

<p>Institution: Teesside University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 29 - English Literature and Language</p>
<p>a. Context A distinctive feature of research in English at Teesside is its focus on literature and culture as agents of social change. Research has benefitted a range of audiences including: pupils, students and teachers in primary, secondary, further and higher education; established and emerging creative writers; audiences for literary events, workshops and festivals; users of services designed to promote public health, well-being and social inclusion. Impact has taken a variety of forms, including: learning resources (in print and online); professional development for teachers, writers and health practitioners; public engagement with the arts; performances and publications commissioned by charities and public sector bodies.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact Consideration of impact potential is integral to research planning within the English group and researchers are proactive in developing pathways to impact. The English approach to impact is motivated by a commitment to: promote public engagement with the arts; promote the creative culture of the Tees Valley in national and international contexts; contribute to strategies to promote public health, well-being and social inclusion; raise the profile of creativity in educational contexts [see REF 3b: “Developing the Teaching of Creative Writing”]; promote public awareness and understanding of cultural diversity [see REF3b: “Muslims Writing Britain”].</p> <p>Research has underpinned activities designed to foster greater public engagement with the arts, through collaboration with key cultural organisations in the North East and nationally. Carroll is co-convenor of a monthly public book club, launched in October 2011 at the Sage Gateshead, a major music performance and participation venue in the region; it is supported by an open access blog, authored by convenors and participants and hosted by New Writing North (the writing development agency for the North of England), and social media networks. This activity is informed by a collaborative research project which explores the relationship between popular music and writing (from literary fiction to music journalism); Carroll is co-editor (with Hansen, Northumbria) and contributing author to <i>Litpop: Writing and Popular Music</i> (forthcoming, Ashgate, 2014). Davies is recognised as an expert on the history of ventriloquism in literature and culture and, more broadly, on the cultural afterlives of nineteenth century texts; she has brought her research to public audiences through print and digital media, and regional and national television and radio broadcasts (BBC One’s “The One Show”, 2010; BBC Radio Scotland, 2010; <i>The Sunday Herald Magazine</i> 2010; BBC One’s “Look North”, 2001; BBC Radio Leeds, 2011; BBC Radio 2, 2012). As a member of the interdisciplinary Creative Speech Technology Network (CreST), Elsam has contributed to a programme of performances designed to raise awareness of speech technology through collaborative exhibits and installations in public places (City Screen, York; Sheffield Winter Garden; Hull Truck Theatre, all 2013). Beagrie and Willoughby (Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing, 2008 to date) convened a public competition designed to elicit creative work in response to the public art installation “Temenos” by sculptor Anish Kapoor; the outcomes were published in a collection, <i>The Eye of Temenos: Reflections on Sacred Space</i> (2011), edited by Beagrie and Willoughby and funded by Middlesbrough City Council (£10,000). Walton co-organises <i>Syndicate</i>, a new media, poetry, performance and lecture series in collaboration with Inspace gallery and New Media Scotland and with the support of the Edinburgh Fund’s Innovative Initiative Grant (£2000). This event promotes dialogue and creative collaboration between writers, musicians, artists and researchers in response to new digital technologies and is supported by an online blog. Walton is the author of an open access blog, “Chinese for Poets” (2012 to date), which is a resource for poets interested in Chinese in translation and for those seeking to learn more about Chinese culture and language; Walton participated in the AHRC funded <i>Speaking My Language</i> programme (Glasgow, 2012) and has been awarded funding by the AHRC <i>Skills Development Award</i> to undertake a research visit to China (August 2013).</p> <p>Research has informed activities designed to promote the creative culture of the Tees Valley, with a focus on supporting the professional development of new writers. Beagrie and Willoughby are</p>

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creative directors of The Electric Kool Aid Cabaret of the Spoken Word which provides a performance platform for established and emerging national and international spoken word performers (including Siddhartha Bose, Kate Fox, W.N Herbert, Esa Hirvonen, Sean O'Brien, Harry Zevenbergen); a mentoring programme provides professional development support for new writers and performers from the region. *Project Break Out* (2012-13) provides mentoring for young and promising writers from the North East and is funded by a £10,000 Arts Council England grant to Ek Zuban Press, an independent publishing and literature development agency founded by Beagrie and Willoughby; Ek Zuban provides opportunities for new and established writers to publish work, develop performance skills and build regional, national and international networks, and it works to extend the readership for contemporary creative writing within Tees Valley and the North East.

Research has informed activities designed in partnership with charities and public sector bodies to promote public health, well-being and social inclusion. **Clewlow** (Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing, 2008-2013) is a founding member and principal playwright for the theatre company *Operating Theatre*, which employs applied theatre methodologies in the context of professional development for health care practitioners; partners have included Newcastle University Medical School and the North East Strategic Health Authority. Key issues in health care are dramatised through the production of original play scripts and their performance in professional contexts. Participants have provided the following feedback: "Realistic - makes us develop empathy for the characters"; "Gave such a deeper insight to mental illness. Really made me think"; "Incredibly valuable and challenging experience. A true example of how art can inform life"; "Really hammers home the importance of communication and understanding people on a human level"; "It can engender empathic approaches professionally"; "The learning will have application in real clinical situations". **Beagrie** and **Willoughby's** *The Great North Rnu* (2010) was a project commissioned by Crisis Skylight (an education, training and employment centre for homeless and vulnerably-housed people), and funded by the Cyrenians (a charity working with vulnerable, disadvantaged and homeless people) in association with Helix Arts (funded by Arts Council, North East). Its outcomes include an online learning resource for groups working with homelessness, an anthology of creative writing and a play written and performed by service users as part of the Creative Progression project, a collaboration with Newcastle City Council's Working Neighbourhoods Fund; the play was performed for a public audience at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle in 2010. *Kids* (Beagrie and Willoughby, 2011-12) was a project funded by the Barnardos SECOS (Sexual Exploitation of Children on the Streets) project which used Charlie Chaplin's 1921 film *The Kid* as a focal point for a creative writing project with hard to reach and excluded children. Its outcomes include performances (Turku City of Culture, 2011; York Literature Festival, 2013, Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle 2013) and a poetry collection (2011). *Pandora's Box* (Beagrie and Willoughby, 2012-13) was a project designed to employ innovative ways to tackle crime in the community and funded by a £13,000 grant from the Home Office; it was delivered in association with South Bank Women's Centre in Middlesbrough, Teesside, working with women service users who were both victims and perpetrators of violence. *Pandora's Box*, a collection of creative writing from the Tees Valley Women's Centre, was published by Ek Zuban Press in 2013. *Choices Reloaded* (Beagrie and Willoughby, 2012) was a project delivered in association with Helix Arts and Newcastle College as part of the Newcastle Young Offending Team's Bridging Project for young offenders and young people at risk of offending. Working with Year 4 and 5 pupils in a Primary Cluster in East Cleveland this project was supported by the School Improvement Fund and was designed to improve literacy and re-engage pupils with education; its outcomes included poems, playscripts and a radio drama written and performed by pupils. As Poet in Residence at the Economic and Social Research Council Genomics Policy and Research Forum (April 2013), **Walton** employed creative methodologies to offer new perspectives on questions of ethics in relation to current debates in epigenetics research. Social media platforms were employed to engage social scientists, policy makers and media professionals in interactive and creative reflection through the production of an open source poetry sequence.

The approach to impact undertaken by the English research group is aligned with, and supported by, institutional priorities. A commitment to research impact is integral to Teesside University's research strategy, which seeks to contribute effectively to the economic, social and cultural success of the communities which it serves and to demonstrate a real and continuing commitment

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to social inclusion. All researchers are encouraged to engage actively with potential users or beneficiaries of research from the outset; impact planning is integral to the annual Personal Research Plan submitted by members of the Institute for Design, Culture and the Arts. A Research Development and Impact Officer was appointed to the Graduate Research School in 2011 and provides support in maximising the impact of research outputs. The GRS has organised University Research Conferences dedicated to the promotion of impact, including a Public Engagement Workshop led by the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (2012). The University's research communications strategy employs print and digital media networks to promote research with high impact potential; the research publication strategy recognises the importance of popular media and professional publications in fostering impact. The University's digital research repository, TeesRep, serves to facilitate improved access to research. In October 2011, a series of public events co-ordinated by Carroll to mark *Black History Month* (October 2011) were resourced and publicised by the Equality and Diversity unit in Human Resources, including a public reading by the author Jackie Kay. The University Research Fund match funded "Three British Poets of Muslim Heritage", a poetry reading and discussion panel convened by Ahmed for Middlesbrough Literary Festival (2012).

c. Strategy and plans

The English research group aims to consolidate and extend the impact of its research. More specifically it aims to: continue to engage in creative partnerships with charities and public sector bodies to promote public health, well-being and social inclusion; cultivate and develop partnerships with key cultural organisations to promote creativity and engagement with the arts in the Tees Valley, the North East region and beyond; integrate strategies to support impact in research and publication planning, with a particular focus on supporting early career researchers; seek opportunities for funding, both internally and externally, to support research impact. The following projects illustrate some of the above aims in relation to new research projects. Elsam is co-creator of an open access website, *Stephen Joseph & The Library Theatre*, which provides biographical, historical and bibliographical information and access to a range of digitised archival material; the site was commissioned by leading theatre practitioner Alan Ayckbourn and is affiliated to his website. This project has been developed with the support of the University Research Fund (URF) and researcher mentoring. As a founding member of the research group *Multicultural Textualities*, Ahmed is collaborating with researchers at Brunel, East London, SOAS, Southampton, and York to develop an open access website which will promote understanding of multicultural societies and the place of non-white, non-secular citizens within them. Events for public audiences have been integrated into the planning of research conferences awarded internal and external funding, including *Species of Spaces: Transdisciplinary Approaches to the Work of Georges Perec* (Carroll, Modern Humanities Research Association Conference Grant, March 2014) and *British Culture After 9/11* (Ahmed and Carroll, URF, June 2014).

d. Relationship to case studies

The case study "Developing the Teaching of Creative Writing" exemplifies research impact in relation to users and audiences including students and teachers in further and higher education; it also illustrates key modes of impact, including learning resources (in print and online) and professional development. This case study can be situated within a broader context of established and ongoing research impact within the English research group, which demonstrates the social and cultural value of creative writing as an enriching imaginative resource for individuals and communities. Whereas "Developing the Teaching of Creative Writing" centres on the work of a Professor Emeritus, "Muslims Writing Britain" centres on the work of a recent recipient of an AHRC Early Career Fellowship. This case study exemplifies the integration of research impact strategies into research and publication planning. It also illustrates the successful initiation of collaborative relationships with key cultural organisations with potential for longer term benefits. The impact case studies have been selected to illustrate the long-standing commitment to research impact within the English research group at Teesside and to demonstrate a proactive and sustainable approach to future impact.