

Impact template (REF3a)

Institution: University of Leicester
Unit of Assessment: UoA22 Social Work and Social Policy (Criminology)
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The theoretical, methodological, and substantive breadth of criminology at Leicester is illustrated by our case studies which concern: (1) improving business supply chain security; and (2) helping probation areas to more effectively tackle and improve the measurement of reoffending. Other high-impact work conducted within the Unit includes: understanding and combating hate crime (Chakraborti); sharing knowledge about the use of forensic science in investigations and prosecutions (Smith); helping the police to improve support services for victims of domestic abuse (Barnes, Fleetwood, Gunby); understanding victim mobility patterns and reducing commercial victimisation (Hopkins); researching the growing availability and impact of substances that give 'legal highs' (Ayres); understanding the factors that encourage or inhibit desistance from crime (King); working with prison architects to enhance the rehabilitative potential of prison design (Jewkes); and evaluating the value of community-based centres for women at risk of imprisonment (Hedderman). This range of activities serves diverse user groups including national and international business leaders and industry professionals, senior governmental policy-makers, senior practitioners and national pressure groups, local community groups, police, probation and prison managers and voluntary sector organisations. The Equality and Human Rights Commission, Prison Reform Trust, Howard League for Penal Reform and National Organisation for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (NOTA) are among the many bodies that have made use of and referenced our work. While the impact case studies are examples of the international and national reach of our research, we also work closely with local criminal justice agencies and other organisations, e.g. Smith's pioneering work with Northants Police has ensured that the force deploy scarce and costly forensic resources only at those crime scenes most likely to yield forensic evidence. Through such engagement, we seek to ensure that policy and practice are informed by the most up-to-date, specialist knowledge in relation to the criminological areas in which we work.</p> <p>The general public are important audiences for our research and members of the Unit frequently accept invitations to participate in current affairs and news programmes that have educational or other social value. Examples include Chakraborti speaking about hate crime on Radio 4's <i>Thinking Allowed</i> and appearing on BBC One's <i>Inside Out</i>, and Hedderman speaking on Radio 4's <i>Today Programme</i> about reconviction rates and on <i>Analysis</i> about 'payment by results'. We have written guest blogs for voluntary sector organisations, e.g. Jewkes on 'prison expansion' for No Offence, and hold regular public lectures and seminars that engage the general public and local practitioners as well as students with the research being undertaken. Recent topics presented by staff include: 'Police Public Relations and the Manufacture of Public Confidence'; 'Does Prison Work? A Study of the Impact of Incarceration on Later Reoffending'; 'The Criminalisation of the Muslim Veil across Europe'; and 'Payment by Results: Hopes, Fears and Evidence'.</p> <p>As part of our prestigious Scarman Lecture series (named after Baron Scarman, an early patron of the Department), we regularly host public lectures by those involved in criminal justice, including local MPs (e.g. Edward Garnier, QC), prominent public figures (Nick Hardwick CBE, Kier Starmer, QC) and peers (Baroness Linklater). The lectures are always followed by an informal social event and we plan to continue inviting public figures to speak in the Scarman series as a means of networking, raising our profile and sharing the impact of our research with key stakeholders. Forthcoming speakers in 2013 include Prof David Nutt (former drugs advisor to government), Sir Clive Loader (Leicestershire Police and Crime Commissioner), and Frances Crook OBE (Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform).</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The research we undertake is predicated on the understanding that it should actively contribute to individual and social welfare by informing decision-making in relation to crime and criminal justice at all levels. Our approach to impact can be characterised as tailoring our efforts to the particular user group we wish to influence through various means, including: consultancy; advisory positions; organising, chairing and participating in seminars, workshops and practitioner conferences; social media; our website; and press releases. Our biannual departmental newsletter <i>Criminology In Focus</i> is sent to numerous professional/practitioners such as local constabularies, prisons, Crown</p>

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Prosecution Service, probation service, voluntary organisations, local councils, honorary members of the Department, alumni and other social science departments in the UK and at overseas universities with which we have connections, ensuring that key audiences are aware of new projects and can contact us about our current research activities. For example, Issue 6 (Winter 2011/12) described **Beck's** work advising the De Beers Family of Companies on how to minimise the loss of diamonds in their value chain. It also featured the appointment of **Hedderman** (and **Jolliffe**) as Independent Assessors for the first UK-based 'Social Impact Bond' project being delivered at HMP Peterborough by the St Giles Trust. Designed to reduce reoffending, the initiative also assesses the impact of the first criminal justice 'payment by results' scheme in England and Wales. Demonstrating their global as well as local impact, the same newsletter features Hedderman and Jolliffe's presentations at a seminar organised by Centro de Estudios en Seguridad Ciudadana (CESC) Instituto de Asuntos Públicos Universidad de Chile in Santiago in July 2011, which also included presentations by the Vice Minister of Justice, the British Ambassador in Chile, renowned members of the judiciary and criminal justice policy makers. We include details of all recent staff research, publications, grants and awards, invitations and other activities in each issue of the newsletter.

Individual staff have developed close working relationships with government officials, criminal justice agencies and businesses. For example, representatives from Leicester City Council, Leics. County Council, the CPS, NHS Partnership Trust and Victim Support have accepted invitations from **Chakraborti** to sit on the Steering Group of a large-scale ESRC-funded Hate Crime Project. This is intended to provide valuable practitioner perspective and to maximise the policy impact of the research by ensuring that the findings are picked up by regional organisations who have the capacity to support victims of hate crime. Chakraborti also sits on several regional Advisory Groups including one on 'Hate Crime and Health' led by Leics. NHS Partnership Trust which focuses on the forms of support that healthcare providers can offer to victims of hate crime in the county.

Occasionally we hold pre-publication events to ensure that the final presentation of findings is tailored to the needs of user communities. This has been found not only to improve the quality of the output, but also gives projects a genuinely collaborative feel, ensuring that final reports suit the practitioner audience's actual, rather than assumed, preferences. In Sept 2011 **Mawby** hosted a half-day conference (with Prof Worrall, Keele University) to present the key findings from their ESRC-funded project on the occupational cultures of probation officers to an invited audience of probation workers, magistrates and academics. The conference was an opportunity to disseminate the project's findings and seek comment from conference delegates. The feedback helped inform the final report published three months later. The project's findings have subsequently been disseminated in a targeted fashion through public lectures and short articles in non-academic publications, responses to government consultation papers and the submission of evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee consultation. In June 2013 **Smith** hosted an event at the Alec Jeffreys Forensic Science Institute (a partnership between Criminology and Chemistry, Engineering and the East Midlands Forensic Pathology Unit) showcasing research and innovation related to forensic science and attended by police agencies, forensic providers, and policy makers.

The Unit's efforts are supported and located within the University of Leicester's overall Knowledge Transfer and Knowledge Exchange strategies whereby it seeks to maximise the social, cultural and economic impact from research. Thus, the University's press office regularly routes requests for information to the Department and issues press notices about results of research work undertaken by Departmental staff. All staff are required to deposit their publications in the Leicester Research Archive, which ensures that Leicester's research outputs are accurately described, securely held, made widely available, and preserved. Since 1 Jan 2008, the Archive has had 484,000 unique visitors who made 1.6 million page views (Google Analytics data to 28 June 2012). Members of the Unit have also played an active part in the University's 'Leicester Exchanges' programme, including a live debate in March 2011 between **Hedderman**, the Head of Criminal Justice at the Policy Exchange, the Chief Executive of London Probation and an ex-offender turned journalist, to address the question, should we punish or reform offenders? The event, before an invited audience of senior figures from the criminal justice world, was chaired by the University of Leicester's Vice Chancellor, Professor Sir Bob Burgess, and was used to initiate a virtual public debate using social media Twitter and Facebook.

c. Strategy and plans

Generating impact from our research is a cornerstone of the Unit's research strategy. We tailor our outputs to the different audiences it can serve and will continue to highlight the impact of individual staff members' research to non-academic as well as academic beneficiaries. We will continue to utilise most of the strategies we currently employ, including formal and informal contacts with user communities, sitting on committees, being responsive to the queries and invitations which result from our press notices, newsletters and media appearances, undertaking consultancies, hosting public lectures and seminars, and organising and attending industry conferences.

We will continue to review potential impact of individuals' research during annual appraisals, mentoring and the twice yearly personal research development meetings that take place between staff and the Department's Director of Research. Early Career staff are encouraged to attend the impact/enterprise training courses offered by the University's central Academic Practice Unit. These processes have enabled us to identify work in progress which is already contributing to public debates but which is likely to have its full impact after the current REF period ends. For example: **Barnes** (with **Gunby** and **Fleetwood**) is leading on a study to improve support for victims of domestic violence funded by and in collaboration with Nottinghamshire Police Crime Commissioner; **Beck** and **Hopkins** are leading an ESRC project co-funded by Asda, Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's on the implications of mobile scanning on theft; **Chakraborti's** ESRC funded research on hate crime has highlighted widespread under-reporting and feelings of dissatisfaction among victims, and is already benefitting a wide range of user groups and stakeholders; **Fleetwood** is working with the Sentencing Council and has applied for Nuffield funding to research proportionality in the sentencing of drug mules to take account of coercion, with a view to new sentencing guidelines being introduced; **Hodgkinson** is researching keyworker perceptions of Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) to deal with anti-social behaviour; **Jewkes** is conducting ESRC funded research on prison architecture, design and technology which is not only shaping scholarship on this topic but is benefitting professional practitioners at a pivotal time when the prison estate is being altered and a 'new for old' prison building policy is being implemented; **King** has most recently brought his expertise in desistance to bear on a bid to Essex Probation to examine offender perspectives on services and interventions; the Government have yet to respond to the Leveson Inquiry report, but **Mawby** was the only Criminologist to be called as a witness by the Inquiry, his views are cited frequently in the Report, and as a further indication of the importance and impact of his work, he is currently a Leverhulme Research Fellow, researching the Leveson Inquiry's data archive; **Phoenix** has worked with several policy reform groups in the areas of prostitution, sexual exploitation and youth justice, and has recently collaborated with the Howard League for Penal Reform on a study into the policing and criminalisation of sexually exploited girls.

We work closely with the University's Press Office and Marketing Department and use social media such as Twitter and Facebook to engage with a broad range of audiences. This is proving to be a dynamic and effective way of rapidly disseminating new knowledge and ideas arising from our research. In the near future the Department will engage with practitioners through the development of a comprehensive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme, which will include a series of short courses, bespoke seminars and workshops and opportunities for practitioners to study single modules at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. In March 2014 the Unit will launch its first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) focused on forensic science and criminal investigation. Free to all those interested in the course it will provide wide access to the current academic research being undertaken within the Department on this topic.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies exemplify the diversity and impact of the Department's work and the different strategies deployed to promote the findings and engage with user communities. **Beck** has made particularly effective use of international practitioner conferences to showcase his work, as well as organising specialist workshops and seminars for organisations and publishing in a wide range of practitioner journals and magazines. In addition, he has worked directly with companies to both undertake research and disseminate best practice. **Hedderman** has acted as advisor and consultant to senior policy makers and practitioners in the criminal justice professions to secure knowledge transfer from research to practice. Both have engaged effectively with the mass media to ensure their work reaches interested audiences and the general public.