

**Institution: The University of Edinburgh**

**Unit of Assessment: 20 Law**

**a. Context**

A commitment to public and professional life is an integral part of Edinburgh Law School's 300-year civic tradition. As stated in RAE2008: '[i]n a small jurisdiction like Scotland, universities have a particular duty to service the legal system and legal practice. The School takes this seriously'. At the same time, the reach of the School's work extends far beyond Scotland, and the law, including engagement with local, national and international legal and non-legal professionals; the governments, parliaments and judiciaries of Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom; European and international institutions; NGOs; civic communities, such as police forces, prosecution and prison services, social work and education departments both within and beyond Scotland; and communities of practice, such as statistical and medical researchers and their regulators. The impact demonstrated by the case studies in section d involves enhancements to civil and criminal justice, including approaches to access to justice and disposal of offenders; fundamental legal and policy reform; changes to professional and state practice; influencing judicial opinion; and improvement in technology regulatory environments, including development of policy and practice on health-related research.

Beyond the case studies, impact-related activities in the census period included:

- **Development of the legal and other professions** informed by many areas of research such as commercial, private, criminal, and intellectual property law, and including lectures on conveyancing to 4,800 lawyers (Gretton and Reid), sensitivity training for judges in asylum cases (Cowan), and training on computer forensics and law to over 400 judges, prosecutors and police officers in Europe and South America (Schafer). CPD delivered by distance-learning was expanded to new audiences, including over 500 medical professionals (Harmon), and a range of members of the creative industries (Kheria);
- **Training of non-legal communities** in quantitative methods through the Applied Quantitative Methods Network (AQMeN). Led by McVie (Edinburgh) and funded to £5.22m by SFC and ESRC, this interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration promotes policy-oriented research with cross-sectoral datasets to reveal deep and broad understandings about well-being. AQMeN has over 1,400 members who benefit from this training, including local councils and NHS employees;
- **Delivery of a free legal advice clinic (FLAC) to the public.** FLAC was established in 2009 and enjoyed continued growth via the re-configured Edinburgh Centre for Professional Legal Studies (ECPLS: 2012). In 2011-12, for example, it received over 600 calls and its student advisors helped 182 clients. In 2013, the FLAC team was highly commended in the UK-wide LawWorks and Attorney General Student Awards.

Knowledge exchange and impact are central to the School's 10 research communities, which comprise centres, institutes and large-scale projects. Blogs update potential users on legal and policy developments. All centres and institutes receive baseline funding of £2.2k to promote dissemination and uptake of research findings through seminars, workshops, and public lectures, and additional funds are available from the Strategic Investment Fund (section b). Three examples of impact through the School's research communities are illustrative.

- Contributions to the debate on Scottish independence were delivered by members of the **Centre for Constitutional Law** which hosted workshops (with Glasgow University) on technical, legal and policy issues with the legal profession, judiciary, and policy-makers in wider civil society (2012). Reach was extended by the advisory positions taken up by Tierney as sole Independent Expert Advisor on Independence to both the Scottish Government (2012) and the

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Scottish Parliament (2013-), and his ESRC Senior Fellowship to engage school pupils and the wider citizenry on deliberative democracy and voting rights.

- The European Research Council project **CITSEE**, led by Shaw (€2.24m from 2009), engaged with non-governmental organisations and EU, national and international policy-makers on Europeanisation of citizenship in the states of the former Yugoslavia. Its approach included a web magazine with photo reportages, real-life stories, animation, and CITSEE TV. The site ([www.citsee.eu](http://www.citsee.eu)) has attracted more than 45,000 visitors to date. It benefitted from association with the Europa Institute (co-led with Social and Political Science) that secured status as a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence (2010-13) to extend its outreach activities, including its 'town & gown' lecture series.
- The **Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime (ESY)**, led by McAra and McVie, used its 4,300-strong cohort database to demonstrate that the deeper children penetrate formal systems of justice, the less likely they are to desist from offending. The project involved close working with policy-makers – including the embedding of a government researcher (Levy) – and served in the census period as the evidence base for the 'whole system approach' to juvenile justice rolled out across Scotland. In the same year the Academy of Social Sciences used the ESY as a case study to the Scottish Government in its spending review. McAra and McVie won The Howard League for Penal Reform Research Medal in 2013.

This rich context demonstrates extensive and sustained experience of establishing and maintaining a range of research-user relationships. It also illustrates the multiple pathways to impact from the research carried out in the School. The advent of the REF impact agenda has resulted in concentrated effort in the census period to build more strategically on these successes, and to support the conversion of dissemination and uptake of research into effective and measurable impact.

### b. Approach to impact

The School undertook a major review of research support after RAE2008. This led to a reconfigured Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKO) and a doubling of staff to 4.5fte with an express remit to deliver support across the whole research trajectory, from idea to impact. Key changes included:

- The appointment of a **Communications and Knowledge Exchange (CKE) Officer** to facilitate dissemination of research success stories via the School website, blogs, and in other ways;
- The appointment of an **Events Administrator** to raise awareness of impact potential in academic events and to gather and collate evidence of impact;
- The establishment of a **KE & Impact (KEI) Sub-group** of the School Research Committee with responsibility for developing and implementing the School impact strategy (below);
- The creation of an **Impact Follow-on Fund** as part of the annual £120,000 Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) to provide support where research funds do not cover impact plans or impact opportunities arise after project monies have come to an end. This complements £26k in College KE grants secured by Law colleagues for CPD and impact purposes.
- Dedicated School-wide training events on impact, enhanced by a **Research Leaders scheme** in 2012 for 12 mid-career staff run in partnership with the University's Institute for Academic Development (IAD). This served as a successful pilot for the College of Humanities and Social Science which then adopted its own model.
- Impact training is also an integral part of the School's bespoke **Early Career and Contract Researcher (ECCR) Research Passport** scheme, while the doctoral community benefits from annual training sessions delivered by staff.
- Law also led the way in the University through Laurie's appointment as Convener of an institution-wide **Task Group on Researcher Impact Training**. This high-level group reported in 2012 with recommendations on cross-institutional initiatives to support researchers and departments in realising impact, subsequently endorsed by University Staff Committee for

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institutional roll-out. Laurie is responsible for the adopted strategy.

Coupled with the traditional civic-orientation of Edinburgh Law School, these changes promote a culture in which impact is encouraged and enabled as an inherent part of research. This is fully recognised in the School workload allocation model. The following are examples of the enabling approach:

- **Encouraging and supporting external appointments** such as: (i) to the Scottish Law Commission (Gretton, MacQueen and Steven on unpaid leave in census period), continuing a relationship of over a decade; and (ii) to government, policy and advisory bodies, e.g. Walker's role as Independent Expert Advisor on Appellate Jurisdiction in the Scottish Legal System (Scottish Government, 2008-2010), Scott's role as EU engagement advisor to the Scottish Government (2013-) and Gilmore's role as sole legal advisor to international organisations on money laundering. Over 30 advisory and policy appointments were held by staff between 2008-2013.
- **Facilitating and realising consultancy opportunities**, with over 45 in the census period including: (i) consultancies for the European Commission on human rights, international law and the environment (Boyle, Ghaleigh and Augenstein, 2011), (ii) consultancy contracts from the FAO and OECD on corporate environmental accountability (Morgera, 2012), and (iii) Boyle's Opinion (with Crawford from Cambridge) for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Cabinet Office, and the Office of the Advocate General for Scotland, on international law implications of Scottish independence (2013), with which the UK government publicly agreed.
- **Encouraging cultural contributions** such as: (i) Harmon's graphic novel *Fever Medicine*, which brought together Edinburgh-based researchers in medicine, art, and the humanities to explore ethical, legal, social, and scientific issues stemming from new medical research and technologies; (ii) Bankowski's AHRC-funded initiative on *Beyond Text in Legal Education*, examining the value of non-textual resources in developing ethical perception amongst law students and professionals, and involving artists and dancers; and (iii) Sparks' involvement with colleagues in Glasgow and Huddersfield, exploring the impact of arts and music on rehabilitation and desistance from crime.

### c. Strategy and plans

The central aim of the School's published strategy is to ensure our research contributes to building a fairer, healthier, safer, stronger and greener society and, in doing so, to ensure that our portfolio of research has both reach and impact, locally and globally. The following are intended to deliver this strategic aim in the next five years:

#### 1. Embedding impact into research design and delivery at all stages

The KEI Group will identify ways to improve advice on, and support for, impact plans as well as making mechanisms available to foster relationships with potential research-users, e.g. through early workshops involving users to inform and shape research design, and targeting downstream KE funding.

#### 2. Developing knowledge exchange and impact capacity

The KEI Group will work with research-users to create the infrastructure to meet current and anticipated professional-development needs and to promote optimal research uptake. This will include fostering KEI benefits for, and from, the student body, reflecting a commitment to research-led teaching e.g. through use of real world case studies.

#### 3. Delivering impact support

The RKO will institute an impact mentor-scheme to partner experienced colleagues with those in need of impact support. This will involve the CKE Officer and the Events Administrator working proactively with academics and users to deliver suitable events and gather tangible evidence of impact.

**4. Fostering and incentivising a spirit of ‘policy entrepreneurship’**

Career progression and annual review already include consideration of impact plans. The School encourages impact activities through its principle of return of CPD monies to the research groups that generate them. Training events will be extended to raise awareness of the range of possible impact in law and to communicate its value, e.g. media training and research-user engagement. The School will continue to recognise impact in its workload allocation model, including experimental activities that require time-commitment but might not deliver impact.

**5. Improving ways of describing, demonstrating and measuring impact**

The School will enhance mechanisms established in the census period: (i) to increase the visibility of research outputs: an SSRN Working Paper Series was launched in 2011; the School website was redesigned in 2013 and now includes a Making a Difference section; academics produce on-minute videos as part of the University Research in a Nutshell programme; and (ii) to track evidence of impact: the KEI Group will work with the Publications Assistant and Events Administrator to monitor press coverage, improve methods to collate evidence of impact, and share instances of best practice.

To deliver on these objectives, the KEI Group will identify and work with projects likely to produce demonstrable impact, e.g. (i) Cowan’s work on sensitivity training for the judiciary, (ii) AHRC/ESRC/EPSRC-funded CREATE initiative working with artists and authors in the digital economy (Cornwall, Kheria, Rauhofer and Schafer), (iii) Morgera’s ERC-funded work with international organisations and NGOs to deliver models of environmental benefit sharing and (iv) Tierney on deliberative democracy and Scotland’s constitutional future.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

- Study 1: Enhancing the effectiveness of youth justice policy and practice
- Study 2: Overhauling the Scottish land registration system
- Study 3: Prioritising enforcement in international money laundering regimes
- Study 4: Shaping the development of international environmental law
- Study 5: Overcoming regulatory impasse in stem cell research in Argentina
- Study 6: Delivering the good governance framework of the Scottish Health Informatics Programme (SHIP)

Support provided	Case study supported and lessons
<b>Sabbaticals and annual research assistance of minimum 80 hours</b>	All colleagues benefitted; staff strategy has introduced <i>additional</i> School provision beyond University sabbatical to deliver one year in four for research activity, incl. impact-oriented activities.
<b>Extended absence from school or unpaid leave</b>	Study 2: Law Commissioners (up to 10 years). Studies 3 and 4 to engage NGOs and courts.
<b>Underwriting workshops and events</b>	Studies 1, 2 and 5, emphasising importance of early engagement with research-users; profile-raising through prominent events.
<b>Media Training</b>	Studies 1, 5 and 6, emphasising importance of clear message on core research findings.
<b>Follow-on funding</b>	Study 1 to support further analysis and Study 5 after end of ESRC grant to pursue continued reach of research.
<b>CPD and policy of return of income to researchers for further pump-priming</b>	Studies 2, 5 and 6: School development and delivery of on-campus and distance learning based on research findings.