

Impact template (REF3a)

Institution: Swansea University
Unit of Assessment: 28a - Modern Languages and Linguistics
a. Context

Swansea University's Department of Languages, Translation and Communication is a flagship for the subject area in Wales, and one of the subject's major UK centres. We seek and achieve impact among non-academic beneficiaries locally, nationally and internationally, in two main respects:

1. Promoting cross-cultural knowledge and understanding, with benefits for:
 - a) local audiences (e.g. Latin American Association festivals, readings by international writers);
 - b) Wales-wide NGOs in the asylum and refugee sector (Cheesman: Case Study);
 - c) Wales-wide school/college students and teachers through video seminars;
 - d) UK and international publics through online projects (e.g. Hall: Case Study; Cheesman: 'TransVis' project; Large: national German Studies mailing list), and broadcast/print media and live appearances as experts;
 - e) associations reaching beyond academia, through executive service and web mastering (e.g. British Comparative Literature Association, Modern Humanities Research Association).
2. Economic benefits to regional SMEs in language industries, and their clients: through language-learning and translation resource and software development, research collaborations, upskilling employees, and by fostering a vibrant and innovative translation studies environment.

b. Approach to impact

Understanding of impact is well developed in the Unit. Our approach is to seek opportunities for non-academic institutional and public engagement, and nurture their impact potential. Department of Research and Innovation staff help to prepare 'Pathways to Impact' statements and have briefed Departmental meetings on Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) and other aspects of impact; Unit members have attended University impact briefing sessions as well as the impact workshop series in the Callaghan Centre for the Study of Conflict, Power and Empire (2009). At the Unit's own weekly workshop meetings in 2009-10 and 2012-13, Unit researchers presented on impact as an aspect of their work, and reported on impact briefing sessions elsewhere, e.g. Heads of German meeting. Hall presented her Case Study to the Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies impact workshop (2012). Furthermore, the University's award-winning *Performance Enabling Scheme* and *Career Pathways* model for staff promotion specifically supports and rewards innovation and engagement / impact activity.

We have crafted our research strategy in order to foster impact. We try to identify impact at an early stage and identify follow-on research that can expand on the impact achieved (e.g. Cheesman's Case Study building on the 1998-2002 'Axial Writing' project). We place information about our research with impact potential in the public domain, through University publicity channels (e.g. video presenting 'TransVis' on the University's YouTube channel, and University press release leading to coverage of the project on BBC online, *Wired* online and the *Western Mail*, with considerable worldwide blogosphere echo, in 2012) but also beyond, e.g. on dedicated websites for wider-reaching research organisations hosted in Swansea (including the BCLA, Friedrich Nietzsche Society, Women in German Studies) or run by Unit staff (Société Internationale Marguerite Duras). Project websites designed to engage wide international publics include 'TransVis' – delightedbeauty.org (crowdsourcing Shakespeare translations) and delightedbeauty.org/vvv (prototype tools; see Cheesman REF2) – and Hall's crime blog (Case Study). However, the Unit's approach has mainly focussed on local and regional opportunities for public and industry/institutional engagement likely to lead beyond dissemination to impact.

(b.1) Public. Unit staff in the **Centre for the Comparative Study of the Americas** (CECSAM, directed by Davies) have been instrumental in organising week-long **Latin American Festivals** in Swansea (2008-11). Most events were held at the city's main venue for literary events, the Dylan Thomas Centre: poetry readings, book launches, lectures, seminars, film screenings, dance workshops and theatre productions, attracting up to 600 participants. Organised with the Asociación Latinamerica de Swansea (ALAS), the festivals have provided a forum for public engagement with Unit-based research focusing on Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Mexico. In turn, ALAS members frequently attend CECSAM seminars. These shared activities increase public understanding of Latin America's cultural wealth, contemporary politics and historical links

Impact template (REF3a)

with Wales, contribute to cultural renewal in diasporic communities, and have received coverage well beyond the local area (BBC Radio 4, *The Guardian*).

As Director of the **Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Research** (MEMO), Williams has co-organised and contributed to many events engaging the local public since 2010, such as an open day at Swansea Castle, storytelling and craft sessions at Swansea Library, and British Festival of Archaeology events at Swansea Museum. As PI on the Wellcome Trust-funded project 'François Rabelais: Medical Humanist', she ran 14 sessions of a therapeutic reading group at Penclawdd Cancer Care Centre (2011-12).

The **Centre for Contemporary German Culture** (CCGC) is the Unit's highest-profile research centre. Founded in 1993 with a grant from the Welsh Office, its remit is to raise the public profile of German culture in Wales and foster intercultural exchange, through a Writers in Residence programme, public readings, and a book series (11 vols to 2007, 2 published in 2012-13). In 2010, fifteen writers with links to the CCGC, including Nobel laureates Herta Müller and Elfriede Jelinek, stated in a letter to *The Guardian*: 'The studies published by Swansea academics have had international impact – even in Germany and Austria', and: 'Swansea is a flagship centre for German-British cultural understanding.' In 2012, Müller (Writer in Residence 1996) received an honorary Swansea degree, instigated by Haines. Her visit was covered by both German and UK media; her public reading was attended by c.30 non-academics. About the same number attended Feridun Zaimoglu's reading in 2008; his visit was the subject of an Arte TV documentary. Many visiting writers later publish work depicting Wales, benefitting the tourism industry (Germans are the largest tourist group after the Irish). Jörg Bernig (Writer in Residence 2013) has already published a novel set in Swansea; Peter Wawerzinek (2010 visitor) is preparing a major work on Dylan Thomas, to appear for the 2014 centenary, with Preece's translation.

Long-term **engagement with writers**, their work and readers has created opportunities to present to UK/international publics (in some cases the researchers are also translators) at festivals, prize ceremonies, and launches. Examples: Cheesman on Adel Guémar; Hall on Esther Dischereit; Preece on Günter Grass; Rodgers on Marguerite Duras; Rothwell on Bernard Noël.

Media calls on cross-cultural expertise include Cheesman on Shakespeare translation (BBC, *Wired*), and on Hafan (Case Study), Haines on Herta Müller (BBC World Service radio, BBC TV World News, RTÉ, National Public Radio [USA]), Hall on crime fiction (Case Study), Preece on diverse topics in the *TLS*, *Literary Review*, and at the Hay Festival.

Conferences organised locally by the Unit incorporate at least one public-facing event. At 'The Author-Translator in the European Literary Tradition' (2010, 200 delegates), the organisation Literature Wales sponsored a plenary panel and a performance by a poet published by Hafan Books (see Case Study). Some 15 local writers and literary translators attended.

Some of our links with **cultural organisations** in Wales and abroad have developed into AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award applications: Cheesman with Literature Wales, 2010; Preece with the Austrian Cultural Forum, 2011, and Visit Wales (in development). Cannon advised theatre company Theatr na nÓg for their production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* in 2008.

To reach **younger audiences and teachers** as multipliers of impact potential, we work with initiatives such as Rhwydwaith Fideo Cymru/Welsh Video Network and CILT Cymru (Routes into Languages). In 2010-12 RFC/WVN hosted a series of schools video-conferences, seven delivered by our staff and postgraduates, in pairs: research-based presentations on A-level curriculum topics (up to 9 classes and 100 students plus teachers each time). At Open Days and other events for schools run with CILT, up to 8 staff and research students present to c.100 attendees. This fosters public interest in our research, as did the inaugural lectures given by Professors Large, Preece and Walters in 2008-9, each attended by c.30 members of the public in addition to colleagues.

(b.2) Industry. Reciprocally beneficial relationships with local companies are key to the development of our thriving MA and PhD programmes in translation. Swansea-based companies Wolfestone Translation and Veritas Language Solutions employ many of our students and graduates. Veritas was founded by two graduates of our MA in Translation with Language Technology. Senior staff from both companies regularly present to our staff and students on language-industry careers and new technological developments. The companies benefit from our research as well as broader upskilling, and have helped us create a lively postgraduate research culture. Ongoing PhD topics including adoption of Computer-Assisted Translation tools, Translation Memory software, terminology, and comparative morphology; all promise direct industry benefit. The Unit co-hosted two conferences in this area (2010, 2011) which attracted representatives from

Impact template (REF3a)

industry, professional associations and language policy, as well as freelancers.

Wolfestone is a partner with Cheesman's TransVis project, creating digital tools for exploring variant literary translations (AHRC-funded pilot in 2012; shortlisted for an AHRC Large Grant in 2013; further proposals in preparation). TransVis seeks wide impact on the 'transcreation' industry, and other education, training, and creative industry sectors where translation alternatives are valuable. Other partners include Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, digital design studio Nand (Berlin), the National Library of Wales, Wikimedia, and the document engineering multinational ABBYY.

c. Strategy and plans

Beyond 2014, the Unit will further embed impact-bearing activities within its research agenda, to ensure that individual and collaborative research initiatives are more self-conscious and purposive about impact. Research grant applications with a significant impact component (Collaborative Doctoral Awards, KTPs) will be prioritised, where possible leveraging internal funding. In consultation with the College and the Research Institute for Arts and Humanities, teaching loads will be adjusted and sabbaticals arranged to accommodate research activities promising impact, e.g. time investment in non-traditional dissemination and the cultivation of non-academic partnerships. Impact leaders (Cheesman, Hall, Williams) will advise on impact plans in funding applications. Research staff and students will be encouraged to seek and seize dissemination and impact opportunities. The University's EPSRC Impact Acceleration Account will support an institution-wide impact award scheme in 2014, open to all researchers, and judged by a panel involving external research users.

Ongoing projects with major impact potential include the AHRC-funded **European Travellers to Wales 1750-2010** project (CI: Jones, 2013-16), involving virtual and touring exhibitions, schools activities, and engagement with local history societies and the tourism and travel writing industries. The CCGC also plans to work with Tourism Wales and publishers on cultural resources for German tourists. **TransVis** has ambitious impact-generation plans through non-academic partnerships.

Veritas Language Solutions, founded by our graduates, is a likely future impact case study. Significant and broad language industry impact is also anticipated through our research associated with the Wales-wide **Training in Languages and Translation (TILT)** project. TILT, launched in late 2013, is supported over 3 years by the Higher Skills Wales Work-Based Learning Programme (European Social Fund/Welsh Government) to deliver language and translation teaching on-site and in e-learning modules to SME employees. We have opportunities to deepen links with language industry SMEs and their clients in the EU convergence region of West Wales and the Valleys, and to promote take-up of our software research outputs. Language industry clients, commercial partners and employees are naturally international, and so will be the impact.

d. Relationship to case studies

Both Hall and Cheesman are Germanists and have applied in enterprising ways the ethos of public engagement for cross-cultural understanding which has been integral to the Centre for Contemporary German Culture since its foundation. Their projects grew out of long-term research, and a desire not simply to disseminate it to wider publics, but to share the processes of discovery and debate with non-academic users, so as to alter and enrich public understandings of complex cultural phenomena – whether international popular crime fiction or local cultures of transnational mobility. In writing the Case Studies they benefitted from support and advice from the UoA and University. This support has included the awards of funds from RIAH to attend conferences to present their impact-related work. In turn, formulating their Case Studies has informed thinking about impact within the UoA, in Swansea University, and beyond, having been presented at seminars in fora ranging from the UoA to the Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies, and at a range of national and international conferences: in particular, these Case Studies underline the crucial importance of long-term, time-intensive commitment by researchers, involving cultivation of many personal and institutional relationships, together with sustained creative use of media, in order to move beyond dissemination to effective cultural change through public impact.