

Institution: Keele University

Unit of assessment: A4 Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience

a. Context

The Brain & Cognition and the Social & Developmental Psychology research groups at Keele are committed to developing an understanding of key social and health issues, and to working with a range of partners to enhance health and wellbeing. During the REF period we have strengthened our collaborations with various social, health and educational partners in both the conduct of our research and the dissemination of our research findings. From the social and educational perspective, we have worked with individual schools, education authorities, parents' groups and others. In the educational setting, our research has contributed to the development of policy and training guidelines designed to enhance the quality of life for students. In the health and ageing projects we have collaborated with hospitals, health boards, nursing homes, community groups and old people's organisations to enhance the health and wellbeing of older people and their families. Many of these partnerships have been with local agencies, but increasingly our work is with national and international partners. Our research impact is at three levels: **direct/instrumental impact** (e.g. on policy and practice), **conceptual** (e.g. reframing policy debates) and **capacity-building**, (e.g. by giving practitioners the skills and tools to engage in research themselves). Through an integrated approach we have ensured that our research has increasing impact.

b. Approach to impact

Partnerships: A key feature of Keele's research strategy is that we actively involve agencies in the design of our research, the conduct of our research, in discussion of our research findings, and in exploring how our research can influence policy and practice. This approach to impact has formed the basis of a recent publication (Murray (2013). "Implementation: putting analyses into practice" In U. Flick (Ed.) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Analysis*. London: Sage). In the area of health, we have established a strong partnership with public health, city and county councils (Manchester, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire; South Cheshire). To facilitate these collaborations we have convened a series of shared workshops with potential partners, including local authorities and the NHS Public Health, on such topics as *Promoting Healthy Communities* (2010) and *Reducing Health Inequalities* (2011) which have been attended by several hundred participants and the reports have been widely circulated. In the area of ageing, we have had formal discussions with a number of agencies including Manchester City Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire County Council, AgeUK North Staffordshire, AgeUK South Staffordshire, AgeUK Shropshire, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Staffordshire Housing, Aspire Housing and the Beth Johnson Foundation to identify potential shared research interests.

Examples of developing partnerships include the work by Kent, who has worked closely with a number of organisations, including the NSPCC, to explore the nature of telephone helplines and how their quality can be enhanced by dedicated staff training. Edelstyn is working closely with the University Hospital of North Staffordshire (UHNS) to explore the impact of different medication regimes on the cognitive performance of Parkinson's patients, such that her work can have immediate impact on medication guidelines. Rotenberg is also working with UHNS to explore the role of trust in child-physician interaction, and to promote the importance of trust in health staff training. Berry is working with parent groups to explore the role of eye gaze in autism and related conditions. Grange and Williams are working with older people's organisations to investigate the impact of ageing on cognition. Stiff is working with the University Students' Union and the University to research how the use of Facebook and the web can be enhanced to ensure integration of new students into university life.

These initiatives have been supported strongly by the University through both the Research Institute for Social Sciences and Research and Enterprise Services, including a recently appointed (2013) Enterprise Business Manager with specific responsibility for ageing, arts and regeneration, who have provided support staff and funding to organise the events.

Dissemination:

The Centre has taken various steps to promote broader awareness of our activities. This includes circulating a research newsletter, distributing news releases, developing websites and electronic communications, and organising public events. We have developed excellent contacts with a range of media outlets and staff have been regularly interviewed on local radio stations. The creation of a new Directorate of Marketing and Communications (MAC) in 2011, and consequent specialist PR advice, has led to increased national media profile for the Centre. Through the strategic use of press releases, assisted by the University press office, we have been able to link our research to current policy debates. Several staff have attended dedicated training programmes on handling the media, either developed at Keele or through other agencies such as the ESRC. Some have built up substantial expertise in working with the media, and the Centre has organised a series of workshops to share their expertise with other staff. For example, Stephens' research on swearing has become something of a cultural phenomenon, with *ABC News* in the US re-enacting his research with passersby in New York Central Park. Channel 4's series *Embarrassing Bodies* also re-enacted the experiment, as did the US Discovery Channel TV show *Mythbusters* in an episode entitled 'The Secret World of Pain', and Stephens was interviewed on BBC TV's *The One Show* and *Planet World*. Similarly the two case studies (see below) have attracted substantial media attention.

We are keen to enhance our webpresence with a regular news feed online. Stephens has also developed the award-winning *Cool Psychology* blog (<http://psychologyrich.blogspot.co.uk/> Top 30 Psychology blog 2012), and Williams one on memory (<http://helenlouisewilliams28.wordpress.com/>). We have a Psychology Twitter account and several individuals have their own project accounts, which are well followed. The use of blogs and other social media has enabled individuals to promote their research and increase its visibility, to communicate with those directly interested in the research and also to develop new relationships. Staff are expected to present and publish their work in academic and non-academic forums. The Centre has organised regular events including the Annual Conferences of the *BPS Cognitive Psychology Section* (2011), *Alcohol Hangover Research Network* (2013), and the *Narrative Practitioner Network* (2009). It has also organised collaborative events with other universities including Manchester and Liverpool (*Time perception*) and Aston (*Ageing Research*, 2013) and the *European Conference on Developmental Psychology of Music* (co-chair: Lamont). Project events have also helped to disseminate the findings. For example, the *Boys to Men* project has staged four events in total, at Keele, Manchester and Bristol, reaching over 200 practitioners in the area of domestic abuse.

c. Strategy and plans

Over the past five years the Centre has taken major steps to increase its engagement with a growing range of partners in order to connect its research to community needs. In many ways there has been a 'turn' from inwardly focused research to collaborative forms of research. In future we intend to build upon the success of this strategy through developing more partnerships, with the aim of ensuring that discussion about impact is promoted from the outset of research projects.

The Centre has taken the lead in several recent initiatives which have emphasised the importance of partnerships. The Keele Initiative on Ageing (KIA), a cross-University initiative led by a Centre member (Murray), has established an Advisory Panel with representatives from the Centre, other research groups (in neuroscience, health, social science, nursing), and the community (including the city and county councils and AgeUK). This advisory panel is designed as a forum in which researchers, policy makers and practitioners can discuss potential research initiatives, ongoing projects, and research findings. A highly successful mini-conference on current research on ageing (May 2013) attracted over eighty people from the broader community, and a brochure detailing key research was widely distributed. Similarly, the planned Centre for Research and Action on Health Inequalities (CRAHI) (co-director: Murray), which will be established in 2014 with joint funding from Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council, is committed to maximising the impact of research. It will also have an advisory board with representatives of the local community and is designed to ensure that research findings deliberately connect with policy and practice initiatives to reduce health inequalities.

The REF period has seen a step change increase in our levels of engagement with external groups. This is consistent with the impact agenda of the REF, but goes well beyond it, and reflects

Impact template (REF3a)

a longstanding commitment by Psychology to viewing academic research as a contribution to the public sphere. What has changed is that we now have a systematic set of procedures, supported by expertise and resources from the wider University, that builds in planning to maximise impact as integral to research (through regular review of the plans of individuals, the Centre and the Research Institute), and recognises work with non-academic groups and impact as elements in calculating time for research, plans for research leave, annual appraisals and promotions. Recent examples of this growing orientation is the planned research of Kent on telephone helplines which is being developed in collaboration with the Staffordshire Police Authority and the work by Lamont on choirs in collaboration with Manchester City Council.

Building upon the success of dissemination strategies such as the use of performances, exhibitions, road-shows, newsletters, blogs and Twitter, we aim to enhance our dissemination activities by ensuring that all staff have impact/dissemination plans for their research. This will be taken up in annual reviews, with guidance and training provided by research group leaders. Staff will also be expected to participate in other training events organised nationally.

There is acceptance of a need for broader engagement with the general public and plans are in place for an annual *Psychology Research Festival* with events in various venues including local libraries, hospitals and community centres. The aim of this approach is not just to showcase our research but to develop greater community participation in our research activities. For example, we have established an Older Person's Research Participation Panel which has provided participants for our research and the plan is to involve them further in designing and conducting research. We also have in place a growing collaboration with schools, such that our staff not only engage in research with local schools, but also share their findings with them across a range of projects. An example is the work of Skipper who has been developing a collaboration with schools on students' creative writing which evolved from her work on feedback to students. This project led to student publications <http://www.amazon.co.uk/A-Web-of-Lies-ebook/dp/B008DZDJXO/> and has attracted wider interest from teachers.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies exemplify, build upon and enhance our approach to partnership. Both have involved external partners from the outset, establishing advisory boards for particular projects and engaging in a range of dissemination activities including talks and workshops, media appearances, and the wider use of the Internet. They are models for other research projects developing in the Centre, and project team members have used their experience to organise workshops on such topics as 'developing partnerships' and 'working with the media'.

Partnerships: In some cases, such as the *Children's and Young People's Social and Emotional Well-being* programme, international partnerships have been built for the purpose of research projects. External partners collaborating with us in this way have been able to benefit through capacity-building, and by using the outputs from the projects as robust assessments to demonstrate the impact of what they do to their own funders. The *Participation in Music and Arts* programme is embedded in arts/culture developments by Manchester City Council and in wider education initiatives. The *Call-Me* research team had ongoing discussion about the project plans and how findings could connect with policy development. The *Ages and Stages* project was designed in collaboration with the New Victoria Theatre and has an advisory board with representatives from both academia and the arts community.

Dissemination: The *Children's and Young People's Social and Emotional Well-being* programme has promoted wide discussion of the research through interviews on radio and television, and reports in the local and national press and on the web. It held workshops for different groups, gave presentations at key events (e.g. the *Schools Anti-Bullying Conference*), and a research road-show promoted the research findings to key organisations. The *Call-Me* project team participated in various events aimed at stakeholders and the general public in Manchester (e.g. ESRC Festival of Science; <http://www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk/assets/files/247.pdf>) and London (e.g. NDA Arts showcase). The *Ages and Stages* project organised public performances and exhibitions which have taken place in schools and other institutions. Both the *Call-Me* and the *Ages and Stages* projects produced policy documents which were the focus of broader discussion.