

<p><b>Institution: Robert Gordon University</b></p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment: 19 Business and Management Studies</b></p>
<p><b>Title of case study: Fostering Entrepreneurship locally, nationally and internationally</b></p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)          The research of the Centre has had a wide range of impacts including economic, commercial and organisational impacts at the level of individual firms, impacts on public policy at the UK level and impacts on practitioners and professional services at the international level. Featured here are examples of each of these types of impact, including an example of impact being made by the whole team on the Nigerian undergraduate entrepreneurship provision and examples of impacts being made at the level of individual firms through the business incubator, on professional practices in a Scottish context through TalentScotland and on UK government policy through work with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) by individual team members.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)          The Charles P Skene Centre for Entrepreneurship at RGU was established in 1995 to promote a national environment of innovation and enterprise. Benefitting from a generous endowment from entrepreneur Charles Skene, the aim of the centre, now known simply as the “Centre for Entrepreneurship”, was to support the academics working in the entrepreneurship field to translate their research into resources and approaches that could be used directly by entrepreneurs and small businesses. As well as producing outstanding research in the academic field (REF5) the members of the centre have developed and delivered specialised training for SMEs, given support to students and graduates in setting up their business and equipped U/G, P/G and doctoral students with the knowledge, ability and understanding to build businesses.</p> <p>The research team is led by Professor Alistair <b>Anderson</b> (Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship). Anderson works with a team of senior (Professor Heather <b>Fulford</b> (Academic Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship)), mid career (Dr Robert <b>Smith</b> (Reader in Entrepreneurship), David <b>Gibbons-Wood</b> (Group Lead, Department of Management) Dr John <b>Park</b>, (Charles P. Skene Entrepreneurship Programme Leader)) and junior colleagues (Dr Simon <b>Fraser</b> (Lecturer in Entrepreneurship) Dr Farid <b>Ullah</b> (Lecturer in the Department of Management) Graham <b>Grant</b> (Lecturer in Entrepreneurship)).</p> <p>The work of the research team is wide ranging and has an international reputation in a number of key areas. <b>Anderson</b> has written a number of articles on Entrepreneurship Education (<b>R1</b>, <b>R2</b>, <b>R3</b>). In particular, his paper on reflective practitioners (<b>R1</b>) has been cited 210 times, demonstrating its importance in this debate (citations are used here only to substantiate claims of the academic influence of specific pieces). The Centre has also produced influential work on networking and social aspects of Entrepreneurship (<b>R4</b> (121 citations); Jack &amp; Anderson, 2002 (475 citations); Anderson &amp; Jack, 2002 (334 citations)). <b>Anderson</b> has been building a corpus of work in the area of Rural Entrepreneurship since his own doctoral work in this area and has a number of well cited pieces (<b>R5</b>, see also Anderson, 2000 (148 citations)). The extent and influence of <b>Anderson’s</b> work is further discussed in REF5.</p> <p><b>Park</b> worked in the Charles Skene Centre for Entrepreneurship from 2001 to 2006 teaching and researching entrepreneurship in high technology firms. During his time at the centre <b>Park</b> worked in collaboration with many entrepreneurs and developed a model for starting up high technology businesses. He published his findings, mentored (<b>R6</b>) and co-authored (<b>R4</b>) by <b>Anderson</b>, an experience that had a major influence on how he approached his subsequent corporate career in Pepsi as will be demonstrated in section 4.</p> <p><b>Fulford</b> has previously published work on skills development for small businesses in a range of key areas, including the development and trial of an incremental approach to internationalisation of SME websites (<b>R7</b>) and strategy practices in SMEs (Rizzo &amp; Fulford, 2012). Her work acknowledges that constraints such as lack of time, lack of funding and lack of trained personnel</p>

## Impact case study (REF3b)

often inhibit skills development within SMEs. **Fraser, Fulford** and Marcella presented on the project at the Scottish Higher Education Employability Conference in June 2011, describing the benefits of delivering graduate enterprise and employability training to graduates on placement in SMEs and social enterprises.

**3. References to the research** (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1. Jack, S.L & Anderson, A.R. (1999) Entrepreneurship Education Within the Enterprise Culture: Producing Reflective Practitioners, *The Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research* 5(3): 110-125.
- R2. Anderson, A.R. & Jack, S.L. (2008) Role Typologies for enterprising education: the professional artisan? with Sarah Jack, *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development* 15(2): 259-273.
- R3. Anderson, A.R., Drakopoulou Dodd, S., & Jack, S.L. (2009) Aggressors; Winners; Victims and Outsiders: European Schools' Social Construction of the Entrepreneur, *International Small Business Journal* 27(1): 126-136.
- R4. Anderson, A. R., Park, J., & Jack, S. L. (2007) Entrepreneurial social capital: conceptualizing social capital in new high-tech firms, *International Small Business Journal* 25(3): 245-272.
- R5. Anderson, A. R., Osseichuk, E., & Illingworth, I. (2010) Rural small businesses in turbulent times: impacts of the economic downturn, *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation* 11 (1): 45 – 56.
- R6. Park, J.S., (2005) Opportunity recognition and product innovation in entrepreneurial hi-tech start-ups: a new perspective and supporting case study, *Technovation* 25: 739-752.
- R7. Fulford, H. (2009) The World, the Web, and SMEs: stepping stones across language and cultural divides, *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Innovation* 10 (3): 191-199.

**4. Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)**The Centre for Entrepreneurship team stimulates change in Nigerian U/G Curriculum: an example of impact on practitioners and professional services at an international level.**

Entrepreneurship has been taught in all Nigerian universities since 2002, but with the current approach there was still a 'dearth of a critical mass of specialists in...Entrepreneurship...to pass on the competence' within Nigeria (**E1** page iii) and so in 2011 the Hon. Minister for Education instigated the development of a BSc in Entrepreneurship. Having developed the curriculum documents for this programme, the National Universities Commission (NUC) approached the Centre for Entrepreneurship because of their internationally renowned expertise in entrepreneurship research and education (**E2**) to deliver a week-long training programme for 69 Nigerian academics on entrepreneurship education in May 2013. *The Entrepreneurship Teaching Programme for visiting Nigerian Academics* was coordinated by **Gibbons-Wood**, opened by Prof Julius Okojie, Executive Secretary of the NUC, and attended by academics from 29 of Nigeria's 48 universities, including old and new, public and private, with representatives of all levels from front line lecturing staff to Pro-Vice Chancellors. **Anderson, Fraser, Fulford, Grant, Smith, and Ullah** presented on aspects of entrepreneurship research and education (**E3**) drawing upon previous research work. For example, **Anderson's** sessions on Day 1 (**E3** p4) blended insights from his personal philosophy on entrepreneurship education (**R1, R2**) and the need for a Nigerian Curriculum to take account of the Nigerian context and not simply import UK educational practices (**R3**). The Programme also included visits to local businesses relevant to the Nigerian economy, such as food and drink manufacturers. The Programme was a "train the trainer" event, where the aim was to supply knowledge and tools for delegates to change teaching practices and the relationship between entrepreneurship research and the curriculum in their own institutions.

Following the Programme a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was drawn up and signed by RGU and the National Universities Commission in Nigeria (**E4**) in a bid to promote the delivery and entrenchment of entrepreneurship education and research. The MoU, which will be in place for three years, aims to enable the enhancement of the teaching and research in entrepreneurship across universities in Nigeria. 96% of delegates confirmed that there was a specific action that they planned to take as a result of attending the Programme and the actions listed included intentions to train others, write for publication, engage with policy makers and make changes within their own institutions (**E5** p10). These statements of intention are early indicators of impact on the thinking

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

and practices of the Nigerian Educators which can be followed up in the next REF period. Following the Programme, several PhD applications and prospective research collaborations have emerged (E6).

**Practising what you preach: an example of economic, commercial and organisational impacts at the level of individual firms**

**Park** joined PepsiCo International in January 2006 and was later appointed R&D Director Insights & Information, responsible for managing R&D product testing activities for the UK Walkers Snacks and Quaker Breakfast Cereals businesses. By implementing the outsourcing model developed through his research (R6), and utilising the social networking approach advocated in his joint work with **Anderson** and Jack, (R4) **Park** re-engineered the consumer and technical evaluation of new food products across the entire European region saving PepsiCo \$22.5million (E7).

In 2010 **Park** returned to RGU to lead the Charles P Skene Entrepreneurship programme, a post funded by the Scottish entrepreneur Charles Skene in the hope of promoting entrepreneurship across the whole university by teaching enterprise skills and raising awareness as part of every U/G degree programme, rather than just those within the Business School. As part of this role **Park** set up the university's Business Incubator Initiative, which provided additional entrepreneurship training to students and support in setting up their own businesses. **Park** was able to close the loop, advising start-up companies on the basis of his own research findings (R3, R5) and how they had worked in practice in PepsiCo. Initial incubator clients included ShirtbyHand, Saunt & Sinner and Arrows Connect (UK) Ltd (E8). In 2011 **Park** won the Scottish Institute for Enterprise Entrepreneurship Educator of the Year award for his role in the Business Incubator.

**Upskilling Scotland's SMEs: an example of impact on professional practices at the level of the individual firm**

In 2012, building on **Fulford's** research on the range of skills needed by SMEs (R7) **Fulford** and Marcella (Aberdeen Business School), in collaboration with the Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship (University of Strathclyde), won a competitive bid to design, deliver and evaluate post-study training (Work-based Experiential Learning for Business Development Project – WELBD) to graduates on the TalentScotland placement programme (run by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise). The project, funded jointly by the Scottish Funding Council (£552,000) and Skills Development Scotland (£200,000) involves delivering business training to graduates working in SMEs across Scotland. **Fraser** joined the Centre for Entrepreneurship in 2011 as a lecturer, with specific responsibility for delivering business training for the programme.

The first residential course of the WELBD project took place in December 2010 for graduates in the Highlands and Islands. Led by **Fulford**, the graduates were taught key aspects of business development, and finished by presenting to a panel of business managers on how they would apply their new knowledge and take their placement projects forward. **Fraser** delivered a further 24 courses across Scotland and by July 2013, 311 graduates had participated in the training and were on placement in SMEs in a range of sectors, as well as in a variety of social enterprises. Evaluation of the project (E9) indicated that the training constituted a highly valuable element of the placement programme for graduates, the businesses and for the enterprise agencies (E10). Learning from the training directly benefitted the graduate participants by enhancing their entrepreneurial and employability skills, but was also channelled, through them, into their placement workplaces, thereby contributing to the up-skilling of the workforce in the SMEs, and the introduction of new approaches and entrepreneurial ways of thinking (E9 pp17 &19).

**Proposing a Corporate Mediator: an example of impact on public policy at the UK level**

In 2008, following a competitive tender process via the Association of Business Schools, **Anderson** was appointed Professor of Small Business for the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) who funded his Chair (2008-2010) to the tune of £100k per annum for 2 years. The FSB has over 200,000 members and exists to protect and promote the interests of the self-employed and all those who run their own business. **Anderson's** appointment came at a crucial time, when small businesses were under threat due to the effects of the "credit crunch". The FSB intended the appointment to add to the existing package of support offered to small firms during the downturn

and to enable enhanced understanding of policy makers and members of the public about the importance of small firms to the economy and to society in general (E11). During this appointment, drawing on extensive experience and having already amassed a significant body of publications on small business and rural entrepreneurship, **Anderson** conducted research for the FSB in a series of projects, a notable example being his survey of over 6000 FSB members on the challenges that rural small businesses were facing during the economic downturn (R4). **Anderson** presented the findings at the FSB National Conference in 2009, raising awareness of the current difficulties in accessing finance and later published the findings in 2010 (R4). A solution to the challenges highlighted by **Anderson's** research was presented in the FSB's proposal for a "Corporate Mediator" to solve problems and facilitate dialogue between the business and banking communities and well as de-politicising and defusing the issue of bank lending. The FSB launched its Budget submission with tangible solutions to tackling the recession, ahead of Chancellor Alistair Darling's Budget announcement on April 22nd 2009 (E12). The proposal cites the findings of **Anderson's** survey (R4) as key evidence in support of such a move (E12 p1). The proposal led to the appointment of Sir Alan Sugar by the UK government (E13).

##### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- E1. Nigerian Universities Commission (2011) *Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards for Undergraduate Programmes in Nigerian Universities: GST. Entrepreneurship*, NUC: Abuja.
- E2. Statement from Director, Student Support Services, Nigerian Universities Commission to corroborate that:
- the NUC approached the Centre to ask them to design and deliver this programme; and
  - that they chose RGU because of the reputation of the Centre in Entrepreneurship research and education.
- E3. Event Programme
- E4. The Memorandum of Understanding drawn up between RGU and NUC
- E5. Event Evaluation Document
- E6. Email from Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship Studies, Benue State University, Nigeria to express usefulness of Programme and initiate joint writing project.
- E7. Presentation given by Park in Nov 2009 to Mehmood Khan, Chief Technology Officer, PepsiCo, to outline the benefits of the re-engineering process. This material is commercially sensitive, but can be viewed by contacting Park and signing a confidentiality statement.
- E8. Evidence of Park's role in success of :
- ShirtbyHand [SIE (2011) Shirty Student Scores Enterprising Success, Ignite Issue 5, p 3. Available from: <http://www.sie.ac.uk/media/94038/ignite,%20autumn%202011.pdf>];
  - Saunt & Sinner [Evening Times 22/05/13 <http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk/features/glasgowmeansbusiness-saunt-and-sinner-125001n.21016036>]; and
  - Arrows Connect [Twitter conversation between Arrows Connect (UK) Ltd members and Park <https://twitter.com/ArrowsConnect/status/348032341530275840>]
- E9. Fulford, H., Marcella, R., and Levie, J. (2013) *Work-based Experiential Learning for Business Development: Final Project Report*. Prepared for the Scottish Funding Council.
- E10. Statement from Head of Programmes, Highlands and Islands Enterprise about the value of the training element as part of the Talent Scotland Graduate Placement Programme (TSGPP), recorded in TSGPP Training Report, July 2013.
- E11. FSB News Release 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008 on Anderson's appointment evidencing their strategic intent for his post <http://www.fsb.org.uk/news.aspx?REC=4823&re=news.asp>
- E12. FSB Proposal for a Corporate Mediator demonstrating link between this proposal and Anderson's research. Available from: <http://www.fsb.org.uk/101/assets/events/corproate%20mediator%20-%20fsb%20briefing.pdf>
- E13. FSB News Release reported on politics.co.uk 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009 hailing Sir Sugar's appointment as a fulfilment of their lobbying for a corporate mediator and citing Anderson's findings <http://www.politics.co.uk/opinion-formers/federation-of-small-businesses/article/fsb-welcomes-appointment-of-sir-alan-sugar-as-enterprise-cha>