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| <p>Institution: University of Manchester</p> |
| <p>Unit of Assessment: 23 (Sociology)</p> |
| <p>a. Context</p> <p>Our impact strategy builds on an international reputation for excellence in empirically grounded research and methodological innovation. With world-leading expertise in 6 core clusters of research: (i) <i>Stratification, Inequalities and Socio-Cultural Change</i>; (ii) <i>Social Ties, Networks and Social Movements</i>; (iii) <i>Personal Life/Everyday Lives</i>; (iv) <i>Cultural Practices, Consumption and Sustainability</i>; and (v) and (vi) <i>Census and Survey Research</i>, and <i>Innovations in Qualitative and Mixed Methodologies</i>, we have targeted 5 core areas of impact activity: (a) <i>confronting inequalities</i> (b) <i>uncovering the power of social connection</i> (c) <i>challenging public understandings of personal life</i> (d) <i>transforming understandings of cultural practices</i>; and (e) <i>extending techniques of intelligence-gathering</i>. Engaging a broad spectrum of audiences and beneficiaries, and with impact occurring at a range of scales, we focus on 3 main pathways to impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociologically-informed interventions in policy debates and development: engaging with Whitehall, government and public sector bodies, NGOs, third sector and civil society organisations, in areas including health inequalities, gender equality, work-life balance, social cohesion, new reproductive technologies, and cultural participation; • Impact on practitioners and professional services: influencing professional practice through consultation and advisory work with government departments, third sector, commercial research and demographic planning bodies, in areas including data management and the dissemination of methodological innovation beyond academia; • Public engagement: challenging and forming debate, and advancing understanding, through public events and diverse and interactive media activities in areas including consumption practices, cultural participation, personal life, racial diversity, and social inequalities. |
| <p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The UoM Research Strategy identifies research with impact beyond academia (yielding economic, social and cultural benefits) as one of three central research objectives, and knowledge transfer is a promotion criterion at all career levels. In addition, the UoM is committed through its social responsibility goal to contributing to the social and economic success of the local, national and international community by using its expertise and knowledge to find solutions to the major challenges of the 21st century. The UoA strategy builds, then, on strong institutional support for the promotion of impact, and we work towards these goals through three interrelated areas of activity:</p> <p>(i) We promote sociologically informed interventions in policy debate and development by encouraging and supporting collaborative relationships with third sector, policy and public debate fora. Our approach targets investments to facilitate collaborative relationships with a diverse range of organisations providing important platforms for interventions in policy debate. Building on the UoM-funded <i>engagement@manchester</i> and <i>policy@manchester</i> networks (which enable researchers to share resources and strategies for public and policy engagement), UoA staff have formed close relationships with a broad range of user groups, including through advisory board memberships and consultancy roles. These include <i>international bodies</i>, eg ILO, the European Commission, OECD, the Energiser Group, and Coca Cola; <i>national bodies</i>, eg the Runnymede Trust, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Arts Council England, and the Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations; and <i>regional groups</i>, eg the North-West Cultural Observatory, Culture North-West, and the Albert Kennedy Trust. Advisory relationships have also been fostered with 11 government departments (eg Home Office, Cabinet Office, Department of Work and Pensions, and Department for Education), 11 other government bodies (eg the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Arts Council England, ONS and the North West Development Agency), 7 local authorities, and the Local Government Association, whilst 18 staff members have given 45 presentations to UK and overseas governmental audiences.</p> <p>New collaborations are fostered through activities such as: inviting users to join project advisory groups and to actively participate in various university/faculty/DA sponsored events (eg as speakers and discussants); hosting stakeholder workshops/conferences (eg the <i>Relative Strangers</i> project on assisted conception hosted a London event aimed at legal practitioners, with Baroness Hale of Richmond as keynote speaker); collaborative studentships (5 since 2008, including with ONS and the British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin); and both staff and PGR student</p> |

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placements, eg Miles's 6-month ESRC Placement Fellowship in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's Evidence and Analysis Unit, and ESRC PGR placements in the Home Office Science Directorate and the British Library. Specific impact outcomes include:

- £2M in research income from impact sponsors since 2008, including Tesco, DEFRA, the Scottish Office, Home Office, charitable bodies and local authorities. Manchester City Council, for example, support work led by Phillipson on population ageing and urbanization;
- Smart and Nordqvist's 'Relative Strangers' research led to invitations to submit evidence to the Nuffield Council on Bio-Ethics 2012 consultation on the ethics of donor conception and for Smart to speak at the official launch of the final report of the consultation in 2013;
- In 2013, A. Heath's and Li's research advice was the basis for affirmative action recommendations made to Parliament by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Race and Community (recommending keeping better data on public sector redundancies, and the need for increased use of anonymised application forms in public sector recruitment);
- Southerton's co-authored report 'Consumers, Business and Climate Change' formed the focus of a 2009 conference with discussants including David Cameron and the CEOs of several major multinationals and NGOs, including Unilever, Coca Cola, Nestle, News International, the Soil Association, the Carbon Trust, WWF and Greenpeace UK.

(ii) We promote impact on practitioners by building consultancy, training and advisory relationships with commercial and public bodies. A core element of our approach has been to develop and support an extensive programme of consultancy and training in methodological expertise and innovation. This commitment to developing practitioner impact is demonstrated particularly well by extensive provision of training and consultancy to bodies including third sector, governmental and market research organisations. Regarding practitioner impact via *training*, CCSR, methods@manchester, Realities at the Morgan Centre, and the Mitchell Centre are major providers of training in innovative methods:

- 496 face-to-face courses attracting nearly 11,000 attendees since 2008: participation rates by non-academics vary, ranging from 10% to 28%;
- bespoke training provision, eg innovative qualitative methods training provided by Realities to organisations including Greater Manchester Council for Voluntary Organisation and OPM;
- over 287,000 downloads of online toolkits, guides and training videos, with user feedback suggesting that these resources are widely employed by non-academics.

These activities highlight and have extended our reputation as a centre of methodological excellence and creativity, forming an important strand of our user engagement and in turn leading to new partnerships, consultancies and research collaborations with commercial and public organisations. Outcomes of successful consultancy arising from this strategy include:

- ongoing commercial development of Ucinet, the world's most widely used SNA package with over 400 non-academic user licenses, and SIENA, designed for longitudinal SNA;
- Dunnhumby's adoption of time diary survey methods for a Tesco product category review;
- an advisory role and collaborative research with the Home Office arising from methodological expertise on covert social networks.

(iii) We promote public engagement, and the shaping of cultural understandings of social issues, via a programme of public events and resources, and by building collaborative research activities with media organisations and wider publics. Our approach targets investments to support and encourage media and social media engagement. To facilitate public engagement, staff members are encouraged to use the support infrastructure of Research Centres/Groups and the wider UoA; there are currently 11 members of staff in the UoA whose roles include supporting and developing communication and dissemination activities, event management, and other social responsibility activities. Examples of the success of this strategy include frequent staff appearances on major national TV and radio news programmes (eg *Channel 4 News*, *World at One*, *BBC Breakfast*, *Today Programme*); current affairs programmes such as *Thinking Allowed*, *Women's Hour* and one-off documentaries; national and local print media, including all major national newspapers and other outlets, eg *New Statesman* and *The Pink Paper*; and online promotion through websites, media-targeted 'Census Briefings', email lists, online

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resources (eg podcasts and videos), blogs, Facebook groups and Twitter feeds (the Sociology DA Twitter feed, for example, has over 2400 followers). We also encourage collaborative research activities with media organisations and wider publics, eg:

- the promotion of debate on youth and political participation across Europe through the blog of the FP7 project MYPLACE, which had over 16,400 readers in 2012-3;
- 28 UK-wide performances by musicians from the Practices of Religious Identity project, and 21,000 visits to the Golden Temple Exhibition at London's Brunei Gallery, at which a project-produced CD of the musicians played continuously, generating sales of 2000 CDs;
- a photography competition and exhibition linked to the Realities *Resemblances* project held at the Zion Arts Centre in Manchester, which was also viewable online.

Training, mentoring and professional development of new and existing staff, annual Performance Development Review (PDR) and UoM promotion criteria, all support our approach by placing strong emphasis on the impact and engagement aspects of staff research. Support in these areas, particularly for ECRs, is provided via UoM Research Impact Scholarships, the Researcher Development Framework, and the Faculty's New Academics Programme's module on research dissemination. The UoA provides online resources to support impact (eg, by the Morgan Centre and methods@manchester), and hosted an ESRC seminar series on 'The Impact Agenda' in 2011. Annual Research Away Days provide further opportunities to learn about impact activities, and MA/PhD students receive training on impact and engagement through a portfolio of taught modules and methods@manchester resources. In addition to targeted investments to develop consultancy and training, and policy and public engagement support infrastructures, staff activities are supported by regular sabbatical leave arrangements (which include impact and engagement as key research leave goals); and by the provision of a £1K p/a personal research allowance (on top of external grant monies and allocations by centres) to support research/research impact activities.

c. Strategy and plans

Our strategy is to strengthen and extend both the excellence and the societal impact of Manchester sociology. Targeting our 5 core areas for impact (inequalities; social connection; personal life; cultural practices; techniques of intelligence gathering) our strategic plans are to:

- extend our strong emphasis on impact and public engagement in training and professional development activities of staff and students;
- invest further in support infrastructure for impact and engagement activities;
- appoint and reward staff whose work advances our impact strategy goals;
- further promote consultancy, training and research collaborations with stakeholders.

Our ongoing strategy to **support the impact aspects of staff training and professional development** is outlined in (b). In addition, individual and School-level reporting of impact activities as part of the annual Research Profiling Exercise enables us to identify strategic development needs and opportunities, and the development of improved School online systems will help staff to record and track their impact activities. We will also continue to promote external collaborations involving students, including via internships, collaborative studentships, and the UoM 'Ambassador' and widening participation mentor schemes, whereby PGR students draw on their research in engaging with schools and other audiences, eg visitors to the University's Manchester Museum. The UoA is introducing 2 annual prizes for best PhD and ECR public engagement activities.

Investments in support infrastructure are targeted at strengthening and developing areas of research excellence with high impact. Staff are encouraged to apply for University/Faculty funding for impact activities, such as the UoM's 'Social Responsibility Flagship' support fund (including funding for non-academic stakeholder involvement in curricular development), the Faculty's Strategic Investment Reserve Fund (which includes support for impact activities), and Simon Industrial Fellowships (funding visiting fellowships from business/industry). The UoM has received 1 of only 3 **ESRC Impact Acceleration Account Pilot awards** (£500K) to support knowledge exchange and impact activities arising from excellent research: through this scheme staff and PGR students are supported in developing collaborative bids with non-academic partners for policy workshops, placements and 'research into practice' activities. The UoA has already won 2 such awards, 1 by UoA staff and 1 by a Sociology PGR student. In addition to Faculty investments in an **impact support team** (including an impact support officer within the School's Research Support

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Hub) we will continue to **invest in UoA support staff** with dedicated responsibility for supporting sociological impact and engagement activities, including ongoing funding of our **Communications Officer post** to deliver our public engagement strategy, and of 4 members of academic staff within the UoA with dedicated impact responsibilities: one with responsibility for coordinating communications, the others for developing and supporting social responsibility activities at DA (x2) and School level (x1) respectively.

Integral to our future plans are our investments in a series of **targeted appointments**, including 5 professorial appointments, as part of the UoM's high profile 'Project Diamond' recruitment initiative, of researchers whose work has high impact and strong links to public bodies. One such appointee, Alexander, is also School Director of External Relations, responsible for championing the UoM's third strategic goal of Social Responsibility; addressing inequality is a major theme of the UoM's social responsibility agenda. Post-doctoral fellowships and other ECR appointments are also targeted at researchers whose work has strong potential for impact and public engagement. Our recently appointed Simon, Hallsworth, Marie Curie and ESRC Future Leader Fellows, for example, work respectively in the fields of Sikh-Muslim conflict, household sustainability, ageing-friendly neighbourhoods, and migration and social integration. Our ongoing strategy to extend our methodological expertise as a basis for consultative and collaborative relations with stakeholders includes a joint bid for the next phase of NCRM's training and capacity building programme (2014-19) and our recent success in securing a UoM Nuffield-funded Quantitative Methods Centre.

Finally, we will continue to **promote active research collaborations with diverse stakeholder groups**, including through their greater involvement as partners in funding bids and in advisory roles, through participating in events such as the annual *policy@Manchester* week, and working with the University's Business Engagement Team. The UoM's emphasis on knowledge transfer and engagement activities in its promotion criteria will also encourage further collaborative relationships. Newly funded areas of research with potential for stakeholder collaboration include: co-hosting the next British Election Study, and research on shared housing, the well-being of children of refugees, fairness at work, food waste, and covert networks.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our six impact case studies are in the areas of: **1)** Working-time and gender equality policy; **2)** Demographic projections for sub-national planning; **3)** Cultural participation and inequality; **4)** Policy understandings of sustainable consumption; **5)** Statistical disclosure practices of data stewardship organisations; and **6)** Public understandings of race, segregation and diversity. Broadly representative of the range of UoA impact work, they exemplify our strategic approach, with impacts arising from (i) *collaborative relationships with policy, NGO and third-sector bodies* (**1, 3, 4, 5**); (ii) *consultancy, training and advisory relationships with commercial and public bodies* (**2, 3, 4, 5**) and (iii) *collaborative research activities with media organisations and wider publics* (**3, 6**).

For example, expert advisory work with the ILO and European bodies (in **1**), and with Scottish Government and HM Revenue and Customs (in **4**), exemplifies our strategy of building *collaborative relationships with policy bodies/NGOs* encouraging further commissioned research, and helping to shape policy debates and research agendas (**1**), and policy innovation and policy toolkits (**4**) in these *fora*. Our strategy of fostering *expert consultancy work* is exemplified by (**5**), where consultancy with data stewardship organisations led to new risk algorithms now widely adopted in the sector; and also by (**2**), where consultancy-led software innovations in demographic projection resulted in the adoption of the software as the industry standard in local planning. A research partnership with the BBC (**3**) exemplifies *collaborative research with media organisations and wider publics*, with over 6.9 million people visiting the BBC project website. The iterative success of such collaborations influences our recruitment strategy and the career development of existing staff. (**6**), based on an ECR whose research has impacted on public understandings of racial segregation, exemplifies how our policy of targeting fellowships/ECR appointments at researchers with good impact potential helps to nurture and embed strong third sector relationships (here Runnymede) early in a researcher's career. All case studies benefitted from the UoM impact support infrastructure; through granting of sabbatical leave to pursue research and impact activities; and in the case of (**3**) through School funding of RAs to support the PI's work.