

<p>Institution: University of Leicester</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 19 Business and Management Studies</p>
<p>Context</p> <p>Given the heterodox nature of the research we have been conducting for many years, we are keen to develop ways in which the knowledge we generate will be relevant for policy and practice. We have been a signatory to the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education since 2009 and take its emphasis on values and dialogue very seriously.</p> <p>The primary non-academic user groups or audiences for our research are local, national and international SMEs; public sector organizations, states and non-governmental organizations, third sector and social enterprise organizations, trade unions and professional associations, journalists and the general public via media coverage. Our strategy is aimed at changing policy and strategy in our target organizations; altering the conceptual framework within which employers and policy makers make decisions with particular reference to management knowledge; and developing and disseminating a broad social scientific approach to what are often solely defined as management problems.</p> <p>More specifically the types of impacts we aim to achieve include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The encouragement of an ethically and politically informed approach to management and organizing which involves the ability to develop and employ critical social science approaches to management research b) A contribution to addressing the questions of sustainability, responsibility and social justice which confront all organizations c) The development of research projects which help our targeted user groups to understand their employees, environment, customers, or relevant populations d) Changes in organizational practices and conceptual frameworks and assumptions, particularly in our user groups' understandings of how organizations and markets work and how innovations affect users and institutions <p>Our research is a major input to our teaching, which has a global reach, and tens of thousands of graduates and current students on a wide range of undergraduate and M level courses. Since the majority of our students study via distance learning whilst in employment, our in house teaching materials and recommended textbooks (e.g. Bryman's Business Research Methods, Ellis et al, Marketing: A Critical Textbook, Linstead et al Management and Organization, Saren's Marketing Theory) have an impact as CPD materials on students throughout the world, the vast majority of whom are in full time employment. In addition, our M level students in a wide range of sectors typically carry out research in their own organizations, supervised by School of Management staff, and aimed at providing recommendations that will be implemented in their organizations</p>
<p>Approach to impact</p> <p>The Unit's approach is guided by the University's commitment to maximising the social and economic impact of its research. A key aspect of the University's strategy is the development and sustainability of an internal culture that encourages, supports and builds further the capacity for impact. At the institutional level, the University has a framework of professional services which support the enabling of impact, built on significant investment in PR and communications, IT-based services, an academic practice unit to build researchers' skills and knowledge, Enterprise and Business Development Office and Research Support services.</p> <p>The School aims to support staff in achieving impact through applications of their work, changing people's concepts and perceptions, and encouraging social science impacts on policy making, mirroring the ESRC's three dimensions of impact. In terms of School policy, we have an integrated understanding of dissemination, engagement and impact, in that we do not separate out the REF aspects of impact (changing behaviour in institutions through application of our research) from other forms of engagement which may have broader, but less traceable impacts.</p> <p>For over a decade, our research strategy has been to encourage critical and heterodox research. During the REF period this has involved explaining the distinctiveness of what has been called the 'Leicester model'. This means that we challenge perceptions amongst our various audiences;</p>

Impact template (REF3a)

develop recognition of the distinct ways in which we approach research; encourage our academics to work with organizations from the various groups we have identified, and finally create or participate in various partnership arrangements. Applying our research is one goal of our engagement strategy, but a further benefit from working in this way is enhancing our opportunities for access to organisations for research purposes as well as gaining practitioners' inputs into the design and execution of research projects with the aim of securing greater impact.

Our focus particularly since 2008 has been on:

- a) Increasing public awareness of all our research, and not just our already well-established work in organization studies and critical marketing. This has meant intensifying our opportunities for media coverage by employing a national journalist on a part time basis to help with the placement of stories; putting more resources into updating the news sections of our web site to include research focussed content; increasing our presence at practitioner or mixed academic-practitioner conferences, and via involvement in social media such as the School blog. The open access Leicester Research Archive with its link to the publication database, e-thesis deposit mandate and digitization of theses supports this attempt to ensure our research is as visible as possible.
- b) Developing partnerships with local bodies including Leicester City council, the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, and Hospitals of Leicester Trust has helped us gain access to local businesses and organisations. For example **Quinn, Godfrey, Lim and Courtney** are involved in projects with the City Council regarding the development of the cultural quarter in Leicester.
- c) Increasing our active involvement in professional organizations such as AMBA, research councils and policy education organizations such as **M Parker's** work with the Industry and Parliament Trust in Westminster. **Lilley** is also an elected member of the Association of Business Schools' executive board.
- d) Encouraging knowledge transfer, to facilitate impact via Leicester University Innovation Partnerships and European Regional Development funding which provide opportunities for action research, consultancy and testing research ideas. This has also meant enhancing the involvement of users in the design of research and applications for funding.

To support these goals we have introduced user engagement and media work into our mentoring of staff and induction of new staff; considerably enhanced the help given to staff in developing and writing research proposals at School and College level, including facilitating access to users and paying particular attention to the forms of impact that might follow. We are also using School and College discretionary research funds in order to support impact activities. In deciding which activities to support, our thinking has been shaped by the University's 2015 Enterprise Strategy, and the practical assistance provided by the Research Support and Enterprise and Business Development offices, including the dedicated College of Social Science Business Development Manager. We have proactively sought to strengthen our relationships with local employers, councils and other bodies, both through engagements with defined projects and also by increasing the robustness and frequency of meetings of the School's External Advisory Committee which contains fourteen entrepreneurs, consultants, third sector employers as well as representation from the city council.

The research which we have conducted as a result of our strategy is often directly on or has implications for the practices of organizations, hence the stress on the necessary relationship between Gibbons *et al's* mode one and mode two knowledge in the specific impact cases. Some work is targeted at the specific problems of certain organizations, for example **Higgins, Lai, Lim and Tsousai** have been engaged in critical marketing work with three local SMEs, one engaged in sustainable heating (Earheat), a social enterprise involved in donations and recycling (Just Giving) and a joinery company (TimbaTeq). All projects were supported by the University's Innovation Partnerships, a new Knowledge Exchange scheme using HEFCE and European Regional Development funds to engage regional SMEs and to embed new innovations. **Higgins** is now working with three more local SMEs on further projects. In 2011-12 **Godfrey** undertook an Innovation Partnership project with the Royal Air Force Association (RAFA), a membership-based charity for former RAF personnel and their families. The RAFA Marketing Manager worked with

Impact template (REF3a)

Godfrey to put together a market research plan that led to the first large-scale survey of membership attitudes which in turn prompted a number of organizational changes in data collection, marketing and communications which will drive the future development of the Association. The empirical base of much of our research provides evidence for practitioners in our target audiences to use and adapt, and our methodologies provide tools which they can use to enhance their situated knowledge.

Other research is concerned to evaluate general practices such as the work done by **Wood, Burridge, Green, Rudloff** and Nolte (ex Leicester) for the UK Commission for Employment and Skills on high performance working. **Goodwin** and **O'Connor** are engaged in innovative research combining secondary analysis of an important contemporary dataset, 'Understanding Society', with 'legacy' data from 1980s to explore how the experiences of unemployed, insecure and vulnerable 18-25 year-olds have changed between two key periods of economic instability in the UK. In doing so they are mapping the nature and extent of unemployment and precarious forms of working and contributing to current policy debates on youth unemployment. **Green** and **Lim** (with Patel at the School of Medicine) are Co-investigators on a Health Education England education project called 'Prescribing Insight for the Future' which looks at prescription errors with junior doctors.

Finally there is work which is aimed at uncovering new relationships in the world or developing fresh concepts to understand them. For example, **Wisniewski**, has published work which demonstrates that 14 Muslim stockmarkets showed a distinctly different set of trading patterns during Ramadan. Since the publication and global dissemination of his work in 2009, the 'Ramadan effect' seems to have diminished very considerably, suggesting that asset pricing strategies changed as a result of information produced at Leicester. Another example would be that **Millo's** research work on the development of high-frequency trading, in collaboration with MacKenzie (University of Edinburgh) and Beunza and Pardo-Guerra (LSE) was included in the evidence base of a report sponsored by HM Treasury, under the direction of the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser. The report ('The Future of Computer Trading in Financial Markets') forms part of the UK government position in the discussion about future regulation of electronic financial markets in the EU (MiFID II). Millo's work has also been recently cited in an US Securities and Exchange Commission ruling on high frequency trading. We also encourage fundamental research with benefits for new and existing concepts such as **Brown** and **Allen's** work on organizational memory with the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, and **Cameron's** long standing involvement with the Swedish artists Goldin + Senneby in their global projects which have been seen by hundreds of thousands of people worldwide (<http://www.goldinsenneby.com/gs/?p=116>).

We also have substantial organizational initiatives with the School such as the establishment of The International Finance and Banking Society (IFABS) by **Fethi**. This was launched with a conference at ULSM in 2009 on 'Global trends in the Efficiency and Risk Management of Financial Services and the Financial Crisis'. The Society has been active in increasing its visibility in an international context by attracting more than 1100 members which include researchers from academia, policy-makers and the financial industry in 60 countries. IFABS's aim is to promote applied research in the fields of contemporary banking and finance research by providing a forum for discussion, critical analysis and networking among academics, research students, policy-makers, and practitioners with interest in contemporary issues in banking and finance. At the conference in 2012 in Valencia 20% of the audience were practitioners including representatives of several central banks.

Part of our strategy has also involved generating a very substantial increase in media coverage. Members of staff are now appearing regularly in local and national radio and press (see REF5e). An illustration of the effectiveness of this strategy can be seen in the way in which **Grocott's** media presence on the Gibraltar issue has resulted in him being asked to take part in a briefing session for the governor-designate of Gibraltar by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We also encourage staff to fully engage with the University Library's open access policies, and to take advantage of relevant courses provided by the University's Academic Practice Unit, such as the 'Enterprising Researcher' series.

Strategy and plans

Our strategy post- 2013 will continue to be driven by the critical commitments of the School, just as it has developed from the commitments we made in RAE 2008. It involves further systematizing many of the necessary developments which have taken place over the last five years into a set of practices which will equip us to deal with the challenges of an environment in which impact is expected and routine. In particular, we will seek out opportunities to co-research with suitable partners on alternative economic and organizational models and disseminate our findings with as much reach as possible. Many of the projects discussed above will be generating impact during the next REF period, and our overall plans involve –

- a) Maximising the impact from existing and future grant income and consultancy, with particular attention to our target audiences in the third sector and the trade union movement
- b) Working closely with the Enterprise and Business Development unit from the University in order to promote our offerings amongst potential partners, particularly in the East Midlands high technology, third sector and green SME sectors
- c) Ensuring that all our research funding applications have user involvement in their design and good prospects for impact
- d) Further developing our capacity to support socially responsible research and enterprise within the School, as fits with our overall research strategy described in REF5.
- e) Encouraging staff to gain media coverage (whether conventionally or through social media) in order to have an impact on public opinion, and hence being able to shape a public debate about the ends of management research and education.

Relationship to case studies

The seven cases were selected to exemplify various types of engagement within our overall approach to impact. They each illustrate different aspects of our strategy above.

- 1. User engagement in the design of a research project and, in the **Moro** case, on optimising debt structures for SMEs in Italy, which is now being piloted in the UK.
- 2. **Green** and **Lilley**'s application of user-centred design and innovation expertise to East Midlands high tech SMEs such as Bulb Studios and CrowdLab.

These cases reflect our collaborative approach to working with the SMEs that comprise 99% of UK businesses and are hence of huge importance for economic recovery.

- 3. Action research for public benefit in the **Bennett** case on improving pilot safety.

This case also exemplifies the difficulty of disentangling mode 1 and mode 2 research but this time in a setting with global reach. It also illustrates how the knowledge being produced for practitioners becomes the object and resource for further academic knowledge and public benefit.

- 4. Impact on state policy in **Sung** and colleagues' research which is assisting the Singapore Government develop its workforce development policies.
- 5. **Fethi** and **Shaban**'s work on bank capitalization and the financial crisis which has influenced the central banks of developing countries.
- 6. Sustained engagement with the international co-operative movement to develop value- led management practices in the **Davis** case.
- 7. **Hammer**'s work on framework agreements with the International Labour Organization and EU as an example of our work with trade unions.

Each of these cases works at national and international levels to influence the way that state, market and international actors operate. At each level of scale, whether Leicestershire SMEs or International Framework Agreements, our impact strategy is to ensure that the critical social science we practice informs decision making for the public good.