annual Professional Development Review (PDR) provides a means to identify potential for, and to encourage, public engagement and KE activities which will help to ensure that our research has strong impact. Strategic University KE initiatives, consultancy possibilities and other opportunities can be incorporated into discussion, and advice is offered about research plans and career development.

Impact has been emphasised in all **new appointments** of research active staff during the census period and is now an essential part of the job specification. **Advice and shared instances of best practice** are given informally and formally as part of PDR. The Department of English **Research Group** assists colleagues to identify impact dimensions in their past, current and future research projects and grant applications, and promotes the sharing of experience.

**We encourage and support the use of broadcasting and media** as a means of generating impact, a policy that has resulted in three staff members, in successive years, succeeding in the *AHRC/New Generation Thinkers* scheme (Harris, Das, Peverley). Senior colleagues (Birch, Davis, Rudd, Rees-Jones) have also contributed to highly-popular radio programmes (*In Our Time*, *Night Waves*, *Today*, *Last Words*). **Engagement with media** has allowed our researchers to be at the forefront of developing a rich cultural agenda at national and international levels, opening access to literature to a diverse audience and seeding potential impact. For example, involvement in the University's year-long PR campaign in India has promoted research collaboration between the UK and India, resulting in national coverage in *The Statesman* newspaper of Das' UKIERI funded project, 'Envisioning the Indian City.'

**We also actively support impact in terms of reaching the general reader**, through the **publication of research in various, high-profile formats**. The impact of such intervention into the nation's cultural life creates new and evolving long-term contexts for thinking, understanding, writing and imagining. Publications include the *Cambridge Companion* series, the *Very Short Introduction* series and handbooks and encyclopaedias commissioned by Oxford University Press, Routledge and Wiley-Blackwell (Baines, Chapman, Roberts, Rudd, Seed). The Department has also encouraged high-quality popular editions of core texts, (e.g. *World's Classics* series). A strong example of a result of this strategy is Birch's seventh edition of *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* (2009) followed by a 'Concise' version (2012). The texts, both of which are publicly available through Oxford Reference Online, have sold 18,884/3,857 print copies respectively. A further example of our commitment to new and interdisciplinary contexts for the general reader is the creation of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation funded [Centre for Poetry and Science](#) (currently 1000 hits per quarter since 2004) (Rees-Jones; Iwanejko, Institute of Ageing and Chronic Disease, University of Liverpool).

**We have also built strategically on the success of exhibitions** as a means to deliver impact. For example, following the success of Sawyer's *Other Worlds* exhibition at the British Library, Das organised a conference on *Renaissance Old Worlds* (2012) in collaboration with the British Library which seeded a further well-received BL exhibition on the Mughals, Rees-Jones has worked with artists in the AHRC-funded [Poetry Beyond Text](#) exhibitions and curated the touring exhibition and public discussion *Where We Begin to Look: Poetry and Landscape*, with the artist Zoe Benbow, in collaboration with *The Poetry Society* (Cardigan, London, Hebden Bridge, Oxford Brookes). The latter has allowed researchers to open up the debate between writing and painterly practice and to explore the representation in visual and literary imagination of women and landscape.

Other mechanisms include the development of a School level **undergraduate** module, which places students in practical work situations (in local museums, schools, hospitals, publishers) in order to bring their skills and knowledge into local contexts and begin the process of impact at an early stage in their academic work. Students studying English are currently working on this module

to generate news articles to communicate School and Departmental research and events to members of the public through web and media publishing. **Postgraduate** students are helped routinely to become active in research-led teaching outside the academy, particularly in continuing education and in outreach schemes, in order to achieve impact from their emerging research.

### c. Strategy and plans

We are committed to creating a free space for all individuals to work within their discipline at the highest level, exploring potential synergies between academic research and long-term potential impact. The approaches outlined here have proved successful and will be intensified and further developed.

Our **staff recruitment and support** strategies reflect our ambitions to maximise our impact: for example, candidates are assessed on the potential of impact from their research. Writer Horatio Clare (0.4 FTE, 2013-15) was recruited in this way, and his post is intended to galvanise live, interdisciplinary literary events across the University, the city and the North West region, as well as to raise the international profile of the Department. We are currently developing a strategy of **recording and archiving** all our live literature events for eventual public access via a new website. This will increase opportunities for high media impact, external collaboration, reaching international audiences (through film and podcast); the development of new material for future literary studies; and, potentially, access to new funding streams.

Harris's continued work in using public engagement to achieve impact is being facilitated by flexible special staffing arrangements, driven by the likelihood of significant further future impact.

We have come to appreciate the significance of **public exhibitions** as a major route to impact on the heritage and tourism economy and on public knowledge/understanding, and will intensify our efforts in this area. Several are already in the pipeline: Harris is in discussion with the Royal Academy about future exhibitions, Roberts and Baines will work on the Wordsworth Trust exhibition of Romantic Art at Liverpool's VG&M in 2014, Lynall on an Eighteenth Century Worlds Rushton exhibition at National Museums and Galleries Merseyside in 2014.

### d. Relationship to case studies

**Bradley and others:** This demonstrates the benefits of our engagement with partner organisations. John and Llewellyn (who have since left) were leading members of the team who produced the AHRC-funded catalogue project GladCAT. The project was brought to fruition by Bradley who, in line with our strategy of linking appointments of research active staff to impact, was subsequently appointed to a lectureship. The project has become a major resource for the public, revitalised the marketing, fundraising capacity, and media presence of the library, and has created impact as a model of digital humanities methodologies and research. Each of these aspects informs our future strategies.

**Harris:** This reports a success story in relation to our strategies focussing on media broadcasting and interdisciplinary work, encouraging individuals to consider the potential impact and public engagement value of their research as well as engaging with a range of partner organisations. It is also an example of effective strategic mentoring of colleagues in similar areas (Das, Peverley).

**Sawyer:** This exemplifies our commitment to supporting public exhibitions. The hugely popular British Library Science Fiction exhibition *Out of This World* (2011) grew out of Sawyer's AHRC-supported archival work on the Science Fiction Hub and numerous public talks throughout the country on science fiction. This is an example of research driving perceptions and responding to changing environments in genre fiction and its distinctive and often highly-knowledgeable readership.

**Billington and P Davis:** This study grew directly out of our commitment to bring literature to a wider audience through community engagement. It supports our involvement with the University Research Theme, Personalised Health, and with the [Centre for Health, Arts and Sciences](#). This case study reports our impact on health and well-being, through our engagement with health care providers and their patients/clients. It also informs our ongoing strategy, e.g. the emerging work of N Davis in relation to narratives of melancholy provides a complementary template for research in this area.