

**Impact template (REF3a)**

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Lincoln</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 20 – Law</p>
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p><b>Types of Impact</b></p> <p>Generating impact, informing policy and legal strategies, and contributing to wider public debate are intrinsic to Lincoln Law School’s research mission. The Law School’s research, reflecting the interests and expertise of its staff, is focused around human rights, civil justice, European law and international law, with overlaps between all four. There is also growing experience and expertise in corporate governance. The research within the Law School is thus focused on analysing existing law, and exploring and proposing ways in which it can be improved, either in content or implementation or both. The audience for its research includes a broad array of national and international legal practitioners, law and policy-makers (including members of Parliament and government departments), relevant charities and NGOs, and other third parties concerned with improvements in the law and legal process.</p> <p>The range of impact undertaken combines both proactive, anticipatory measures initiated by the School, and responding to contemporary policy discussions and debate. Recent work has been undertaken through funded research for the private sector and government departments (such as Swiss Reinsurance (Nurse/<b>Peysner</b>), and the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (<b>Peysner</b>)), which has fed into ongoing policy discussions. <b>Peysner</b> and Nurse’s 2008 report for the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (now the Department for Business Innovation and Skills) informed the Department’s subsequent White Paper on consumer law. <b>Ryland’s</b> work on animal welfare has influenced the campaigning work of the charity, International Cat Care. In addition, <b>French</b> presented recommendations on international environmental dispute settlement to the United Nations in preparation for the 2012 Summit on Sustainable Development, <b>Stone’s</b> work on human rights has directly influenced legislation on entry powers (Protection of Freedoms Act 2012), and <b>Velluti</b> has twice (in 2008 and 2010) contributed as an invited expert on ‘New Governance’ within the EU at events organised by the Committee of the Regions of the European Union.</p> <p><b>Research users, beneficiaries and audiences</b></p> <p>The beneficiaries of the Law School’s research are at all levels of governance: international, national, and regional. At the international level examples include work on sustainable development (<b>French</b> – International Development Law Organization, UN), and European law (<b>Velluti</b> – EU)). At the national level examples include reforms to civil procedure (<b>Peysner</b> – judiciary and legal services), and important changes to the English Law on entry powers (<b>Stone</b> – Government and Parliament). The School also has an ongoing commitment to its external Advisory Board to inform local and regional debate, with one example being research by <b>Peysner</b> into referral fees (‘Referring to Justice’, <i>European Business Law Review</i>, Volume 19 (2008)) and the creation of Alternative Business Structures (ABSs), discussed with forty representatives of regional businesses, banks and legal practices at a School-sponsored workshop in 2013.</p> <p><b>Relationship to research activity and groups</b></p> <p>As is prioritised in the School’s research strategy, research carried out in the Law School is planned, as often as is possible, to impact on the development of law, legal principles, and legal processes as they operate in practice. The clusters of research focussing on human rights, civil justice, European law and international law, all have the potential to inform public debate, and all researchers are increasingly refocusing their research and its dissemination on the potential for impact. Thus, the School’s research strategy mainstreams impact activity and places it at the heart of the ongoing development of the overall research environment of the School.</p>
<p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p><b>APPROACH TO ACHIEVING IMPACTS FROM RESEARCH</b></p> <p>The Law School’s approach to impact has involved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting research in areas which have the potential for a direct relationship with policy development, law reform, or changes in legal practice;</li> </ul>

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- Ensuring that the results of research are disseminated beyond the academic community in publications or other forms which are likely to attract the attention of those engaged in practice, policy or law reform;
- Direct engagement with potential users of our research.

**i. Research areas with potential for impact**

The strength of the Law School's impact is directly tied to the continuing strength of its research. The areas of research focus listed in a. above all have the potential for impact. In particular, at national level the work on civil liberties (**Stone**) and civil justice (**Peysner**) has taken the form of critical analysis combined with suggestions for reform (see impact case studies). At the international level, the work done by **French** and **Cooper** on aspects of environmental law and distribution of resources has been designed to both feed in to international policy development and change behaviour within states. Similarly, **Velluti's** work in European Law is aimed at informing and improving European governance.

**ii. Dissemination beyond the academic community**

Throughout the period 2008-13 the Law School has encouraged its research-active staff to promulgate the results of its research beyond the academic community, for example, by publishing in journals and other publications that are aimed at practitioners, in addition to academic outlets. Examples include **Stone's** contribution to a standard work on contempt, and **Peysner's** regular contributions to the *Civil Justice Quarterly*. Funding has been available throughout the period to support conference attendance, including conferences aimed primarily at legal practitioners, to allow networks of academics and practitioners to be developed. The School disseminates its research and ensures that it comes to the attention of the widest possible audience including, for example, through its blog and its Twitter account.

**iii. Direct engagement with potential users**

This is demonstrated, for example, by **French's** presentation to the United Nations preparatory session on sustainable development in April 2012, and by **Peysner's** role as keynote speaker in 2012 and 2013 at the Westminster Legal Policy Forum's events on cost implications of the Defamation Bill and the Jackson Review. At the regional level the Law School maintains good relations with those in professional practice, and has an important role, being the only Law School in the Lincolnshire region. The Law School Advisory Board, comprising practitioners and judiciary, provides a sounding board for proposed research activities, and also a source of information on current concerns within the profession. The Advisory Board provides advice and guidance on transforming and using our research into relevant measures of policy engagement. Reciprocally, one of the members of the Advisory Board, a managing partner in a firm of solicitors, gave a research seminar in the Law School in October 2013. In addition, individual colleagues have networks of professional contacts, which support, inform and influence the overall impact of the School's research.

**SUPPORTING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

The research work of the School has been supported by investment in a building redeveloped for the purpose (with Lincoln Business School), which has for the first time brought together all research staff. Future estate plans will continue to be informed by promoting research excellence, cultivating synergies in cognate disciplines and maximising research impact. Impact is pervasively considered within the Law School's mentoring and appraisal processes. The objective of the research fund delegated to the Director of Research has a broad remit, including dissemination and impact. Similarly, applications for study leave need to consider the potential impact of the research undertaken.

At an institutional level, research and enterprise are treated as interrelated activities. The College of Social Science has made funds available to support research with the potential for impact, from which the Law School has benefitted (most recently **Cooper** is being supported for visits to Malawi and South Africa for his research on the implementation of new technologies (e.g. smart pumps) and its effect on the right to water). The University Research Office and the College Research Officer provide valuable source of information on relevant opportunities for funded research, and support in developing proposals.

**c. Strategy and plans****Current strategy**

The Law School operates within the framework of the University of Lincoln's strategic plan 2011-2016, which is concerned to serve and develop the 'local, national and international communities by creating purposeful knowledge and research'. In giving effect to this plan, the School and the University will: (i) continue to direct internal research funding at projects which have clear relevance for policy and practice, and a clear engagement strategy; (ii) provide support for the production and distribution of short user-friendly research summaries to potential users at key points during, and at the end of, all research projects; (iii) through professional service departments, such as the Press Office and the institutional repository, ensure that research is both intellectually accessible and widely available; and (iv) provide training in user engagement and utilising resources for dissemination.

The Law School's research strategy contains a commitment 'to enhance the links between research and enterprise', and views impact as crucial to ensuring the long-term viability of the Law School's research. As a result, the Law School has adopted a 'life cycle' approach to impact, so that it is embedded within the whole process of research innovation, formulation and execution, as well as including impact within annual research planning. While the range of research undertaken is diverse, a common thread is that impact is not an additional activity to be considered at the end of the process, but is integral to the research, designed in from the start and optimised throughout.

**Future Plans**

The Law School focuses its research in a number of areas, and will continue to seek to make appointments to build on these specialisms. Recent appointments have strengthened, in particular, international law, as part of the strategy of increasing the internationalisation of the Law School's activities. Other emerging areas include health and corporate governance, both of which have significant potential for impact. Investment in the School has brought in new staff whose expertise and policy connections will, over the next few years, increasingly provide direct and indirect engagement in international and European intergovernmental and non-governmental policy forums. Specific ongoing areas of activity include **French's** work on sustainable development law (including through participating in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office-John Smith Memorial Trust 'Arab partnership rule of law' programme), **Cooper's** research on the interface between legal regulation and technical innovation in the area of water law in developing countries, and **Okoye's** work on corporate governance and boardroom behaviour. These, and other, initiatives are underpinned by a number of mechanisms, including the inclusion of impact as a discrete aspect of study leave applications, the incorporation of discussions on impact within the research planning and annual appraisal processes, and the ongoing development of a forward-looking impact strategy by the School's Research Committee post-2014. Colleagues writing research applications for external funding will be expected to consider impact from the outset, and to make it central to the application. An impact champion will be appointed from amongst the professoriate to take the lead on future strategic developments.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The two case studies both illustrate the success of the Law School's ongoing strategy of engagement with the legal profession and broader policy discourses as a means of developing work that informs policy and strategy. They are also linked to two of the main research focuses of the Law School, falling within the research areas of (a) civil justice ('Efficient and effective access to justice') and (b) human rights ('Reform of law on powers of entry'). The first case study is related to a long-standing research engagement involving empirical research, which has informed policy decisions on reforming and improving access to justice (e.g. *Litigation Funding: Status and Issues* – Hodges, **Peysner** and Nurse), an area that is singularly under-researched in the UK. Related work influenced the policy recommendations of Lord Justice Jackson in relation to his reforms of civil litigation. The second case study relates to a key area of civil liberties (in particular *The Law of Entry, Search and Seizure* – **Stone**). The original research informed a broad spectrum of parliamentarians, including Lord Selston, who subsequently sponsored new legislation, practitioners, the police, government departments, and local authorities about their powers, and was central to a change in primary legislation, namely the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The work continues to inform the development of the code of practice under the Act.