

<p><b>Institution: Durham University</b></p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment: Theology and Religious Studies</b></p>
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>Research in the Department of Theology and Religion (DTR) has benefitted four main non-academic groups.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Churches. DTR research has informed the intellectual development and spiritual formation of Anglican, Roman Catholic and other church communities, and supported the work of denominational and ecumenical bodies, both nationally and internationally.</li> <li>2. The UK education sector. DTR research has supported religious education in schools through engagement with pupils, teachers and curriculum designers. This has included work aimed specifically at widening participation.</li> <li>3. UK civil society. DTR research has contributed to policy and/or professional practice in human rights law, medical ethics, psychiatry, palliative care and funerary practice.</li> <li>4. Mass media and the museum sector. DTR researchers have worked extensively with broadcast, print and online media, and with museums.</li> </ol> <p>All of these beneficiaries are supported by each of the DTR's three broad research areas – Biblical studies, Christian theology and contemporary religion. However, research in Christian theology has been of particular importance for the Churches, and research in contemporary religion has been of particular importance for interactions with civil society. The DTR's most developed structures for supporting impact activity are its two formal Centres: Catholic Studies and Death and Life Studies.</p>
<p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>The DTR has a longstanding conviction that high-quality academic research in Theology and Religion must of necessity engage with living religious traditions and with society. In 2007-8, the DTR founded two Research Centres – the Centre for Catholic Studies (CCS) and the Centre for Death and Life Studies (CDLS) – in part to facilitate external engagement and partnerships, which the Centres have done through public lectures, conferences, consultancies, exhibitions and (in one case) film. Both Centres have attracted external funding (see REF5) to support staffing, studentships and events. For their specific impact activities, see CS2 and section b.3 below.</p> <p>In 2010, the DTR formally included impact in its Research Strategy; a full University impact strategy followed in 2012. These strategies' main purposes are to ensure (a) that staff attend to opportunities for external engagement throughout their research and (b) that they are appropriately supported in doing so. In terms of (a), all staff identify areas of potential impact as part of their personal research plans, discussed during annual staff review. Impact is now an important criterion for academic appointment, probation and promotion, and also in applications for and reports on study leave. At the same time, the strategy recognises that impact is often unforeseen. For (b), since 2012 a dedicated University fund of £250k per annum has supported impact activity: for example, a CDLS conference for funerary practitioners in 2013. The University's Institute of Advanced Study also funds visiting fellowships in part to support impact activity; and the Communications Office supports the public dissemination of research.</p> <p>The DTR's appointment strategy ensures that impact is integral to its culture. The Van Mildert Chair of Divinity (established in 1832 and held since 2009 by <b>McIntosh</b>) combines an academic role with the duties of a residentiary canon in Durham Cathedral. McIntosh's preaching, retreats and study days at the Cathedral all draw on his research. Following this model, the newly-created Bede Chair in Catholic Theology (<b>Ayres</b> 2009-13; Kilby from January 2014) requires 20% of the holder's time to be devoted to outreach work relating to his or her research within the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. The Durham Project for Spirituality, Theology and Health (see CS3) was the basis for <b>Cook's</b> promotion to a personal Chair in 2012. The national theological training partnership established in 2013 (see sections b.1.i and c.1, below) led to the creation of a Chair in Theology and Ministry (now held by <b>Higton</b>).</p> <p>These structures have all supported impact in the four areas outlined in section 1, as follows.</p> <p><b>1. Churches.</b> The DTR engages with a wide denominational range of Christian bodies, with two primary benefits. <b>(i) Ministerial formation and training:</b> Since 2005 the DTR has, in collaboration with local ministerial training institutions, offered a Doctorate of Theology and Ministry in order to meet the demand from practising ministers to pursue research which allows them to reflect theologically on their own ministry. In 2012, a bid by the University, led by the DTR, won a national</p>

contract to validate and provide research leadership for almost all theological training in the Church of England and several partner churches (Baptist, Methodist, United Reformed). The process of reviewing curricula and delivery at twenty partner institutions has now begun, under **Higton's** leadership. Individual DTR staff regularly address ministerial groups, locally, nationally and internationally. **Ayres, Barclay, Davies, Guest, McIntosh** and **Weeks** have lectured to clergy groups across the UK on subjects arising from their research; the CCS hosts annual study days for clergy and laity; **Ayres, Banev, Doering, Moberly** and **Murray**, amongst others, have lectured to clergy and led retreats in Australia, Austria, France, Israel, Romania, New Zealand and the USA. **Bertschmann, Cook, Davies, Doering, McIntosh, Moberly** and **Ryrie** are themselves clergy or lay ministers, applying their research in pastoral and practical contexts. (ii) Academic representation in church councils, advisory committees and ecumenical bodies: **Murray** is a Consultor for the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (2012-17); **Harrison** is a member of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Examinations Committee (2012-15), and **Song** an advisor to the Church of England's House of Bishops Working Group on Human Sexuality (2012-14); **McIntosh** and **Murray** are members of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (see CS2).

**2. Education.** The DTR influences educational provision in the following ways. Staff regularly lead sixth-form study days, speak at secondary schools locally and nationally, and take part in widening participation initiatives: for example, since 2009 **Weeks** has contributed a section on ancient Egypt to 'Inspire', an annual event for about 100 Year 6 pupils from deprived areas in County Durham, in addition to wider work on this subject in local primary schools. Since 2012 the CCS has staged A-level revision conferences for RS students at venues across north-east England. The DTR has also organised a series of heavily subscribed conferences for Religious Studies school teachers (most recently in 2009, 2011 and 2013). **Guest** was a consultant to a UK-government funded project on materials used to teach world religions in primary and secondary schools (2008-9), and **Ryrie** is a consultant for EdExcel's A-level revision programme (2012-).

**3. Civil society.** DTR staff have brought questions of religion and spirituality into public policy and debate. For **Cook's** work in the area of mental health, see CS3. **Song** has advised clinicians, hospital chaplains, and other NHS workers on medical ethics; **Guest** was an invited respondent at the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 2009 consultation on religion in a secular society. The research of **Davies** and the CDLS in identifying cultural shifts around death and dying has had particularly far-reaching influence. Through workshops, conferences, training events, consultations and committee memberships **Davies** has helped funerary and palliative-care workers to adapt their practices and language to these cultural shifts, and created dialogues between religious groups, palliative-care professionals and funerary workers. These have in turn helped to reshape funerary practice at crematoria and the emergent practice of woodland burial. **Davies's** definitions of spirituality in palliative care have been adopted by the National Council for Palliative Care in its report *The Missing Link* (2010). This in turn influenced the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's draft 'Spiritual Support and Bereavement Care Quality Markers' (2011), setting national standards for palliative care professionals in the UK.

**4. Mass media and museums.** As exemplified by CS1, DTR staff have enriched and informed public understanding of religious matters through the following media. (i) Broadcast: the many examples include **Murray's** media work around the 2010 papal visit to the UK (including being guest expert advisor on BBC Radio Five Live throughout their four-hour coverage of the visit's first morning) and the 2013 papal election (including lengthy interviews published in the US and Greek press, and further radio work); **Ryrie's** work as script consultant and interviewee on the American TV documentary series, "Martyrs for a Book" (2012). (ii) Multimedia resources: **Insole, Moberly** and **Ryrie** have made theological problems accessible to the wider public through lectures on a video timeline of Christian theology hosted by St John's College, Nottingham: YouTube views have consistently numbered well over a thousand per month. (iii) Museums and exhibitions: **Ryrie** assisted in the public outreach work of the British Museum's *Treasures of Heaven* exhibition (2011) through a formal public conversation with Neil MacGregor and Eamon Duffy (500 tickets sold out at £8 each). The CCS and other DTR staff organised public tours, lectures, a concert and a conference to mark the 2013 Lindisfarne Gospels Exhibition in Durham. (iv) Popular writing: **Guest** contributed to the mass-market introductory volume *30 Second Religion* (Ivy Press, 2011); **Ryrie's** account of Tudor magic, *The Sorcerer's Tale* (2008), was positively reviewed in *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Los Angeles Times*; **Gehring** and **Kelly** have both contributed to *BBC History*

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magazine. (v) Film: **Davies'** research on woodland burial led to the making of a 30-minute film, *Natural Burial and the Church of England* (2011), which has been shown at conferences for funeral and medical professionals including the National Death Centre Annual Meeting, the Green Burial Awareness Day, and at the Conference of the Scandinavian Thanatological Association; and has also been shown at public film festivals at Cambridge, Montreal and Turin.

**c. Strategy and plans**

The DTR's Research Strategy commits it to research which will 'impact beneficially upon the lives of people', 'influence high-level Church, government, regional and grant-awarding bodies', 'foster links with Churches, societies and organisations in relevant fields', 'foster collaboration with non-academic partners' and 'raise the profile of our work through media and other outlets'. Such activities are not only inherently worthwhile but also stimulate further high-quality research.

In order to advance these aims, the DTR currently plans two main structural developments. (i) Expansion of the CCS, whose extensive development programme is overseen by a dedicated development officer. Over £1.5m has already been raised to endow a chair in Catholic Social Thought and Practice; this is in addition to a lecturer in this field already appointed for 2014 start. These appointments are expected to generate research projects with social and policy impact. The CCS is also developing the historical study of English Catholicism, aiming to establish the former Catholic seminary at Ushaw as a national Catholic heritage centre which will house the Catholic National Library (currently in Farnborough) and a national Catholic archive. (ii) Establishment of two new Centres in order to build on areas of growing research strength. A Centre for Spirituality, Theology and Health will enhance collaboration between DTR researchers and health and social care professionals both within and beyond the UK (see CS3). A Centre for Anglican Studies will work closely with Durham Cathedral in community outreach and will pursue ecumenical and interfaith discussions, as well as supporting the DTR's work in the training and formation of Anglican ministers (see section c.1, below): it will be led by a Professor of Anglican Studies (full endowment funding is now in place for this post: appointment expected in 2014).

Beyond this, specific plans to develop impact in the four areas outlined in section 1 include:

**1. Churches.** The new national training contract with the Church of England and partner Churches, initially for 2014-19, offers a major opportunity for DTR research to benefit non-academic users. There will be a further academic appointment to support this project in 2014. In addition to the oversight of programmes and regulations, the DTR will add intellectual value through training events, summer schools and online materials, and by leading collaborative research in theological training and formation. This will also support a planned expansion of the DThM programme.

**2. Education.** The DTR has secured endowment funding to hold an annual conference for RS teachers from 2014. The DTR is also supporting a new North West Theology and Religious Studies Centre (**Song** is on its steering group), working with disadvantaged schools in Greater Manchester.

**3. Civil Society.** The CDLS will develop its work on woodland burial: it is currently holds consultancy contracts with two woodland burial providers. It will also pursue a new project on supporting grief in the clergy and caring professions.

**4. Mass media and museums.** **Ryrie** is on the advisory board of the Auckland Castle Trust, planning the Castle's redevelopment as a museum, and also has a major public-interest book contracted for publication with HarperCollins / Penguin in 2017. **Weeks** is on the planning committee for the Ashmolean Museum's projected 2017 exhibition on the fall of Jerusalem.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The three case studies represent the DTR's three principal research areas: Biblical studies (CS1), Christian theology (CS2) and contemporary religion (CS3). They also exemplify three of the DTR's characteristic pathways to impact, and three typical groups of beneficiaries. CS1 ('The Case of the Forged Gospel Fragment') is a case of unanticipated impact, in which media and public discourse were redirected by one individual's research. CS3 ('Spirituality and Mental Health') arose from an area of growing research strength, the Project for Theology, Spirituality and Health, and is an example of collaboration with partners in UK civil society. CS2 ('Receptive Ecumenism') arose from an established research Centre, and exemplifies the DTR's involvement with Christian churches at national and international level. CS2 was also critical in persuading the DTR as a whole of the potential value of research Centres.