

Institution: University of St Andrews



Unit of Assessment: UoA 34 (Art and Design)

a. Context

The School of Art History early recognized that contributing to public access to visual art and architecture in those areas associated with its core research would form the basis of its impact strategy. By 'public access' we mean on the one hand the actual creation of opportunities for members of the public to experience and enjoy art and on the other the provision of information that will educate them about art through presentation of facts and interpretation in various media. Our activities under this access umbrella have benefitted society, culture and quality of life beyond academia in significant ways, chiefly through relationships with the following non-academic parties: the heritage sector (ancient monuments commissions, museums/galleries, and artistic, historical and archaeological societies), tourism (particularly museum and gallery visitors), media organizations, lay researchers, members of the general public, and student groups and educators from primary school to university level outwith the University of St Andrews. By nature it is challenging to disaggregate the targets and beneficiaries of impact, because the activities from which it results are rarely confined to single constituencies. But we would single out tourism, the museum/gallery going public, and the heritage sector as areas in which we have made the biggest difference.

b. Approach to impact

The School has sought interaction with non-academic users through a variety of means, and has supported its staff fully in the process of achieving its aims. In order to get the most out of available opportunities for impact, we have focussed much of our attention on supporting members of staff whose work is geared to enabling impact within the current REF cycle.

A major pathway in our approach has lain through the **public display of art and artefacts and exhibitions and the events that surround them**. Professor Ian Carradice established a lasting legacy for cultural tourism and non-academic education as well as academic work by leading the project to set up a **new museum in St Andrews** – MUSA (<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/musa/>) – which opened in 2008. This involved raising £2.1 million for a facility to display and interpret for the widest possible audience the best of the University's historic collections. MUSA has a dedicated staff that organizes and leads activities for school-groups of all ages and abilities, and the building is expressly designed to cater for public education. It also hosts a series of public lectures delivered by University staff. Its opening was widely noticed by the press and its activities are highly popular. MUSA's popularity with the public grows apace. It had 36,680 visitors in 2012 (calendar year) and 29,771 in 2011. Carradice's contribution to MUSA grew out of a longstanding engagement with research and teaching into the University's collections and museology more broadly.

Professor Peter Humfrey has also contributed importantly to the School's generation of impact, through involvement with public exhibitions. Humfrey was a member of the organizing committees of four highly successful public exhibitions, all linked to his on-going research on Old Master paintings: *Giovanni Bellini* (Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome, 2008-09); *Cima da Conegliano* (Palazzo Sarcinelli, Conegliano, 2010); *Passion in Venice, Crivelli to Tintoretto and Veronese: The Man of Sorrows in Venetian Art* (Museum of Biblical Art, New York, 2011); *The Essence of Beauty: 500 Years of Italian Art* (Glasgow, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, 2012). The latter exhibition travelled to Oklahoma City, the Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse (NY) and Edmonton in Canada. Humfrey wrote its catalogue and co-authored that of the Bellini show. These exhibitions were popular with their respective publics: *The Essence of Beauty*, one of the major art exhibitions to have been held in Scotland in recent years, arose directly from his definitive catalogue of Glasgow's Italian paintings (*Glasgow Museums: The Italian Paintings*, London 2012). Without Humfrey's ideas, research and organisational input, this exhibition could never have taken place.

Dr Alistair Rider has also been involved in exhibitions and display policy. He gave public lectures at retrospective shows of the minimalist artist Carl Andre's work at Museion in Bolzano (October 2011), Firstsite in Colchester (April 2012), and Turner Contemporary in Margate (March

Impact template (REF3a)

2013), and advised curators on the conservation or display of Andre's art at Turner Contemporary, MIMA (Middlesbrough), Indianapolis Museum of Art, Tate Modern, and the DIA Art Foundation (New York). He also did a popular 'in conversation' event with Manfred Mohr at a retrospective of the pioneering digital artist's work at the commercial gallery Carroll/Fletcher in London and has contributed to the exhibition's catalogue.

These individuals' contribution to the School's impact strategy has been supported through reduction in teaching loads and accelerated sabbatical leave. Carradice had two semesters of leave while working on the MUSA project and Humfrey had a year's research leave while working on the Glasgow exhibition and preparing his catalogue. As a new member of staff, Rider benefitted from a lighter teaching load than that of established colleagues.

Impact has been enabled in other ways by the involvement of Professor Richard Fawcett and Dr Julian Luxford in **projects to reconstruct digitally important heritage sites in St Andrews**. These are collaborations with computer scientists at St Andrews, but all historical and architectural data is supplied by Fawcett and Luxford and arises from their research on historic buildings (see also case study 2). The first of these projects, on St Andrews cathedral (<https://vimeo.com/71629823>), is complete and has been taken into several local primary and secondary schools, where it has won high praise from students and staff. It has also been showcased at educational events for the general public: Food for Thought (St Andrews), Across the Universe (Dundee Science Centre), and at the Timespan Heritage Centre (Highlands). Fawcett's appointment to the School (in 2006) was part of the School's strategy to increase research grant income, as well to contribute to a core strength (medieval art and architecture) in teaching and publication. We recruited him because he had over thirty years' experience working in the heritage sector (Historic Scotland), and because his expertise in this area could be harnessed to diversify our approach to research, not least in the area of public outreach. With the rise of impact as a REF criterion, his appointment has proven invaluable. Within the current REF cycle, Fawcett's contract has been renewed and increased from 0.2 to 0.5 FTE to enable him to work on the *Corpus* and digitization projects, while Luxford has been granted a one-fifth reduction in teaching and administration to the same end.

In the past six years, the School has cultivated **links with public media** (television, radio, newspapers) to popularize its research, and several of us have given press interviews. Dr Fabio Barry and Luxford appeared in TV programmes made for the National Geographic Channel. Barry appeared several times in *When Rome Ruled* (2011: now on DVD) speaking about the Roman architecture and culture he works on, while Luxford featured in episodes of *The Mystery Files* (season 1: 2010) about Robin Hood and the Princes in the Tower as a result of peer-reviewed articles he had written which subsequently attracted public interest. *Mystery Files* was shown in 350,000 UK households, and both series have since been shown on National Geographic's American and Asian networks.

Finally, it deserves to be stressed that our approach to the substantial generation of impact is supported by the School's commitment to providing teaching and administrative relief, IT and administrative assistance, and funds from the School's operating budget, particularly when in the planning stages.

c. Strategy and plans

Our strategy will continue to emphasize the intrinsic value of increasing non-academic engagement with art and architecture at all levels. We realise how successful the first phase of the *Corpus* of Scottish Medieval Parish Churches (case study 2) has been, and we are building on this in the second phase, which, in covering more ground, will be of potential use to a larger number of people. Our work on digital reconstructions of the historic environment of St Andrews is also continuing with the aim of contributing to the awareness and enjoyment of the medieval town by students and visitors: a reconstruction of St Salvador's chapel (the university's oldest building), will soon be completed and released to the public online. We will continue our involvement with exhibitions in galleries and museums, and develop our links with the media and local education: our teaching fellow William Rough has already curated an exhibition with the McManus Gallery in Dundee (on 19th-century prints), and another (on William Orcar) is planned for next year. We are discussing collaboration with the Curator of Northern European Art at the National Gallery in Edinburgh with a view to joint exhibitions and teaching. Dr Kathryn Rudy is also developing a major project on the manufacture and use of early books in collaboration with non-academic institutions

such as the British Library (currently at the application stage). This aims to generate impact through website access, an exhibition and a series of workshops.

d. Relationship to case studies

Although the impact we have generated does not arise entirely from the case studies outlined here, nevertheless they too have benefitted significantly from the strategies the School has adopted. Both case studies have been facilitated by time off teaching and administration, financial grants from our operating budget and secretarial and IT provision. With regard to the Corpus project (case study 2), we recruited Fawcett with the deliberate aim of developing projects based on his unequalled knowledge of Scottish medieval architecture and his understanding of public policy and heritage sector values. Without extensive University IT support the project could not have been proposed. The digitization involving Fawcett and Luxford is a result of their role in the Corpus. We have learned much from the Dictionary of Scottish Architects (case study 1) about the power of a well-conceived, accessible resource to showcase ourselves and present our research to non-academic users. (For e.g., the values of an easily negotiable user interface, simplicity of structure in online presentation, and understanding of the core audience at which the work is aimed.) This learning has helped to determine the presentation and content of the Corpus website. The Dictionary was got up before the requirement to develop a focussed impact strategy existed. However, the experience it gave us of working with heritage organisations and public archives on the one hand and database designers on the other, coupled with the evidence it provided of non-academic enthusiasm for the fruits of original research into the built environment from a variety of quarters (both expected and unexpected), has substantially informed our approach to impact by highlighting the importance of presentation, sympathetic response to non-academic agendas and cooperation with non-academic bodies.