

Institution: University of Kent
Unit of Assessment: 21 Politics and International Studies
<p>a. Context</p> <p>Politics and International Relations at the University of Kent has a long history of engagement with non-academic organisations and individuals, dating from the foundation of the University in 1965.</p> <p>The reach of the unit's research during the REF period has extended to think tanks and policy institutes, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), national and international media, legal practitioners, public policy makers (UK and European parliament and national and international government agencies) and practitioners. Its impact ranges from influencing policy, shaping and informing political and public debate and providing expertise in legal cases, to developing training methods for practitioners.</p> <p>The School Research Strategy prioritises impact. Our research has been organised into four centres during the REF period and these have been the primary vehicles for cultivating relationships with external, non-HE stakeholders. The four centres have helped focus and target our research, establishing a reputation for work that is relevant to our user communities.</p> <p>The centres have also provided a distinctive environment to train and mentor staff in order to maximise the reach and impact of their research. Individual researchers have been supported by mentors with a strong track record in influential research, to help disseminate their work to non-HEI users, and to develop their own impact strategies.</p> <p>The School has maximised opportunities for impact and engagement by investing in support appointments to enhance the dissemination of research, including through social media, and via a series of research-user workshops and seminars.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The School takes a strategic, planned approach to research impact through developing sustained relationships with a wide range of non-academic stakeholders. We build such relationships in order to enhance the understanding and use of our research outside higher education, and to develop symbiotically the skills of our researchers to gain greater reach and significance for their work. We systematically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the impact of our research at individual, centre and school levels through the School Research Strategy.</p> <p>1/ How staff in the unit engaged with or developed relationships with key users</p> <p>The researchers of the School have engaged with the key users of their research by establishing 'privileged partnerships', by building long-term relationships and by providing briefings, commentary and expert evidence.</p> <p>Our formal links with key research users include associated researcher status with influential think tanks and policy institutes such as <i>Chatham House</i> (Sakwa and Whitman), the <i>South African Institute of International Affairs</i> (Hammerstad) and <i>ResPublica</i> (Pabst).</p> <p>We have cultivated long-term partnerships with NGOs. These sustained relationships have developed trust, and allowed for the exchange of confidential and sensitive material which has informed the work of organisations such as <i>Reprive</i> (Blakeley). Our partnerships with NGOs have also brought political and social theory scholarship into the understanding of cultural practices via our work with <i>Arts Council England</i> (MacKenzie).</p> <p>Staff have built reputations for expert commentary, helping us establish strong relationships with national and international media (Aybet [2001-2013], Azmanova, Blakeley, Cunliffe, den Boer, Féron, Pabst, Sakwa, Whitman). We have sought to develop long-term relationships with key media correspondents in order to build their understanding, in addition to providing quotations and commentary.</p> <p>The School has strong links with government and public policy makers. Researchers have established relationships with desk officers, heads of unit and research analysts by providing 'at request' briefings and commenting on work-in-progress reports and analysis at the UK <i>Foreign Commonwealth Office</i> (FCO) (Dardanelli, Korosteleva, Loizides, Sakwa, Whitman); <i>European</i></p>

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Commission (Casier, Korosteleva, Whitman); and *European External Action Service* (Whitman).

The School has also encouraged staff to develop relationships with the *UK and European Parliaments* by **providing expert evidence** to parliament, **writing briefing papers** for parliamentarians and **contributing to parliamentary reports** and briefings for individual members of parliament (Casier, Korosteleva, Sakwa, Whitman).

With legal practitioners the School has encouraged the cultivation of relationships to provide **expert testimony to legal professionals and jurists** in complex cases that require specialist knowledge available due to research expertise (Blakeley, Sakwa).

The School has also engaged with practitioners 'on the ground' by **providing training in conflict management** through our Conflict Analysis Research Centre (Clayton).

2/ Evidence of the nature of those relationships (other than those detailed in the impact case studies)

Think tanks and policy institutes [See also REF 3b Case Studies 1, 2 & 3]

Whitman was invited, on the basis of his research on European foreign policy, to co-author a 2012 Chatham House evidence-based report examining the early stage operation of the European External Action Service of the EU. Hammerstad, as Research Associate and a visiting fellow at the South African Institute of International Affairs, gave policy recommendations on immigration in South Africa in two policy documents published in 2011 and 2012.

Non-governmental organisations [See also REF 3b Case studies 1, 2 & 4]

Clayton has advised and supported a number of NGOs in the field of cultural heritage to help develop the negotiating capacity of professionals working in conflict-plagued zones. These include the Italian Development Corporation; the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), a part of UNESCO; and BILADI, a Lebanese NGO that promotes cultural and natural heritage to young people. Clayton has trained over 40 professionals in mediation, including senior army officials, policy-makers, aid workers and archaeologists.

Through his work with Arts Council England, MacKenzie has contributed to the regeneration of the town of Margate, bringing awareness to the transformative and creative dimensions of the town. His exhibition entitled 'Metaphysical Margate: A Photographic Exhibition by Werner Zellien', with an accompanying essay 'The Real Margate', contributed to the improvement of the social and cultural sustainability of Margate.

National and international media [See also REF 3b Case Studies 1, 2, 3 & 4]

Pabst is a regular contributor to the opinion pages of *The International Herald Tribune*, *The Guardian*, *The National*, *The Moscow Times*, *The Huffington Post* and *Les Echos*. Since 2008 he has published more than 20 articles for *The Guardian* alone. This sustained involvement in the media gives him a situation of privilege to disseminate his research findings. Cunliffe provides regular political analysis of the Western Balkans for the *Economist Intelligence Unit*. Whitman has been interviewed widely on his research area of Europe and European integration, with coverage in media outlets including *BBC*, *CNN*, *Bloomberg*, *CNBC*, *Newsweek*, *Reuters*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post* and the *Daily Mail*.

Policy makers (UK and European parliament and national and international government agencies) [See also REF 3b Case Studies 1, 2 & 3]

Whitman's research influenced the inquiry of the European Union Committee of the UK House of Lords into the EU's External Action Service (conducted winter 2012-2013) with reference made on 18 occasions to his expert testimony in support of the report's findings.

Seyd delivered two seminars at Westminster for civil servants and politicians on public reactions to the Coalition Government's constitutional reforms in April 2012. His research presentations drew on data from the British Social Attitudes survey to identify public attitudes to measures such as directly elected mayors, elected police commissioners and the use of referendums, and consequently helped to inform the policy debate on these constitutional reforms.

3/ How the unit has supported staff to enable impact to be achieved from their research

The School has made impact an integral part of its research strategy. Every year, through a formal

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individual research appraisal process, the Director of Research asks each member of staff to identify their ambitions for individual impact for the forthcoming academic year. Mentoring is provided, whereby peers with strong impact records are partnered to help train and support other research staff. This has been implemented since 2010 and will take on increasing significance in the 2013-2018 period (see Section C).

The School has invested in two new grade 5 support staff appointments to communicate research (including via social media), and provide capacity for the organisation of our regular workshops and seminars, linking users and practitioners.

As part of the research responsibilities of the members of staff, the School allocates time in staff workloads to establish and sustain links with external stakeholders and user groups.

The creation of the new research centre, the Global Europe Centre (GEC), has been strategically planned to provide a platform for further engagement with Brussels-based policy-makers.

4/ How the unit has made use of institutional support, expertise, or resources to provide support to its staff

The School uses the services of the University Innovation and Enterprise Office, and notably its Enterprise and Impact Training, to understand the range of knowledge exchange activities and how to engage with non-HEI users and to define and demonstrate impact. We also work with the University's communications team to help disseminate and publicise information about our work and our School away day has been used to provide media and communications training for staff.

c. Strategy and plans

What are the goals and plans for maximising the potential for impact from current and future research?

The School's research strategy is intended to maximise impact at individual, research centre and overall school levels. The research strategy is reviewed annually, including an assessment of the existing and potential extra-academic impact of our research. As described in Section B3, at **individual level**, staff are provided with mentoring to maximise the impact of their work, and we will be further developing our approach to training and mentoring during 2013-18.

Our **research centres** each have clear research goals, including a target to increase grant income by 400% over the next five years, with a focus on reach and impact. The centres began publishing a series of policy papers from 2013, designed to make research findings more widely accessible to non-HE audiences.

At **School level**, a key strategy is to develop the Brussels School of International Studies (BSIS), our School campus in Brussels, into a gateway for practitioner engagement with EU and member state policy makers and Brussels-based NGOs.

Two further new developments have also been launched for 2013-18. First, members of staff have been allocated additional time for impact-related activities in their workload. These researchers have been selected on the basis of internal assessment during the research appraisal process.

Second, a visiting fellowship scheme is to be established to attract practitioners from diverse sectors (NGOs, policy-making, cultural institutions and industry) to create links and partnerships within the School's existing research projects. The duration of these visiting fellowships will be 1-4 weeks, depending on the levels of involvement and the significance of the research.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies clearly demonstrate the School's approach to impact, showing how staff have been encouraged and supported to widen the reach and deepen the significance of their research.

Our focus on the four research centres has allowed us to build sustained, long-term relationships with think tanks and policy institutes (Case studies 1, 2 & 3) and with NGOs (Case studies 1, 2 & 4), while our support and mentoring arrangements have helped staff develop the skills, confidence and contacts to build an extended range of relationships with national and international media (Case Studies 1, 2, 3 & 4), with legal practitioners (Case studies 3 & 4) and with government and policy-makers (Case Studies 1, 2 & 3).