

Institution: UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
Unit of Assessment: D29 English Language and Literature
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The UoA fosters a regional and national sense of cultural identity through literary and cultural research, increasingly influences cultural life on an international scale, and transforms professional practice through language research. Our Impact is focused in these areas:</p> <p>We enhance cultural life by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o maximising the quality and degree of public engagement achieved by libraries, museums and archives through collaboration with libraries such as Birmingham City Library (now The Library of Birmingham), the Winchester College Fellows' Library and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; o enhancing the quality of productions and information provided to the public by the Royal Shakespeare Company; o encouraging tourism and community identity through collaboration with civic groups such as City Councils seeking to build on connections with local authors; o enhancing the work of cultural groups such as reading groups and local self-education groups. <p>We have a commitment to public discourse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o locally, by taking part in activities such as poetry readings and public lectures; o nationally, by taking part in television and radio broadcasts. <p>We contribute to education and commerce by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o enhancing the practice of professionals such as language teachers, examiners, translators; o enhancing commercial activities by engagement with the publishing industry.
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>By demonstrating an agile response to opportunities, we have achieved a strong record of beneficial impact on cultural life, both in the UK and internationally, on public discourse, and on education and commerce. Indicative examples are:</p> <p>Cultural Life. Our literary and creative research has impact on the cultural life of the region and beyond. Key activity has been led by members of the Shakespeare Institute, who influence the performance of Shakespeare's texts through engagement with theatre companies at Shakespeare's Globe, London, and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon. This activity has been enhanced by University investment in the Institute (two new posts), and particularly by the broadening of the research focus of the Institute to encompass both Shakespeare as a cultural artefact and the performance of Shakespeare, as well as textual editing and theatre history. Wiggins and Dobson write regular programme notes for London and Stratford theatres. Dobson, Fernie, Sullivan and others advised on interpretations of <i>Taming of the Shrew</i> in a seminar attended by both academics and theatre practitioners. The Shakespeare Institute has also developed the public reception of Shakespeare as a cultural artefact, in partnership with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, with whom we have a jointly-appointed Research Fellow (Hopes), as well as two AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral researchers supervised by Hamling (returned to History UoA). Elsewhere, Fernie's AHRC/ESRC funded project <i>Redcrosse</i> was designed to enhance public cultural and spiritual life through a re-imagining of religious poetry and the re-claiming of the concept of England. It produced a new poetic liturgy for England and St George, premiered at St George's Chapel, Windsor and at Manchester Cathedral (2011) and performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company at Coventry Cathedral (2012) and at venues in London and Birmingham. Praised by the then Archbishop of Canterbury as 'a unique contribution', it featured in reports in The Guardian, the Independent, The Star, BBC Radio and TV. Fernie has also advised the new Library of Birmingham on developing its Birmingham Shakespeare Library, which re-engages Shakespeare with the city and region.</p> <p>Creative Writing is another key influence on cultural life. House's quartet of novels (<i>The Kills</i>), conceived in an innovative digital format, is at the cutting edge of new publishing practices and transforms the way that writers interact with new technologies. Similarly, his short story 'we were okay' is published via Twitter (October 2013). House and Kennard are public figures as well as researchers: <i>The Kills</i> was long-listed for the 2013 Man Booker prize; House's <i>Fatboy Review</i> project receives about 11,000 unique hits annually from over 20 countries; between 2011 and 2013, Kennard has given poetry readings to audiences of between 100 and 700 at venues such as Manchester's <i>Poets and Performers</i>, Norwich Arts Centre, Bristol Old Vic, the Latitude Festival and the St Ives Poetry Festival.</p> <p>We increasingly influence cultural and community organisations. VRumbold and</p>

Impact template (REF3a)

KRumbold, in collaboration with Winchester College Fellows' Library, supervise a PhD student (funded through the AHRC collaborative doctoral award scheme) who is uncovering the history and cultural importance of the 18th century donation of a significant private library to the College. The project's 2013 'Unlocking the Private Library' symposium, attended by 50 librarians, volunteers, and representatives of smaller/private libraries and holding organisations such as heritage sites and religious institutions, alongside academic researchers, shared the benefits of this work with communities committed to enhancing public engagement with such library collections. Adlington and Mason have supervised a PhD project investigating early Quaker texts in the Woodbrooke Library of the Society of Friends, enhancing the Society's understanding of its past. In conjunction with her work on reading groups in Britain and abroad (see case study), Fuller is a member of the Board of Directors and Trustees of Writing West Midlands, the literature development agency for the West Midlands, funded by Arts Council England, and in that role has inspired the inclusion of reading-centred events, such as Readers' Days, within the often writer-centred Birmingham Book (now Literature) Festival programme.

Public Discourse. We contribute to public discourse on literature, culture, and language. In our work with civic groups we enhance both **social wellbeing** and, through the development of tourism, the **commercial wellbeing** of the region. Supported by College finance for an undergraduate research fellowship, Scase's work on the Vernon manuscript has enhanced perceptions of the West Midlands dialect/accents and has contributed to local self-esteem (see case study). VRumbold has participated in the Gravity Fields festival in Grantham (2012), an event building on the town's 18th century heritage in science (Newton) and literature (Cibber) to enhance its image and cultural tourism offer. The University's Barber Institute has hosted public events contributed to by members of the UoA, including: an exhibition of the original manuscript ('scroll') of Kerouac's *On the Road*, curated by REllis (2008-09); three events in conjunction with a conference on Sitwell organised by Longworth, and including a lecture by her, attracting public audiences of up to 200 (2011); art and poetry evenings (Adlington, Wright, VRumbold). The University's 'Book to the Future' literary festival in October 2013 expects to attract 300 members of the local community and features contributions by House and Scase in a programme of over 40 events and exhibitions. Dobson, Fernie, Preston and Scase contributed to the 2012 Hay Festival of Literature and the Arts by speaking about their research, and Fuller took part in the 2013 Festival. Adlington has given lectures on Milton at the Birmingham and Midlands Institute (2013) and at Birmingham Central Library (2009). Mitchell has lectured at the Johnson Society, Lichfield (2012). VRumbold and Sullivan have taken part in the Radio 4 programme *In Our Time*. REllis was interviewed about Harriet Beecher Stowe in 'What's the Point of Forgiveness?' (BBC1, April 2011). Preston was interviewed (January 2013) on the BBC4 documentary *The Century that Wrote Itself* and participated in a National Public Radio programme on Thomas Browne (2010). Rokison advised and appeared in *Shakespeare Uncovered* (BBC, 2011-12). Sullivan advised on *Tony Robinson's Gods and Monsters* (Channel 4, 2011). She also engaged in Impact activities such as a public lecture and an appearance on Australian Public Radio during a visit to Australia funded by Universitas 21 (2013). Kennard was featured on BBC Radio 3 *The Verb*. These contributions demonstrate a sustained commitment to engaging the public with our research.

Education, Commerce. There are two main strands to this activity:

Language education. Since the 1980s we have worked with publishers and commercial organisations to use the outcomes of our research to enhance language teaching materials (e.g. the Cobuild series of dictionaries and grammars for learners of English, published by HarperCollins). Most recently, in addition to Koester's co-authorship of the *Business Advantage* series (Cambridge University Press) (see case study), Walker has developed a language teaching game (*Word Dominos*) based on research into collocation, available commercially on computers and smart phones. Walker was assisted by the University's enterprise unit, Alta Innovations, which advises on commercial applications of research. John has contributed to academic writing materials for the new edition of the Advanced Oxford Learners' Dictionary, Oxford University Press (2011-12). Members of the UoA also contribute to development of curricula and teacher education in English Language Teaching worldwide. Kennedy has worked for the British Council and the Ministry of Education, Venezuela (2012-13) as an external consultant to local teacher networks researching the English language curriculum. We have also contributed to language education

Impact template (REF3a)

nearer to home. Drawing on their earlier engagement with primary schools to enhance language awareness, Sealey and Thompson organised a workshop for educators in 2010 on ways of using language corpora research in classrooms.

Commerce The University's emphasis on interdisciplinary research enabled Mason to work with colleagues in the University's Centre for Railway Research and Education on a project funded by the Centre to automate the linguistic processing of commercial tendering bids.

Literary Editions We are a centre for excellence in text editing and our researchers produce gold-standard editions of major writers used in HEIs across the country, particularly in the Early Modern period: Dobson *Twelfth Night* (2005); Jowett *Sir Thomas More* (2011), *Richard III* (2000), *Timon of Athens* (2004); Wiggins *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (2003); Wright *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Poetry* (2005). Other work spans a range of periods: REllis, Harriet Wilson *Our Nig; or, Sketches from the life of a Free Black* (2011); VRumbold *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, vol. III, *The Dunciad 1728 and the Dunciad Variorum* (2007), *The Cambridge Edition of Jonathan Swift* vol.II, *Parodies* (2013); Scase, *The Vernon Manuscript* (2011); Small *The Complete Words of Oscar Wilde*, vol. II, *De Profundis* (2005). Many of these are standard editions used on English programmes worldwide; for example, the editions of Shakespeare are required texts for most relevant MA programmes, including Cambridge, London, Oxford, Princeton, Stanford, York. Our newly-formed Centre for Literary Editing and the Materiality of the Text (CLEMT) acts as a catalyst for further innovation in this area.

Resources. We recognise the need for both soft resources, such as advice and mentoring, and hard resources, i.e. time and money.

Advice and Mentoring. The School Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee coordinates **research mentors**, senior colleagues who advise researchers on issues including scoping the Impact potential of new projects at the planning stage. Regular research-focused **away days** disseminate good practice in proactive development of Impact. In addition, the College of Arts and Law provides professional advisory resources for Impact, headed by a senior advisor appointed in 2011 with responsibility for supporting the development, embedding and evidencing of Impact as part of research. Between 2009 and 2011 it drew on HEIF funding to fund two part-time advisors on the commercial exploitation of academic research. From October 2013 they will be replaced by a Head of Business Engagement with the remit to maximise the potential for external and commercialisation opportunities to impact across the College, including opportunities with voluntary sector, not for profit organisations and SMEs.

The University of Birmingham has taken a number of strategic initiatives to facilitate Impact. These include the establishment of units such as Alta Innovations (detailed advice on the business potential of research) and Ideas Lab (a professional pitching service to facilitate popularisation of research into documentaries hosted by broadcasting companies), the appointment of a Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Cultural Engagement as well as two University Impact Officers, with a remit for enhancing and evidencing Impact, and a Public Engagement working group, chaired by the Professor of Public Engagement in Science. These individuals and groups identify initiatives and provide the structures and strategies needed to develop them.

Time and Money. Researchers in the UoA can draw on funds to support Impact activities from the **College Research and Knowledge Transfer budget**. A quick turn-round time ensures responsiveness to Impact requirements. Application can also be made to the **School Research and Knowledge Transfer budget**. Impact activities that are part of funded research projects are allocated time in the College **Workload Allocation Model**. Public engagement activities in North America and India are supported by the University's North American and India Travel Funds.

c. Strategy and plans

The UoA has used REF preparation as an opportunity to review its approach to Impact. While continuing our focus on **cultural life, public discourse** and **education and commerce**, we are enhancing the role of Impact in our research strategy. We focus on three aspects of infrastructure:

- Our School Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee has re-configured research mentorship in the School so that all staff have the opportunity to work closely with a mentor who is also a member of the committee. All research mentors, and the College RKT office, ensure

Impact template (REF3a)

that Impact is an integral part of each research project from its inception, and that **the most appropriate Impact design** is built into our funding applications.

- The School Research and Knowledge Transfer committee has identified an Impact Champion who will develop resources to share good practice and assist individuals in **documenting Impact consistently**.
- We recognise that Impact activities require dedicated time, and that allocation for them needs to be made in our workload model. Activities can also involve expense. Our **Workload Allocation Model** and our model for **allocating research funds** within the School are being revised to enhance support for Impact activities.

There are three specific aspects of research where we plan enhanced Impact activities:

- The Shakespeare Institute continues to enhance links with partner institutions. The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the Royal Shakespeare Company have responded to our initiatives with increasing requests for engagement. We are developing further engagement with other community theatre groups in the West Midlands and with the Munich Shakespeare Library and the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Researchers are working with the new Library of Birmingham to enhance its Shakespeare Library. We have in place detailed plans for participation by the UoA in the World Shakespeare Congress of 2016, many of which are aimed at involving arts organisations, community groups, schools and the general public. Subject to funding, Fernie's 'Shakespeare European Laureate (1769, 2016 and beyond)' will culminate in performances of old and new Shakespeare Odes in Stratford and London in 2016.
- Led by the Centre for Literary Editing and Materiality of the Text, we have in place detailed plans to engage with specialised book and manuscript collections in non-HEI cultural organisations, to use our research to enhance public access and understanding. Currently 41 such organisations in the region have been identified as an initial target group. We also take advantage of the AHRC-funded Collaborative Skills Development Award 'Reaching out from Higher Education' gained by the College of Arts and Law Graduate School to embed postgraduate students in regional cultural organisations. Four students from the UoA were funded in 2012-13.
- While maintaining the influence of our Language research on the educational and publishing sector, we will extend its impact into policy and public cultural life. A project on interdisciplinary discourse (ESRC, PI Thompson) responds directly to questions raised by journal publishers about how to maximise the success of interdisciplinary journals. A project on the discursive representation of animals (Leverhulme, CI Sealey) will inform decisions by food manufacturers, broadcasters, and campaigners. A project on multilingual communities (ESRC, CI Tagg) will increase economic growth and social well-being and inclusion across four British cities by raising awareness of the role and benefits of multilingual practices. We are developing further projects in conjunction with Cognitive Science, Social Policy, Law, International Development, and Medicine.

As part of a civic university with a long term commitment to the impact of its research, we contribute to the mission set out in the University of Birmingham's 2010-2015 strategy, which aims to '*bring the University's resources to bear on societal needs, through knowledge development and transfer, and strategic partnerships in the intellectual, commercial, cultural and policy spheres*'.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our case studies represent different areas in the UoA, including literary editing, Shakespeare, and corpus linguistics. Fuller's, Scase's and Sullivan's research addresses **cultural life** and **public discourse**, exemplifying our commitment to producing influential and innovative editions (Scase's electronic edition of the Vernon manuscript), to reinterpreting key cultural figures (Sullivan's work on Shakespeare as cultural artefact), and to investigating cultural practices (Fuller's work on reading groups). Koester's research into workplace discourse and Littlemore's into figurative language enhance **education**, at secondary and tertiary levels (helping learners process metaphor) and in Continuing Professional Development (facilitating participation in business interactions), through the influence of linguistic research on teaching and examining English Language. The case studies also exemplify varying relationships between research and Impact. Scase's and Koester's projects, as well as VRumbold's and Preston's work, add value to academic research by following it with Impact activities. Fuller's, Littlemore's and Sullivan's case studies demonstrate our complementary concern to adopt Impact as the driver of research.