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Institution: University of York
Unit of Assessment: 18, Economics and Econometrics
<p>a. Context</p> <p>All six of our research clusters have had impact and user engagement beyond academia during the REF2014 period. Our research with the most significance and reach has been in health economics, reflected in exceptionally strong user engagement and impact over many years at national and international levels (e.g. Department of Health (DH), National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), Office of Fair Trading, OECD, World Bank, World Health Organisation (WHO), US Patient Centred Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), and the Gates Foundation funded Global Development Network). Our research in macroeconomics and finance has had impact throughout the world via major policy making institutions (e.g. Bank of England, European Central Bank (ECB), US Federal Reserve Banks, Bank of Canada, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Bundesbank, Reserve Bank of Australia, Central Bank of Iceland and Central Bank of Turkey). In recent years the breadth of our impact has widened to include labour economics (e.g. Low Pay Commission (LPC), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), German Bundestag and Assembly of the German Federal state of Schleswig Holstein), micro/experimental economics (e.g. Department for Food Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra), DWP) and public sector economics (e.g. Ofsted and Department for Education). Our research has had the greatest impact in relation to public policy and the provision of public services. Our engagement with users spans the international to local level and encompasses forms of regulation (e.g. value based pricing for new pharmaceuticals, wage floors in labour markets and quantifying the effects of pollution regulation such as US school bus emission reduction programs on health outcomes); shaping policy made by government (e.g. macro-financial policy advice on topics such as whether the fiscal stances of European countries are sustainable on current policy); changes to the delivery of public services (e.g. resource allocation and capital planning in the NHS and education sectors); informing public debate more broadly via our research application (e.g. research on epidemiology of infectious diseases, economic development and prosperity had a knock-on application to badger populations and the spread of tuberculosis to cattle), and regular media engagements and other outreach activities. Our user engagement has resulted in our research findings benefitting individuals, families, workers, patients and pupils throughout society.</p> <p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Economics shapes all of our lives and has the potential to significantly impact human well-being and development. At York we aim to do research that has relevance both within and beyond academia. We believe research and its impact to be fundamentally inter-linked within our discipline and that the relationship between research and impact is self-reinforcing. During the REF2014 period our strategy to achieve the greatest social reach and significance for the research we do has been as follows:</p> <p><u>1. To build on successful user engagement:</u></p> <p>Our strategy has been shaped by the Department's track record of successful user engagement in the fields of health economics and macroeconomics. For health economics, direct engagement with research users happens through large commissioned research projects (e.g. DH), and membership of advisory committees (e.g. NICE, Medical Technologies Appraisals Committee, Pfizer International Advisory Board, Global Development Network and Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation). For macroeconomics and finance the impact has been via a sustained and cumulative influence within national and international policy circles (e.g. via membership of the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), the Ernst and Young ITEM club, House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee, and regular invitations to present at central banks e.g. Bank of England, ECB, US Federal Reserve Banks, IMF and World Bank). This form of engagement reflects a collective effort that has achieved significant reach. We have built on this experience and capacity to support further engagement with other UK government departments, the public sector and quasi-governmental bodies, local government, charitable organisations and private organisations.</p> <p><u>2. To hold research grants that facilitate non-academic user engagement:</u></p> <p>We actively seek to hold research grants that, in themselves, support non-academic user engagement. For example, some of our research funders are also significant independent (non-governmental) research users e.g. the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and the Nuffield Foundation. Such grants facilitate research impact and engagement from the outset of the projects.</p>

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Winning competitive grants requires an awareness of commissioned research calls and tenders, for example such as those offered by the DH, DWP and the LPC. This has been supported by the appointment of a Research Support Officer in the Department and a Social Science Research Development Manager by the University. In addition, the University's Knowledge Transfer Manager (in post throughout the REF period) has facilitated outside funding and research opportunities, as well as access to University funding opportunities (via HEIF funding). For example, the University's Strategic Initiative Fund (SIF 2011-12) supported a project with City of York Council (CYC) to assess the implications of their adopting a Living Wage policy.

3. To develop collaborative research partnerships at York and beyond:

Our approach to impact has included developing collaborative research projects with outward-facing research centres at the University of York thereby enhancing the opportunities for user engagement. Most notably this has been with the Centre for Health Economics (CHE). We have two joint professorial appointments (Claxton and Rice) with CHE who have on-going research programmes with impact relating to value based pricing for new pharmaceuticals, characterising uncertainty and value of information in health care decisions and person-based resource allocation in the NHS. We also have close research relationships with the Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU) and the Centre for Housing Policy (CHP), which have been enhanced through a project to assess the effect of a Living Wage policy implemented in January 2013 within the York-based Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Housing Trust (JRF/JRHT).

4. To support direct engagement and effective dissemination of our research:

To support the effective dissemination of our research we have dedicated financial support from the Department's Research and Impact Support (RIS) Fund. RIS is used to fund activity such as research conferences and networks of academics and policy makers, e.g. the Money, Macro & Finance Research Group (MMF), and participation in the Work, Pensions and Labour Economics Study Group (WPEG), which provide excellent opportunities for engagement and connection to policymakers. Two of the journals we edit (*Journal of Health Economics (JHE)* and *Health Economics (HE)*) are read widely in policy circles and have high impact factors. They respond to policy questions as they arise e.g. *HE* hosted a symposium on value-based pricing and published a subsequent special issue on the topic. We encourage staff to publish in non-academic publications (e.g. ESRC Britain in 2010 and 2013, ASA/RSS magazine 'Significance', and VoxEU.org) and engage with public events (e.g. York 2012 Festival of Ideas), outreach activities (e.g. "Research in Action Debate", British Academy in conjunction with Uprising UK, London 2013), public consultations (e.g. Equality and Human Rights Commission on proposals for measuring and publishing information on the gender pay gap 2009/10) and the media more broadly. Our research has featured prominently in national and international media since 2008, including regular macroeconomics contributions on the BBC Radio 4 Today Programme and also via television (BBC Breakfast, CNBC Monday; Newsnight); radio (The World at One, PM, The World Tonight, BBC Radio 5 Live); international media (Bloomberg, Chicago Tribune, Fox News, International Herald Tribune, New York Times, Sydney Morning Herald, Times of India, US News); national press (including: The Economist, Daily Telegraph, Financial Times, Guardian, Independent, New Statesman, The Times); and regional press (e.g. London Evening Standard, Northern Echo).

c. Strategy and plans

The importance of impact is embedded within the Department's research strategy and, by highlighting impact in performance and promotion/pay reviews, we set and monitor expectations for individual academics. Continuing infrastructure and policies to support user engagement and impact include:

- financial support for impact activities via the the RIS Fund (c.£75k per annum);
- promoting funding applications for activities that have impact e.g. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and commissioned research projects (e.g. via government and EU tenders);
- embedding the University of York's research information system (PURE) as the primary electronic data archive of research and impact activities of our academics (providing an information source that supports collaborative research and impact initiatives and activities across our research clusters, other departments at York and beyond);
- engaging with users through international advisory boards (for example, Health, Econometrics and Data Group, Applied Microeconometrics (AME) and Centre of Mechanism and Institution Design (CMID), all developed as part of large grant applications for external funding);
- using research clusters to share KE best practice and relevant contacts to better support

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collaborations and maximise research impact across our research themes (particularly via senior staff introducing junior staff to policy contacts);

- encouraging ESRC and other internships programme engagement by our PhD students. During the REF2014 period we have had three internships at the Office for National Statistics (2012), Cabinet Office (2013) and the World Bank (2009).

Our plans for 2014-2020 include:

- maintaining and strengthening the outstanding significance and reach of the impact of our health economics research nationally and internationally, e.g. via collaboration with policymakers on the relative effectiveness of policies to reduce waiting times and the development of regular collection of comparable waiting time data across the OECD; further development of methods and software which will enable analysis of the value of additional information to be routinely used by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to prioritise and commission research; developing methods to allow the principles of value-based pricing in health care to inform decisions in global health, including work with the World Bank on the implementation of their Results Based Financing (RBF) scheme, and with the Gates Foundation and Department for International Development in identifying funding and research priorities;
- continue to inform and engage policy makers and practitioners (such as the Bank of England, HM Treasury and the OBR) with our research on fiscal austerity, sovereign debt ratings and credit spreads, conventional and unconventional monetary policy, the effectiveness of macroprudential versus monetary policy, macroeconomic volatility and the term structure. All areas for which the importance of our academic policy contributions have been heightened by the most recent global financial crisis, allowing us to help shape new policy-making structures in the post-crisis era;
- further developing (in line with recent senior appointments in AME) the delivery of high calibre policy engagement on core policy questions relating to research in the areas of the family (via exogenous shocks to family income, health status), child outcomes (involving multidimensional child 'capabilities' including health, cognitive and behavioural skills) and the labour market (effectiveness of team based incentive schemes, gender wage gap and unemployment);
- developing commercial partnerships via the new CMID that will offer a 'public service platform' to provide expertise in solving real world problems to partners in industry and the public sector;
- using collaborative projects with external partners as a way to build, develop and enhance relationships, as well as sharing the learning effectively within our Department. For example, our recent success under the ESRC Knowledge Exchange Opportunities Scheme (£215k, commencing January 2014) "Identifying sustainable pathways out of in-work poverty" with colleagues in Social Policy and Social Work (SPSW) and York-based project partners (CYC, JRF/JRHT and York St John University) will provide a model to facilitate this shared learning approach.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our impact case studies evidence our strong user engagement in health policy and our developing impact in additional policy areas. Our four case studies demonstrate impact at the international, national, and local levels. The health-related case studies show how our impact is a result of building long-term relationships with national and international research users to establish ourselves as a trusted provider of analysis, evidence and policy advice. This is evidenced in the case studies through our links with the DH, NICE, NHS, EU, OECD, World Bank, WHO, and others. Hosting the leading field journals (JHE and HE) has allowed a rapid response to policy challenges within the academic literature and has supported our shaping of the national and international policy agenda and evidence-based on health. Our four case studies have all been supported by research projects funded by non-academic research users (EU, DH, NICE, PCORI, Low Pay Commission) and via the research collaborations with outward facing research centres at York (CHE, CHP and SPRU). Membership (e.g. Claxton & Culyer NICE) and on-going engagement (e.g. LPC) with relevant national committees tasked with delivering policy recommendations has focused our research on key policy questions and challenges. Our more recent impact in the local York labour market was pump-primed by the University's SIF 2011-12 and built on the experience of engaging with research users acquired through a series of commissioned LPC projects and an ESRC project which embedded user engagement and the dissemination of findings as a core activity in line with the ESRC 'Pathways to Impact'.