Institution: Canterbury Christ Church University

Unit of Assessment: Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management (36)

a. Context

The Unit is based in the Department of Media, Art and Design, which is located within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. The current departmental structure was established in 2011 when the Department of Media merged with the Department of Art. The research produced by the submitting Unit has focused on four priority areas: (1) practice-based research in media, art and design; (2) digital transformations in media and cultural practices; (3) film studies; and (4) cultural studies. A range of publications and practice-based artefacts has been produced in these areas. In relation to impact beyond academia, the research has reached two main types of beneficiaries: communities in South East England and third and public sector organisations working for and with these communities; and local, national and international arts and media audiences. The main types of impact have been: enhancing public engagement within local communities; the enrichment of cultural life; and raising awareness of social and cultural issues.

Impact that has occurred in relation to communities in the South East includes **Shepherdson's** The Old Lookout Gallery at Broadstairs (2010-). This has taken practice-based research in photography, sculpture, film and video, sonic art, and graphic design into the heart of the local community, and has created impact by contributing to the quality of cultural life experienced in that community. **Shepherdson's** research has also made an important contribution to the preservation, conservation and presentation of the cultural heritage of coastal communities in the South East through the establishment of the *South East Archive of Seaside Photography* (2012-) (see Impact Case Study 1). **Gulyas'** projects on local media and local communication have created impact at a community level by increasing public awareness of the changes taking place in local media, and the potential of social media as a tool for enhancing community cohesion (see Impact Case Study 1). **Blackman's** research on youth culture has created impact at a local level through consultancy work with the Kent and Canterbury Addiction Young Persons' Service (2011-), developing awareness of the issues faced by young people in relation to drug and alcohol addiction. Other projects engaging with communities in the South East include work by Jones to rescue and archive films made by amateur film-makers in Kent (2010-), the contribution made by **Pallant** to the annual Canterbury *Anifest* animation festival (2011-), and Hawkins' involvement in the community archaeology project *A Town Unearthed: Folkestone before 1500* as curator of the *Earth and Vision* exhibition (2012).

In relation to arts and media audiences, research by members of the Unit has created impact in terms of enriching cultural life as well as raising awareness of social and cultural issues. Practice-based research undertaken by **Stefanovski** has had an impact on theatre audiences at an international level (see Impact Case Study 2). His plays, which investigate the complexities of Balkan identity and history, have stimulated and enhanced public understanding of issues of European identity. Furthermore, the originality of **Stefanovski's** work, recognised by theatre critics and directors, and in international prizes, creates impact through the development of new forms of artistic, social and political expression. **Stefanovski's** work can also be seen to create impact in relation to public understanding and discourse at an international level through his active participation in the work of European arts think-tanks and campaign organisations such as the European Cultural Parliament (2008-) and Culture Action Europe (2010). Other practice-based work that has reached international audiences includes work exhibited, screened or broadcast in the USA (**Shepherdson**, 2011; **Birtwistle**, 2011), Italy (**Birtwistle**, 2008; Hall, 2013; **McLean** 2013) and France (**Birtwistle**, 2008; **Stefanovski,** 2012). At a national level **Butler's** research on science fiction has created impact on audiences for science fiction film and literature by helping to develop public understanding and appreciation of the genre. His work in this area has included publications aimed at a non-academic audience (e.g. *Fifty Key Figures in Science Fiction*. Routledge, 2010) and his role as Chair of Judges for the Arthur C. Clarke Award for Science Fiction Literature (2011-). Other examples of practice-based research reaching national audiences include contributions to exhibitions held at the Camden Arts Centre, London (**Birtwistle**, 2013) and the Storey Creative Industries Centre, Lancaster (**Shepherdson,** 2013) (for further national

examples see below). In South East England the exhibition of practice-based outputs produced by the Unit in fine and media arts has created impact for arts audiences by contributing to the cultural life of the region. Practice-based research undertaken by Hawkins, **T. Long**, Hall, **Butler**, **Shepherdson**, Ball, Ikoniadou and **Birtwistle** has reached audiences in the South East through exhibitions, screenings, performances, and online content (see below).

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b. Approach to impact

The Unit's approach to impact involved developing relationships with beneficiaries in two main ways: firstly through partnerships, and secondly through public engagement activities.

Partnerships have included formal and informal collaborations with external organisations. A number of research projects have been conducted with external partners who were themselves the primary users of the research generated and who, in turn, provided a means by which research was subsequently made available to wider audiences. For example, **Gulyas'** research on social media and journalism (2011, 2012 and 2013) has been used by the multinational PR and marketing-communications company Cision, and the journalists and PR professionals it serves. Similarly, **Ambrose's** work on the painter Francis Bacon, featured in a collection of new writings commissioned by the Estate of Francis Bacon (*Francis Bacon: New Studies – Centenary Essays*. Steidl, 2009), finds an audience both in and through the Estate, which is active in promoting research on the artist. **Gulyas'** *Neighbours Online* project (2011), and social media for voluntary and community organisations projects (2011-12, 2012-13), have involved **Gulyas** working in partnership with Canterbury District Community Alliance and Canterbury City Council to help voluntary and community organisations enhance their links with communities and clients. Other examples of partnership activities included **Meades'** involvement with Games Expo East Kent (GEEK) 2012 and **Pallant's** work with the Whitstable-based animation company Animate and Create (2011-).

Public engagement activities involved a range of approaches to developing relationships with beneficiaries, including: participation in, and organisation of, exhibitions and screenings; curatorial work in external galleries; the creation of new gallery spaces; participation in festivals; the organisation of public events and debates; publications; and online interactions. Galleries have provided an important means by which practice-based work in painting, sculpture, photography, film, video, and sonic art has reached a range of local, national and international audiences. **T. Long's** drawings, prints and sculptures, selected for Royal Academy of Art Summer Exhibitions (2008 and 2010), and Ball's photography, exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery (2009) and the Royal Academy of Art (2012), have been seen by large national audiences, as have paintings by **J. Long**, who has exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy's Annual exhibition in Dublin since 1993. At the same time, work produced by Hawkins, **T. Long**, Hall, **Butler**, **Shepherdson**, Ball and Ikoniadou has achieved impact in the South East through exhibitions, workshops and other events held in galleries in Canterbury, Margate, Broadstairs, Folkestone and Whitstable. Where these galleries have a specific remit to engage with local communities (e.g. Limbo Arts, Margate; The Old Lookout Gallery, Broadstairs; the Sassoon Gallery, Folkestone) audiences often extend beyond the gallery-going public to include members of the broader local community, or particular interest groups within that community; for example local archaeologists in the case of Hawkins' 2012 Sassoon Gallery exhibition *Earth and Vision*. Specific arts communities and audiences have also been engaged through the participation of staff in externally organised festivals as well as events hosted by the Unit. Thus Hall's work has reached the sonic arts community through her involvement in international events such as the Deep Wireless Festival (Toronto, 2012) and the Lightworks international festival of arts and new media (Grimsby, 2012), and locally through the organisation of radio art workshops (Horsebridge Arts Centre, Whitstable, 2012). Research on the work of filmmaker Michael Powell undertaken by Hawkins and McMillan has reached the community of Powell enthusiasts through film screenings and talks organised by the Department's Powell Research Group as part of the Canterbury Festival (2010 and 2011).

Shepherdson's project *The Old Lookout Gallery Broadstairs* has been successful in enabling some of the Unit's practice-based outputs in photography, sculpture, film and video, sonic art, and graphic design to achieve impact through public exhibition. Ball, Hall, **T. Long**, **Butler**, and Ikoniadou have all undertaken week-long residencies in the gallery, located at Broadstairs Harbour in Kent. In its aim to take practice-based research into the heart of a seaside community, the project is fundamentally underpinned by a concern with community engagement. This engagement

is also central to research undertaken by **Gulyas**. The 2009 project, *Empirical study on current trends and challenges in regional media in Kent,* achieved impact through public events organised to discuss issues raised by the research.

During the assessment period, the strategic focus of the Department's work relating to impact was the establishment of a strong relationship between research and knowledge exchange. Impact activities have been supported by funds, resources and infrastructures both at University and Departmental levels. At Departmental level, staff have been able to bid for teaching remission and grants to support the development of impact. The Departmental budget and devolved QR funding have been used to fund public events, develop websites for research projects, provide research assistants on impact projects, mount exhibitions, and produce publications. The University has also provided support via the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) and through the services of its Research and Enterprise Development Centre. Through competitive internal bidding, during the assessment period members of the Department Of Media, Art and Design secured a total of £101,631 from HEIF. This funding has been central to the submitting Unit's development of impact related projects and initiatives, and has supported many of the projects described above. In addition a total of £98,272 KE income was secured from external funding sources such as Arts Council England, Kent County Council, Cision, and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

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c. Strategy and plans

As the Department moves from a period of capacity building to further developing international excellence in its research, targeted support for high-impact research will be provided through the establishment of: i) a departmental research centre for culture, media and communities, that aims to build a centre of excellence for research and KE on the topic; and ii) a Faculty centre for practice-based research in the arts, that aims to act as a catalyst for, and promoter of, practice-based research. At the same time, research across the Department's four priority areas will continue to be developed through QR funding, workshops and mentoring. Focusing on these strands of research activity, the Unit aims to reach two key groups of beneficiaries: i) communities, and organisations working with and for communities; and ii) regional, national and international audiences for creative arts and media.

To enhance the impact of its research, the Department has identified two overarching strategic objectives for the period 2014-19: i) to increase collaboration with partners outside academia; and ii) to secure significant external funding for impact and knowledge exchange activities. The first objective will be achieved through the development of strategic relationships with new and existing partners, including media companies (e.g. Animate and Create; Cision Europe), local government and public service providers (e.g. County and City Councils), galleries and other arts venues (e.g. Turner Contemporary; The Pie factory, Margate), arts and media organisations (e.g. Canterbury Festival; The Dreamland Trust, Margate), and charities and third sector organisations (e.g. Canterbury District Voluntary Association; Kent Can). In relation to funding, while continuing to draw upon internal sources, focus will be placed on securing income through partnerships, and through bids to external funders such as Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Income-generation activities will be supported through workshops, internally funded remission, and mentoring.

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d. Relationship to case studies

The Unit's two case studies, 'Enhancing Public and Professional Understanding of Digital Transformations Through Research on Communities' and 'Creating New Forms of Political Expression Through Practice-based Research in the Arts', deal with the impacts created by the work of a number of researchers working in the Unit. The first case study exemplifies the emphasis placed on community engagement and enhancing the lives of communities in the Unit's approach to impact, and focuses on the work of **Gulyas** and **Shepherdson**. The second case study exemplifies the place of practice-based research in relation to the Unit's approach to achieving impact, and focuses on **Stefanovski, T. Long and Birtwistle's** research on the creation of new forms of political expression, and its engagement with a range of local, national and international audiences. Both case studies illustrate the multidisciplinary nature of research produced by the submitting Unit, which is reflected in the reach and range of impacts generated by the Unit's outputs.