

<p>Institution: University of York</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 32, Philosophy</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The Department conducts research in a wide range of areas, including History of Philosophy, Mind, normative and applied Ethics, Aesthetics, Metaphysics and Philosophy of Religion. In all these areas there is the potential for direct or indirect impact and through the Department's Board of Research and Impact Officer we aim to make the most of every opportunity. Although many of the topics philosophers discuss are of general public interest and, as a result, there is the potential for impact, significant training is required to understand the detailed intellectual contribution philosophers make to these issues. One would not expect particular theories and arguments to show up in the understanding of the general public in a way which distinguishes them from near competitors. Yet, at the same time, it is not integrated like, for example, mathematics in the sciences, as the mediator of empirical consequences of knowledge which can have wide spread non-academic application. For this reason, the pathways to impact may be long and must be fostered by identification of particular occasions in which philosophical engagement may be both beneficial and appreciated. Therefore, in order to provide strategic focus in our efforts, we have actively sought impact in four main contexts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through influencing policy, by direct engagement in publications (e.g. Holland on research conditions approvals by NICE), by contributions to advisory bodies (e.g. Baldwin on Nuffield Council) or by serving on government expert advisory committees (e.g. Baldwin on obesity). 2. Indirectly, through knowledge exchange with researchers in other disciplines, such as epidemiology or health economics, leading to research outputs in those disciplines which have impact (e.g. Stoneham and Noordhof's Causal Models project). 3. Through influencing the teaching of philosophy in the UK and abroad (e.g. Lamarque defining the sub-discipline of analytic philosophy of literature, Carpenter developing Indian Buddhism in western curriculum). 4. Through social and cultural benefits resulting from public engagement activities (e.g. Open Course Lectures, Currie on Harry Potter, Eford on metaphysics of Christianity). <p>In other areas, we seek to identify users and beneficiaries for whom we can clearly anticipate the impact, and concentrate our effort on the first stage of the process, namely communicating our research to wider audiences.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The Department has always taken seriously the obligation of researchers to engage with a wider audience and to share the fruits of their research. In particular we have, for more than a decade, been pursuing four overarching approaches:</p> <p>First, philosophical engagement with particular issues which were of significant interest to policy makers and the public at large by membership of working parties etc. (e.g. Baldwin as Deputy Chair of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) on stem cell research);</p> <p>Second, public engagement through development of outward facing research centres (e.g. the Centre for Research into Imagination, Creativity and Knowledge (CRICK) and the Centre for the History of Philosophy (CHiPhi)), giving public lectures, making schools visits, and running series of Open Course lectures (e.g. Creativity in the History of Philosophy) on campus for the general public;</p> <p>Third, creating and engaging in knowledge exchange activities to inform researchers in other disciplines about philosophical thinking which is potentially relevant to their work and which may go on to have further impact (e.g. Causal Models project bringing together 12 to 15 philosophers and scientists, all of significant international standing with an interest in non-standard and indeterministic causal models, and their applications to epidemiology, supported by £48,000 from HEIF);</p> <p>Fourth, publishing some of our research in ways which made it accessible to students in order to influence the study and teaching of Philosophy outside of York (e.g. Holland on Public Health Ethics, Okasha (York 2000-2003) on the 'science wars').</p>

The development of the impact agenda its current form in 2009 (in particular, the shift from public engagement and knowledge exchange), reflection on the character of philosophy and our own implicit approach up until that date, led us to develop the following extended approach to impact.

(a) Proactive engagement with potential beneficiaries in areas where our research is directly relevant: For instance, subsequent to Baldwin's earlier work for the Nuffield Trust, he sat on the Government's expert advisory committee on obesity, he is now leading a new inquiry into Brain Technologies, has been appointed expert advisor to Department of Health, and been involved in a new report on medical research relying upon animals containing human material. Additionally, we responded to Heidi Alexander MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Choice at the End of Life who circulated a draft of the bill on Assisted Dying, by highlighting how departmental research, especially Holland's, bears on it. Such influences on policy making create impact which will be both significant and has reach.

(b) Form interdisciplinary research relationships with disciplines with more immediate lines of non-academic impact: For instance, the Sensory Content and Cross Modal Perception Project (York International Seedcorn money) involving Network for Sensory Research (Canadian Research Council funded) led to an early career researcher, Richardson, giving a paper on taste to winemakers in Toronto; and the Sensuous Non Perceptual States Project (York International Seedcorn money) has resulted in collaboration between Debus, who works on habit and emotional memory, and the Macquarie Cognitive Science Institute, which has an excellent record of non-academic impact. Such interdisciplinary interactions create impact in diverse but significant ways.

(c) Support further curriculum development: A recent example of fostering potential impact here is Carpenter's book on Indian Buddhist Philosophy and her involvement (supported by Department pump-priming funds) in a working party of international scholars, writing a volume on normative and meta-ethical questions in Madhyamaka Buddhist philosophy, which will together constitute a resource to allow teachers of ethics to expand their curriculum beyond the Western tradition while maintaining the highest standards of philosophical sophistication.

(d) Monitor the impact of our research, follow it up, and encourage consultancies which result: Led by the department Impact Officer, we encourage staff to respond positively to approaches for consultancy work which promises to provide an intermediate step to non-academic impact (e.g. Noordhof's consultancy work for Chris Miller's Emeritus Leverhulme Fellowship supported book on the implications for indeterministic causation on legal practice; use of causal reasoning, and its assurance, in safety cases). Likewise, we monitor the impact of our outputs and consider ways to sustain and develop them (e.g. Noordhof's theory of expressive properties is part of Cain Todd's book on Philosophy of Wine, Noordhof attended follow up with Cain Todd on workshop on emotion and imagination).

(e) Identify potential beneficiaries who might already be motivated to engage with our research, or help to create such beneficiaries: For instance, Efird's ministry in York Minster, which involves regular preaching of sermons informed by his work in philosophy of religion and, specifically, the metaphysics behind certain Christian doctrines. The sermons themselves create impact in the congregation and Efird's metaphysical approach to doctrinal issues produces further indirect impact through his interactions with the Dean & Chapter. Also a workshop on film and attitudes to death, again supported by pump-priming funds, derived from Holland's philosophical work on the concept of death and nursing ethics and the publicisation on the University homepage of eye-catching pieces of research that might be taken up by media (e.g. Cohen, Kant on Dinner Parties) provide an accessible way into current departmental research; similarly lecture series for the general public on 'Creativity in the History of Philosophy' – linking to the CRICK initiative – develop the appetite and understanding for philosophy, and the department's research interests more specifically. The last proved sufficiently successful that we continued with series on Know Thyself and on Emotions.

(f) Encourage staff to be more sensitive to opportunities for impact: For instance, the department organised and ran a one-day away day for arts and humanities academics to discuss

Impact template (REF3a)

how impact could be understood, identified and measured, using funds from the Research and Innovation Office support for impact. Equally, we encouraged job applicants to think about the potential impact of their philosophical research at interview and took it as a positive if they had thought about this and developed something interesting to say (e.g. recent appointee Richardson’s work on the senses is partly derived from a continuing interest in understanding what counts as a sensory disability).

c. Strategy and plans

Although the introduction of impact into REF2014 has not required a substantial strategic shift, it has stimulated greater institutional support which we will assiduously use to further extend the impact of our research, specifically, the appointment of a University Impact Officer, Humanities Research Centre Project Grants for impact activities (e.g. Proclus). We have also recruited an academic with a substantial record of engagement with impact (Currie). This framework will enable us to realize the successfully the following strategy.

1. Ensure all project proposals have strong Pathways to Impact elements, whether this is required by the funder or not. For example, the Integrity Project considers, among other things, workplace stress arising from employees being encouraged to act without integrity which we hope will eventually have an influence on management practices
2. Mentor junior staff and use the funding above to give them initial experience in realizing potential impact
3. Provide practical support for staff asked to take on consultancy and advisory work (proportionate to tasks and remuneration)
4. Promote the full range of our research through public engagement, e.g. Open Lectures, Facebook, YouTube (e.g. Proclus, Currie on Harry Potter)
5. Have Department fund to pump-prime larger impact projects
6. Target outputs with the potential of direct impact for the next REF period, monitor this and seek to assist/reinforce: e.g. Holland’s ordinary concept of death captures relatives conflicting attitudes to persistent vegetative state (PVS) and related cases about when their relative died and may assist with grief counselling, and his article on the justification attaching research conditions to access of health technologies may have an influence on NICE’s reasoning.

d. Relationship to case studies

We have chosen to present three case studies – the Ethics of patenting DNA, Public health and Highlighting and advancing analytic methods in the philosophy of art. These illustrate two of our four approaches to impact, namely the direct philosophical engagement with policy-making by producing applied research for relevant bodies which they then disseminate and generate resulting impact, and changing the way the discipline is taught through the dissemination of original research in a manner which makes it particularly well-suited to inclusion within existing teaching structures but, in virtue of its original content, produces significant curriculum change. The former exemplifies a distinctive way that philosophical research can have impact, namely by the production of applied research outputs precisely for the purpose of influencing policy. While it is often hard to trace the impact of our more abstract contributions, the researchers who produce them thereby have a specialist expertise which can be drawn upon by bodies such as the Nuffield Council, The HFEA and the Human Genome Commission, resulting in the policy advice of such bodies becoming, in itself, philosophical. The latter is a particularly good example of the type of impact we produce because Lamarque’s strictly analytic approach to the philosophy of literature has not only changed the teaching of the topic within Philosophy Departments but also, in several Literature Departments, provided a paradigmatic alternative to the predominant ‘continental’ approach and drawing the attention of such literary theorists as Terry Eagleton.