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Institution: St Mary's University College
Unit of Assessment: 32: Philosophy
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The Philosophy Unit returned to this REF centres around the undergraduate degree at St. Mary's University College (introduced in 2004) and the Centre for Bioethics and Emerging Technology (CBET, founded in 2008). This Unit of Assessment comprises 4.8 FTE (six staff). In line with the particular ethos of the University College, the philosophers at St. Mary's consider public engagement an important part of their work. This engagement expresses itself in a strong ethical component, and a pedagogical component. Beneficiaries of each component are scientists, teachers, policy makers, and members of the public.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The approach to impact in the REF assessment period (2008-2013) has been inspired by the ethos of the University College. The University College has retained its founding ideal of education for 'the poor', and of serving the 'common good'. In this environment members of the Unit are encouraged to be responsive to requests, and start initiatives, that help the disadvantaged or offer free access to education. Thus, conferences and lectures are open to the public; the Unit has run a successful Summer School for gifted and talented students from under-represented groups in HE. Staff in this Unit also share their expertise with scientists and policy makers.</p> <p>Until recently the approach was thus guided by the ethos, more than by design. This is now changing. The University College is developing a workload planning model which recognises impact. It also offers training to support staff in the process of developing and measuring impact. When preparing for this REF submission, SMUC introduced a scheme which offered staff release from teaching to complete their case studies. Altorf applied successfully for this scheme, in Spring 2013. In response to developments in the University College, the Unit started to focus its attention on the two strands of ethics and pedagogy, outlined below. The Unit's Strategy for 2014-2019 is outlined below.</p> <p><u>The ethical component</u></p> <p>The Centre for Bioethics & Emerging Technologies (CBET) runs an M.A. programme in Bioethics recruiting healthcare and social care professionals, theologians, philosophers, and public policy makers. It has obtained funding under both FP7 and COST schemes, and organises workshops and other events on ethical and conceptual issues of new technologies (information and communications technology and nanotechnology). The centre has a number of PhD students (Berle, Hyer, McCarthy, Phensrisai, and Westin).</p> <p>Members of this 'think tank' include researchers in philosophy, applied ethics, theology, physics, clinical practice and medical law. They are often asked to provide consultancy, at national and international level. Thus, Erden has been an independent evaluator for the Nuffield Report on Emerging Biotechnologies (2012), and continues to act as an Independent Expert in Ethics for the European Commission, evaluating research proposals submitted to the European Framework Programme (2012 - ongoing). Hunt is an occasional advisor to Lloyds of London on nanotechnology risks. He has also provided written evidence to the House of Lords Science & Technology Select Committee, and he has been consulted by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution. Rainey has regularly acted as an ethics evaluator and auditor for EC-funded research projects, and has been employed as a consultant to the Ethics Review Sector of the European Commission's Directorate General of Research and Innovation. Stammers is a consultant bioethicist for CHKS (Caspe [Clinical Accountability Service Planning Evaluation] Healthcare Knowledge Systems). He also contributed to the Welsh Government Consultation on Presumed Consent for Organ Donation (2012-2013).</p> <p>In addition to organising conferences, and to consultations, the philosophers at St. Mary's also</p>

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influence the agenda of the public debate and of policy makers by appearing on television and radio programmes, at public fora and by writing position papers, and popular pieces. For instance, during the REF assessment period, CBET has put on public lectures on subjects such as ethical aspects of biometrics (especially face recognition), computers and consciousness, and nanotechnology risks and safety.

Erden was invited to give a public FiSH lecture (November 2012; FiSH is a neighbourhood voluntary care scheme for elderly residents). She was also invited to present at a short training school for COST-FA0904 in Skopje, Macedonia (November 2011), and to talk at a European Science Foundation (ESF) meeting on Human Nanotoxicology and Nanomedicine (London, September 2011). She is also regularly invited to speak at schools, local philosophy clubs and to students of computer science at other universities.

Hunt was invited to give a lecture on 'Introduction to nanotechnology', at Charterhouse School, Godalming, Surrey to higher level students, 9th Feb. 2012; and he was invited as a nano-ethics expert at a Food Safety Authority (FSA) Citizens' Forum on nanotechnology and food, Birmingham (December 2010). He chairs, and gives talks to, the Clinical Ethics Group at Princess Alice Hospice, Esher. He also serves as Buddhist Chaplain for the University of Surrey (2004-present).

Rainey has presented workshops to non-academics on ethics and different ways of conceiving ethics, in the context of the European Commission. He has written policy briefs which were readily adopted by working groups and committees of the European Commission's ethics sector.

Stammers is regularly asked to contribute to TV programmes or interviewed for local and national radio. (Including 'Iconoclasts', BBC radio 4, 23 September 2009). He publishes regularly in the Catholic Medical Quarterly and was quoted in a recent postnatal abortion controversy (see for instance: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9113394/Killing-babies-no-different-from-abortion-experts-say.html>)

Altorf published an article on ethics of privacy and statistics together with A. van den Hout in a popular (non-academic) journal. (Stator 2012).

The pedagogical component

The pedagogical projects arise from the teaching practice of the philosophers at St. Mary's University College, but are not limited to its students. The ethos of the University College, and its origin in teacher training for the poor, encourage academics to develop research into innovative teaching methods as well as more fundamental questions in pedagogy. An example of such research is Altorf's philosophical project on 'What is learning?' (2010-2011). Members of the Unit are also encouraged to engage with the local community. The College awards prizes for innovations in, and the promotion of inclusive approaches to teaching and supporting learning. Staff are also encouraged to exchange ideas at Learning Lunches and Staff Development Days. The philosophers regularly speak at 6th form conferences (Altorf, Erden, Hunt, Stammers), and have run a successful 6th form Summer School for gifted and talented widening participation students in the London Boroughs of Richmond & Hounslow between 2004 and 2011. In addition, Altorf published an opinion piece on the rhetoric of Royal Christmas speeches in a Dutch national newspaper (NRC Handelsblad, 24 December 2012).

c. Strategy and plans

This submission of 4.8 FTE staff includes four Early Career Researchers. Most members have considerable teaching and/or administration duties. Taking these specific circumstances into consideration, the team manages to enrich their research through teaching and their teaching through research. A common theme in their work is that of dialogue, and almost all members are actively engaged in dialogue with stakeholders, policymakers, and experts on practical ethical issues.

As outlined above, the University College's approach to impact in the current assessment period has only been recently pursued systematically. As a result of preparing for the REF2014, the

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Philosophy Unit is now developing a more systematic approach for the new assessment period. Having identified its two components, it works to develop these by further by identifying possible future case studies for each component. Moreover, staff will discuss the possible impact of their research at the Philosophy Unit (four per year), and the School's Research Committee. They will also be supported in gathering evidence of impact. The Unit will continue to engage with their current stakeholders, and seeks to add new beneficiaries in a (potentially) world wide audience of students and teachers, beyond the academic community (see pedagogical component).

Strategies for the ethical component

The team will continue to respond to requests for further dialogue and expertise. It shall also seek out opportunities to contribute to the debate. Thus, CBET is presently planning further EC funding applications with existing partners in the field of social and ethical aspects of nanotechnology for medicine, food packaging and food irradiation, linked as member of the Europe-wide 'Nanosafety Cluster' network. The Unit is also presently preparing a conference on 'Autonomy and the Other', as a continuation of earlier projects on autonomy, funded by Porticus UK. Hunt will follow up a collaborative funding bid for the British Heart Foundation, with a team led by Dr Gabriel Cavalli-Petraglia, University of Surrey. He is also preparing data for a second research publication on hospice ethics with Dr Craig Gannon and colleagues, in the context of his ongoing work as chair of the Princess Alice Hospice Clinical Ethics Group, and also continues his interest in public interest disclosure.

Strategies for the pedagogical component

Innovation in teaching is regularly discussed in team meetings, especially in the lead-up to revalidations (2009 and 2013). These included particular attention to assessment and the use of dialogue. Innovation is also conceived in informal discussion with colleagues in and outside the programme. The focus on dialogue has resulted in two projects funded by the Higher Education Academy's Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies. It has also been the subject of the second Royal Institute of Philosophy public lecture series held at St. Mary's University College (see <http://extranet.smuc.ac.uk/events-conferences/RIP-Lecture-Series-2013-14/RIP-Lecture-Series-2012-13/Pages/default.aspx>).

The Unit's renewed focus on dialogue has resulted in a successful HEA bid that will allow the Unit to organise a workshop on dialogue in assessment, entitled 'Assessment: Group Effort, or Individual Achievement, Or: I Can't Believe It Is Not Group work' (5 February 2014). In addition, Altorf is developing a web resource on philosophical dialogue and rhetoric. This open access resource will allow people around the world to take part in a module online. It is envisaged that participants will contribute to the resource in the form of replies to assessment, as well as in the form of general feedback. They are also invited to take part in Socratic Dialogues, where possible. (<http://philosophicaldialogueandrhetoric.wordpress.com/>)

d. Relationship to case studies

The selected case studies exemplify the two strands of impact of the Philosophy team: ethics and pedagogy. The first case study details the work of CBET in the area of nanotechnology and stakeholder dialogue. It concerns the publication of a national standard for nano-labelling, and the imminent publication of an ISO international standard. The initiative for this labelling was taken by Hunt, who has consequently been actively engaged in conceptual and ethical dialogue with European professionals and diverse stakeholder organisations (regulatory, NGOs, consumer bodies, national, regional and international policy-makers, insurance bodies). The second case study concerns a project on dialogue. As outlined in the narrative, dialogue is central to the work of all philosophers at St. Mary's. This particular case study features a series of dialogues, held at St. Mary's and on different locations in certain European countries. These dialogues are intended to offer participants an alternative to the domination of marketisation, with its emphasis on competition and outcomes.