

Institution: Middlesex University
Unit of Assessment: 19 Business and Management Studies
<p>a. Context Middlesex University Business School (BS) has a long history of research linked closely to end users' needs, combining contributions to impacts related to business growth and productivity alongside a distinctive focus upon issues of social equity and the quality of work. This ethos of user engagement and social value was established in the foundation of the Business School and is fundamentally embedded in its working culture and strong international orientation. The commitment to business and social engagement means there is a wide range of non-academic beneficiaries and audiences involved in the production and use of our research output, which creates diverse impacts upon:</p> <p>Policy formation, development, delivery and evaluation Research users include a range of governmental bodies and institutions operating at supra-national, national and sub national levels as is evident across the impact case studies (ICS). The global reach of research working with supra national organisations is well exemplified by Croucher' s research, with nine others in the BS, on the effects of labour management practices on productivity in SMEs internationally, undertaken with the International Labour Organisation. At the national level, UK policy makers are important end users, including work on access to finance for SMEs, by North and Baldock for the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), and on active labour market policies by Daguerre and Etherington for the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Key national regulatory bodies have also commissioned and used our research. Quinlan and Vickers' research for the Health and Safety Executive contributed to the independent review on health and safety legislation and Croucher and Rizov have undertaken a series of studies for the Low Pay Commission. At the sub-regional and local level the work by Syrett and 4 others in the BS on local economic strategies has influenced policy and practice in this area across local authorities (see ICS1) as well as the policies of specific local/regional bodies such as Barnet Council and the Greater London Assembly/London Development Agency with regard to economic development and finance provision.</p> <p>Business strategy, capacity and performance Beneficiaries here range from large Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) through to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), social enterprises and voluntary/community based organisations (see ICS 2,3,4,5). Examples of impacts upon larger firms include those that emerged from collaborative research by Lewis with 19 major science, engineering and technology employers across Europe, which resulted in actions to improve gender equality, as well as Frynas' work on developing best practice corporate social responsibility in oil and gas MNCs in Morocco. In relation to SMEs, Donohoe's action research on firm learning capabilities resulted in improved small business performance as part of the <i>Knowledge Connect</i> programme, and Jackson's research into cross-cultural management in the delivery of HIV/AIDs programmes led to an improved delivery capacity of a range of non-governmental and community based organisations in South Africa.</p> <p>Improved conditions for employees/marginalised workers Beneficiaries here include employees, particularly the low paid and those on the margins of the labour market, and users comprise trades unions and other social institutions (see for example ICS 3 and 4). Croucher's work on the enforcement of the national minimum wage led to improved rate-fixing, publicity, and enforcement which benefitted thousands of low paid workers. The BS's research tradition in Human Resource Management (HRM) and employee engagement has led to the development of strong working relations with trades unions and a range of social, community and voluntary organisations (see ICS 3 on the research work by Upchurch for the Unite Union). For example Cotton's collaborative work with Unions and other bodies has developed a more progressive approach to mental health at work. This includes the ongoing development of a free online resource www.survivingwork.org and a handbook for the Industrial Global Union Federation.</p> <p>Professional practice Users here comprise a range of practitioners and practitioner groups, as exemplified by ICS3 and the impact upon professional practice in relation to whistleblowing research. Other examples include research by Flynn, Muller-Camen, Schroder and Croucher on work, retirement and age discrimination, which included commissioned work for the Chartered</p>

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Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) leading to the production of a 'Diversity Guide' and an online management tool supporting HR managers to adapt work and retirement policies. Impact here is also realised through the close relationship between research and teaching, notably via the expansion of postgraduate professional practice doctorates (DProf/DBA) developed in collaboration with a wide range of practitioner organisations such as the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and the Marine Society.

b. Approach to impact

Our approach to impact is embedded in our research strategy. The aims set out here are: (i) to produce research relevant to policy makers, business and society which (ii) defines and responds to practical issues as well as to debates driven by purely academic concerns, and (iii) involves stakeholders on a consistent and not merely project by project basis. Our emphasis upon social purpose is evident within this impact upon business and policy and includes engagement with constituencies often marginalised in business research, such as unemployed people, low paid workers, trades unions and social enterprises.

Engagement with businesses, public sector organisations and diverse communities of practice is integrated into our working culture cutting across all areas of research, teaching and learning. The tone is set by the Dean, Anna Kyprianou, who is one of the elected Vice Presidents of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), the world's largest Chartered HR and development professional body with members from 120 countries. MU Business School was the first non-business member to join the UK branch of the UN Global Compact network, and participates actively in a number of high profile networks (e.g. the UN Habitat University Partnering Initiative; Business Call to Action Network; Business Fights Poverty; African Inclusive Business Network; National Centre for Business and Universities; DFID private sector partnerships; UK Catapult Centres and UKTI Taskforce on Capacity Building in emerging markets).

Infrastructures and institutional support

The School's arrangements for ensuring impact from our research are robust. Strategic responsibility for ensuring impact across the UoA is shared between the School's Director of Research (Professor Richard Croucher) and the School's Management Team (SMT). The Research, Knowledge Transfer and Ethics is chaired by the School Director of Research and includes the Dean, Heads of Department, Head of CEEDR, representatives of the School's Professors, and the School's Director of Corporate Engagement. Its composition and remit reflect its strategic nature.

Within each of our four departments, senior staff (Professors) act as formally-designated Research Leaders. Their remit includes developing research impact and supporting staff to develop the impact of their research activity, particularly through mentoring by staff with greater experience of user engagement. They also encourage staff to liaise closely with the School's Director of Corporate Engagement and the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Office (RKTO). The RKTO provides support through a team of highly professional staff, who take a proactive approach in providing information and identifying opportunities for business engagement. In addition the RKTO provides specialist technical knowledge (i.e. in relation to contracts), logistical support and a programme of training for all staff, for example in relation to legal aspects, managing innovation and business incubation.

Working across the School, the Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research (CEEDR) plays a key role in promoting research impact, engagement and dissemination. The Centre's profound roots in policy communities developed over twenty years of activity are reflected in an extensive track record of funded research including many commissions from government departments. Its longevity, depth of experience and tradition of interdisciplinary working are major assets to the School's researchers both as a model and resource for developing research impact. Drawing on their own experiences - including successfully leading a major ESRC £1.2 million funded 'capacity building cluster' and key involvement in the ESRC funded Third Sector Research Centre during this REF period - the Centre's members act as advisors and mentors to colleagues in the Business School, actively promoting involvement in knowledge transfer activities, reflection on pathways to impact, and working relationships with policy makers, practitioners and academics.

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Mechanisms and Processes

Business School staff are supported to engage with and develop relationships with key users to ensure impact in their research activities through a number of mechanisms:

Building active relationships with key users nationally and internationally (businesses, policy makers, think tanks, trades unions etc.). This is achieved by:

- Participating in and hosting user events (conferences, seminars, workshops). This develops a dialogue with users through the communication of our research expertise and our staff gaining a better understanding of users' research needs. The mix of employers, regulators and practitioners who participated in **Frynas'** ESRC seminar series on corporate social responsibility exemplifies this type of approach;
- Participation in users' steering groups/advisory panels and setting these up in our own research projects. **Lyon's** social enterprise research involved setting up a reference group comprised of key users from government departments, social enterprises and Third Sector umbrella groups;
- Running specialist training/CPD events targeted at users and making research findings available in a user friendly form. Baskaran and Pancholi's ESRC supported workshops with SMEs in London, acted to improve their profitability through improved financial management.

Staff secondments. The School encourages staff to develop links by working in other organisations, and users themselves spending time working within the Business School. Examples of secondments of our staff include Li seconded to Peking to work closely with Chinese companies (2010); Gottschalk's secondment to the United Nations (2012); Jiang's secondment to the Bank of Finland (2013) to develop her work on the efficiency of central banks; and **Rizov's** secondment to Intesa Sanpaolo Bank funded position in Nitra University Slovakia (2010-11). This process has been developed further through the ESRC funded Capacity Building Cluster via a funded voucher scheme to encourage staff exchange over lengths of time ranging from 2 weeks to 3 months.

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. A pathway to impact that scarcely existed in the previous RAE2008 period, this is an area that has been actively developed through the successful completion of four KTPs in the REF period.

Collaborative studentships and bespoke degree programmes. This REF period witnessed a significant increase in the use of collaborative studentships within the Business School including five ESRC funded CASE studentships (Bertotti, Stumbitz, Calvo, Irurita, McKenna) involving collaboration with a range of organisations (e.g. Ethnic Minority Foundation, the London Development Agency, UnLtd, Locality). The increasing number of professional doctorate students also gives us strengthened links to industry as do the suite of MBAs developed to meet the needs of specific business sectors (e.g. the shipping industry).

c. Strategy and plans

Middlesex University Business School will continue to place impact at the centre of its work, embedded within its research, teaching and knowledge exchange activities. Our experience has demonstrated how research and impact can go hand in hand, both contributing centrally to the overall success of our work. We welcome the Research Councils UK and government emphasis on impact and user engagement with new sources of funding available to incentivise collaboration with business and user groups. This emphasis on user engagement is consistent with our established approach and we are keen to exploit opportunities offered by this enhanced focus on impact. We are well equipped to benefit from this opportunity. Further, our international institutional structure and reach, combined with the diversity of our staff and student bodies, constitute major resources (e.g. the University's global network of regional offices and its campuses in Dubai, Mauritius and Malta) which we are yet to employ fully in relation to impact.

Our strategy is to build on our established experience of generating research impact and use this in relation to both existing areas of research strength and new areas, where the large number of additional appointments across the REF period provides significant opportunities. The strategic appointment of a range of new Professors (see REF5) aims to intensify the School's research effort and develop research with strong business and social impact. New staff have introduced extensive international experience, a wealth of business and practitioner contacts, and a history of research impact both in the UK and abroad (e.g. **Lange** in Germany and Australia; **Kujal** in India,

Andriotis in Greece). They have opened up new areas with great potential for research impact, for example in relation to the influence of **Boddy's** work on corporate psychopaths on HRM practice, **Mabey's** research on the leadership of knowledge exchange, **Lange's** studies of job satisfaction and **Andriotis's** work on tourism policy. These new staff resources are already being mobilised to raise the impact of our research.

To maximise the reach and significance of our research's impact we plan the following:

- (1) *Targeted user engagement*: we will continue to systematically pursue and manage our relationships with key users, beneficiaries and professional groups (e.g. BIS, DCLG, Low Pay Commission, Cabinet Office, ILO, CIPD) and evaluate how best our research activity can impact upon them;
- (2) *Staff development*: recent recruitment has focused on increasing impact capacity. We will embed knowledge exchange, consultancy and user engagement activity targets within the performance appraisal of staff supported by a process of mentoring and internal training and information exchange and extending the current programme of staff workshops;
- (3) *Research funding*: we will continue to pursue government, EU and industrial funding related to methodologically and theoretically driven research which includes a clear focus on engagement and implementation through non-academic partners, and improve the pathways to impact of our growing flow of RCUK funding through the active sharing of learning;
- (4) *Knowledge transfer and knowledge exchange activities*: this will be developed through promoting awareness and knowledge of different types of activity (e.g. secondments, KTPs; collaborative studentships etc.) and extending their use further;
- (5) *Use of social media and media engagement*. We will further embed the use of both social and conventional media. Here we will share our learning, building on recent initiatives, including **Upchurch's** successful 'Globalisation and Work' Facebook Group (over 350 members worldwide) and **Daguerre's** work on developing media engagement funded by an ESRC mid career fellowship (2012-14).

d. Relationship to case studies

The impact case studies presented here have been selected to exemplify our broad approach to impact. These case studies have informed, and in turn have been informed by, the various pathways to impact discussed above. In each case, a critical element has been engaging closely with end users over extended periods of time to build trust and mutual understanding. For example the earlier secondment of **Lyon** to the Cabinet Office provided a strong basis for ensuring the programme of social enterprise research impacted upon policy and practice (ICS 2 & 4). In all cases, the impact presented is on-going and provides a strong basis for future development.

The selected case studies demonstrate the different types of users and beneficiaries of our research as well as evidence of our emphasis on issues of equity and social justice which has strengthened across the REF period. The impact of **Brookes's** work helping unemployed workers in South Africa into sustainable employment (ICS5) and the improved protection for whistleblowing employees in the UK and internationally (ICS3), both demonstrate how marginalised workers/employees have benefitted materially from our research activities. Social purpose is also evident in the impact of our work on local economic policy designed to benefit disadvantaged areas (ICS1) and support for the development of enterprises with social objectives and the improved measurement of social impact of enterprises and charities (ICS 2 & 4). The impacts upon business organisations range from the practice of corporate governance in large firms (e.g. with regard to employee voice in ICS3), through to the employment policies pursued by major South African employers (ICS5) and the improved growth and performance of social enterprises (ICS2).

Government departments and public bodies are key users and beneficiaries in these case studies. Here the impact of research is evident in the shaping and design of policy as well as its implementation, practice and evaluation. This is apparent for example through relations with DCLG and other national government departments in the development of local economic policy (ICS1). The cases all show the diverse ways in which policy and practice have been changed, for example in relation to framing approaches to social investment and impacts upon policy implementation (ICS4), and developments in relation to employee voice (ICS 3).