Institution: Middlesex University

Unit of assessment: 22

a. Context: We work closely with policy makers, professional bodies, major charities, voluntary sector organisations and pressure groups, in an approach which helps us tailor research to enhance policy impact and which supports implementation of findings. Our case studies reflect the range of impacts driven by our research: contribution to shifting public and professional debates on major policy issues; providing research evidence to underpin policy making; research which supports the refinement and roll out of interventions; and support towards capacity building in small organisations. The main non-academic users and beneficiaries are: government departments e.g. Education, Health, Home Office and Justice; professional bodies e.g. British Association of Social Work; advocacy groups e.g. Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants; health and social care, police and criminal justice practitioners; major charities e.g. Save the Children UK; local authorities; and both large and small voluntary sector organisations. The end user beneficiaries are members of the public who have benefitted from a range of improved services or interventions that have been funded and initiated as a result of evidence provided by our work. We work to develop follow-through to sustain partnerships with beneficiaries of research where impact has been successfully demonstrated with the intention that those impacts then feed back into future research.

Our work has four main areas of impact: health and welfare impacts; impacts on practitioners and services; on community safety and security and on migration and social justice. Direct health and welfare impacts include: influencing partnership approaches to managing national alcohol-related problems through research commissioned by the DoH taken up in national policy and local practice (Thom et al.); changes to the provision of social services to older people resulting from recommendations based on our research (Hafford-Letchfield) and taken up by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills and National Institute for Adult Continuing Learning; DfE endorsement and public and charity funding (Lloyds Bank and Morrisons Grocery Chain) of a national 'scale up' of a parenting programme across primary schools in disadvantaged UK communities (McDonald L and colleagues) (FAST case study).

Impacts on professional practitioners and services include curriculum changes for healthcare workers in the UK and Europe through the adoption of tools developed from research (Papadopoulos) promoting culturally more appropriate care and the involvement of mental health service users in Europe in decision-making about services (Ryan P; EMP1 case study).

Impact on community safety and security includes changes in policing of internet pornography (Martellozzo), revisions of *Prevent* counter-terrorism strategy (Adler & Ryan, L.) and better means of protecting children from pornographic images (Adler, Horvath) (CHILD case study). Impacting domestic violence policy (via evaluation of DVPO pilots influencing the Home Secretary's decision in 2013 on national roll-out) (Adler, Horvath) was similarly significant. Impacts in relation to migration and to families include enabling local community groups to acquire a better understanding of how to respond to diverse populations in a changing environment (D'Angelo, Kofman, Ryan L, Vacchelli), and to advance social justice for those affected by immigration policy, such as family migrants (FAMILIES and MINORTIES case studies), and the stateless (STATE) case study.

We have selected six case studies to reflect our approach, types of impact and beneficiaries.

b. Approach to impact: Our researchers are committed to improving public policy, users' experience of public services and enhancing social justice. With these as our guiding principles, we support staff to achieve impact in a number of ways. The underpinning framework is based around informing, consultation and collaboration.

Forging sustainable relationships: We develop our relationship with key users and commissioners of research: **i)** By initiating research projects which directly address concerns of policy makers, service agencies and end users (e.g. EMP1). We build in user perspectives in the creation of knowledge and strengthen prospects for impact on policy and practice, for example by including consultation on research questions as research projects are developed. **ii)** By engaging research users as members of steering groups and advisory boards, thereby maintaining constant dynamic knowledge exchange between users and researchers, for example the Advisory Board of Forensic Psychological Services (FPS). **iii)** By organising, funding and promoting conferences and symposia that engage with user communities to create contexts conducive to impact: for example Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (DARC) event *Regulating Khat: Perceptions of the social harms associated with khat use,* a conference and panel debate in response to a Home Office report, facilitating knowledge exchange between specialist researchers, service providers, representatives from London policy group and community members (mainly Somali). Engagement in policy networks has often led to collaborations between our researchers and external organisations, for example in relation to the impact of equality issues at the local level in London with Enfield Racial Equality Council with which the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) has made joint bids to the Trust for London and Enfield Council and, Engaging Muslim Youth with Barnet Council, a 4-year programme as part of the DCLG-funded *Prevent* strategy. FPS has run three conferences with international keynote speakers, with delegates from user communities: Hate Crimes, 2008, Hate Crimes and Extremism, 2010 and Sexual Violence, 2011: **iv)** By continuing and developing our relationship with external partners after the completion of contract research and consultancy work by, for example, identifying commonalities of interests, subsequent joint research bids, postgraduate placement arrangements or involvement in conferences.

Skilling researchers to exploit research outcomes: We run a programme of specific initiatives aimed at equipping researchers with the skills necessary to work more effectively with funders and other users to exploit the outcomes of research e.g. workshops on negotiation skills and contract development. Our university Research and Knowledge Transfer Office (RKTO) supports researchers who have developed intellectual property to adopt the most effective routes to market where appropriate. We also work closely with the University's communication office to promote public engagement with our research, for example in a landmark legal case concerning family migration regulations, which has been used by claimants and campaign organisations in appeals (FAMILY). Training and employing community researchers has developed research skills in user communities.

Knowledge exchange (KE) initiatives: Because knowledge exchange is the first critical step toward impact, to incentivize this we have initiated a performance related rewards and incentives scheme. For example, Horvath (now Reader) was initially employed from this fund. The fund has been used to appoint Enterprise Fellows, whose role is to create KE capacity and assist in enhancing impact. Alongside the use of QR funding, our incentives and rewards scheme enables us to pump-prime initiatives and has also been used to fund seminars, other events and vouchers for small pieces of work with users. KE and impact work are encouraged and included in work programmes.

Specific appointments (D'Angelo, Horvath) were made to initiate and coordinate KE around social policy research, again preparing the ground for subsequent possible impact. SPRC, which works closely with the ESRC-funded Social Enterprise Capacity Building Research Cluster led by Middlesex, has creatively used vouchers (small amounts of funding) to

collaboratively undertake research with local third sector organisations. The first voucher was used to develop a larger Knowledge Transfer Partnership (2011-2012) with Social Firms UK (SFUK). This was funded by the ESRC and TSB with matched funding from SFUK (see http://www.mdx.ac.uk/research/law/projects/knowledge_transfer.aspx). Other vouchers have enabled joint projects and capacity building of community researchers with DayMer, a Turkish and Kurdish organisation and Paiwand, an Afghani organisation. We have also encouraged staff to seek further funding to disseminate fundamental research using the ESRC Follow on Grants, for example on *Polish Pupils in Schools* following on a project on *Recent Polish Migrants* (Ryan L, Sales, D'Angelo). In this, we worked with an external organisation to create guidebooks enabling Polish parents to understand the UK education system, and for UK teachers to understand the Polish system.

While the impact of our research is not always foreseen during the inception of research projects, our approach has proven to be highly conducive to both the development of excellent research and its translation to significant non-academic impacts.

c. Strategy and plans: We are committed to the production of excellent research which can inform and enhance public policy, improve the experience of user groups, and advance social justice. Our aims include:

i) Enhancing our capacity to develop sustainable relationships with commissioners of research, evaluation and consultancy, by leading and participating in research consortia. For example, participation in several long-standing European consortia in policy-oriented research, such as *EMILIA*, 2006-10 has created additional vehicles for research engagement. These major collaborations bring together networks of researchers, service users and service providers of mental health services. The approach adopted was crucial to ensuring that research findings had a direct impact on services for mental health users (EMP1).

ii) Prioritising our efforts to focus strategically on particular types of impact and key users of our research and by developing research in areas of contemporary social, political and economic importance. As shown above, government departments represent important users of our research, as do EU, UN and other bodies including NGOs. DARC, for example, was established after the 2008 RAE, to strength research and explicitly to facilitate policy impact. Its commissioned evaluation of the Alcohol Improvement Programme was used to support the argument for continued funding for the Alcohol Learning Centre, originally set up by the DoH in 2008 to help reduce alcohol-related hospital admissions across the NHS.

iii) Diversifying our portfolio of activities better to exploit the researchers' embeddedness within the local economy and existing national and European partnerships. Our involvement in various European policy consortia detailed above exemplifies not only successful results of this strategy but also illustrates where we are leading the way, for example through Kofman's research on migration with the European Women's Lobby.

iv) Maximising the impact and knowledge exchange outcomes of our research portfolio and individual research by working with RKTO and the University's Marketing Office. Our work with ESRC-funded Social Enterprise Capacity Building Research Centre and SFUK, for example, was enabled by the skills and knowledge of these offices. We helped SFUK to rethink their strategy for employment of vulnerable groups.

v) Establishing new initiatives to address impact. We have already noted the introduction of Enterprise Fellows. Additionally, the establishment of the Forensic Psychological Services, focused on research-driven, direct work with policy and practice bodies is an example of a spin-off that resulted from excellent research.

Recent senior appointments such as Blitz as Director of the International Observatory on Statelessness, and Moore, an expert in international political economy, will strengthen our involvement with international organisations, such as the UN, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and international NGOs through their long-term collaborations with these organisations, and build impact in these areas.

Our impact strategy reflects the policy and practice relevance of our research strategy as a whole. The heads of centres monitor the success of the strategy annually and at the end of projects. Recent investment in research leadership and appointment of a number of research active staff will enable us to build on the considerable success we have enjoyed in research and its impact both within and beyond academia.

d. Relationship to the case studies. Our case studies exemplify different aspects of our approach and of our strategy and plans.

Forging sustainable relationships and dialogue with government departments, international institutions and users is exemplified in the case studies on statelessness, family migration, and child protection and pornography. Our influence has led to the adoption of user-centred interventions and better-focussed community strategy on hate crimes, gangs and radicalization. The Statelessness and Citizenship case study (STATE) shows how our work has led to the development of humanitarian policies and protection affecting 12 million stateless people worldwide. We work in close collaboration with leading NGOs and using their well-developed communications network with government and other civil society organisations to challenge restrictive family migration regulations and to engage more widely with the public (FAMILY). The research has provoked the UK government to appeal against the ruling which was informed by our work.

Diversifying our portfolio: the FAST case study (identifier FAST) exemplifies our strategy of diversifying our portfolio of research and consultancy funding (including an innovative partnership with Save the Children UK). We saw the opportunity for direct involvement in the systematic, national dissemination of the programme of demonstrably effective social work interventions. With support from the RKTO, we now house a team that manages the project's on-going evaluation across its sites in the UK. The findings of the evaluations have fed back into the programme, improving its replicability.

We **develop relationships with key users and commissioners of research** by (co-)initiating research projects which directly address concerns of policy-makers, service agencies and end users, thus maximising opportunities for impact. Such relationships, for example, enabled both our work on transcultural education for cultural competence and our pan-European work on empowerment and mental health service users (EMP1). The latter project provided a successful example of impact through establishing a pan-European mental health service user group, able to influence service design and delivery.

Nationally, we have **prioritised our efforts to focus strategically on particular types of impact by actively developing projects of contemporary significance** as in case studies on Children, Pornography and Sexual Exploitation, and services for migrant and ethnic minority communities. The CHILD case study has impacted on a wide range of organisations (e.g. Netmums, UK Office of Child Internet Safety) and has shifted the terms of public debate through extensive media coverage. The MINORITIES case study on services for migrant and ethnic minority communities exemplifies how our approach interweaves research and impact, benefits from long term relationships and includes a focus on communities which are under-researched and whose needs are poorly served.