

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Hull</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> C19: Business and Management Studies</p>
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>The University’s mission is to be research-led <i>and</i> an anchor institution in the region, and the Hull University Business School (HUBS) plays a leading role in translating this mission into practice through its corporate and community relationships. We are a strongly business-facing school, with 47 prominent corporate partners supporting us in making an impact, both locally and globally. We define the end users of our research very broadly to include organisations, groups and individuals in the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. This is in line with our aim to foster ‘responsible leadership in a complex world’, where responsible leadership is needed in all sectors, and dealing with complexity often requires work with multiple stakeholders across sector boundaries. Examples of end users of HUBS research since 2008 include governments (UK, EU, Greece, China, Australia, New Zealand); companies (e.g., IBM, Yorkshire Bank, Capita, Smith and Nephew, Merck, Arco, Reckitt Benckiser, William Jackson Food Group, Sewell Group, Co-op., Ericsson, ABB, Kingston Communications, Morrisons, British American Tobacco, Hull City FC, Tata Steel, Plastrubition, CA Technologies); professional organisations, such as the TUC and the International Centre for Complex Project Management (ICCPM); public sector organisations, such as the Financial Conduct Authority, the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), Hull City Council, 2 NHS trusts and the Humber Local Economic Partnership (LEP); voluntary organisations, such as Dove House Hospice and the Wildlife Trust; and many communities, including an eco-village in Ireland and 21 Colombian cities.</p> <p>Relationships with end users to bring about impacts vary in length and intensity. Some are long term with periodic, intensive engagements (e.g., the ICCPM, the NPIA, IBM, Ericsson, Morrisons). Others are time-limited, very intensive collaborations, with less-intensive follow-ups; e.g., a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) with Plastrubition and an EPSRC project with an Irish eco-village. Still others involve client relationships where the end user is closely consulted but the research essentially remains independent (e.g., CA Technologies). A small minority involve the provision of expert advice, so end users (e.g., the EU and UK governments) make contact with academics for a given purpose, such as speaking to a parliamentary select committee. All the above relationships involve working directly with the organisation that will make the impact happen. However, there are also <i>indirect</i> impacts from HUBS research, which transpire when we partner with non-academic organisations to support them in using the research of our staff to inform their own consultancy, professional development or policy advice, which bring about impacts in third party organisations or communities. An example is ESR (a government research institute in New Zealand), which has generated a large number of impacts in that country from Hull research. Other examples of relationships with external organisations, specifically established to facilitate impacts from our research, include professional development courses offered through the ICCPM; capacity building with the NPIA; and a Logistics Club, where business people come to network and learn about new Logistics Institute (LI) research that could make a difference to their practice.</p> <p>The types of impact range from the very specific, experienced by a single organisation, to quite diffuse, experienced by millions of people across a nation. An example of a specific impact is a LI KTP with Plastrubition Ltd., which used research results from a study of supply chain management to inform changes in the company, giving rise to an increase in sales turnover of 30% (£500k directly attributable to the KTP) and an increase in profits of £92k during the period of the KTP. Likewise, action research with an NHS Trust focused on reducing hospital-acquired infections, saving £10.3m in treatments. At the other end of the spectrum is a partnership between the Bogotá Chamber of Commerce and the University of Los Andes (Colombia), which used Hull research on systemic mediation to inform an initiative to disseminate practical conflict resolution techniques to over 2m citizens in 21 Colombian cities. The scale of this is quantified in one of the case studies, but what cannot be so easily seen in the statistics are the hundreds of thousands of community, business, school and family relationships that have benefited qualitatively.</p> <p>All the HUBS research groups have end user relationships. In the case of the Centre for Systems Studies (CSS) and the LI, some of these are long-term: e.g., the Logistics Club continuously updates LI end users on Hull research, and IBM has sought advice from Midgley (Director of CSS) over a 10 year period on subjects as diverse as how to support Japan’s recovery</p>

**Impact template (REF3a)**

from the 2011 earthquake, and systems thinking for improving the governance of 'smarter cities'. However, most CSS and LI end user relationships are primarily linked to time-limited research projects, either conducted in consultancy mode (many LI projects take this form) or systemic action research mode, where end user benefits are facilitated directly by the researcher working in collaboration with external organisations (this is a preferred method of operation for CSS, and also for some in OB/HRM). The other groups all facilitate more conventional project-based end user relationships: end users are consulted on research design; the research is undertaken independently; and end users are then supported in translating findings into practice. An example of the latter is Dahl's research on social marketing to promote physical activity amongst older people, which translated into a GP training course funded by the South East Essex PCT. Another example is Atkins, who undertook research for the Wildlife Trust (WT). He presented his findings in a format that could be used by the WT to support their review of a DEFRA economic impact assessment of proposed marine conservation zones, and an unanticipated spin-off impact was use of his work by the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (citation in Postnote 437).

**b. Approach to impact**

HUBS has recently developed a formal impact strategy (see Section c). In 2008, the different research groups in HUBS had very different starting points: CSS and the LI already saw impact as central to defining research success, while the other research groups (with the exception of a few individuals in those groups who placed a high value on impact) were primarily focused on influence within academia. CSS and the LI are discussed below, followed by information about what has been done to facilitate greater awareness of, and action on, impact in the other groups.

CSS primarily undertakes systemic interventions, testing systems methodologies and OR problem structuring methods (PSMs) in action research with external organisations. Impacts are derived directly from this research, as it generally involves facilitated workshops where ideas for change are developed by participants and then implemented in their organisations. By definition, action research brings about impacts. Professional development activities are also important to CSS: e.g., Gregory, Jackson, Midgley and Williams have delivered capacity building (executive education, strategy workshops and thought-leader seminars) to the ICCPM, the NPIA, Pocklington School Foundation and IBM, which are now creating their own impacts using Hull research. Projects and executive education that brings in external income give staff resources to buy out teaching, so staff have extra time to make impacts happen. CSS has developed an impact evaluation framework and questionnaire, which is filled in by workshop participants after the use of a systems methodology or PSM. Data from questionnaires are fed into a reflective workshop, where researchers and end users examine which impacts can be attributed to the intervention and which have other origins. Two staff members have video-recorded workshops with industry to capture the emergence of innovations that ultimately lead to impacts.

The LI undertakes much of its research through consultancy, which (like CSS's action research) is, by definition, about impact. Recent examples include studies into reducing waste and inventory in a supermarket's supply chain, the feasibility of a new port complex, the feasibility and logistics of an anaerobic digestion plant, as well as fleet reviews, transport management system (TMS) implementations and an enterprise resources planning (ERP) system sourcing. In 2009, marketing and PR strategies were developed, focusing on how to generate leads that the LI staff could turn into research-based consultancies and collaborative relationships with impact. The LI has had 4 KTPs since 2008, and HUBS has supported these by giving release from teaching so the KTP Associates could be properly supervised and impacts facilitated. For 3 of the 4 LI KTPs (1 did not complete), staff gathered data, such as financial returns and views of senior managers, to evidence the impacts. The LI has also run the Logistics Club (plus a more recently formed Supply Chain Risk and Resilience Club) to raise industry awareness of their research. In addition, the LI facilitates indirect impacts through executive education and a 2-year Foundation Degree for 100 Morrisons supermarket managers. It has long been the case that staff collaborate closely with industry to ensure that impacts materialise.

Clearly, there is a culture of valuing impacts in both CSS and the LI. However, in 2010, it became apparent that most other researchers had little awareness of the impact agenda. It was therefore necessary to build capacity, raise awareness and create incentives. An impact workshop was held in the school in May 2011, with the aim of building awareness of the importance of impact, and knowledge of how to evaluate it. Also, in 2011, we ran a workshop on fundraising for

**Impact template (REF3a)**

research, which put an emphasis on the importance of an impact track record in establishing credibility with end users and funders. Greater emphasis has been put on collaboration with the University's Knowledge Exchange (which incubates fledgling businesses, maintains corporate contacts and facilitates KTPs), as this was instrumental in securing the LI's 4 KTPs and 7 others that have been shared between Computer Science and HUBS.

In terms of incentives, each research group has £3k per annum for activities of collective benefit in addition to £2k per individual for personal research expenses, and it was widely publicised in HUBS that this money could be used for facilitating impact. An example is a staff member drawing on these funds to meet with the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), leading to a pro bono project in which HUBS research informed the development of a new continuous improvement framework that the NPIA developed.

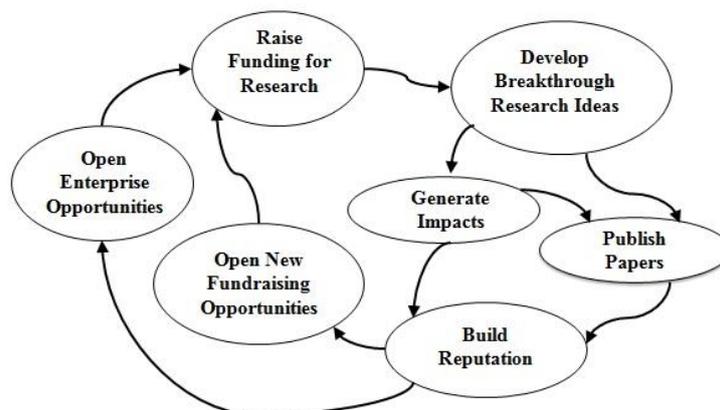
Consideration of impact was also built into the workload model in early 2011, so staff could get recognition for this in their research hours. The largest research allowances (50%) are only available to staff who make a strong contribution across 4 research areas: publications, funding, PhD supervision and impact. While this is a signal of the strategic importance of impact, a more immediate incentive is our use of a teaching buy-out formula, so people can use grant and consultancy income to free up time for applied research and the facilitation of associated impacts.

In April 2013, HUBS appointed new Associate Deans for Research and Enterprise and Business Engagement. These strategic appointments put 2 of our strongest impact facilitators into leadership roles for the whole school. Every research group now has a 'business engagement champion', who helps researchers with less experience to make industry and wider community contacts. Researchers are mentored during the process of writing bids for funding to ensure that credible impact pathways are in place. The HUBS communications strategy has also been strengthened, so research is more often brought to the attention of potential end users.

**c. Strategy and plans**

Business engagement (BE) and Research and Enterprise (R&E) strategies were developed in April 2013, setting out the first 2 years of activities that are needed to initiate a longer-term culture change, including placing a higher value on impact. The BE strategy, which is research-led and integrated with the R&E strategy, identifies research and impact as one of 6 priorities. Executive education is discussed as a fruitful means for generating impacts from research, as much of this is informed by our research findings. An example of executive education as a vehicle for impact is a course on systems thinking for complex project management delivered in Australia, which was based on HUBS research and resulted in a 5% cost reduction in defence procurements involving the course recipients (see our impact case study on this).

The R&E strategy views impact as an essential aspect of a virtuous cycle of growing and sustaining research excellence:



The R&E Strategy states that enhanced impact “will improve our standing in applied research communities; contribute to the REF; demonstrate our effectiveness to potential partners (in and outside of academia); contribute to track record for funding bids; support our efforts to recruit and retain high calibre staff; provide examples for use in teaching; be useful in publicity to attract more and better students; and support enterprise spin-offs (and associated income generation)”. The following (selected) activities have been identified as priorities for implementation in 2014:

Jan 2014 and on-going: Work with the University's Knowledge Exchange to increase the

number of KTPs by widening the set of academics applying for them. A very well attended workshop on KTPs has already been run, and staff from across the HUBS research groups have started discussions with companies about possibilities for new applications.

Jan 2014 and on-going: work with the new planning officer in the University Strategic Development Unit with responsibility for impact to develop impact planning for future research bids.

Jan 2014 and on-going: widely publicise the University's workshops on impact, to improve staff understanding of why impact is important, how to facilitate it, how to record it, and how to ensure that impacts feed into the other activities mentioned above. Also run HUBS workshops that are specifically focused on the contexts in which our own research groups are working. Emphasise the importance of on-going, non-instrumental relationship building, with benefits for all parties. Some of these workshops should be on impact *evaluation*, so this can be built into projects from the outset. Three workshops to be held per annum, repeated annually.

Jan 2014 and on-going: identify non-academic consultants, policy advice agencies and executive educators who create impacts through their activities, and build strategic alliances with them so our research feeds into their work.

By April 2014: design a template for recording impact stories and collecting supporting evidence, and communicate with staff about the potential synergies that can come from collecting evidence on impact, as this can inform press releases; case studies for teaching; and can contribute to high quality research outputs (given that impact is strongly valued in business and management research communities). Also, raise awareness amongst staff that sometimes research informs impacts that they may not be aware of. 'Hidden' impacts may be uncovered through effective networking. Citation searches may also reveal impacts, as in some research communities it is common to report impacts in academic papers.

Ready for the 2014/15 academic year: ensure that PhD and DBA supervisors (a DBA will be launched in September 2014) pass on the impact template to their students, and support the latter in facilitating impacts and recording them when appropriate.

Ready for the 2014/15 academic year: value impact more highly in the workload model, ensuring that people who have plans for generating impact are given dedicated time for this. Also explicitly check that time for facilitating impacts is properly built into grant proposals.

On-going: keep the Communications team informed about HUBS research and its impacts, and make sure these are given a high profile on the web and in newsletters to bring them to the attention of potential end users. Increase the number of press releases for this purpose.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

Two of the impact case studies exemplify how impact can be directly facilitated through action research, which is a specialism of CSS, and is also used by some OB/HRM researchers. Espinosa's systemic intervention in the governance of an Irish eco-village involved facilitated workshops where ideas for change were developed and then implemented for the benefit of the residents. Cook's case study explains how research on employer sponsored volunteering fed into deliberations by employers on how to enhance benefits. These case studies have both confirmed the value of non-instrumental relationship building and have led to its emphasis in the strategy.

The case study on the impacts of systems research in Australia and New Zealand exemplifies two different impact strategies. First, Jackson used research-informed executive education as a pathway to impact. Second, the case shows what can be achieved when HUBS research is picked up and used by non-academic partner organisations (ICCPM and ESR) to facilitate their own impacts. It should also be noted that Jackson's success in generating impacts via the ICCPM led to recognition, in the BE Strategy, of the value of executive education as a pathway to impact. Likewise, it was the success of the partnerships with ICCPM and ESR that informed our strategic thinking about the need for more strategic alliances with non-academic consultants, policy advice agencies and executive educators.

The case study by Bovis on public procurement in the UK and EU shows the importance of responding positively to opportunities and invitations from potential end users. The first invitation happened because the University was proactive in issuing press releases about Bovis's research. This is a practice that has been working well for several years, and an increase in the number of press releases is now an explicit part of our impact strategy.