

<p>Institution: University of Bristol</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 23 Sociology</p>
<p>a. Context: Impact has now become firmly embedded within our research. Sociology at Bristol is driven by big ideas and pursued through rigorous empirical research; linking first class research to impact involves encouraging colleagues to think seriously about how their individual mediation of issues can add public value. The aspiration is to blend elements of the older image of the 'public intellectual' with the newer image of research communities who help move things on in civil society and the political sphere. As the impact agenda has grown, we have developed an infrastructure and research culture ethos to match, such that all of our 18 academic staff members (part of a new School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies established in 2010) and increasing numbers of PGRs have been involved in impact and public engagement between 2008 and 2013. To promote impact, we aim for, and have achieved, stability in research strategy. We see this as vital to the expertise, reputation, and networks necessary for serious, sustained impact. Our main impact-related research activities focus on our research expertise in ethnicity/migration, theory/culture and gender/inequalities, drawing on internationally recognised work on nationalism, multiculturalism, political and social movements, environment and risk, popular culture, families and intimacy, and class.</p> <p>The main users of our research encompass government, the voluntary sector and the general public. In the UK users include executive, legislative and judicial branches of government (e.g. Cabinet Office; Prime Ministerial Seminar on Equality, Fairness and Responsibility; Department for Education; Ministry of Justice; Home Office; Parole Board; National Offender Management Service; Criminal Cases Review Commission; Court of Appeal), third sector bodies (e.g. Islamic Foundation; Muslim Council of Britain); arms-length bodies (e.g. Commission on Multi-Ethnic Britain; National Equality Panel) and trade unions (e.g. Association of University Teachers, National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education). Globally, the main users have been equivalent actors in other countries (e.g. US Department of Justice) and international organisations (e.g. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UN Expert Group on Poverty Measurement; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development; European Commission). Our use of print, digital, and electronic media locally, nationally and internationally, ensures our research also informs a public audience.</p> <p>The main types of impact of our research have been: fundamental change in the definition and measurement of social problems and the design of related policy and evaluation (especially in relation to poverty and social exclusion world-wide); changes to macro-discursive and policy paradigms and related legislation (especially in relation to the accommodation of Muslims in Britain); and shifts in public thinking on important social issues and associated change in legal processes and training (especially in relation to victims of wrongful imprisonment in Britain).</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact: We have five interlinked pathways to impact: identifying potential impacts that could flow from our research; engaging stakeholders; disseminating research findings; support within the School; and using wider university resources. Examples given in this section are mostly in addition to our case studies illustrating the extent to which our impact activities extend right across Sociology.</p> <p>Identifying potential impacts that could flow from our research: Our research addresses compelling contemporary social questions and provides conceptually, theoretically and empirically rigorous findings. We value applied and blue skies research equally. We recognise that the route to impact may be through immediate application of concrete recommendations to deal with specific problems or indirect and long term critical reflection on the status quo.</p> <p>Engaging stakeholders: We engage key stakeholders to ensure that our research is shaped by and is relevant to them by employing the following complementary approaches:</p> <p>We involve stakeholders throughout the research process and develop long-term relations of trust and cooperation. For example, the Bristol Pakistani Women's Organisation changed its name to the Bristol Pakistani Community Welfare Organisation and started offering services for men as well as women following on from a longstanding cooperation with Charsley.</p> <p>We engage with a wide range of types of stakeholder, including at a high governmental level. Research by Charsley on family migration policies published by the Home Office in 2011 was used to brief the incoming government and shaped the public consultation that followed. Research by one of our PhD students (Lewis) on an ESRC placement with the Welsh government, led to the allocation in March 2013 of £10.5 million of government funding to support Welsh school pupils</p>

from ethnic minority backgrounds (<http://tinyurl.com/emagwales>). The President of Ireland has referred directly to the work of Levitas on Utopia and invited her to discuss these ideas: this illustrates how theoretical insights as well as empirical findings can have impact.

We engage with stakeholders in widely varying ways. One type of approach used is top-down. SurrIDGE's research published in 2008 on the National Student Survey was featured prominently by the Higher Education Academy, was circulated to all higher education institutions in England and Wales and all three of her reports were featured on the HEFCE website. Another approach used is bottom-up. Since May 2013, the School's Sociology-led Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship has hosted an online public forum Public Spirit (www.publicspirit.org.uk) for discussion of faith and public policy, funded by the AHRC (O'Toole; Modood).

We offer numerous types of benefit to stakeholders, including from the work of individual scholars. For example, Dermott's research on fatherhood and childcare led to her participation in Food Standards Agency's work on infant formula feeding in 2008-09; the Children's Society's work on children and fathers; and the Fatherhood Institute's report launched in Parliament in 2010 which included a new Fairness in Families Index used to assess gender equality in the home and workplace across the UK and 20 other upper income countries (9,420 Google hits).

We seek to connect different types of stakeholder on issues to enhance impact. Yamashita's work on the double burden of caring for both older people and children in Japan involves a national network of non-profit organisations and Yokohama city council in close collaboration and being extended to schools and councils in Hong Kong and Taipei.

Disseminating research findings: We have a comprehensive communication strategy designed to create routes to impact by facilitating dialogue and interaction with key users, with three core elements: face to face, online and news media (online, print and broadcast).

We regard face to face interactions as indispensable. Staff run and target events involving practitioners as well as academics, and present their concepts and findings in ways that show their practical implications. The Paired Peers project hosted annual dissemination events in 2011, 2012 and 2013 in which findings were presented to a wide audience ranging from policy makers, teachers, industry workers, schools, colleges, universities, students and parents. Sociology staff contributed to the University's Thinking Futures public engagement week in 2012 such as O'Toole on enhancing Muslim engagement in local democratic governance with Building the Bridge, Bristol, and Fox on everyday racism at Easton Community Centre, Bristol. We will similarly be involved in this year's ESRC sponsored Festival of Social Science including events on living with poverty, and faith and governance, bringing together academics, community workers and members of the public. We also use less conventional ways of connecting to users. Dermott discussed contemporary fatherhood in a post-performance Q&A session of a new play 'Our Fathers' at the Parabola Arts Centre, Cheltenham. A photographic project 'Looking for the Blue' is a spin-off from Levitas's work on Utopia and will be shown at Bristol's leading art gallery, the Arnolfini.

We work through online channels, including social media. Every large research project has dedicated space on the School website and bespoke branding is commissioned for multi-partner projects, as in the case of the Paired Peers project. Our blogging strategy involves adding value by grounding posts in staff's own research findings, securing recognition as a regular blogger and contributing posts to key external blogs e.g. Fox for LSE Politics and Policy; McLennan for GlobalHigherEd and Downer for NuclearPhilosophy. Staff increasingly have their own Twitter feeds (Dermott; Fox; Haynes; Modood; O'Toole; SurrIDGE) or manage collective ones (Modood, O'Toole for Public Spirit; Atkinson for Class Research; Naughton for Innocence UK).

Staff contribute frequently to the news media or have their research reported upon. We cover online, print, TV and radio, and we value local outlets as well as national and international ones in order to engage with the local Bristol community in which the University plays an important part. Staff appear often on BBC Radio Bristol and on programmes such as BBC Radio 4 Thinking Allowed (Atkinson, Dermott, Levitas, Haynes), BBC Radio 4 Moral Maze (Levitas, Perrier) and the BBC One Show (Naughton), as well as having their research discussed in the print media e.g. Paired Peers in the *Independent*, *Telegraph*, *Huffington Post*.

School-level support for staff: The School has created the position of Impact Director (ID) and we ensure that the academic in this role is senior, knowledgeable and committed; the current ID runs an international ESRC-funded knowledge co-production project. The School has mechanisms and resources to facilitate impact (resources posted online to the university's intranet; individual support and annual impact training for academic staff and PGRs; annual review of the

Impact template (REF3a)

impact of all staff; and review by the ID of all Pathways to Impact of funding applications).

Use of wider university resources: The University has identified impact as a key priority in its *Impact Action Plan 2011-15*. It incentivises impact activities with its Impact Development Fund (IDF) of up to £15,000 and the Vice Chancellor's Impact Award. These signal that impact will be valued, supported and rewarded. We use University resources as a springboard to secure much larger external resources for impact. The University, with the University of the West of England, has set up the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement. The University's own Centre for Public Engagement provides advice, including on pathways to impact. The University's Research and Enterprise Development (RED) team consists of more than 80 staff who help us develop and sustain research and impact. They provide vital online materials and are friendly, accessible and familiar. They visit us on site and provide frequent and extensive advice by phone and email. The University Research Institutes (Cabot and Elizabeth Blackwell) and the University's Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) provide seed funding. Successive heads of School from Sociology have played impact leadership roles in the University (McLennan as IAS Director 2008-11; Osborne on the Steering Group of the Cabot Institute on living with environmental uncertainty 2011-present). The University's PolicyBristol unit works to increase the impact of Faculty of Social Sciences and Law (FSSL) research and regularly features our work (e.g. Modood, Naughton).

c. Strategy and plans Our core goal for 2014-20 is to increase the breadth of impact generated across our research. The success of these measures will be assessed and developed through an annual review of the School's *Impact Strategy*.

Embedding impact: Both individual and School level initiatives will ensure impact is not only taken seriously as an important additional aspect of sociological research but becomes commonplace across the entire discipline. Existing annual research reviews with staff will identify impact potential and develop individually-tailored plans for its realisation; since September 2013 all staff have been required to input into the university's research information system their ongoing records of impact. As standard practice staff and PGRs will be expected to produce a briefing paper and social media post in relation to each of their academic publications. In 2014 the School will integrate impact into its quantitative workload equalisation model and impact achievements will be valued for academic promotion. During 2014 the School will institute comprehensive online and social media sharing facilities across its website in order to give a higher profile to our research findings and their political and policy implications.

Supporting impact: Within the School setting research groups and individuals with the highest level of engagement in impact activities will be tasked with providing support and knowledge and these will be integrated into our existing mentoring procedures. Expertise from the University's Centre for Public Engagement and RED team will provide information on pathways to impact and especially the opportunities offered through interdisciplinary collaboration. More specifically, training will be provided on developing and managing face to face and online collaboration with users using cutting edge methodologies, such as Teamwin (www.teamwin.com). Financial support for new impact initiatives is also available. Since September 2013 all staff have been allocated £1,000 annual research support including for impact activities. We will also make use of funds from the University's £100k ESRC Transformative Research fund, and from the £894k ESRC Impact Acceleration Account anticipated to be available within the University for social science research.

d. Relationship to case studies The variety, reach and significance of the impact described in the case studies (on social exclusion and poverty, accommodation of Muslims and wrongful imprisonment) reflect the diversity of Sociology at Bristol. They showcase our open, pluralistic and inclusive approach to developing impact (section a) that also informs our strategy and plans (section c). We prioritise allocating impact support to areas with evident impact potential, while recognising that valuable impact contributions originate from both conceptual and applied research. The case studies indicate the vitality and success of the five interlinked pathways to impact (section b) established over the current REF period to promote impact in a coherent way. Collectively, the impact cases demonstrate the very high value that we have always placed on research impact even before the existence of the REF, the support we offer to staff to achieve excellent research with high impact and our commitment to the strategic development of research impact in the future.