

<p><b>Institution: University of Kent</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Unit of Assessment: 32 – Philosophy</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>a. Context</b>  Our department’s research achieves impact in the following ways – see (b) for full details:</p> <p><b>Direct engagement with non-academic beneficiaries.</b> In this REF period, research on the ethics of war, on humanism, on totalitarianism and on metaethics has been used to influence the activities and opinions of, respectively, the US military, the UK public, the Romanian government and A-level philosophy students. Thus the primary categories of impact are policy making, public discourse and education. This form of impact is particularly associated with departmental research in practical philosophy.</p> <p><b>Indirect impact through engaging with other academic disciplines,</b> including mathematics, computer science, education and medicine. This form of impact is particularly associated with departmental research in theoretical reasoning. The main user groups, beneficiaries and audiences of this research are the blind, for work on pedagogical methodology, and medical practitioners, for research on methods for cancer prognosis and also for research on protocols for evidence-based medicine (i.e., education, public services and policy making).</p> <p><b>Engaging professionals and the general public through research periodicals.</b> Two departmental research periodicals, <i>Marx and Philosophy Review of Books</i> and <i>The Reasoner</i>, have mixed academic / non-academic audiences. The primary category of impact here is public discourse.</p> <hr/> <p><b>b. Approach to impact</b>  Our approach to achieving impact for our research is to use the three channels outlined above. We actively seek out user groups, either directly, or indirectly via academic collaborations, or by engaging potential users by means of research publications.</p> <p><b>1. Direct Impact.</b> First, staff members work with non-academic groups. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frowe’s position on the ethics of war has been communicated directly to the US Military in order to help shape its ethical position on counter-insurgency tactics. Frowe has benefited from University support in terms of relief from other duties (10% of total workload from 2012-14) in order to pursue this impact.</li> <li>• Richard Norman’s position on humanism has been communicated to the public, via a popular book and the media, in order to change public attitudes to humanism, and to the House of Lords in order to help shape political debate in this area. He was awarded £2000 by the School to support and monitor impact.</li> <li>• Kanterian’s published work on totalitarianism led to discussions with one of the judges on the Romanian Constitutional Court in 2012, in which he encouraged and advised the judge to defend the rule of law. This culminated in successful efforts by the judge, who negotiated with EU institutions to put pressure on the Romanian government, to resolve the 2012 constitutional crisis in Romania and help steer the country away from a return to <a href="#">authoritarianism</a>. Kanterian also alerted the Western public to these issues through popular media, including <a href="#">newspapers</a> and <a href="#">blogs</a>.</li> <li>• Kirchin has been working with schools and with the AQA in order to help change the A-level philosophy curriculum, to make it more relevant to philosophy as studied at university; in particular he has been promoting discussion of <a href="#">metaethics</a> at A level, to understand better current views in metaethical debate. In 2011-12 Kirchin received £3000 from the School and £3000 from the Faculty to provide him with teaching assistance so that he could carry out these impact activities.</li> <li>• Ahlstrom-Vij’s popular scientific book <i>Magkänslans anatomi</i> (The Anatomy of Gut Feelings), published in 2010 by Sweden’s largest publisher (Bonniers), introduced the psychology of intuitive judgment to a popular audience for the first time in Sweden and was accompanied by several <a href="#">media appearances</a> and public lectures, including a keynote at the 2012 Project Manager of the Year award ceremony in Stockholm, with approximately 150 participants.</li> </ul>
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## Impact template (REF3a)

- Hacker regularly engages the public with his research. This REF period he has spoken or written about his research on French radio, Dutch TV, a [podcast](#), the *Philosopher's Magazine*, three Hay-on-Wye [Philosophy Festivals](#), and the Simply Charly [website](#).

**2. Indirect Impact.** The second way in which the Philosophy department seeks research impact is through collaborating with staff in other disciplines who act as intermediaries in pathways to impact. Such interactions are fostered by the department's [Centre for Reasoning](#), which has membership across a wide range of disciplines at Kent. For example, Goldstein has worked with Martin Gough at the Kent Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching in order to develop his research on pedagogical methodology which began with building a tactile device for teaching logic to blind students (see, e.g., their 'Gardner-Inspired Design of Teaching Materials: A Logical Illustration', *Discourse* 10(1):173-202, 2010). This led to seminars at Greenwich and Salamanca in 2012, as well as workshops for students at a blind school in Rio de Janeiro in 2013.

As an example of indirect impact outside the Centre for Reasoning, Williamson has worked with cancer scientists and computer scientists in order to apply his version of objective Bayesianism to improve methods for obtaining prognoses in breast cancer (e.g., Sylvia Nagl, Matt Williams and Jon Williamson, 'Objective Bayesian nets for systems modelling and prognosis in breast cancer', in D. Holmes and L.C. Jain, eds, *Innovations in Bayesian Networks: Theory and Applications*, Springer, 2008, pp. 131-168).

Another example stems from a British Academy project: in 2007 Russo and Williamson argued that in order to establish a causal claim, biomedical scientists typically require evidence both that the putative cause makes a difference to the putative effect and that there is some underlying physiological mechanism that can account for this difference ('Interpreting causality in the health sciences', *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science* 21(2):157-170). This epistemological thesis, now referred to as the Russo-Williamson Thesis, was developed in three subsequent research projects (British Academy, Leverhulme, AHRC), but goes against the principles of evidence-based medicine, which have tended to ignore evidence of mechanisms. In response to this thesis, other academics developed policy advice for the medical profession that provides an explicit role for evidence of mechanisms ('[The Oxford 2011 Levels of Evidence](#)', Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine). However, a team of researchers (Russo and Williamson at Kent; Clarke, Illari and Gillies at UCL) argue that it is the wrong role (e.g., in the journals *Preventative Medicine* and *Topoi*, 2013), and held an academic symposium and a public engagement event (with £2036 support from School and Faculty) in 2012 to highlight the problem and to seek further changes in policy guidance. On the strength of this, the team secured a further £2000 from the University to enable further impact activities.

**3. Publicising departmental research.** The third route to impact involves establishing the department as a natural port of call for non-academics seeking academic research in certain areas. Two regular departmental publications reach a wide non-academic audience. [The Reasoner](#) reaches, as well as academic researchers, those outside academia who work on reasoning-related business – such as those working in data mining in health care, or decision-support systems in finance and manufacturing. This gazette averages well over a thousand downloads per issue, with an audience in around 100 countries. It has received support from the School in the shape of an editorial assistantship in order to continue its work. [Marx and Philosophy Review of Books](#) reaches non-academics who are interested in Marx's political and social philosophies, a focus of Sayers' and Angier's research. This online publication receives over a million hits per year.

#### c. Strategy and plans

Our strategy for sustaining and developing the approach to impact outlined in (b) is two-pronged: to ensure that researchers identify pathways to impact for their research, and to resource and support those impact projects that have clear potential reach and significance.

**Pathways to impact.** We recognise that philosophical research can take a long time to achieve impact and that it is prudent to consider potential impact early in the research planning phase. We do this by advocating the methods adopted by the research councils: we ensure researchers articulate the *pathways to impact* for their research, when planning research, especially when

preparing their annual Individual Research Plans. This ensures that potential opportunities for impact can be appropriately resourced from the beginning. An example of this approach is the identification in 2010 of the pathways to impact for the 2012-15 inductive logic project, which will culminate in 2015 in a multi-disciplinary conference and a book; OUP claimed that this was their longest lead-in time for a contracted book. This early planning meant that the School was able to resource a year of staff leave in 2013-14 to work on impact activities as well as on new research.

**Planned projects.** We encourage and support our early career researchers in their impact, and we have identified pathways to impact for their research so that they can be adequately supported in the long term. For example, Ahlstrom-Vij is working on the ways in which information markets can improve decision making and is applying for funding together with a researcher at the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) for a project on how new information market technology can be used to inform cost-benefit analysis in public decision making. Darby works on the relationship between quantum mechanics and metaphysical indeterminacy and is seeking to influence the way in which popular metaphorical uses of indeterminacy are reflected in the public understanding of science. Those members of staff who are currently working on impact – see the examples given in (b) – will receive continuing support, in particular with regard to measuring the reach and significance of impact, which is often a time-consuming activity. For example, Kanterian is planning further impacts around his project on liberalism, law and legitimacy in the EU, and has received seed funding for a first workshop in this area, held at our Brussels campus in 2013.

**Strategy for support.** Impact is supported, and will continue to be supported, in five main ways. (i) The departmental Director of Research and University research officers offer advice as to how to achieve and measure impact. In addition, the University runs training on impact for early career researchers. (ii) The School offers relief from other duties for those working on impact case studies. Currently 10% of staff time is allocated to major impact activities; the School is planning to increase this to a term's teaching relief. (iii) Funds can be provided to pay for the costs of impact and public engagement. For example, Kirchin received £6000 to help him publicise departmental research for his impact activities, Norman was given £2000 to help him measure his impact. Funds are provided by the School, the Kent Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, and by the University's Public Engagement Fund. (iv) The University's Innovation and Enterprise department provides professional support to develop business collaborations for the purpose of exploiting research outputs for commercialisation, consultancy and training. (v) The University's Press Office helps researchers reach a wide audience by engaging with the press.

Procedurally, encouragement and monitoring of impact is the responsibility of the department's Director of Research, who reports to the departmental Board of Studies committee, which usually meets three times a term. The department's Director of Research liaises regularly with the School Director of Research, Faculty Director of Research, the Research Services department (who are responsible for support for impact), and the Innovation and Enterprise department (responsible for consultancy and links with business), in order to adequately resource impact projects.

#### **d. Relationship to case studies**

Both case studies are examples of the direct impact approach outlined in (b).

Richard Norman is an established professor, having been a member of staff in the department since 1970 (emeritus since 2005). Consequently, his pathways to impact were already well developed by this REF period. As mentioned, he was provided with £2000 as follow-through support for research assistance to identify and measure impact. Norman and his RA Walsh have also been supported in terms of advice, from the department's Director of Research, School Director of Research and University research officers.

Helen Frowe is newer to the department and has benefited from more in the way of the advance planning mentioned in (c), as well as from support in terms of relief from other duties (10% of total workload from 2012-14), access to funds to support her impact project, and the above channels of advice.