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| Institution: Newman University |
| Unit of Assessment: 4 – Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience |
| <p>a. Context</p> <p>The main non-academic audience for the research of the Psychology Unit of Assessment is health, counselling and psychotherapy professionals working in both policy and practice. The principal types of impact relevant to our research to date have been on health awareness, health promotion and policy. These form the main audience, for example, for Lorna Dodd's work on young people's risky health-related behaviours, and for Alison Rolfe's work on untreated heavy drinking. Research impact is an area that we are currently seeking to develop and which will be a priority over the next five years.</p> |
| <p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The unit's approach to interacting with non-academic users, beneficiaries and audiences during the period 2008-2013 has been somewhat limited given that the Department within which this Unit of Assessment is based has undergone numerous changes of personnel and a period of considerable expansion. However, there have been some notable examples of staff who have been appointed to Newman University during this time, who are now actively seeking to develop external relationships.</p> <p>Staff in the unit have been supported to achieve impact from their research through the availability of funds dedicated to research, resulting from the institution's previous RAE entry. In undertaking these activities, the unit made use of the institution's support facilities and expertise in the Graduate School. For example, Dr Lorna Dodd has used these funds to support her attendance and presentation at conferences attended by healthcare practitioners.</p> <p>This infrastructure includes an External Engagement Coordinator who enables impact across the University's unit. This has led to a number of potential collaborations with a variety of significant partners, such as Ingestre Hall, Stafford, and New Life Counselling, Northern Ireland. We also have a very strong skill set in counselling, psychology and the applications of psychology, and have sought to engage with counselling and psychotherapy organisations to provide expertise and consultancy around evaluation of therapeutic outcomes, and around working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) clients. These two areas of expertise stem from the research work by Drs Fran Renwick and Alison Rolfe on therapeutic outcomes, and by Jan Grove on the experiences of same-sex couples of receiving counselling.</p> <p>Employers have been attracted by Newman University's distinctive ethos for learning and community and are keen to have conversations that help to build sustainable working relationships, meet their organisations' needs, identify and progress new business opportunities and generate additional work placements for students.</p> <p>In May 2012, a research-focussed day conference was held, which was attended by over 100 people. These included members of our Professional Development Association, who are counselling and psychotherapy professionals. This day conference was focussed on disseminating the findings from research carried out by staff and postgraduate students from Newman University. These included presentations on writing in counselling and psychotherapy, the mother's experiences of her baby during therapy, evidence from reflective practice, the spirituality of counsellors working within a Christian counselling organisation, client's discourses on the process of seeking same-sex couples' counselling, and unsuccessful psychological therapy: the experiences of clients.</p> <p>The unit's approach to impact is aligned with Newman's overall mission, which states that as an institution we seek to make a positive difference to individuals and communities through the contribution of our staff, students and graduates. Over the majority of the census period this has</p> |

Impact template (REF3a)

shaped our wider HEI strategy on impact, which in turn has been indebted to the government's November 2009 publication 'Higher Ambitions: The future of universities in the knowledge economy'. As such, our strategic approach has been aimed at strengthening our contribution to social justice, regional development and community cohesion. Commitment to the world outside our campus is axiomatic for Newman University, with its foundation in Catholic social teaching and its roots in teacher education. In particular, the notion of community is central to this tradition, embracing wider ideas of fellowship, openness and collaboration alongside more practical and specific responsibilities to our partners, especially with regard to the distinctive role which Newman can play in its locality and region.

c. Strategy and plans

Our plans to support impact from the unit's research in the future are to further develop the partnerships referred to above, with Ingestre, Stafford, and New Life Counselling, Northern Ireland. The former project is to evaluate and evidence impact of mental health interventions for vulnerable young people in a residential arts centre setting. The second is to assess outcomes from school-based counselling throughout Northern Ireland, with a view to feeding into best practice in service provision.

Our goals for impact from the unit's research in the future are, firstly, to further develop the impact from the research on risky health behaviours (Dodd and Rolfe) and to disseminate this to student populations, including young people at Newman University, through the development of health awareness resources for newly enrolled students. We also aim to hold a day conference at Newman University within the next five years focussed on the findings from practice-related research in counselling and psychotherapy. This would be similar to our previous day conference referred to above, but with a national target audience, rather than a local/regional one.

The unit is developing its strategy for impact by working closely with the Newman University External Engagement Officer and with potential partner organisations.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies relate to the unit's approach to achieving impact, as described in b above, in that they related directly to the aim of impacting upon health awareness and health policy debates. They do this through their focus on risky health-related behaviours, and upon implications for interventions to facilitate more healthy behaviours, particularly amongst young adults.