

<p>Institution: University of Manchester</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 29 (English Language and Literature)</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>English, American Studies and Creative Writing's strength lies in our ability to produce research exploring and challenging assumptions about diversity from a cultural, critical, historical and creative perspective. A shared commitment to social change through the communication of original research beyond academia lies at the centre of our impact activities and is supported by the University's long-term commitment to public engagement and social responsibility. Quinn, whose research is at the centre of one of our case studies, was the recipient in 2011 of the Manchester Beacon Certificate for Public Engagement, a programme that preceded the current identification of Social Responsibility as one of the three core goals in our Strategic Vision 2020.</p> <p>EAC's aims have been to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop public engagement activities aimed at promoting the study of fiction, poetry, and film and at breaking down the barrier between academia and the city, with a view to creating cultural capital and expanding and enriching lives and sensibilities; • increase the public understanding of complex, life-changing cultural issues, illuminating and challenging cultural values and social assumptions; • advise museum curators and heritage organisations in order to enhance public knowledge and understanding while contributing to local creative economies. <p>Our main beneficiaries and audiences are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the wider public interested in literature, history, visual studies and music; • campaigning groups, especially groups working on issues of gender and sexuality; • schools; • museums, libraries and heritage organisations.
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Three key factors have shaped our approach to impact:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Relation between research excellence and impact</u>. All our impact activities derive from our original research, whether in terms of award-winning novels (Amis; Tóibín; Winterson), short stories (Hyland) or poetry collections (Groarke; McAuliffe), monographs (Bernau; Doan; Owen-Crocker; Pearl; Quinn; Sanders; Stacey), articles (Mitchell; Wolff), or archival discoveries (Mitchell; Sanders). 2. <u>Financial and professional support to develop impact</u>. Our impact case studies have been a direct result of investment in research by the University and UoA. In 2005 Quinn was granted £5k in Faculty Research Support Fund to research black youth culture and in 2011 awarded a Beacon Certificate for Public Engagement recognizing her teaching sessions on rap, violence, and inequality at Chorlton High School, Manchester (2010-2011). Our UoA also supported through peer-reviewing and mentoring Sanders' successful AHRC application and subsequent research leave to complete the monograph (2009) at the core of his impact case study, and granted him another period of leave, during which he identified the Chartist Hymn Book, leading to its digitisation. Building on its long tradition of excellence in research on the Anglo-Saxon period and on active divisional support, Owen-Crocker made a successful grant application based on producing an output with an impact component and received in 2006 a collaborative AHRC award to the value of £552k (total value £762k), which led to further impact on the heritage industry, and produced an open access database (see case study). 3. <u>Professional recognition of impact activities</u>. The University of Manchester recognises knowledge and technology transfer activity as one of four key criteria for promotion (along with research, teaching and service/leadership). Recent promotions to Senior Lecturer were achieved in part on the basis of impact (Sanders, Quinn, Mitchell). <p>These factors have led to activities that have impacted outside academia through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. public engagement aimed at promoting the knowledge and appreciation of literature while contributing to the creative economy of the North West (examples i and ii, below); B. enhancing public understanding by challenging and explaining cultural values and assumptions (example iii); C. advising and contributing to local creative economies while increasing knowledge and understanding (case studies 'Medieval Dress' and 'Poetry and Politics').

A) Public engagement

We have established Centres as our main vehicles for increasing public engagement:

i) The Centre for New Writing was founded by **McAuliffe** and **McGuire** in 2007 after a successful bid for Presidential and Faculty of Humanities funding totalling £1.2 million over 5 years. The Centre was designed to maximise the impact of the appointment of an iconic chair in creative writing (Martin **Amis** [2007–2010]; Colm **Tóibín** [2011–12]; and Jeanette **Winterson** [2012–2014]) and to create partnerships with the University's main cultural assets (Martin Harris Centre, John Rylands Library, Whitworth Art Gallery, and Manchester Museum) and with local and national literary organisations such as The Manchester Literature Festival, Carcanet Press, Comma Press, the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, Arvon, The Poetry School, International PEN, NAWA and Literature Northwest, each of which has contributed to partnership events. In line with this remit, we have developed four yearly events featuring our staff in conversation with invited guests. Setting the agenda for cultural debates, these events have drawn mixed audiences ranging from 130 to 349. The CNW has also developed 'Literature Live', bringing 10 to 15 major poets and writers to Manchester every year to read from and discuss their work. All public events are free to PGT and PGR students, costing £4-15 to the general public. The Faculty Media Office, which reports on the public impact of academic work in the Faculty, estimates that a significant story about the Centre and its staff has been reported in the national press every month since the Centre's inception. The CNW also engages with a non-academic public through its UK's leading online literary journal *The Manchester Review*, which has published work by internationally known writers including Paul Muldoon, Ali Smith, and John Banville alongside emerging talents. Since the move to its new site on November 9, 2012 (issue 9), *TMR* has had 31,649 views, with 1,627 readers on a single day when issue 10 went live (May 2, 2013).

One of the CNW's main partners, the Manchester Literature Festival, has had an increasing cultural and economic impact on the city since its launch in 2008. This has been facilitated by, among others, **de Groot**, an Early Modern scholar and an expert on media uses of history, who, with the support of the Clore Duffield Foundation Cultural Leadership Programme (2009), has been Chair of the Board of Trustees of the MLF since 2008. MLF's audience has grown from 3,587 in 2008 to 8,062 in 2012; it has generated a turnover of £c.140k and raised, over the past 5 years, a total of £81k in cash sponsorship, to which **de Groot** contributed by securing a major sponsorship by HSBC (£90k over three years, currently in its second year).

ii) The Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in the Arts and Languages

Established in 2005 and directed by Professors Frank Mort (History, 2005-8), Janet **Wolff** (2008-2010) and Jackie **Stacey** (2010-present), CIDRAL places public engagement projects at the core of its mission. The Mary Kelly Symposium (2011), in conjunction with her exhibition at the Whitworth Gallery, for instance, drew 200 external participants (ticket prices at £25/£12; overall audience figures for the exhibition between Feb 19 and June 12, 2011: 52,863) and was tied to **Wolff's** research on the author, now published in the catalogue (2011). A direct link also ties **Stacey's** monograph to the showing of the film *Genetic Admiration* (dir. Frances Leeming) on a DVD loop for two weeks at the Whitworth Gallery. Between March 14-29, 2009, it drew an audience of 8,277 and led to the 'Animation and Automation' conference, which attracted a mixed audience of practitioners and academics (60) and resulted in the 2012 special issue of *Body and Society* co-edited by **Stacey** and Suchman.

B) Illuminate and Challenge Cultural Values and Social Assumptions

Active use of strong institutional support for the promotion of impact can be observed in the activities of our

iii) Centre for the Study of Sexuality and Culture. **Alderson** and **Doan** launched the Centre 2003 as the first research facility in the UK to focus exclusively on the interrelationships of sexuality, gender, and culture. Now, it has become an internationally recognised centre that demonstrates a commitment to social change through an increase in the public understanding of complex and yet life-changing issues, illuminating and challenging cultural values and social assumptions.

Pearl, AIDS activist and author of the monograph *Aids Literature* (2013), contributed to the Lesbian and Gay Foundation's event on Women and Activism (2012) as part of the Manchester Pride's fringe festival, which led to an invitation to run in 2013 a regular Reading Group of between 10 and 20 non-academic participants, who write: 'it was a powerful reminder of how emotive literature can be [...] as a result of the group I have started to read more, and I have

benefited from it' (FS, 2013), and 'attending the group has helped me to identify with the broader LGBT community and parts of its literary history, to better perceive my gay identity, and to develop a more solid sense of belonging' (DF, 2013). In collaboration with 'Queer Up North Festival' and building on original archival research, **Mitchell** and **Duncker** discussed the history of lesbian pulp fiction in Tea Cup Café (2008) in front of a non-academic audience of 50 (£5) and **Doan**'s conversation with writer Diana Souhami (Abode Hotel, 2008) on modernist women authors drew an audience of 110. As part of the annual LGBT History Month activities, Lancashire Archives invited **Mitchell** to discuss 'Shameful Histories and Pulp Pleasures' to an audience of over 50 people (mostly aged 50+). **Mitchell** also gave a keynote lecture on 'Gender, Sexuality and the Contemporary Novel' at the Prince's Teaching Institute workshop for teachers, People's History Museum (June 2012). **Bernau** and **Mitchell** also discussed their research on 'Female Sexuality / Feminist Pornography' at Ladyfest, The Zion Centre, (2008). **Bernau**'s cultural history of virginity (Granta, 2008; translated into German and Japanese) led to an invitation at the non-academic international conference 'Strengthen Girls' Rights Worldwide', organised by German Women's Rights organization Terre des Femmes, which counted 350 activist and healthworker delegates (Berlin, 2011).

c. Strategy and plans

We have made active use of institutional support for the promotion of impact via the activities of our three key Research Centres, all of which have a strong commitment to public engagement and social change. Our strategy for the future is articulated into three main points:

- 1) A research strategy built upon areas of specialisation with high impact potential. The Centre for New Writing's new business plan for strategic investment will further develop impact activities: our iconic professor will continue to organize public events in collaboration with outside venues, especially HOME; our new undergraduate 'English Literature with Creative Writing' BA programme will incorporate a partnership with the Manchester Literature Festival, whose events our students will blog about and review; and we are currently developing a new MA in screenwriting aimed at using original research (**Winterson**) to generate further collaborations between CNW and leading film and TV production companies in the North West.
- 2) Further developing the interaction with partner organizations. We are making use of the School's formalization of 'External Relations' roles and of the possibility to bid for Faculty funds to develop and co-ordinate further the public engagement activities of the Centre for the Study of Sexuality and Culture. To this end, a successful bid (**Doan**; £3k) will be used to develop a research agenda that includes impact. Current bids by **Harte**, **Stacey**, **Brown**, and **Knigh** aim to produce research impact in the future through new partnerships with theatre companies (Green Shoots Productions), local cultural institutions (HOME; Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Centre) and museums (Slavery Museum, Liverpool; People's History Museum).
- 3) Recognising impact in career development. Building on the recently established MSc Medical Humanities Degree Programme (CNW and Manchester Medical School), we intend to draw out and promote the impact of three current exploratory research projects on the medical humanities into a concerted impact strategy. These are: **Gallagher**'s cultural history of sexually transmitted diseases, for which she received a 2013 Wellcome Trust small grant (£3k), currently under consideration with the AHRC in its expanded version; **Baker**'s project on disability in the Early Modern Period, now submitted to both AHRC and Wellcome Trust; and science fiction writer **Ryman**'s business plan to establish BASE (British Arts and Science Exchange), following his work on the 'Putting the Science in Fiction' event (2012; 120 mixed-audience participants).

d. Relationship to case studies

All case studies derive from investment on the part of the UoA and Faculty and show the benefits of the recognition of impact in its promotions criteria and organisation. 'Poetry and Politics' and 'Rap Lyrics' are the result of School investment in research; 'How to Write Illness' derives from Faculty's investment in the outward-facing activities of the CNW. Our case studies demonstrate the potential of English, both in its creative and critical components, to impact on the life of the city, the region, and the nation: 'Poetry and Politics', and 'Medieval Dress' demonstrate how scholarly expertise in local history feeds into the heritage economy; 'How to Write Illness' shows how writing shapes debates on life-changing medical conditions; 'Rap Lyrics' indicates how research impacts on judiciary decisions which affect people's lives.