

Institution:	GOLDSMITHS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
Unit of Assessment:	21 Politics and International Studies
Title of case study:	Understanding choice and markets in public services
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)	

One strand of Griffiths' academic work has looked at public service reform. This research has influenced a variety of think tank publications examining reform strategies in health, education and social care. In particular, it has shaped debates on citizenship, choice in public services, the 'coproduction' of services between citizen and state, and greater professional autonomy. Both the New Labour Government and the Coalition have moved policy in this direction. Griffiths' contributions have been significant enough to be discussed by Cabinet Ministers and senior opposition politicians, special advisers, trade union groups and in local government. His latest edited book in this area is currently the subject of an ongoing series of [debates](#) between academics and policymakers, including government ministers, hosted by the Royal Society and Arts and sponsored by the ESRC.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)
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Griffiths has been employed in Goldsmiths' Politics Department since being appointed as a lecturer in 2008, and has divided his time between academia and public policy. He was formerly Senior Policy Advisor at the British Academy (the UK's national body for the humanities and social sciences) where he was involved in setting up their Policy Centre, and Senior Research Fellow at the Social Market Foundation where he headed the organisation's work on public service reform. Before that he worked as a parliamentary researcher, taught at the London School of Economics and worked for the sociologist, Anthony Giddens. As well as publishing academically on politics and public policy, he has also written for newspapers such as *The Independent*, *Times* and *The Guardian*.

His academic work on public service reform has been put forward in several publications. An overview of his research in this area is set out in the opening chapter of a collection he has recently edited on these questions.^[1] Here he introduced some of the long term challenges facing those reforming public services today, including: better understanding the relationship between citizen and state; the relationship between different sectors and providers; the long-term challenges facing public services in coming years (financial, demographic, life-style related and others). He has been invited to the Cabinet Office to discuss this publication in more detail in late November 2013.

Griffiths has also explored the policies of recent governments when it comes to markets and public services; this research is set out in a range of publications. His work on Labour's public service reform agenda was articulated in a 2009 article^[2] in the influential journal *Policy Studies*, describing and explaining changes in the public services under the Blair and Brown governments. It examined the attempt to combine significant marketisation of public services with increases in public spending and mechanisms to ensure fairness of provision for all citizens.

Several chapters and articles Griffiths published between 2009 and 2011 concentrated on the policies of the Conservative-led coalition:

- *'Cameron's Conservatives and Public Service Reform'* (2009),^[5] written before the party was elected in 2010, provided an overview of the direction that a Cameron-led government was likely to take on public services once in office through an analysis of their policy proposals.
- *'The retreat of the state: Conservative 'modernisation' and the public services'* (2011)^[3] examined the Coalition's public service reform programme and its scepticism about traditional or state-led methods of provision.
- *'The Con/Lib Agenda for Education: Learning the Hard Way?'* (2011)^[4] examined Coalition policy on education, including the introduction of market-mechanisms to incentivise schools to improve (such as the pupil premium) and the creation of a marketised system in Higher Education.

Taken together, these contributions sought to explain the choices made by the Coalition in reforming public services, and examined some of the tensions that the government has faced in dealing with

Impact case study (REF3b): GOLDSMITHS - Griffiths

competing priorities. In particular, Griffiths' work looked at the use of market mechanisms to provide public services and increase citizen choice, setting these changes against the changing economic context; he also examined the ideological assumptions inherent in recent accounts of public service reform and provision. This has been complemented by his wider analysis of changes within contemporary Conservatism and the nature of the Coalition government, as described in a forthcoming article [*"What was 'progressive' In Progressive Conservatism?"*] forthcoming in *Political Studies Review* (12(1), Jan 2014).

Griffiths has published a number of other articles on the relationship between market and state in modern social democracy.^[6,7,8,9] Collectively this body of publications describes extensive underpinning research which constitutes a solid foundation for the normative work described in the following section that Griffiths has carried out on public service reform with various bodies, and which has had an impact on their thinking in this area.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Evidence for the quality of the research: Many of the articles listed below have been published in highly competitive and rigorously peer-reviewed journals (e.g. refs 2, 6 in particular).

1. Griffiths S. and Kippin H (2013) 'Public Services: a new reform agenda. In, Simon Griffiths, Henry Kippin and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Public Services: A New Agenda* (Bloomsbury Academic). Available from Goldsmiths Research Office on request.
2. Griffiths, S (2009) 'The Public Services under Gordon Brown', *Policy Studies*, 30(1). DOI: 10.1080/01442870802576207. [REF output – available in REF2b]
3. Griffiths S (2011) 'The retreat of the state: Conservative "modernisation" and the public services', *Public Policy Research* (PPR), 18(1) DOI: 10.1111/j.1744-540X.2011.00637.x
4. Griffiths S (2011) 'The Con/Lib Agenda for Education: Learning the Hard Way?' in Simon Lee and Matt Beech (ed.), *The Cameron-Clegg Government: Coalition Politics in an Age of Austerity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).). Available from Goldsmiths Research Office on request.
5. Griffiths S (2009) 'Cameron's Conservatives and Public Service Reform', Matt Beech and Simon Lee (eds.), *The Conservatives under David Cameron: Built to Last?*, (Palgrave Macmillan), 2009.). Available from Goldsmiths Research Office on request.
6. Griffiths S (2011) 'Pluralism, neo-liberalism and the 'all-knowing' state', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 16/3. DOI: 10.1080/13569317.2011.607297 [REF output – available in REF2b]
7. Griffiths S (2009) New Labour, New Liberalism and Revisionism's Second Wave. In Simon Griffiths and Kevin Hickson (eds.) *British Political Parties and Ideology After New Labour*. Palgrave Macmillan.). Available from Goldsmiths Research Office on request.
8. Griffiths S (2007) "Comrade Hayek"? Andrew Gamble and the new right. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 12(2). DOI: 10.1080/13569310701285032
9. Griffiths S (2006) Market Socialism in Retrospect. *Contemporary Politics*, 12(1). DOI: 10.1080/13569770600704930

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The impact of Griffiths' research is found in current policies. It has fed into think tank reports and policy discussions, and helped set the agenda for policymakers. The main impact was on individuals and groups associated with the Labour Government of 1997-2010. These reports express in normative terms, both the implications of his evaluation of the main political parties' views of public service reform set out above and try to answer questions set out in the work on the relation between markets and the state in contemporary social democracy. This normative work on public policy was part of an important debate in policy circles around the role of choice in public service reform, the autonomy of professional groups, the co-production of services between citizens and the state, and

Impact case study (REF3b): GOLDSMITHS - Griffiths

the use of behavioural change (or 'nudge') theory to improve outcomes for citizens in their use of public services.

Griffiths has given many invited presentations in this area to various non-academic and policy audiences, which have included the Cabinet Office and major think tanks, and has written about the policy-implications of his research in a wide variety of non-academic publications. Three reports in particular grew directly out of his research and had policy impacts:

1. The 2009 report *Assertive Citizens: New Relations in the Public Services*,^[1] published by The Social Market Foundation, and co-authored by Griffiths with Beth Foley and Jessica Prendergast, was influential. It examined the rise of the 'assertive citizen' and argued that this change creates profound challenges for public services, particularly for the relationships between users and providers. The report looked at how the public services, and those who work in them, can adapt to fit these changing expectations. The report's recommendations focused on the appropriate direction of choice-based reforms; the future role of professionals; and the concept of co-production, which seeks to promote greater cooperation between citizens and professionals in the production of public services. It argued that strengthening the personal relationships between professionals and service users is vital to meeting the challenges posed by assertive citizenship.

The report was launched at a Price Waterhouse Cooper-sponsored event attended by David Willetts (now Minister of State for Universities and Science) and Julian Le Grand (Tony Blair's special advisor on health policy). It generated significant media attention for its claim that we are now more 'assertive' in our dealings with public bodies. In particular, it led to *op ed* pieces in *The Times* and an extended interview with Griffiths in *Community Care* magazine. It has been widely cited since in think tank publications – for example, in work by the Royal Society for the Arts 2020 Public Services Trust, the Institute of Public Policy Research, Involve, and the Health Foundation. It was also cited in PriceWaterhouse Cooper's recommendations for reform of Australian government administration in 2009. All these pieces are available electronically.^[1a]

Several of the ideas expressed in the report (professional autonomy, nuanced choice in public service provision; and coproduction between citizen and producer) influenced policy thinking at that period. The report was discussed at steering group meetings during its preparation by, amongst others, John Dunford (Association of School and college Leaders); Karen Reay (Unite-Amicus); Baroness Pauline Perry (Conservatives' Public Service improvement Group); David Walker (formerly of Public Magazine); Martin Ward (of the Association of School and college Leaders) and Tony Wright (former Labour MP), as well as being circulated to ministers in government. The report also led to an invitation to talk at several policy organisations, including trade unions, think tanks and a keynote address at the Independent Living Organisation.^[1b]

2. A 2010 report *Collective co-production: working together to improve public services*^[2] was co-authored by Griffiths and Foley, and commissioned by Research Councils UK and the Local Authority Research Council Initiative (which was established in 1997 to bring Local Authorities and the Research Councils closer together, under the tagline 'Excellence with Impact'). This report grew out of the success of *Assertive Citizens*, which argued that individual citizens and the state must work better to share responsibility for health, educational and other outcomes.

Collective co-production was thus written to advise local councils on this new area of policy. It examined ways in which citizens could work collectively with the state to ensure better outcomes, and sought to share best practices adopted by local councils for various forms of collective co-production, including time banks, participatory budgeting, and peer support groups. It also helped councils to understand this policy term: thus the report was cited as evidence by the Scottish Government's 'Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services.'^[2a]

3. Finally *Engaging Behaviour* (2010),^[3] co-authored by Griffiths and Foley and published by the Department for Communities and Local Government [DCLG] and The Social Market Foundation, dealt with behavioural change and civic engagement. It was commissioned by DCLG on the basis of Griffiths' earlier research to advise Ministers on new techniques in public policy, and was written in close collaboration with civil servants in the department. It examined the way in which the

Impact case study (REF3b): GOLDSMITHS - Griffiths

insights of behavioural change theory could promote citizen involvement in public services and elsewhere. It led to Griffiths giving evidence on behavioural change to the House of Lords Science & Technology Committee in May 2010.

Many of these ideas have been brought together in an edited collection on public services,^[1] which has generated significant [debate](#) and attracted funding from the ESRC, who supported four events at the Royal Society of Arts, held in conjunction with the 2020 Public Services Hub and the Collaborate Institute, to discuss questions raised by the book. The debates were attended by ministers and senior policy makers.

In summary, this work, and the associated media articles and presentations, have contributed to the debate on how to create more 'citizen-focused' public services and have had an impact on government's thinking about public service provision. They have fed into discussions with senior policymakers; have provided a framework for some of policies pursued by government in this area in recent years; and have stimulated and informed on-going debates and discussions about the reform of public services in the twenty-first century.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

All of these are available in hard copy on request from Goldsmiths' Research Office.

Reports:

- 1) Griffiths S, Foley B, Prendergrast, J (2009) [Assertive Citizens: New Relations in the Public Services](#). The Social Market Foundation.
 - a) Media articles/interviews: [The Times](#); [Community Care](#) interview ; Royal Society for the Arts [2020 Public Services Trust](#); [Institute of Public Policy Research](#); [Involve](#); [Health Foundation](#); [PriceWaterhouseCooper](#)
 - b) [Keynote address](#) to the Independent Living Organisation
- 2) Griffiths S, Foley B (2010) [Collective co-production: working together to improve public services](#). Written for Research Councils UK and Local Authority Research Council Initiative,
 - a) Citation in Scottish Government report: [here](#)
- 3) Foley B, Griffiths S (2010) [Engaging Behaviour](#). CLG/The Social Market Foundation):

Individuals who are willing to be contacted for corroboration of the impact described here include those listed below [*details given in the separate REF fields*]:

- a. Partner, PriceWaterhouse Coopers
- b. Director, Collaborate Institute
- c. Director, Social Market Foundation
- d. Former Director, Social Market Foundation
- e. Special Adviser to Vince Cable, Business Secretary