

<p>Institution: Newman University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 26 – Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The main non-academic audiences and user groups of the unit's research over the 2008-13 period have been professional athletes, coaches, sports clubs / teams, sports organisations and officials, teachers, parents, health-care professionals (especially those working in schools), and local authorities. Furthermore, policy makers for education, and policy makers involved with the organisation of sport, agencies delivering sport in future host countries, and people working with sports for which there is a major sports event being hosted in their country/region have also been beneficiaries of our research.</p> <p>The principal types of impact relevant to our research have been concerned to raise, through empirical evidence, awareness in a range of applied settings, including: alternative approaches to training load monitoring; the consistency of the Thai system of holistically judging Muay Thai fights in comparison with scoring principles in the West; the expectations and experiences of those working/volunteering in sport in Birmingham during 2012 and 2013 in order to understand their perceptions about any influences of the Olympics on their work; the physical activity, health and well-being of young people. As a direct outcome we have been influential in: changing practice for specific sporting groups (including a cessation of certain practices shown to be less effective, for example, the superiority of individualised training load monitoring method over existing methods of monitoring internal training load and exercise dose in intermittent sports); in changing professional standards, guidelines and training for sportspeople, officials, coaches and sports promoters; also, in shaping policy made by quasi-government bodies and NGOs. Furthermore, practitioner debate has been stimulated by research findings through the dissemination of research findings to, for example, sports coaches and officials, physical education teachers, and those responsible for delivering major sports events.</p> <p>These principal types of impact are related to the spectrum of research activity in the unit in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have undertaken applied research in different settings, using a diverse range of methods, with a view to improving sports performance and officiating, increasing participation in sport and physical activity, and improving health and fitness. • We have disseminated work to those interested in, or involved with, the organisation of sport, policy makers, and those delivering or working in sports for which there is a major event being hosted in their country/region. • We have shared research findings with schools to enable them to consider how they may increase physical activity levels during the school day to improve health outcomes for the children. • The UOA has been commissioned to undertake evaluations of projects in the UK and South Africa (for example, evaluation of a Stellenbosch University 'Hope Project', to establish the effectiveness of sport in engaging with Township communities between 2010-2012). <p>Through the development of the Sport, Exercise and Health Research Centre we have promoted the work of the UOA to external organisations including: national governing bodies (such as British Canoeing), professional sports clubs (such as Premier League football clubs), and local authorities.</p> <p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The unit's approach to interacting with non-academic users and audiences during the period 2008-2013 has been characterised through the dissemination of peer-reviewed research via the distribution of publications, presentations at open conferences attended by non-academic audiences, including representatives from Sport England and County Sports Partnerships, and the organisation of, or contributions made to, public seminars and workshops in the UK, Europe and</p>

internationally.

Evidence of these relationships / interactions can be demonstrated in a number of ways. Our work has taken place in a variety of applied settings with members of the unit having worked alongside professional athletes, coaches and officials to develop training practices to enhance the performance of individuals and organisations nationally and internationally. Furthermore, UOA members have worked alongside colleagues in local authorities and / or education settings with a view to promoting professional debate surrounding their policies and practices (in relation to those policy and decision makers looking to enhance the health and well-being of various populations in response to various agendas, and including those aiming to deliver impact as a result of the hosting of sports events). Resulting impact can be evidenced by various sporting bodies responsible for the organisation of their sport changing their regulations and / or requiring their officials to be educated on judging practices following courses and seminars.

Staff in the unit have been enabled to achieve impact from their research through the Institutional backing for the establishment of the Sport, Exercise and Health Research Centre, which has served as a hub for much of this activity since 2010. The research centre has proved to be a marketing platform through which links with various sporting organisations have been established. The University's infrastructure has further supported the unit's ambition to maximize the impact of its work. An External Engagement Coordinator has enabled impact by developing collaborations with a variety of significant partners including Aston Villa Football Club and West Bromwich Albion Football Club. Employers have been attracted by Newman University's distinctive ethos for learning and community engagement, and are keen to have conversations that help to build sustainable working relationships, meet their organisations' needs, identify and progress new business opportunities.

The unit delivers coaching and evaluation services. Our approach to impact is aligned with Newman's overall mission, which states that as an institution we seek to make a positive difference to individuals and communities through the contribution of our staff, students and graduates. Over the majority of the census period this has shaped our wider HEI strategy on impact, which in turn has been indebted to the government's November 2009 publication 'Higher Ambitions: The future of universities in the knowledge economy'. As such, our strategic approach has included strengthening our contribution to regional development and community cohesion. Commitment to the world outside our campus is axiomatic for Newman University. In particular, the notion of community is central to this; we embrace wider ideas of fellowship, openness and collaboration alongside more practical and specific responsibilities to our partners, especially with regard to the distinctive role which Newman can play in its locality and region.

c. Strategy and plans

Our plans to support impact from the unit's research in the future include:

- Using the University's and the unit's established school, community and business networks and regional, national and international partnerships to both disseminate examples of how research has positively impacted on policy and practice, and to increase the number of external research partners.
- Discussing with existing and new partners how they would like to see research findings presented, and to review how we disseminate the recommendations or considerations for practice
- Conducting an evaluation of the effectiveness of the research centre, especially since its restructure in 2012, in building collaborative research partnerships that lead to developments in policy and practice.

Our goals for impact from the unit's research in the future are to extend our networks of influence by developing new partnerships with sports clubs, teams, local authorities, education settings (including schools), and sporting bodies / organisations. We also aim to use the research centre to further build upon the collaborative research partnerships among colleagues both within the unit,

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and with other HEIs, by promoting and involving all staff and postgraduate researchers.

The unit is developing its strategy for impact through the construction of strong partnerships and relationships at local, regional, national and international levels. There is a need to extend the range of activities through the proactive marketing of the research centre and by utilising the work of various University support services such as the External Engagement Co-ordinator, International Office, and School Experience Partnership Office. Staff research profiles, and case studies and testimonials from partner organisations will be used to outline the impact of our work to prospective partners.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies relate to the unit's approach to achieving impact, as described in b above, in that they provide citable evidence of how the use of specific examples can influence and shape organisational policies and practice. They show that our impact is achieved through the building of collaborative partnerships with organisations and individuals working within these organisations. They demonstrate a willingness on the part of local regional, national and international organisations to engage with the unit's research in order to improve their policies and practice, to augment the health and performance of the people they may represent and work with, and to ultimately enhance the quality of the sport for spectators, through the generation of research that is rigorous, evidence-based and accessible.

They exemplify aspects of the approach because they present a strategic move to ensuring high level impact at the level of the individual unit. They highlight our aim to identify organisations that may be receptive to research and the value of creating strong external networks and collaborative partnerships. At the level of the individual organisation they demonstrate the on-going commitment required of the part of the researcher if policies and practices are to be evaluated and, where appropriate, changed.