

Institution: University of Bristol
Unit of Assessment: 20 - Law
a. Context <p>At the University of Bristol Law School, we believe that research excellence - whether doctrinal or socio-legal; local, regional, national or international - is achieved when scholarship of the highest standard generates social benefits in whatever field. We appreciate that there are many pathways to impact and that impact can also shape the questions we ask and the ways in which we answer them. Impact maximisation might come from tapping funding sources or research leave (section b below) or from individual scholars' energy in pursuing change based on their ideas. The school therefore encourages and supports a wide range of interactions with a multiplicity of users, recognising that the pathway to impact is often lengthy and arduous. As we show below, with the assistance of the Faculty and wider University, we endeavour to offer colleagues not only guidance but comprehensive and patient support in their impact-oriented activities. To this end, we are active in creating impact opportunities through our existing networks and developing new ones. We are also sensitive to the specialisms of individual academics which require different avenues for achieving change.</p> <p>Our beneficiaries include legislators, policy-makers, NGOs, other organisations and future students. Our stability and research breadth means that we can identify a wide range of impacts, including (1) National, European, and International legislative change; (2) Expert advice to national governments and NGOs with a demonstrable impact on policy; (3) Changes to legal procedure and substantive law, with consequent benefits to consumers and the legal community; (4) Research commissioned by law reform and other agencies, shaping their programmes, profiles, and practices; and (5) Shaping the future of legal education and its consumers.</p>
b. Approach to impact <u>General approach and key users</u> <p>Over the assessment period we have undertaken specific actions and policies to: (1) enable academics to interact with key beneficiaries, users and audiences; (2) support School members to achieve impact from their research; and (3) provide access to university resources to achieve impact. The extent and diversity of our interaction with key beneficiaries, users and audiences is determined by their scope, which is international, national, and local. However, the School encourages interaction with its wide range of end-users through major research projects, organisation of workshops, meetings to bring academics and research beneficiaries together, and one-to-one connections.</p> <p>There are two key examples using all these techniques: (1) McDermont's £2.4 million ESRC connected communities grant, which was co-produced with local community groups and which aims to co-produce research about the ways in which regulatory systems can be re-designed to promote engaged decision-making in politics, policy and the arts. The underpinning work was supported by the School through its research funds and brought in nine community partners across Bristol and South Wales. (2) The Human Rights Implementation Centre (HRIC) was set up with a grant from the University and provides a focus for impact work in this area (see case studies), drawing on School funds where necessary, and teaching is arranged around their activities.</p> <p>As regards legislators, our research has directly influenced the development of legislative programmes in the UK, EU, and internationally. Our research is responsible for changing the direction of certain legislative reform packages (corporate bribery case study; telecoms regulation case study); equally, our research might uncover a false underpinning premise for a proposed legislative reform, halting that reform (eg Kerridge's research halted the Ministry of Justice's proposed intestacy law reform). Outside the UK, Evans/Murray's work has directly affected legislative programmes around torture (see case study) and the implementation of human rights (see case study).</p> <p>As regards policy-makers, our work has led to the initiation of concrete reform programmes and</p>

significantly influenced their work models (eg telecoms regulation case study; children proceedings case study). Masson's research into child protection proceedings (see case study) has shaped policy development nationally. Cowan's housing research has directly influenced the Welsh government's housing tenure reform package, which will affect 660,000 households there, as well as the Law Commission's advice to that government. Young's research into interests of justice decision-making for the grant of criminal legal aid was explicitly acknowledged in court service and legal aid guidance on defence representation orders. The HRIC's research led to the Equality and Human Rights Commission reconfiguring their approach to treaty monitoring, and their work directly led to the extension of the prison inspectorate's role in relation to places of detention for torture prevention mechanisms (case study). Burnside's research into faith-based units in prisons was credited by the Ministry of Justice as providing it with resources to complete the design phase of the programme, including its 124-page Theory Manual in this REF period. Hitchings' research was widely used and accepted by the Law Commission in its consultation on *Marital Property Agreements*, and subsequent work (funded by the Commission) then fed into the Commission's supplementary Consultation Paper.

Our work has reached into the diverse roles of **NGOs** in significant ways. McDermont worked with Citizens Advice and Shelter to formulate a research project to investigate the methods by which UK advice agencies mediate between citizens and the practices of law. Having begun as a small scale CASE studentship, this project grew into a €1million European Research Council grant. Other examples include the torture case study, and Charlesworth's co-authored research on privacy impact assessments, which significantly influenced the information commissioner's office guide. Locally, Morgan/McDermont are working with the Centre for Sustainable Energy and the Bristol Energy Network to support them in helping communities maintain momentum arising from seed grants. Our interactions also transcend jurisdictional and other boundaries – eg Morgan/Seshadri work with Frank Water, a local company, to explore governance structures which best link ethical consumerism in the UK with sustainable development objectives in the developing world, specifically Indian clean water projects.

We have had impact on **other organisations**, working with them to change practices, for example through (1) CASE studentships (see below); (2) funding arrangements (CIL work with Hewlett Packard on the development of privacy impact assessments:); (3) joint research (eg Charlesworth/British Library, Digital Preservation Coalition; McDermont's joint research with the Citizens Advice Bureaux).

Finally, **future students** have benefitted from Bibbings' widening participation research, which has led to under-represented groups being recruited to enter HE institutions (eg through Bibbings' subsequent secondment to co-ordinate the Sutton Trust and HEFCE Summer Schools).

Support of staff to achieve impact from their research

The University's impact policy 2011-15 identified the need for Schools to appoint impact directors and committed funds to support impact through the Enterprise and Impact Development Fund (EIDF). Law broadened out the role of the impact director to include knowledge exchange to ensure that activities which may support and lead to impact and which help inform research are included in that formal role (Cowan appointed June 2011). Research Enterprise Development (RED) forms the hub for delivery of the University strategy with a specialist team, which also administers an 'Evidencing Impact Fund', in recognition of the need for follow-up work with research users to identify specific impacts (Wells and Murray/Evans have benefitted from the Fund). All our scholars work with RED at the outset of new research projects to consider how impact can best be achieved. The Faculty of Social Sciences and Law supports impact through research centres and themes (eg HRIC and the human rights research theme), through strategic research funding streams; the Bristol Festival of Ideas (eg Greer and Evans formed a panel to discuss torture at the 2012 Festival), and through training/workshops. Law is a member of the South West Doctoral Training Centre which facilitates the matching of potential projects with non-academic partners.

The Law School has the following additional support mechanisms to ensure that impact is at the

forefront of its activities, all formalised in the School impact policy (September 2011): (1) Impact is a standing item on the research committee agenda; (2) An impact section of Blackboard with complete resources, including best practice; (3) Peer support/feedback to develop pathways to impact statements for RCUK and other applications; (4) A requirement that applicants for the generous 1 in 4 study leave scheme identify the impact (if any) of their research, which is one of the criteria for the grant of study leave; (5) Use of the personal research fund for impact work; (6) Organising training and workshops for colleagues and postgraduate researchers; (7) Developing best practice; (8) Workshops have been used to cascade information about the range and types of impact work as well as good practice about the use of funds (eg McDermont/Morgan's work came about directly through such contact); and (9) Working more closely with umbrella organisations to develop research studentships.

These mechanisms are paying dividends through, for example, excellent feedback on RCUK applications regarding pathways to impact statements, greater use of impact funds (see below), and study leave decisions particularly influenced by the level/detail of potential impact (eg child protection case study; telecoms regulation case study; Laing's commissioned work with the Care Quality Commission). We have also been particularly successful in working with organisations to develop projects for research studentships: McDermont and the local/national Citizens Advice Bureaux (x2) and Shelter; Charlesworth and HP; Morgan and Frank Water.

Use of university resources to achieve impact

Law has been able to draw on university resources in diverse ways: (1) There is a close relationship with RED; (2) Our scholars have been successful in competitive applications for university research fellowships (awarded to Masson – child protection case study; Boeger – telecoms regulation case study); (3) We have received two EIDF awards (Evans/Murray; McDermont/Morgan); (4) Two further awards (Wells; Evans/Murray) were received from the Evidencing Impact Fund; (5) The HRIC was made possible by seedcorn University funding and the implementation of human rights has subsequently become a Faculty research theme - the HRIC consequently have a fund for related projects; and (6) We are already starting to work with the newly created PolicyBristol hub to enhance the influence and impact of our contribution to effective policy and legislative development, as well as ensure that our research is more accessible to our users.

c. Strategy and plans

The 2011 Law impact strategy (circulated in the University as a good practice model) derived from the experience of our scholars whose research insights have achieved reach and significance within various non-academic user communities. The heterogeneous nature of those communities and the research in which we engage require impact support to be individually tailored. Our strategy emphasises that impact and knowledge exchange are and should be significant activities for academic staff, emphasises the value placed on impact and related work, and encourages our scholars to go beyond REF requirements.

Key to the strategy and its further development is the annual collation of impact activity from each member of staff (who are all encouraged to keep an impact diary). Staff are asked how, if at all, the School/Faculty/University can assist their impact work. The Impact Director is then able to identify funds or impact events, research links with non-academic users, appropriate nominations for University impact awards or pay increments, and workload management issues. This ongoing process facilitates the co-ordination of our activities and identifies gaps; it enables the Director to work with colleagues to develop and reflect on how best to achieve the reach and significance of their work among non-academic research users.

The research committee is the forum where our strategic activities and training needs are discussed and planned. As well as coordinating and disseminating best practice in relation to impact activities, the committee makes decisions on the use of discretionary funds to for specific impact purposes. The use of the EIDF and other funding streams has been the subject of a workshop demonstrating the broader applicability, as well as creative use, of funding streams for impact purposes (including the use of the recent ESRC Impact Accelerator Fund). The School has

adopted the committee's recommendation that impact is included in the criteria for academic appointments. We are committed to developing ICT systems to assist in recording and monitoring the impact of our work. So, for example, the web-based PURE system called "Explore Bristol Research" will be developed to log individual's impact activities.

All RCUK pathways to impact statements are peer reviewed internally and with assistance from RED; other grant applications are reviewed through this system. Peer review enables us to ensure that the maximum impact of research findings can be considered and planned in advance. We anticipate that this will lead to our showcasing more of our impact work. We are learning from these approaches and developing best practice internally, so that we can identify potential high-impact work at an early stage. Examples of the success of this strategy can be seen in the telecoms regulation case study and in Quick's medical malpractice research.

We have consolidated and extended our links with members of the legal profession (see the corporate bribery case study). The School appointed an Advisory Board in 2013 - one of its key objectives is to facilitate the impact of our research among non-academic users. That objective guided our decisions on which of our alumni to appoint to the Board. Members of the legal and media professions were appointed. We see this as a key resource for our future activities, enabling us to reach a key set of previously untapped beneficiaries and to develop our communication practices.

Three examples of how we are developing and learning about impact are: (1) We now draw on a variety of funding streams to facilitate early, timely interventions (eg EIDF) as well as new models of research (eg the co-production model developed by McDermont). These were designed in part to meet the frustrations felt that tie-ins with non-academic users at an early stage in a research process can result in "cooling off" over the time it takes to develop an application for, and obtain, funding. (2) Quick's work on medical manslaughter led to an invitation to address the CPS annual conference of the special crime and counter-terrorism division in 2012. It became clear during this event that elite prosecutors had engaged with his work and possibly had contributed to them changing their practices. As a result, working with the Impact Director and RED, various funding streams were explored, eg for a high-level seminar with policy-makers and future research grant applications. This is a project in action but demonstrates how co-ordination can pay impact dividends in the longer-term, a process which will be replicated in the coming years. (3) Our learning is being put to good use in developing an induction programme for new colleagues which both imparts that learning and seeks to learn from their experiences. The University is also developing additional resources to promote impact work – specifically the PolicyBristol hub and the ESRC Impact Acceleration Account, which will be key resources we can draw on as we develop our impact work into the next five years.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies demonstrate the significant reach of the impact of our work on diverse beneficiaries, from international, to European, to national. Three were developed in close participation with the intended beneficiaries (human rights implementation; prevention of torture; children protection); two were commissioned by the intended beneficiary (telecoms regulation; children protection); and one succeeded in pushing a self-developed research agenda into legislative change (corporate bribery). Each was supported in different ways, drawing on the mechanisms described above. Research leave, primary unit support, internal peer review, use of University, Faculty and School impact funds. Key to our development, though, is that the relationship is not one way, but multi-directional. Our impact strategy arose out of, and was influenced by, the significant achievements and plaudits garnered by the case studies. We learnt from them at an early stage that there was a need for seedcorn funding for impact activities, early interventions, cascading information within research teams and beyond, peer support in drafting and facilitating pathways to impact statements. Finally, the development of our workload model and facility for impact-related study leave are sufficiently flexible to enable impacts to develop and progress. We recognise, therefore, that there is no "one size fits all" strategy and we work with our scholars to maximise their impact around their other obligations.