

## Impact template (REF3a)

<b>Institution:</b> Liverpool John Moores
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 29
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>Underpinned by LJMU's commitment in the Strategic Plan to its role as a civic university, impact activities in English focus on everyday lives past and present, giving people an enabling awareness of their surrounding cultures and environments. Through public engagement and knowledge exchange English contributes to the retrieval of neglected or buried cultural histories, particularly in Liverpool and Merseyside, in order to reassess practices taken for granted, to catalyse community change and to inform policy-making at local and national levels. Our impact agenda concentrates on three overlapping areas: cultural heritage (the Shakespeare North project/community theatre archiving), projects fostering social inclusion (prison writing, the Archive of Working-Class Writing), and individual scholars translating their scholarly interest in overlooked aspects of everyday life and popular culture into public, multimedia forms (Moran, Smyth).</p>
<p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>Working with stakeholders in local government, local and national cultural institutions and the media, the unit communicates its research-informed understanding of the local, the everyday and social exclusion to a wide range of audiences. At the heart of our cultural heritage work is our longstanding involvement in the ongoing Shakespeare North/Prescot Playhouse project (which celebrates early regional drama and connections between Shakespeare and the Knowsley-based Earls' of Derby troupes). The project aims to build a historic theatre and international postgraduate college in Prescot (validated by LJMU). Teaching Shakespearean theatre technique in an economically depressed area, the theatre and college will establish Prescot and the borough as a cultural hub with an international festival site linked to the RSC, Stratford-upon-Avon and Shakespeare's Globe, London, thereby stimulating economic, educational and cultural regeneration. As part of a continuing programme of community engagement, Graham has been invited to speak to groups, such as Warrington Literary and Philosophical Society, on the dramatic and cultural history of the region; doctoral researcher Tyler has given 43 talks to community groups on Prescot's Elizabethan history; Knowsley Hall hosted the Shakespeare Schools Festival in 2012; and there are permanent exhibitions in the town centre and KMBC's combined Museum/One-Stop Shop/Library (footfall: 4000 a month) celebrating the town's dramatic heritage. Graham has collaborated with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council since 2004 and as a member of the Prescot Regeneration Group helped secure the £1.85m Heritage Lottery-funded Townscape Heritage Initiative. She is board member of this Partnership which, with additional funding from KMBC, will deliver £3.2m heritage-based building restoration, activity and training in Prescot (<a href="http://www.prescotthi.org.uk/">www.prescotthi.org.uk/</a>). Our commitment to maintaining and illuminating the history of the region's theatre for a broad audience is also evident in our curating of community theatre archives. Building on the successful, large-grant AHRB-funded Everyman Archive Project, which created a publicly available digital database hosted by LJMU, and drawing on her regional theatre research (e.g. <i>Liverpool Playhouse: A Theatre and its City</i> (ed. 2011)), Merkin spoke at Liverpool's Unity Theatre 30th anniversary (2010) and Liverpool Playhouse centenary (2011) events. She devised and directed <i>Everyman for Themselves</i>, a staged musical history of Liverpool's Everyman Theatre at the city's Kazimier club (2012).</p> <p>Our commitment to the social inclusion of culturally disadvantaged groups is embodied in the prison-writing project (case study) and the Archive of Working-Class Writing, an evolving collaboration to bring unpublished working-class writing online. Through an innovative blend of research and teaching, Rogers developed the module, Writing Lives, to create a prototype online resource now publicly accessible and inviting public contribution (<a href="http://www.writinglives.org">www.writinglives.org</a>; also publicised through its Twitter feed @Writing_Lives). Underpinning research on prisoner experiences (Free to Write anthology: case study) has also reached a wider audience through digital media including: Crime In the Community blog post (Rogers, 29.4.13); <i>Journal of Victorian Culture Online</i> (Alker, 22.2.13); Creer: <a href="http://adamcreed.co.uk/#Prison">http://adamcreed.co.uk/#Prison</a>; @VictorianCrime Twitter feed (Alker, 2010-: 1900+ followers). From May 2013 doctoral student Alker has been supported by LJMU funding to work in partnership with St George's Hall, Liverpool to create learning resources on juvenile and female offenders. Our continuing relationship with St George's Hall led</p>

to our collaboration with them on a Heritage Lottery Funding bid for a Justice Museum (2013) and their co-hosting the launch of the Free to Write anthology (2013).

Through our support, the work of individual researchers on disregarded cultural histories has reached national and international audiences. Moran's role as public intellectual researching everyday cultures (case study) highlights this commitment. Smyth has also communicated his research on non-mainstream forms of popular culture through a variety of platforms, most notably in *The Brother*, a two-man play he adapted from the work of Flann O'Brien and which he performed in, bringing together his interests in a neglected strand of Joycean modernism and in pedagogy as performative practice. *The Brother* was performed at the International Centenary Flann O'Brien Conference (University of Vienna, July 2011) and has since been performed in Liverpool (three times), Trieste (May 2012), the Edinburgh Fringe (six times, August 2012) and at King's College, University of Aberdeen (May 2013), to a combined audience of 1110. Smyth participated in a BBC Radio 4 documentary, *The Man with Many Names*, on O'Brien's life and work (4.10.11) and frequently appears on radio and TV (e.g. *Dialogues*, RTÉ Radio 1 arts show, 15.4.10; the 4-part *Hitting Home: 50 Years of the Irish Charts*, RTÉ Radio 1, December 2012).

Many of our impact activities are also underpinned by a commitment to Liverpool and Merseyside. Working as musician and cultural critic, Smyth's work on sea shanties, building on his research on music, literature and identity, explored a form of music closely identified with Liverpool's history. In collaboration with local musicians, he has performed sea shanties in locations attracting very different audiences: Liverpool clubs, RNLI events, local schools and the Mersey River festival hosted by the Maritime Museum (9.6.13). His sea-shanty CDs *Roll & Go: Songs of Liverpool and the Sea* (2009) and *Across the Western Ocean* (2011) were showcased in three one-hour episodes of BBC Radio Merseyside's *Folkscene* (15.9.11/27.9.12/11.10.12), with an estimated audience of 16,000 per episode. Proceeds from *Across the Western Ocean* raised over £2000 for Hoylake RNLI. Through these diverse activities, a broad audience has participated in and developed a fresh understanding of Liverpool's maritime culture. Smyth's CD *James Joyce's Chamber Music*, based on his musical settings of Joyce's 1907 lyric suite, was launched at a concert in the Bluecoat Arts Centre (14.10.12) as part of the Liverpool Irish Festival, and he performed songs from the album at the re-opening of Liverpool Central Library (16-17.5.13). He also curated three Irish film series at Liverpool's FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology) centre as part of the Liverpool Irish Festival in 2011, 2012 and 2013. The unit has a longstanding relationship with Liverpool's Writing on the Wall festival ([writingonthewall.org.uk/](http://writingonthewall.org.uk/)), initiated through LJMU, which promotes excluded or marginalised areas of literary and cultural production to audiences of 3000+ each year; Friel, MacLennan and Stubbersfield all participated in recent WOW events.

Through participating in the HEFCE Impact Pilot (2010), the UoA identified areas in which research had already produced significant public impact, and concentrated impact strategy on projects which led to civic engagement and social transformation. The Faculty Research Committee reviews all requests for funding for impact activities against our objectives: through appropriate use of university funding and the generation of external income, we look to support both projects and individual scholarship with sabbatical leave and research assistance. With our prison-writing project, initially funded by the Paul Hamlyn foundation (£55K; 2004-), we invested in staff (Creer) and research assistance (Priest) to develop the Free to Write anthology. Graham received funded sabbatical leave to pursue the Prescott Project, working with bursary-funded doctoral student Tyler, the project having received £250K development funding from the Big Lottery in 2006-7. Graham's work on community, memory and heritage led to the public event, financially supported by LJMU and run in conjunction with English Heritage, 'William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle: Courtier, Horseman, Patriarch and Patron' (April 2012, c. 2000 visitors), which combined talks by academics with equestrian and other reconstruction activities. The Archive of Working-Class Writing was given infrastructural support through £50K RCIF funding for the development of software. Smyth received funding from Culture Ireland and the European Federation for Associations and Centres of Irish Studies to perform *James Joyce's Chamber Music* to c. 1500 people at 10 different venues in Belgium, Netherlands, France, Iceland, England and Italy (March 2013). His Edinburgh Fringe run of *The Brother* was supported by LJMU. Merkin has been awarded £75K Arts Council funding for an autumn 2013 tour of UK railway stations with her site-specific performance, *Suitcase*, developed to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the arrival of the Kindertransport at London's Liverpool Street Station.

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Following the Impact Pilot, the unit contributed to university-wide training and represented LJMU in its research impacts brochure. Graham and Muller have been trained as LJMU Public Engagement Ambassadors; Muller was awarded an LJMU ECR fellowship in 2013 to work with a mentor (Professor Maggie O'Neill, University of Durham) to develop publicly engaged research projects. Senior UoA staff, such as Moran and Smyth, mentor ECRs and junior staff in impact activities and run impact workshops. The UoA's new Visiting Research Fellow, Lynsey Hanley (appointed July 2013), will contribute, through seminars and one-to-one discussions, to our understanding of impact. A *Guardian* columnist, frequent broadcaster and author of *Estates: An Intimate History* (Granta 2007), Hanley engages with existing staff interests in class and cultural literacy while serving as a model for research-informed, publicly accessible work. Impact strategies are embedded in regular research review meetings, grant training workshops and were the subject of a UoA workshop (January 2013). They inform performance review and are part of the conferment criteria for Professors and Readers. Moran's promotion to Professor (2012) recognised the impact of his research.

**c. Strategy and plans**

Our impact strategy, shaped at UoA, School and University level, is to enhance staff understanding of impact by: continuing our programme of training in public engagement through deployment of internal and external expertise; fostering links with academic and community partners; and formally recognising and rewarding public engagement. Our agenda for the next cycle comprises four main strands:

1. To continue to make a scholarly contribution to regional cultural life by extending our programme of collaboration with local cultural institutions. The Shakespeare North Project has recently acquired a Grade II listed building in Prescott which will function as a hub for local activities. Also in the near future, Smyth and Walchester are each curating film series with FACT; Smyth's double bill of *The Brother* and his new play, *Will the Real Flann O'Brien ...?*, already performed at Liverpool Irish Festival (October 2013), will be touring Britain and Europe in 2014; Ferrebe has planned workshops with the Tate ('Art Turning Left' exhibition, 2013-14) and Walker Art Galleries; Ferrebe, Moran and Smyth have met with the Programme Director for Bay TV, which holds the local TV franchise for the Liverpool area and will launch in 2014, to develop programmes promoting their research.
2. To sustain investment in the development of archives, held by the University's Special Collections but made widely available through digital access, which will deepen public understanding of the culture and heritage of Liverpool, its region and beyond. We have added to the Everyman Archive by recently acquiring the Unity and Liverpool Lunchtime Theatre archives and Willy Russell's personal archive, the latter being launched with the public event 'An Evening with Willy Russell' (November 2013). We will develop digital access to this new material and carry out underpinning research through a postgraduate studentship (led by Merkin).
3. To continue to recognise the importance of individual scholars as public intellectuals through support of single-authored book projects and their dissemination: e.g. Moran's new project on the cultural history of shyness.
4. To identify and invest QR funding in specific projects as a platform for the targeting of external funding sources. For example, through a combination of internal support and her external HEA teaching grant, Rogers is developing a public blog, 'Blogging Beyond the Classroom', and preparing a large project grant bid (AHRC) with the editors of *The Autobiography of the Working Class: An Annotated, Critical Bibliography* (1984-9) to update and extend the bibliography as a publicly searchable digital database.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The everyday cultures case study highlights our efforts to bring the work of individual scholars to the attention of broader audiences, to foster creative approaches to scholarly writing and dissemination, and to recover marginalised histories of everyday life.

The prison-writing case study reflects our commitment to social inclusion by working with inmates, ex-offenders and prison education and probation services to give individuals within the penal system a voice and address recidivism rates.