

Institution: City University London

Unit of Assessment: 4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience

a. Context

The Department of Psychology shares the commitment of the University to research which is of the highest academic standard and has impact. Our research environment is organised to generate impact for three broad groups of beneficiaries, with developments targeting a fourth group, a strategic priority for the immediate future. The first group includes patients (broadly defined) and medical professionals, with impact relating either to informing strategies for effective prevention, intervention and patient management (Jones Nielsen, Pires-Yfantouda, Sykes) or to assisting of medical professionals (Ayton, Zibarras). The second group of beneficiaries is the general public, particularly in relation to public health (e.g., promotion of healthy eating; Silvester, Tapper). The third group comprises clinical and vulnerable populations, notably autistic individuals, and applications relating to e.g., care and treatment issues (Bowler, Boucher, Gaigg, Lind). The fourth direction of impact, which we are developing following strategic investment (see section c), concerns financial consultation and the provision of research-based tools for aspects of government policy (Conway, Howe, Reimers, Silvester).

b. Approach to impact

The Department generates impact by focusing on the four identified groups of beneficiaries, with each matched to a research group (Counselling & Health Psychology, Organisational Psychology, the Decision Making & Behavioural Economics group and the Centre for Behavioural Economics). These are linked to and supported by our graduate programmes (the MScs in Health Psychology, Organisational Psychology and Counselling Psychology and the Professional Doctorate programme in counselling; there are also plans to develop an MSc programme linked to the Centre for Behavioural Economics). These programmes affect recruitment policy, requiring staff with established track records in relevant applied research. They create externally-visible focus points for collaborations with the potential for impact and attract students with relevant professional backgrounds and career aspirations. We have awarded 146 Professional Doctorates in the current REF period across the DPsych in Counselling Psychology, Doctor of Psychology in Health and Doctor of Psychology pre- and post-chartered.

For example, the recruitment of Jones Nielsen and Pires-Yfantoudas has broadened the reach of impact we generate relevant to patients and medical professionals. As part of a national evaluation of the NHS Health Check Programme, commissioned by the UK Department of Health, Jones Nielsen is developing a standardised evaluation tool to measure patient-perceived levels of self-efficacy in preventing cardio-vascular disease. Pires-Yfantoudas's work examines how to support patients with musculoskeletal conditions through motivational interviewing techniques: the dissemination of results through channels including blogging encouraged wide access. These activities supplement the established areas of impact in this group, such as Sykes's research on pregnancy sickness (experienced in approximately 80% of singleton pregnancies). Her work has led her to become a trustee of the Pregnancy Sickness Support Charity, with a remit to decide the charity's research strategy and manage the data it collects. Zibarras' work on recruitment procedures for GPs, detailed in one of our impact case studies, provides another example of impact on medical professionals, as does Ayton's research into the efficacy of tools used to aid medical decision making, such as computerised decision support in mammography.

Impact on the general public and public health is illustrated in a project commissioned by Phillips International, in which Silvester explored the influence of lighting on performance and wellbeing in the workplace and classroom (quality of lighting is a legal health and safety requirement). Flaxman's links with many organisations support his research on how to alleviate work-related stress as detailed in one of our impact case studies. A three-year ESRC grant supports a research project on the promotion of healthy eating with web-based tools, which could be used, for example, on the NHS Choices website (Tapper; the project includes representatives from the Welsh Assembly Government and the Welsh Food Standards Agency). Tapper (newly recruited) is also involved in the evaluation of a free breakfast initiative in Welsh primary schools, a scheme which has now been extended to all primary school children in Wales. This example provides evidence of how our recruitment strategy broadens the reach of our impact in areas of significant concern.

Impact template (REF3a)

Our public dissemination of research also benefits from the University hosting The Conversation UK (<http://theconversation.com/uk>), where UK academics write about their research for a lay audience.

Impact on clinical and vulnerable populations is strongly demonstrated by researchers in Autism (Bowler, Boucher, Gaigg, Lind), who have a long-standing tradition in the Department and contribute one of our impact case studies. The focus of the group is to understand the causes and consequences of Autism and to facilitate impact through the dissemination of laboratory findings to service providers, educators, practitioners and the general public. Boucher recently authored an educational textbook about Autism for non-specialist audiences such as carers and parents seeking to understand the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of the disorder. In 2013, Boucher was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA), in recognition of "contributions to the academic study of neurodevelopmental disorders, and for broadening our understanding of how these disorders are perceived by wider society". The group has also developed the *Task Support Hypothesis (TSH)*, which informs clinicians and educators on how to structure environments (e.g., classrooms and curricular activities) to alleviate learning and memory difficulties in Autism. Research in the Department also benefits other groups of vulnerable individuals, such as patients with schizophrenia (Haenschel) and drug addiction (Filippopoulos, Corcoran); and asylum-seekers and refugees (Todd). Of particular note is the work by Howe on memory processes in abused and/or neglected children. This has ramifications for the criminal justice system as it impacts on the expectations for accurate testimony from such populations (Howe is supported by a National Institute of Mental Health, USA, collaborative grant, worth \$1.5M).

A key example of impact on financial consultation and government policy is provided by Silvester's research on the assessment and recruitment of MPs (currently applied to some 60% of parliamentary candidates and detailed in an impact case study). This area of impact has been the focus of considerable investment in this REF period, including the appointment of three senior professors. Two of these, Conway and Howe, regularly provide expert evidence relating to memory (e.g., the evaluation of memories in witness statements) to the legal profession (principally to solicitors, barristers, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Criminal Review Board in England and Northern Ireland), based on their world-leading expertise on veridical and false memories. Conway provided key evidence in an appeal case at the Royal Courts of Justice, Criminal Appeal Courts, *R v J.H. and T.G (Deceased)*, July 1st 2005 (EWCA Crim. 1828), which led to a ruling that allows expert evidence to be called in cases of adult recall of childhood memories (reports in *Memory & The Law*, BPS, 2008, 2010). The recommendations of the report were subsequently communicated to lawyers through professional journals including *The Barrister* (2008), *Justice for the Peace* (2008), *Cambridge Handbook of Forensic Psychology* (2011) and *Lawyers for Children Newsletter* (April 2012). Howe has consulted in over 100 legal cases and served as an expert witness in 33, in Canada, the USA and the UK, activity which is directly supported by his relevant research. Another new recruit, Reimers, has advised HM Revenue & Customs on communication protocols related to tax, an area related to his research concerning the psychology of taxation.

University and Department policies and processes support the generation of impact from research. Mentoring structures for academic staff ensure that staff have sufficient time and resources to engage in activities which promote impact. The generation of research with impact is recognised at a level commensurate with other measures of academic success in annual staff appraisals and applications for promotion. The Department's Research Committee supports activities intended for impact (e.g., attendance at non-academic conferences) on the same basis as those aimed at basic research. Staff who are particularly focused towards impact are supported with reduced teaching responsibilities on the undergraduate programme to allow them to maximise their contribution to the teaching of relevant postgraduate courses. For example, Flaxman and Zibarras teach exclusively on the MSc in Organisational Psychology, Sykes on the MSc in Health Psychology and Filippopoulos on the MSc and Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology. The Department also benefits from University policies which support impact and encourage the pursuit of industry links. The City Research Online open access repository enables easy, visible access to research outputs for the wider public. The University and School Research and Enterprise Offices provide administrative support for the establishment of links with industry and the University has generous rules for time allowance and compensation relating to such links (e.g., under some circumstances an academic can receive 100% of consultancy fees as direct payment or returned to their investigator balance account to support research activity). The University backs

Impact template (REF3a)

departmental initiatives for public engagement activities. One example was the art exhibition organised by the Autism Research Group in 2011 which sought to raise public awareness about Autism. Members of staff, with support from the University's Press Office, contribute to and promote lay reports of their research. For example, our research has featured in *New Scientist* (e.g., Endress, Freeman, Howe) and *Scientific American* (e.g., Endress, Pothos). Colleagues are also involved in scientific productions for television (e.g., Conway, J.Cook, Howe, Jones Nielsen) and radio broadcasts (e.g., Freeman, Reimers). One compelling example of public engagement with science through art is Conway's collaboration with video artist Shona Illingworth over a ten year period on works of art that express modern scientific thinking about memory, for example, films such as *The Watchman* (on trauma), *Balnakiel* (on memory for childhood) and installations such as *The Memory Experience*. The total audience figures estimated for the project, including secondary audiences, were over one million.

c. Strategy and plans

We plan to continue to undertake excellent research with impact, especially in relation to beneficiaries with whom we have established experience of interaction. The Department's recruitment policy will continue to recognise research with impact in accordance with the University Framework for Achieving Impact from Research. During the current REF period we have made several appointments partly on the basis of impact (e.g., Filippopoulos, Jones-Nielsen, Plagnol, Tapper, Zibarras). We have recruited staff to support research groups that are well-positioned to deliver research with impact (e.g., Counselling & Health Psychology; Organisational Psychology), while at the same time ensuring the sustainability of groups engaged with more basic research (e.g., the Cognitive Neuroscience Research Unit). Where possible, we recruit individuals whose research interests and profile enable them to function effectively in both applied and basic research groups, thus promoting cross-fertilisation and enabling a higher degree of responsiveness to emerging priorities (e.g., Filippopoulos, Tapper). Our recruitment policy will also continue to support the more applied graduate teaching programmes which in turn support the corresponding research groups, e.g., through the recruitment of research students and advertising of relevant research in the Department.

In the current REF period, we have established the Centre for Behavioural Economics (Corr, Plagnol) and the Centre for Memory & The Law (Conway, Howe, Knott). These strategic investments, together with the University's location in central London, provide excellent prospects for extending the benefits of our research to the financial institutions and legal professionals respectively. The Centres represent a major investment (three senior professors, two lecturers, all full-time; new laboratories; associated PhD studentships) which provide the foundation for further development of the research with impact already undertaken by the Centre leaders. In the Centre for Behavioural Economics, research into, for example, mood and loss aversion in trading and characterising rational decision making (Corr, Pothos) will generate impact relevant to financial institutions. The Centre for Memory & The Law will facilitate the development of Conway and Howe's current research into the impact of memory on testimony issues (particularly in relation to children).

d. Relationship to case studies

The emphasis on impact in the expansion of the Department during the current REF period is evident in the impact case studies selected and in the many other examples cited above. Our new staff appointments have strengthened the research groupings in the Department and so aided the development of the impact case studies through contribution of additional expertise, cross-fertilisation of ideas and a broader research culture supportive of impact. The MSc programmes have provided a pool of graduate students willing to engage with related work and foster forums for the consideration of impact. The 'eyewitness testimony in adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder' case study is supported by the recruitment of experts in the application of memory research in legal settings (Conway, Howe), providing the foundations for sustainable related research with impact. The case study on 'employees' mental health' has been cross-fertilised with other applied research in the Counselling & Health Psychology research group (e.g., Sykes). The research leading to the case studies on 'selection practices within the health care professions' and 'selection and development practices for politicians' has benefited from interaction with the new appointments for the Centre for Behavioural Economics.