

<p>Institution: University of Leicester</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: UoA 29 English Language and Literature</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p><u>Audiences and Users</u> The School of English (UoA) works with a wide range of local and national user groups in order to achieve the fullest benefit and impact for the broad variety of our research activities. Colleagues are regular contributors to TV, radio and the national and international press, and work closely with bodies such as Tate Britain, the British Library, the National Army Museum, and the Charles Dickens Museum. Staff also provide regular advice to national exam boards (Knight on English Literature, Page on English Language, Whitehead on Creative Writing). Locally, we have collaborated with Leicester's Records Office, New Walk Museum, Phoenix Cinema and Arts Centre, and the Curve Theatre. Our local users include schools, the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society, the Leicester Victorian Society, and the English Association; and visitors to the University's Literary Leicester festival (organised by the UoA), and other open access events. Other key users are online reading communities, including over 10,000 participants in a project to read novels by Dickens and Wilkie Collins in weekly instalments (see Dickens case study), and a considerable online audience for the Sublime website at Tate (see Sublime case study).</p> <p><u>Creative Practice</u> We enable the dissemination of creative practice through our Centre for New Writing (2013-). It provides a formal structure for writing and reading initiatives including an annual public Creative Writing lecture (2011-, audiences of 200+), and leads the University's partnership in the city's Everybody's Reading project, which combats illiteracy. The UoA also fosters local knowledge and production of new writing through the <i>New Walk</i> magazine, edited by Nick Everett (2010-, c.300 sales per issue); events such as 'New Writing from Afghanistan' and 'Enduring Freedom: Women's Writing from Afghanistan' (in collaboration with Leicester's Afghan Community Organisation, 2011 and 2012); and the Arts Council-funded Grassroutes: Contemporary Leicestershire Writing (2010-12), which promoted public engagement with regional transcultural writing and showcased the work of fifty Leicestershire writers online.</p> <p><u>Cultural Heritage</u> As a School we are committed to enriching our community, in the broadest sense of that term, through enabling engagement with cultural as well as literary communities and heritages. Our work with heritage bodies and broadcasters clearly also has an economic impact which is difficult to quantify, but significant to our partners. Work on heritage issues includes: Marshall and North's talks about 'Curating the Victorians' to the public, curators, and researchers, Greenwich Maritime Museum (July 2011, 100 delegates); Dawson's appearance on 'Locomotion: History of Railways' (BBC 2, June 2013); Shaw's work with the Courtauld Institute, the National Maritime Museum, and Tate Britain; and Halliwell's contribution as a consultant and participant for a BBC1 <i>Imagine</i> documentary on the history of Scrabble: 'A Night on the Tiles' (Dec. 2009).</p> <p>Much work has focused recently on the discovery of the body of Richard III in the city. In 2013 Lund and Knight were interviewed on international radio and published a piece for the <i>TLS</i>; Marshall was interviewed for the BBC's 'Great British Railway Journeys' series; Lund, Knight and Marshall gave talks in Leicester Cathedral; Dr Shaw appeared on the <i>PM</i> programme and other media outlets discussing Richard III's accent; and there was a Richard III panel at Literary Leicester 2013.</p> <p><u>Cultural and Social Values</u> The UoA's work has impacts that illuminate and challenge cultural and social values, and engage the public with new perspectives generated by our research. Graham's exhibition, 'Spreading the Word: AIDS Posters from Around the World', (New Walk Museum, 15 July - 28 August 2011) led to an invitation to contribute to the AIDS section of a British Museum exhibition on propaganda (July-September 2013). Further engagement with human rights issues is evident in work with local immigrant communities exemplified by the Grassroutes project. Social impact is also achieved through Coleman's research on slang dictionaries and the contemporary usage of slang, which has impacted upon understanding of this form through radio interviews, blogs, and a legal trademark case; Halliwell's talk at the Camden Black History Forum (British Library, October 2008; audience c. 200); and an interdisciplinary project on 'The Impact of</p>

Diasporas on the Making of Britain' (2010-14), for which Dr Shaw is the English lead.

b. Approach to impact

UoA, College, and University Support Impact is a standing item on the UoA's Research committee agenda and is formally considered within annual research interviews. Since January 2010 the UoA has had an Impact Co-ordinator (IC), responsible for exploring the impact potential of research initiatives; advising on the impact element of funding bids; channelling impact advice from external bodies and the University; and mentoring colleagues involved in impact work. The IC works closely with the School's External Relations working party. The UoA assists the development of impact with information events, support for staff involved in case studies and impact management (e.g. workload allowances and teaching remission) and by providing travel funding. Impact is also taken into account in requests for study leave.

In consultation with the UoA, the College of Arts, Humanities and Law has developed a Plan for Enterprise and Knowledge Exchange, supported by a Business Development Manager, which includes support through seed-funding for the development of local, regional and national partnerships. The UoA also accesses the College Research and Development Fund to support impact development, knowledge exchange, and equipment infrastructure. The College provides mentoring and peer review for impact funding bids.

Impact work is also supported by a range of initiatives at University level, including the recognition under the University's study leave scheme, and the appointment of a dedicated Research Impact Development Manager. The UoA makes productive use of the University's Research Support Office expertise in integrating impact strategies into research funding bids, and has benefited greatly from the Press Office's help in marketing and disseminating impact projects.

Literary Leicester Festival (2008-) The Festival exemplifies the UoA's approach to impact in engaging local communities in literary issues and events, and builds on a long history of work with local interest groups, including the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society, for whom staff have given lectures, and for whom they have also worked as Council members (and Chair 2010-11: Stannard). Speakers at Literary Leicester include Sarah Waters, Will Self, Claire Tomalin, Colm Toibin, Sue Townsend, Michael Fray, Amitav Ghosh and Alan Hollinghurst, all of whom were invited because they are seminal to the research interests (e.g. life-writing, contemporary literature, lesbian and gay writing) of the UoA, and thus help to provide a forum for sharing research with non-HEI audiences. Recent panels have included speakers on The King James Bible, Charles Dickens, and Richard III (which all feed into current or future impact case studies). Five thousand free tickets are issued each year and significant book sales are made throughout the Festival. The Festival's programme of events appeals to a wide range of local and national audiences, and includes sessions for children which supplement our primary relationships with schools via talks and activities with children from year 6 upwards. These relationships are carefully maintained and have subsequently resulted in school visits to the University, as well as participation in specially-designed workshops. 'Fringe' events were added to the Literary Leicester programme in 2011 which also drew on the UoA's research and included sessions on code-breaking in World War Two and the art of war, each drawing audiences of 30-60.

c. Strategy and plans

Strategy The pro-active role of the School's IC in identifying imaginative impact opportunities for the UoA is constantly being developed. The IC is part of a working party (along with staff with a remit for external relations, schools outreach, employability and research ethics) dedicated to public engagement.

The UOA will continue to respond enthusiastically to new opportunities to develop the impact potential of their research. This responsiveness to impact funding opportunities and the extent of impact work undertaken demonstrates a culture within the UoA and the University, in which the cultural benefits of academic work are regarded as intrinsic. We have had three Collaborative Doctoral Awards (2008, 2010, 2011), and participated in the pilot of the Post-Doctoral Public

Impact template (REF3a)

Engagement Award (projects at the Charles Dickens Museum and CityRead, 2013) which support postgraduates and post-docs to engage wider audiences with their research. Recent research funding awards for Furneaux (AHRC Fellowship, in partnership with the National Army Museum, 2013-15), Stannard (major AHRC grant to edit the complete works of Evelyn Waugh, 2013-18) and Dawson (Co-I on AHRC-funded project, 'Constructing Scientific Communities: Citizen Science in the 19th and 21st Centuries') incorporate a significant impact dimension.

New developments in the funding of doctoral research will enable PhD students to be more involved in the impact agenda across the breadth of the Midlands. The UoA will benefit from its inclusion in the successful Midlands Three Cities AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership. Across the consortium, the AHRC funds 205 PhD studentships, which all six institutions in the Consortium match on a one-to-one basis. This delivers 410 studentships for the Consortium for arts and humanities, which will play a major role in the future sustainability of research in our UoA. The UoA will use the re-organisation of doctoral training through the BGP2 consortium to enable students and early career researchers fully to realise the impact potential of their work. Employers and partners will have the opportunity to shape the content of the skills training programme, as the BGP scheme includes a system of work placements, and a post-PhD voucher scheme to develop work with partner organisations.

UoA's post-REF 2014 Impact strategy

Moving forward the UoA plans to develop its impact strategy by additionally:

- contributing to and influencing heritage debates both nationally and internationally through collaboration between the School-based Victorian Studies Centre and the University's School of Museum Studies, and in our on-going relationships with museums and heritage bodies;
- organising research-led public events to mark the centenary of the outbreak of World War One (led by Stewart and Rawlinson);
- exploring visitor interactions in museum foyers and the media used in them as part of the AHRC Transforming Thresholds Research Network to make recommendations as to how museums can improve the use of their threshold spaces (Page). Partners include with British Museum, Petrie Museum, Museum of London, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester Arts and Museums, and Chatsworth Trust;
- extending local community links initiated by the Grassroutes project for a broader project on regionality across the Midlands. Future strategies in this area include plans for an e-publishing house, in partnership with Writing East Midlands, which will further promote transcultural writing;
- further developing areas of emergent impact focus including creative writing, heritage, history of the book, and war. These are all areas of on-going substantial public engagement work within the UoA not used in the case-studies for REF 2014.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our case studies (The King James Bible; Charles Dickens; The Sublime, and Muriel Spark) exemplify the School's approach to impact in their commitment to sharing high-quality research with the widest possible audiences, in person, through writing, and online. Furneaux and Shaw have worked with museums, galleries and the cultural sector in enabling curators fully to realise the impact and importance of their collections, to create new displays, and to encourage visitors to participate in research-based activities. Campbell and Furneaux have had a major impact on schools nationally and regionally through the distribution of Campbell's edition of the King James Bible to all state schools in the country, and Furneaux's work with a local school in exploring what Dickens's fictional families and unconventional domestic groupings teach us about families today. This work will be extended nationally through publications and an e-resource. Campbell and Stannard have made significant contributions to the publishing sector with sales of best-selling texts on the Bible, and a biography of Muriel Spark. Both also contributed to TV and radio programmes, and appeared at major literary festivals and other venues world-wide.