

**Institution:** University of Hull

**Unit of Assessment:** D35: Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts

**a. Context**

Music, Drama, and Film/TV studies research at Hull extends its work to the wider public by engaging with its subject matter as living art, be it a creative process, or responsive investigation. Research is used to influence *cultural life* at several levels: firstly, in the region through performance work, also in collaboration with theatre venue and company Hull Truck (as with Edinborough's 'Punctum' probing the spectators' empathetic engagement with the performer as a subject) secondly, nationally and internationally, through working contacts with art practitioners (as in Alix's work with French and Belgian theatres, Tsang's work in the UK and China, Drábek's work with Czech theatre and opera companies, and MacKay's collaboration with Scottish and North Yorkshire Festivals), thirdly, through digital media (as with Slater's Middlewood Sessions, Chatzichristodoulou's work or Edinborough's Podcast series). Our ambitions in these engagements are to attain the maximum possible impact on the formation and nature of *civil society*, *public discourse* and *public service*. This we intend by means of projects aimed at influencing assumed values and discourses (as in Conroy and Dickenson's Paul Hamlyn grant project 'Developing Dialogue about CPD' or Edinborough's 'History of Water' and 'A Sense of Anatomy' projects). The unit's research has had influence on *education* (Borthwick and Tsang's 'Lear Settings' or Dickenson's 'Not Yet') as well as on *economic prosperity* and *public discourse* (Dickenson, Conroy and Mazzoni's 'The not-knowns' project; E. King's work on well-being and trade perfectionism). Educational impact is mediated through research dissemination (conferences, publications, educational workshops, websites, such as Wilson's 'Shakespeare and Music' project) and editorial work (eight of the submitting staff are active as editors).

The main user groups, beneficiaries and audiences beyond academia of Hull research vary according to the categories of activity undertaken by individuals or groups of researchers. Audiences in the region benefit from theatre performances in traditional as well as innovative and found spaces, social performances, live performance of new compositions, jazz and multimedia works; broadcasts and digital media extend the audience of original recorded music, artworks and analytical discourse far beyond the origins of making. Analytical work, such as that on studio production processes, benefits the recording industry, individual practitioners and aspiring producers. Historical and critical investigation effects impact on the academic community as well as theatre practitioners, and concert and theatre audiences.

In Music, the public engagement with composition through performance depends on live concert and workshop situations. These occur on a monthly basis in the region attracting audiences from the general public and from secondary schools. Electroacoustic composition is disseminated to a wider audience through on-line performance and contemporary popular music productions reach a global audience through radio broadcasts, club culture and the commercial mechanisms of the music industry. Jazz performance and music production practices are both taken out into the community in public performances in regional venues. Music psychology addresses a wide performance clientele comprising amateurs and professionals in both ensemble and solo situations. Work on Shakespeare music has been used by theatre directors (Globe, RSC) and at permanent exhibitions (Globe).

The diverse yet often intra-connected range of research activity across the research groups of the UoA relates both directly and obliquely to the various user groups and types of impact. Shakespeare music and theatre studies have both a separate as well as a conjoint impact. Acoustic and electro-acoustic composition can embrace similar and dissimilar audiences depending on location and context. Jazz performance and musicology seemingly have different user groups but emanate from the one research group. There is fruitful overlap between the so-called 'jazz community' and other types of musician and audience. Moreover, the audience demographic for Hull's activities is far broader than the traditional audience type associated with 'classical' music. This reaches out not only to the region but has national and international implications for impact, notably with Shakespeare studies, composition, music production and jazz.

In Drama, the main user groups, beneficiaries and audience beyond the HEI are the general theatre-going public, local communities, theatre companies, schools and hospitals. The main types of impact are the refinement of cultural life, the refinement of professional working practices (for

## Impact template (REF3a)

example Billing's recent volume on rehearsing Shakespeare has been fed back into the processes of the professional companies whose work is discussed and evaluated within it, particularly the Globe and the American Shakespeare Centre, Staunton, VA), dissemination of research and research practice among school children, cultivation of the public sphere, redefining public spaces, and the usage of theatre and performance tools (actantial and behavioural models, embodiment, bodily sensation and rhythm, interaction, movement and acting techniques) to improve the quality of life in schools and in medical treatment.

In Screen, there are numerous engagement activities that bring together academic, public and business audiences. Screen holds a Research Seminar series that was initially connected to its postgraduate research and MA in British Cinema and which featured external speakers and interdisciplinary researchers. The outcomes of this series have been published in various academic journals and books (for example, Aston's *Ethics of Remembering* in Routledge's Media, War and Security series). Screen's production facilities at Holme House have continually produced undergraduate work of a high standard playing in local and national film festivals (Yorkshire Short Film; Glimmer), as well as being utilised by local North-East film companies (Panopticon Films) and also providing links to local media industry (Panda Splash) and educational institutions (University Centre Doncaster). Screen is also prominent in promoting independent cinema in Hull, maintaining working contacts with a number of local cinema operators (Friends of Hull, Fruit and Hull Screen).

**b. Approach to impact**

Staff in the UoA engaged and developed relations with a diversity of secondary schools and music organisations in the region to deliver practice-based research. This was demonstrated in the series of concerts and workshops presented under the auspices of Hull Sinfonietta. Resulting impact was identified through feedback surveys, responses from hosting organisations, focus groups, and data gathering. Opportunities for further engagement both in the region and elsewhere were developed through implementation of research into teaching materials ('Not Yet' drama applied in German language tuition), through theatre tours and arrangements for touring schools; other projects reach out towards public spaces ('History of Water' project) and social communities (Applied and Social Performance research grouping). The UoA supported this impact through internal and external funding, part-time research leave and access to facilities.

During 2012, Drama began to produce Performance Pods, an initiative by Edinborough. Performance Pods are MP3 recordings that may be downloaded through iTunes. Their aim is to introduce listeners to current research in the field of Theatre and Performance Studies, by presenting 15-25 minute interviews with scholars on seminal productions, practitioners and moments from the history of performance. The podcasts, which take the format of a discussion between Edinborough and a specialist in the field, are recorded in the School of Drama, Music and Screen's radio studios and made freely available for download via iTunes:

<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/podcast/hull-drama-performance-pods/id507418190>

There are currently 19 episodes online, many with Hull staff as Edinborough's collocutors. The podcasts have received 5 star reviews, been in the top ten of the iTunes Arts and Performing Arts charts, and have been downloaded over 10,000 times.

A telling instance of complex and multiple impact is Mackay's composition and installation work, which has had exposure to a broad spectrum of the public, both nationally and internationally. His soundscape 'Re-imagining the Jurassic', created for the *Scarborough's Lost Dinosaurs* exhibition at Scarborough's Rotunda Museum has had an audience figure of 20,000 people, 18 months into the exhibition. It was also one of 37 works chosen by an international jury of composers for the *ArtxClimate* contest run by the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre for sound art miniatures related to climate change effects and the global environmental crisis ([http://ceiarteuntref.edu.ar/art\\_climate\\_selected\\_works](http://ceiarteuntref.edu.ar/art_climate_selected_works)). His work created for the *Sea Swim* project has also had total audience figures of 20,000 people to physical exhibitions as well as coverage on Russian TV's Channel 1. Venues include The Poetry Library at London's Southbank Centre; York Art Gallery; MIMA (Middlesborough Institute of Modern Art); as well as performances and radio broadcasts in New York and Toronto. His consultancy work for the *Ruskin Rocks* project aided the creation of the Brantwood Musical Stones: a lithophone housed at the Brantwood museum. This was featured in an episode of BBC 1's Countryfile to a viewing figure of 1.5 million people. His composition *Flow* was premièred at the Morelia International Music Festival to 1,500 people in Mexico, and has since been performed in the planetarium at Tamaulipas.

### c. Strategy and plans

A strategy for enabling impact has been implicit in practice-based research, by means of public performances and presentations of the work, both out of and in campus (the latter in the Middleton Hall and the licensed Donald Roy Theatre in the Gulbenkian Centre). For example, structured collaboration between new performance outlets (Hull Sinfonietta) and regional audiences are designed to maximise impact from practice-based research at Hull. Impact outside academia in other areas such as musicology and empirical analysis has experienced perceptual increase and application, to be quantified in the future.

Plans to develop impact revolve around self-reflective research seminars involving staff and postgraduate students, inter-discussion across research groups both at Hull and in other HEIs, structured discourse with local user groups, overseas connectivities and applications for charitable funding. The strategies inform graduate culture: some research students (in Drama) specialise in applied and educational theatre, further refining the impact strategies.

As of 2013, a new scheme of fostering research impact has been launched, with a seminar series organised with the Engagement and Communications Coordinator and research colloquia discussing the social and political implications of research in the humanities; speakers are invited to talk about their own successful ways of applying their research to non-academic life and to industries.

### d. Relationship to case studies

Individual case studies relate purposely to the UoA's approach to achieving impact in the area of practice-based research. The 'Lear Settings' (Tsang and Borthwick) project with Hull Sinfonietta involves synergies arising out of new music composition, ensemble performance, film, music performance psychology. Both the end product, the animated film accompanied by music composed by Borthwick, and its intermediary stages in development aim to engage with an audience drawn from the local community, diverse in age and social background. This project has involved regional as well as international communities (orchestras, performers, festivals, audiences) and has had impact on increased and sustained engagement in Music and Arts subjects, changes in behavioural patterns and pupil attitudes to creative arts, changes to school teaching methods including cross curricular learning, and increased use of techniques in other artwork (e.g. artist and audience live interactions with projected images).

The 'Middlewood Sessions' (Slater) engages processes of musico-technological creativity and has centred on processes of creativity that involve technology in some way. Slater's music reaches a public beyond academia via radio broadcasts, DJ and club culture, the commercial mechanisms of the music industry and more localised community pedagogy. His work contributes to an international audio culture that draws upon jazz, hip-hop, dance and orchestral music. Such aesthetic resources provide rich material for education projects that offer young musicians and sound engineers an insight into the technical, social and musical processes of music production. Broadcast and pedagogy represent the two main routes through which his work has a wider impact.

The 'Not Yet' project (Dickenson) links research into playwriting, integrating psychological research into memory, identity and social trauma. This case study is representative of encompassing an international audience and theatre community in a politically charged and engaged theme (the Fall of the Berlin Wall anniversary) and resulting in an impact on education, namely in a drama for school children nationally and internationally on intercultural and social tolerance, introducing behavioural methods of overcoming bullying, harassment and otherness (underpinned by an interdisciplinary pending grant project connecting drama, psychology and regional development). The production was first seen publicly at the Gulbenkian Centre; it was broadcast by the BBC on a large screen in the centre of Hull; and it toured to Berlin with involvement from schools and public workshops.

These case studies both reflect and inform the on-going development in the public sphere of aspects of research in Hull. They involve researchers from various research groupings in collaborative and individualistic ways so that differing activities will impinge upon and contribute to furthering the research whilst at the same time enhancing its accessibility to an interested but non-specialist audience beyond academia, such as creative artists, secondary schools, music and drama societies, and theatre/concert-goers.