

<p><b>Institution:</b> Middlesex University</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 4 (Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience)</p>
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>The profile of the Unit and the Department of Psychology within which it is located has been enhanced by significant investment in outstanding new academic staff alongside improved research profiles of existing staff. Our evolving approach to impact is informed by historical research strengths which have already resulted in impacts, along with new opportunities arising from strengthened research leadership and capacity.</p> <p>The main sectors where our research has impact are health, education and related public services. Specific areas include suicide prevention in prisons, dyslexia support, domestic violence, exposure to pornography, child exploitation, the relationship between video gaming and health, embryo transfer policy, cognitive behavioural therapy for anxiety in older adults, and improving services for learners with dyslexia in the UK and Iran.</p> <p>Consideration of impact is an increasingly important part of our research, informs decisions regarding staff appointments and is reflected in our approach to staff development. Enhanced research leadership and improved research capacity, coupled with strong relations with a variety of users, place us in a strong position to substantially grow our research, with impact in and outside academia.</p>
<p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>We recognise the multitude of forms which impact takes, and are mindful of these as we apply our research to the world outside the university. Impacts may result directly from research (e.g. Baluch's work impacting on the national curriculum for reading in Iran) or may be indirect and difficult to plan (e.g. Coulson's work impacting on NICE guidelines). We enable staff to enhance non-academic impact, by providing training, allocating resources, employment of staff focussed on knowledge transfer (KT), work programme allowances, and a rewards and incentives scheme operating at School and Departmental level to stimulate new activity and reward existing initiatives.</p> <p>Alongside inter-disciplinary networks of practitioners and academics, we sustain relationships with key users through activities including membership of committees that influence practice and policy (e.g. the British Fertility Society; the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority; the British Dyslexia Association). The proactive generation of impact has been facilitated by Departmental investment in appropriate activities (for instance funding Raman to attend briefings and deliver lectures on dyslexia in Cyprus and Turkey) and cultural shifts within the Department, in the ways in which impact is now regarded as a crucial component of research. Our research finds various routes to impact, some explicitly planned, others deriving from longstanding relationships across research, KT and teaching. Our long running student placement scheme has provided us with opportunities to benefit from relationships with a variety of organisations. For instance, one of our students performed a small evaluation for Stockwell Green Community Services which led to involvement with the London Probation Trust (LPT) who subsequently commissioned a Middlesex team lead by Professor Joanna Adler to evaluate all of LPT's community partner organisations and LPT's approach to running partnerships. The results of this evaluation were picked up by the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism, leading to Adler feeding into the reviews of <i>Prevent</i> strategy, and giving evidence to the Carlile Review. Direct impact on policy in domestic violence (with the Middlesex contribution to the evaluation of the DVPO pilots influencing the Home Secretary's decision in November 2013 to roll out the scheme nationally (Adler, Horvarth and Coulson) was similarly significant.</p> <p>We encourage practitioner and voluntary sector involvement in the instigation, development, dissemination and implementation of our research through a variety of means, including continuing professional development. For example, we have involved stakeholders in seminars (e.g. A Society for Reproductive and Infant Psychology funded workshop on <i>The Future of Infertility Treatment Policy and Practice</i>, 2008; and BPS funded seminars on <i>The Language of Music, The Music of Language</i>, 2010-2011) and conferences, often involving practitioners, academics and</p>

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policy makers with keynote speakers of international renown. User involvement in such activities is enabled financially, by reduced fees as well as bursaries. These conferences have been positively reviewed and have enhanced our reputation and profile. Ongoing relations, including student placements, also help ensure that our research is relevant to policy and practice impact, with access through significant policy makers and practitioners, in state as well as voluntary sectors. Appreciating that only some of our research projects have had impact explicitly designed into the research process, we are now directly addressing this issue. Coulson (Reader) has been appointed as the Departmental Impact Coordinator. This role is part of the Research Management Team (RMT), and takes a lead on supporting staff in building impact considerations into their research, spreading good practice, and assisting colleagues in using the Unit's impact toolkit (see c below). The Impact Coordinator works closely with the Departmental Knowledge Transfer Lead (Adler), who has extensive experience of undertaking policy relevant work with considerable impact, and has strong policy and practice networks.

The generation of impact is supported at an institutional level by the Research and Knowledge Transfer Office (RKTO), through information and specialist technical knowledge (i.e. in relation to contracts), logistical support and a programme of training for all staff. The Unit's two centres, Forensic Psychological Services and the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies (see below) have strong credentials in undertaking outstanding research with clear impact on policy and practice. Additional support is available through the University's other policy oriented research centres, such as the Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research (Business School) and the Flood Hazard Research Centre (Science and Technology) .

**c. Strategy and plans**

Our approach to and strategy for impact is firmly located in our research strategy and closely aligned with our teaching. KT and impact on policy and practice are important in keeping our teaching and research relevant, making our provision exciting and enhancing students' education and employability. We have therefore taken a number of strategic initiatives to enhance research impact.

**Building capacity**

Impact considerations have played a strong role in decisions about new appointments, both senior and junior, and in developing the skills of existing staff. For example, Dhami (Professor) has a history of undertaking research, funded by government departments such as the Home Office, Ministry of Justice and the Department of Defence, with implications for justice and security services. Marzano's (Lecturer) research on suicide prevention has led to CPD for the Royal College of Psychiatrists and is widely disseminated in the prison service. They are among a number of colleagues appointed in this REF period with strong credentials in policy relevant research. Alongside this, we have supported the development of existing staff. Gray and Nunn, for example, have been funded to undertake specific training on enhancing impact. The importance of research impact is also reflected in strategic decisions to establish centres, focusing on research and knowledge transfer. The Department funded the establishment of Forensic Psychological Services (Adler as Director) as a vehicle for research, consultancy and continuing professional development. With the appointment of Bifulco (Professor and Head of Department), we have attracted to Middlesex, the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies (CATS – previously at Kingston). CATS has a strong reputation both for the quality of its research and its engagement with user communities ([www.cats-rp.org.uk](http://www.cats-rp.org.uk)), including the Metropolitan Police, the Bowlby Centre, children's charities such as the Lucy Faithful Foundation, and the NHS. Models for ensuring impact being developed in these centres will benefit our general approaches to impact enhancement.

**Strengthening interfaces with stakeholders**

We have invested to strengthen interfaces with stakeholders. The Research Management Team roles reflect this commitment. Funds are made available to support activities related to impact (e.g. Baluch's work on dyslexia), and to provide training. Stakeholders are engaged informally through conferences, seminars (where appropriate with fee concessions) and ongoing relations (e.g. student placements) and now formally through their representation on steering groups for all three research themes. We have recently reconfigured our professorial inaugural lectures into day-long conferences, to which stakeholders are invited. The Impact Coordinator (Coulson), maintains a

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Departmental client relationship management system and is charged with the responsibility to further strengthen interfaces with stakeholders. Financial support is available for relevant activities. To formalise the consideration of impact in the research process, an impact toolkit, guided by the ESRC's model, is being developed.

**Strengthening collaboration**

We have improved collaborative research links during this REF period. For example, colleagues working in forensic psychology work closely with criminologists and social policy analysts. The strength of this collaboration is reflected in these colleagues being submitted in UoA 22, to which they are also contributing an impact case study (on children, pornography and sexual exploitation). We have also developed collaborative links with computer science and with biomedical sciences, with whom we share facilities and infrastructure. These collaborative networks have benefited us during this REF period and place us in a strong position to further enhance the impact of our research. We also invest in international collaborations. For example, in relation to dyslexia, Baluch's Iranian collaborator, Danaye-Tousi, is now an Honorary Lecturer with us. To expand the reach of this work beyond Britain and Iran, the Unit funded Raman to attend a knowledge transfer visit to Istanbul in July 2011 where she met with officials from the Department of Education and the Office of the Prime Minister. This led in November 2011 to her running a seminar entitled 'Dyslexia and Education in Turkish Speaking Children in the UK: Integrating Theory and Practice'. This seminar was funded through knowledge transfer money provided by the Unit. As a result of the interest generated by this seminar, Raman has set up, and become the first president of, the Turkish Dyslexia Association. We are now well placed to strengthen these collaborations in Iran and Turkey; new appointees have brought with them other national and international collaborative networks.

We have achieved much since RAE 2008. In the next REF period, we are committed to ensuring that we enhance our research impact through the strategic interventions outlined above.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The Unit is submitting two case studies, with a third from forensic psychology submitted to UOA22. Both Dyslexia and Medically Assisted Reproduction (MAR) focus on specific populations, with the excellence of the research leading to impacts on policy and practice nationally, and in the case of dyslexia, internationally. Each case study's contribution to our approach to impact is outlined.

**MAR:** Research has impacted on the training of infertility counsellors, HFEA policy, and has contributed to the reduction in multiple births and associated maternal and infant morbidity and mortality in the UK. One of the key lessons learned from this relates to the role psychology and psychologists can play at multiple levels, in this case within a medical context. This case study also illustrates that impact sometimes requires multiple routes. Here findings from high quality research, undertaken over a number of years, were one important component of achieving impact. A history of relationships with key stakeholders and membership of significant committees and bodies also played a significant part in ensuring that research findings were fed into specific policy actions and roll out.

**Dyslexia:** In generating the significant impact on the teaching of Farsi in Iran and enhancing public understanding of dyslexia in the UK and the USA, we acknowledged the importance of maintaining research collaborations and capitalising on the practical applications of research findings across professional and international boundaries. Developing a reputation based on several years of high quality research played an important role in ensuring impact. Brunswick's significant contribution was based on high quality research followed up by its distillation into accessible formats for a range of users, and a history of service to users through engagement with the British Dyslexia Association. For Baluch, collaboration with an Iranian colleague, an ability to work across English and Farsi, and prolonged engagement with policymakers, were significant in ensuring impact. Further potential impact in Turkey has benefited from our own investment.