

<b>Institution:</b> University of Derby
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience (UOA 04)
<b>a. Context</b>

The REF 2014 submission for UOA 4 comprises research by members of the Centre for Psychological Research, which is one of six University-approved Research Centres. The Centre's research includes cognitive, clinical, developmental, pedagogic and social psychology research, and impacts on outcomes in the domains of health, education and industry. The health impacts involve NHS and other service providers for mental and physical health, as well as services and materials delivered directly to the general public. The education impacts involve education policy and support for learners in higher education and other settings. The industry impacts include manufacturing, labelling policy, and health and safety at work. In each case the research is developed in collaboration with end users to ensure relevance, applicability and implementation. The approach to impact involves promoting multidisciplinary and applied research, and actively engaging with end user groups.

<b>b. Approach to impact</b>
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To promote **multidisciplinary** approaches to research, the Centre for Psychological Research has provided development events including an interdisciplinary research awayday (November 2010), and an externally facilitated Research Design Service workshop on applying for NIHR funding (February 2012), both organised jointly by the Centre for Psychological Research and the Biology Research Group. Examples of multidisciplinary aspects of the Centre's research include:

- Research with psychiatrists and mental health professionals, especially in relation to research on compassion-focused psychotherapy.
- Research with physical health professionals in hospitals, general practice and the voluntary sector, especially in relation to pain management, blood disorders, food allergy and other chronic conditions.
- Research with neuroscientists, neural network modellers and brain imaging researchers, especially in relation to attention and emotion processing.
- Research with occupational health and safety professionals, especially in relation to workplace health.
- Research with biologists and weight management professionals, especially in relation to interventions for obesity.
- Research with teachers and educators, especially in relation to virtual learning, maths anxiety and educational transitions.
- Research with sports scientists, especially in relation to performance in sport, exercise and dance.

The Centre for Psychological Research has prioritised **applied research** since 2008 in a number of ways including:

- Recruiting early career and experienced researchers whose research has the potential for high impact applications in the fields of internet use, criminology and health.
- Supporting researchers who are jointly employed between the university and external organisations including Slimming World (a major national weight management organisation) and Human Applications (a risk management consultancy).
- Awarding PhD studentships to applicants with proposals for research applied to addictive behaviours, childhood obesity, children's anxiety, online gambling, student plagiarism and natural environments.
- Appointing a Visiting Professor (Abigail Locke), to support and improve the impact of the Centre's applied qualitative research.
- Supporting consultancy based on applied research, for example on psychological characteristics of consumers of new interactive technology, and open access educational resources about sickle cell disease.

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- Organising a series of externally funded projects on virtual learning, which led to a JISC Guide on *Innovative Practice Using Mobile Technology, Social Software and Virtual Worlds*, and further applied projects to support students with disabilities.
- Organising conferences hosted at the University of Derby in June 2012 and June 2013 on applied qualitative methods, which brought together applied qualitative researchers from across and outside the UK, with papers on a diverse range of applied topics including communication skills training, aphasia rehabilitation, and experiences of substance misuse and offending.

Examples of the Centre's **active engagement with end-user groups** include:

- Research conducted in partnership or collaboration with voluntary sector organisations serving relevant populations, including SENSE, the Anaphylaxis Campaign, the Compassionate Mind Foundation and First Steps (a local organisation for people with eating disorders).
- Externally funded projects with external partners, for example the IOSH-funded Move More study of postural break taking behaviour, with participants from six commercial organisations.
- Research that influenced national and international care pathways and clinical guidelines for the care and management of children with allergies, including the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health Allergy Care pathway for Children (2011), the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Food Allergy (2010), and the World Allergy Organisation Guidelines for the Assessment and Management of Anaphylaxis (2011).
- Research that engaged stakeholders in translating project findings into evidence-based policy recommendations, such as the HEA-funded Flying Start project on educational transitions, which included a policy forum in June 2010, which was attended by representatives of HEFCE, UCAS, UUK and the NUS.
- Research that made evidence-based contributions to national policy development consultations, such as HEFCE's July 2010 consultation on key principles and features in a review of the teaching funding method.
- Research that informed UK government higher education policy by contributing to the House of Commons Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee investigation into Students and Universities (conducted during 2008-09, report published August 2009).
- Research that led to significant media coverage of research and researchers, facilitated by the University Press Office, including features in a national BBC1 Horizon TV programme about food allergy (December 2008); a Guardian Education feature on maths anxiety (May 2012), and very wide national and international press and media coverage of published calls for the video game industry to take greater responsibility for online gaming addiction (August 2013).

### c. Strategy and plans

Strategy and planning for psychology research impact begins in discussion at monthly meetings of the Centre for Psychology Research, and continues in consultation and liaison within the school and faculty, and at Faculty Research and Research Degrees Committee meetings. Regular staff engagement events at school and faculty level provide opportunities for interchange and consultation between managers and researchers. A more formalised strategic plan for research impact is discussed at the annual psychology research awayday, where we seek consensus around key targets and objectives for the coming year. The Centre for Psychological Research's current strategy for maximising research impact includes strengthening the **multidisciplinary** nature of our research in order to address socially important issues, improving the **outward facing** aspects of our research, and linking staff **recognition** and **reward** more closely and explicitly to research impact.

To strengthen the **multidisciplinary** nature of our research, we are reviewing the internal organisation of research 'clusters' (special interest groups) in the Centre for Psychological Research, to focus more on specific multidisciplinary areas of research with high impact potential, for example compassion, cyberpsychology, nature connectedness, and painkiller dependence. This will be part of a wider review of university research structures, which may lead to the

**Impact template (REF3a)**

establishment of multidisciplinary Research Centres focusing on issues such as wellbeing and sustainability.

To improve the **outward facing** aspects of our research, we are reviewing and overhauling the Research Centre web site. The aims of this are to increase the availability and accessibility of information about the Research Centre, and to develop improved strategic networks and alliances to address national and international priorities. The renewed web site is expected to provide a stronger and clearer online focus on key themes with greater external salience, for example wellbeing and sustainability, and to make greater use of video and flexible, interactive resources.

To improve the **recognition and reward** of research conducted by members of the Centre, we have improved the coordination between research management and the management of teaching and administrative duties by appointing an Assistant Head of Subject with a specific brief for research. This allows work that improves the impact of psychology research to be recognised more transparently in workload planning. The Research Centre and the Subject Group are developing departmental management policies in which relief from teaching and administration and other measures are used more effectively to recognise and reward successful researchers and are linked more closely and explicitly to research impact.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The case study about research on compassion-focussed therapy exemplifies **multidisciplinary** research encompassing psychological and evolutionary theory, neuropsychology and clinical practice, and is a good example of research on psychological processes being **applied** to achieve benefits in terms of clinical outcomes for patients and users of voluntary sector organisations, as well as offering information and support for the general public. It was supported by university policies and initiatives to **reward and recognise** collaborative and applied research, for example through funding contributions from QR funds allocated to the Research Centre, and most recently in the award of a University fractional research appointment to Professor Paul Gilbert.

The case study on cognitive ergonomic research also exemplifies **multidisciplinary** research that brings together psychology, ergonomics, design and policy for public health and industry standardisation. It is also a good example of psychological research being **applied** to achieve benefits in terms of public health and wellbeing as well as industrial and commercial improvements. The research was also supported by university policies and initiatives to **reward and recognise** collaborative and applied research, for example the conferment of a University Readership in Cognitive Ergonomics for Dr Miles Richardson.

The two case studies present evidence about the impact of relatively longstanding research, where there has been greater opportunity to achieve impact. Both case studies follow the pattern described by the more general approach to impact, however, which the Centre for Psychological Research applies in a similar way to research that is less longstanding, or is conducted by newer or less experienced researchers. The case studies are representative of a longstanding commitment to applied research with demonstrable benefits outside academia, with a special focus on health and wellbeing. Much of the research featured in the case studies was conducted in the context of long-established research clusters and groupings within the Centre for Psychological Research, and the lead researchers featured in each case study are involved in active collaborations with less experienced researchers in the Centre.