

<p><b>Institution:</b> Canterbury Christ Church University</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Theology and Religious Studies (33)</p>
<p><b>a. Context</b> The UoA's research impact derives mainly from its research focused on themes of: <b>Social Justice and Religion; Religion and Art</b> (with a particular focus on music and theatre); <b>Interfaith Dialogue;</b> and <b>Religious Education</b>. All of this research engages with individuals and groups outside academia. The main non-academic users, beneficiaries and audiences of the research in the unit are <b>international</b> institutions and communities, including The International Forum Bosnia, the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, the global LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, Intersex and Queer/Querying) community, the International Lay Buddhist Forum, the Buddhist Asoke community in Thailand, the Newari Buddhist community in Nepal, the Karmapa International Buddhist Institute, Delhi), <b>national</b> organisations (5 AM Records, Black Led Churches, Church House, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), The Bible Society, BRAP Birmingham Race Action Partnership), <b>local</b> institutions and communities in East Kent (Canterbury Cathedral, the Canterbury and Rochester Dioceses, the Canterbury &amp; District Inter Faith Action, Christian organisations interested in developing spiritual interests in South East of England and the Thanet and District Reform Synagogue), <b>media consumers</b> in the UK (BBC, Channel 4, Radio, Twitter) and <b>artists</b> (playwrights, musicians, choreographers). The main types of impact that can be evidenced are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contributions to processes of reconciliation and interfaith dialogue;</li> <li>• the creation of cultural capital and contributing to widening public access via artistic expressions of religions;</li> <li>• influencing and informing the design and delivery of curriculum and syllabi in schools and other HEIs; and</li> <li>• influencing practice and policy as a result of research on the nature and extent of racial, sexual and gender discrimination and contributing to a wider public understanding of human rights conceptions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>Research in the UoA has had an impact on <b>civil society</b> by contributing to interfaith dialogue and influencing current debates on interreligious engagement. Jones (Professor of Theology until 2011) was actively engaged in peace and reconciliation-building institutions in two countries that experienced major ethnic and religious conflicts in recent years. He was involved with the Centre for Interreligious Dialogue of the International Forum Bosnia to which he contributed an Anglican perspective to their reconciliation work. He also contributed to regular interfaith meetings between theologians of different faiths at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. Scherer is a member of the University's Interfaith Council and the International Lay Buddhist Forum Network and regularly participates in interfaith meetings in the UK (e.g. <i>LoveSpirit</i>, London), Germany (e.g. <i>Musica Sacra International</i>, Marktoberndorf; Interfaith lectures open to the general public at the Faculty of Protestant Theology, University of Oldenburg) and Spain (UNESCO Inter-Faith Forum, Málaga) as a Buddhist scholar and practitioner drawing on ongoing research in this field. Diemling has worked since summer 2011 in collaboration with Larry Ray (University of Kent) with the Thanet &amp; District Reform Jewish Community to explore their cultural and religious values. She has also organised a conference assessing the Day of Prayer for Peace convened by Pope John Paul II in Assisi in collaboration with the Franciscan International Study Centre (October 2011) that brought together scholars and faith leaders from different religions and was attended by representatives from Candifa (Canterbury &amp; District Inter Faith Action) and local churches and has resulted in a book. Norman's research on theology and sexuality led to an invite from Hong Kong University to speak on Christianity and Transgender in December 2010. The event was a response to the W case (the legal battle of a transsexual woman to marry her boyfriend), and was reported in the HK press.</p> <p>Members of the UoA have contributed to <b>cultural life</b> by the creation of cultural capital using a variety of artistic forms to make their academic research accessible and to enrich and expand the lives of particularly, but not exclusively, faith groups. Beckford's research on British Pentecostalism has led to a collaboration with playwright Kwame Kwei-Armah on a radio drama, 'Father Son and Holy Ghost' that examined faith and the impact of a consumerist society in an inner-city Pentecostal church (first broadcast on BBC Radio 3, 10 March 2012). The play was described as a 'raw examination of faith and whether it has an effective role to play in these morally and financially bankrupt times' and as a 'tough but brilliant listen. I hope that it gets a wider audience.' (Jane</p>

## Impact template (REF3a)

Anderson, *Radio Times*) Beckford and Khovacs have worked on widening access to religions via artistic expressions. Beckford organised the workshop *The Black Messiah* in connection with the Black History Month (October 2012) in cooperation with the University's Widening Participation Office. A number of filmmakers, playwrights and choreographers explored how artists represent Jesus and the implications of this for the church. This will be followed up by a workshop in 2013-14 and a publication. Khovacs has published on the use of theatre for theology (Theo-Drama) and religion and literature. He is also a regular preacher in churches in the Diocese of Canterbury as well as the Église Protestante Française de Cantorbéry, with a special focus on dramatisation of the Bible, story-telling and theological reflection through art. He appeared on the BBC's Inside Out South East (July 2012). The Diocese commissioned from him the creation of n9vena.blospot.com and a Twitter feed on art and faith (@n9vena) for 2012-2013 to link local Anglican communities in the use of art and imagination in prayer and homiletic reflection. Khovacs is currently working with a Diocesan commission on Christian spirituality developing drama and performance workshops for use in church communities. This involves eleven organisations from different Christian churches in the South East. Khovacs is also a contributor to transpositions.co.uk, a knowledge exchange forum for artists and theologians.

The unit has an ongoing commitment to contributing to debates on **religious education** in schools and to provide resources for teaching in Higher Education. Law's work on the role of church foundation universities was taken up in a study on the distinctiveness and identity in Cathedral group institutions by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (funded by HEFCE) in 2011 [<http://cathedralsgroup.org.uk/Uploads/DistinctivenessFullReport.pdf>]; see also the review by the CofE National Advisor for HE: <http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1535934/aipplitreview.doc> and led to Law being asked to chair the Theological Steering group for the Anglican Identity Project. Law has also secured funding from The Church Colleges of Education Fund as consultant for a research project to develop a practical theology in the form of handbook for Chaplains employed by Anglican HEIs in the UK. This examines the role of Chaplains in the changing environment of contemporary Higher Education in the UK. Norman along with CCCU's Education Faculty has developed links with the Higher Education Academy, and Church House and contributed to policy debates on religious education in schools and Higher Education. This led to consultancy for the Edexcel A-Level Religious Studies specification at Pearson (Nov 2012). Drawing on a long-standing research expertise in Jewish-Christian relations, Diemling is coordinating with Hannah Holtschneider (School of Divinity, Edinburgh University) an online teaching resource on Jewish-non-Jewish relations [<http://www.jnjr.div.ed.ac.uk/about.html>] aiming to provide high-quality resources for teaching Jewish-non-Jewish relations at undergraduate level. Since its official launch in July 2011, the site has attracted about 20,000 unique hits from mostly international users. It is regarded as '[a]n innovative online teaching resource with challenging and interesting primary sources that will be very useful to anybody studying the relations between Jews and non-Jews' (Dr Yaacov Deutsch, Executive Director, *World Union of Jewish Studies*). Scherer has explored and consulted on Buddhist teacher training with the Karmapa International Buddhist Institute, Delhi, India, by providing sample lectures to aspirant students; discussion rounds exploring the stakeholders needs and intensive curriculum discussion with education providers. Research by members of the UoA has also informed **policy debates and practices**. Scherer's research contribution to Queer Studies and engagement in the University's Equality and Diversity Committee has impacted the University's Sexual Orientation Position Statement and the Gender Identity Statement (see case study 1). Beckford has informed the policy debate and practice in his work with the NHS BME [Black and Minority Ethnic] network at the Brighton and Hove NHS Trust (see case study 2).

The unit has invested its QR funding on research projects with the aim to create measurable and sustainable impact and members of staff have also successfully attracted funding from other sources, both within the university (Knowledge Exchange grants) and outside funding bodies and charities (Spalding Trust, The Church Colleges of Education Fund, the Bible Society) to work on research that creates measurable impact outside academia. These projects have been supported by study leaves and QR funding to engage in research that has the potential to create strong and measurable impact. Members of staff have utilised a number of institutional facilities and resources in undertaking these activities, including the Equality and Diversity Committee, RED (Research and Development) and the Interfaith Council. The department's Knowledge Exchange representative is responsible for collating information from colleagues about the impact of their research.

**c. Strategy and plans**

We have identified our main strengths in a number of areas outlined above and will continue to support these. **Social Justice and Religions;** The UoA has launched a research cluster around the theme of Social Justice and Religion which will create greater research cohesion in one of the key areas of our expertise. We aim to develop this research cluster into a research centre which will enable us to engage with NGOs and charities in the UK and abroad, build on existing collaborations (for example, Birmingham Race Action Partnership, Bringing Hope Gang Reduction Project and others in the UK; the Green Tara Trust and others in Nepal) and develop new links, thereby making a contribution to civil society by challenging social assumptions, influencing policy and practice and contributing to teaching the Ethics of Social Justice beyond our own institution.

**Religion and Art:** Several members of the UoA are currently working in ways of engaging people with religion through the Arts. Over the next REF period, we will build on an emerging body of work that has sought to engage with diverse beneficiaries, such as the homeless (Khovacs) and hard to reach youth (Beckford). We have identified a number of projects with the potential in creating significant impact that will be supported by QR funds. One example of these is the *Jamaican Bible Remix Project* (Principal Investigator: Beckford, funded by the Bible Society, £15,000 awarded in 2013). It aims to make the Jamaican Bible (launched in 2012) accessible to a wider demographic by remixing key biblical texts with contemporary urban music. It includes provision for an MA by Research thesis that will evaluate the project throughout and measure its impact. This is a pilot project that will enable us to develop a toolkit to document and measure the impact of our research projects.

**Interfaith Dialogue;** As a result of the unit's research into interfaith relations, we developed an online teaching resource that will expand further to engage with religious communities and interfaith groups, such as the Council of Christians and Jews. We plan to target such groups by offering bespoke seminars, supported by access to the online resource. This will facilitate an in depth understanding of the complexity of interfaith relations both historically and in a contemporary context. In addition to promoting the source with religious communities, we are also seeking through external funding to expand the resource substantially to allow for more resources on Jewish-Muslim relations.

**Religious Education:** Building on established links with the National Institute for Christian Education Research (based at CCCU's Faculty of Education), **Law** and **Norman** are currently working with colleagues to prepare a bid (£90,000) for The Anglican Identity Project for Church Foundation HEIs to contribute to research on the identity of universities and colleges belonging to the Cathedral Group and enhance our expertise in the area of Religious Education.

The creation of strong and lasting Impact is built into all research plans and proposals. When applying for internal research funding, members of the unit are being asked to set out how their research project will create impact that can be measured and evidenced.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The case studies are examples of the unit's research impact in the field of social justice and identity. The **Improving Social Justice in LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans\*, Intersex and Queer/Querying) communities: The Impact of the Queering Paradigms Project** is an academic resource and network that is closely linked with global activism on sexualities and gender identity. It sets out to expand the discourse on Queer Theory beyond Western academia and actively engages with activities and groups that so far have often been excluded. The network has supported change of awareness of LGBTIQ issues, empowered activists in their political roles and contributed to changes in attitudes, public discourse and policies regarding sexual equality. In addition, the network has had an impact on the policy and practice of Canterbury Christ Church University which in turn has influenced the equality and gender identity policies and practices at other universities in the UK and the US (case study 1). The work on **Biblical Exorcism as Political Motivation: Empowering Black Pentecostals to Engage with Politics** focuses on the intersection between black liberation theology, documentary film and racial justice practice. It has challenged assumptions about race and faith in Pentecostals churches, influenced the methods of social justice projects in local communities (Birmingham Race Action Partnership, Bringing Hope Gang Reduction Project) and contributed to the development and implementation of the equalities framework at Brighton and Hove NHS Trust (case study 2).