

Institution: Keele University

Unit of Assessment: C19 Business and Management Studies

a. Context

Keele Management School (KMS) engages with a broad range of user groups at local, national and international levels. Key audiences that have benefited from KMS research include businesses, public sector organisations, politicians, policy makers, community groups, charities and other third sector organisations, and the general public. Particular impact strengths are in the areas of banking and finance, healthcare organisation, trade unionism and volunteer work. The types of impact that are prioritised within the School reflect a strong commitment to dialogue and the exchange of ideas between academic and non-academic groups. This approach is founded on a reciprocal model of knowledge translation which goes beyond traditional notions of managerial relevance and focuses on all those in society who are affected by management. This has enabled impact on changing practices of collaboration in the translation of knowledge into practice in healthcare settings (Scarborough), and creating 'actionable' knowledge in the context of volunteering communities (Kelemen and Mangan). There is also a critical component in the type of impact that is relevant to KMS research which is related to issues of social justice. This includes research that focuses on those who are marginalised or disadvantaged by organisations and has led to impact around the treatment of low paid (Thornley, Sousounis) and migrant workers (French). It also explores alternative models of organisation, such as co-operatives. A further type of impact relates to the regulation and operation of financial markets and banking organisations (Leece).

b. Approach to impact

Through their work, KMS researchers seek to generate impact that is directed towards achieving fairer, as well as more effective, forms of management and organisation. This involves developing long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with non-academic audiences. For researchers in the Employment Policy and Equalities group, this involves the large alumni network of former Keele MA in Industrial Relations students, most of whom are either management or trade union practitioners. Active dialogue is maintained with alumni members through the organisation of a biennial conference at Keele (2008, 2011), which involves non-academic stakeholders as key participants. The conference, which focuses on employment practice in the UK and internationally, includes invited external speakers from academia and management, trade union practice, and is typically attended by 40 to 50 delegates. These user relationships also enable impact to be built into the research process from the outset, for example through the recruitment of two PhD students into the School who are financially supported by non-academic organisations (Public and Commercial Services Union and Commercial Workers Union) to work on projects relevant to their organisations.

Another approach adopted by KMS researchers to ensure their research is responsive to user needs relates to the projects currently being undertaken by Kelemen and Mangan, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), on the creation of actionable knowledge by communities in the context of volunteer work. All of these projects involve working closely with volunteering organisations and their members, including volunteering charities (Community Service Volunteers, Timebank, Volunteering England), advocacy groups (such as the National Council for Voluntary Organisations), and research groups (Institute for Volunteering Research and Institute for Voluntary Action Research). In addition to building long-term relationships with local communities, such as the New Vic Theatre and New Vic Borderlines in Newcastle-under-Lyme, this research is likely to have considerable impact on the national context through providing evaluation of an important aspect of government policy for the 'Big Society'.

Communication with non-academic audiences is also enabled through participation in consultative processes organised by government and third sector organisations, and by giving talks to external audiences. For example, Thornley's work on low pay and equalities resulted in a series of invited presentations including invited chair and speaker at the 2008 and 2010 'Westminster Briefing Conferences' in association with *House Magazine*, the weekly business publication for the Houses

of Parliament and all those with an interest in policy and legislation. French has given invited talks at the National Association of Head Teachers Annual Conferences (2006, 2007 and 2008) and at the Public and Commercial Services Union in 2007 on workloads and work-life balance. In addition, this research was submitted to the Teachers' Pay Review Body and the Cabinet Office and was covered in the *Times Education Supplement* in 2006 and 2008. This work also led to submissions in evidence made to the National Assembly for Wales, and was cited in a report by the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services.

Researchers in the School have also been creative in using performance, art and social media to enhance engagement with user communities and maximise impact. For example, Kelemen used a documentary-drama performed by volunteers to a public audience at the New Vic Theatre in Newcastle-under-Lyme to enable understanding of the role that volunteering plays in the making of personal communities. The drama was subsequently restaged at an AHRC 'Connected Communities Showcase' in London, which was recorded by the AHRC and posted on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QsosP821t0>). Later work involved participants making an interactive audio-visual installation in the form of a boat composed of objects to signify occupations which communities have lost, and exploring themes of community resilience and regeneration. The installation has provided the focus for subsequent community engagement events (e.g. in Edinburgh) involving poetry, craft and music to stimulate user engagement with the themes of the project.

The variety of approaches adopted has enabled KMS staff to achieve a range of direct and indirect impacts on business, policy and pedagogic practice. This can be seen in the work of Audzeyeva who received an ESRC and EPSRC sponsored Award for Best Application of Social Science in a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) at the KTP Awards (2011), and a KTP Certificate of Excellence in 2010, for her Knowledge Transfer Project (2007-2009), funded by National Australia Bank Europe, ESRC, EPSRC and DTI. Her research informed a customer 'needs-based' rather than 'sales targets-based' communications programme which saw an uplift in sales of 170%. As the result, a new profitable sub-group of customers has been identified which led the organisation to invest £40,000 in R&D, with the aim of improving their retention and acquisition.

In addition, KMS researchers have had an impact on policy through their engagement with agencies and organisations that shape government policy. This includes research by Sousounis and Lanot (who moved from Keele to Ume ^{the Univ}) effects of the introduction of the minimum wage in 1999 on young low paid workers, and was funded by the Low Pay Commission. Findings from the study were published in the 2011 Low Pay Commission Report on the National Minimum Wage. The report was subsequently discussed in Parliament and the government decisions that were informed by it generated significant national press coverage (*Financial Times*, *Guardian* and the *Telegraph*).

Researchers in KMS have also had an impact on pedagogic practice beyond the submitting unit. For example, Bell participated in a consultation convened by the Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust (IGE UK) in collaboration with the Institute of Business Ethics (IBE) supported by the Gordon Cook Foundation, on 'Promoting Cultures of Integrity: Ethical Issues for Business Education' in 2011. A report summarising the findings of the consultation led Bell to become co-investigator, working with Hamilton, on a Higher Education Academy project featuring Keele as a case study illustrating critical approaches to teaching business ethics ('Creating Cultures of Integrity: Ethics Education in UK Business Schools', HEA, forthcoming).

The School also engages with user communities by hosting an annual 'Question Time' style event in collaboration with the Chartered Management Institute, with invited speakers from industry, public sector organisations and Keele researchers. Invited speakers on the theme of 'Sustainability, the Euro and the UK' in 2012, included Director of the Front Consultancy Ltd., Chief Executive of North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and West Midlands Regional Director UKTI.

Impact is underpinned by the expertise and resources provided by the Faculty Research Office and

the University's Research and Enterprise Services who give legal, financial and communications advice and ensure that impact is embedded in research activities, including grant applications. The School also works closely with the University's Marketing and Communications Directorate, established in 2011, and the University's public relations agency, McCann, to ensure that research findings are disseminated effectively via the media, and create a directory of experts in the School able to contribute to public debate on specific research issues in response to media requests.

c. Strategy and plans

A core element of the School's impact strategy is to develop improved interfaces with non-academic user groups. This is being achieved through establishment of a KMS Business Advisory Board to be launched at the end of 2013. The Business Advisory Board will comprise directors of large corporate, SME, public and third sector organisations including Royal Mail, Cap Gemini, Stoke City FC, Michelin UK, and North Staffs Chamber of Commerce. A key role of the board will be to help KMS staff to shape their research projects in ways which are relevant to organisations. The recent School-level appointment of Forrester as a Senior Fellow in Enterprise will further ensure that organisations are able to access and exploit KMS research knowledge. Improved interfaces are also being built with carefully selected organisations where Keele researchers have the potential to deliver impact. The recent appointment of Parkin-Kelly, Research Officer at Co-operatives UK, as a Visiting Research Fellow at Keele, will enable relationships to be built with retail societies and the wider co-operative movement through understanding the co-operative model. Impact relationships are also being built with the Manufacturing Institute in the areas of manufacturing strategy and quality/process improvement, and with Midlands TUC and Stoke and Mid-Staffordshire Citizens Advice Bureau on the living wage. Partnerships are also being forged with other Schools in the University, e.g. Keele Medical School, aimed at securing future impact.

'Impact in focused areas of research' is a key priority in the University's strategic plan. Keele has therefore developed a systematic set of procedures, supported by expertise and resources, to ensure that impact is seen as an integral aspect of research (e.g. through regular review of individual impact plans, annual appraisal and promotion). Future strategy will focus on training and staff development on impact-related issues, such as how to build impact relationships and strategies for public engagement and dissemination. This will be provided at School and Faculty levels by drawing on internal expertise (e.g. Scarbrough, Yanow), and by inviting academic and non-academic speakers from business, public and third sector organisations.

d. Relationship to case studies

The impact case studies presented in our submission relate to work done in the Employment Policy and Equalities research group (Thornley and French) and in the Economics and Finance research group (Leece). Rather than being isolated examples, these cases illustrate the embedded nature of an outward engagement within KMS, and the institutional support given to those undertaking impact related work. The case studies, and other specific examples of impact in KMS, have been used to inform the ongoing approach to impact across the Faculty, for example through presentation at the Annual Faculty Impact Showcase.

Research by French concentrates on migrant workers who are vulnerable to exploitation. By studying migrant worker experiences and communicating research findings to trade unions and government agencies, French has enabled understanding of an important but often overlooked employment issue. The case study by Thornley, focusing on low-paid women workers in health and local government and the gender pay gap, further highlights the importance that Keele researchers place on addressing issues of inequality, and generating impact that is aimed at enhancing social justice. This case study is also illustrative of the commitment of Keele researchers to long-term engagement with user communities in tracing changes over time. Finally, Leece's research on household decision making, risk and mortgage design illustrates the ability of Keele researchers to produce practical, industry-specific knowledge that is also of broad public interest and importance. All three case studies thus exemplify the School's overall approach to impact which focuses on broad societal interests and is aimed at achieving fairer, as well as more effective, forms of management and organisation.