

<p><b>Institution:</b> York St John University</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 26 (Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure &amp; Tourism)</p>
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>York St John University is a civically engaged university with a strengthening research profile and a commitment to developing a strong and vibrant research culture that not only informs learning but has utility in the wider community. In its research strategy for 2012-2015, the University explicitly communicates an ambition for its research to demonstrate evidence of impact through its strategic aim to ‘engage with and influence users of research, locally, nationally, and internationally.’</p> <p>Since the 2008 RAE, Sport research in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (HLS) at York St John University (YSJU) has established a clear identity with a focus on processes and mechanisms that enhance engagement in community sport and physical activity. UoA 26 comprises three distinct research groups whose work seeks to understand: (i) motivational processes; (ii) socio-cultural aspects of sport; and (iii) exercise and health. Impact is embedded in the applied focus of research conducted by staff within the HLS Faculty, and UoA 26 reflects the Faculty’s commitment to transforming research into practice. Research within the Faculty seeks to influence policy, process and delivery, with the broad aim of enhancing health and well-being in its various communities of influence. The research conducted by staff submitted to UoA 26 provides a foundation, which can be drawn upon to guide how sport, physical activity and exercise may be used as vehicles for increasing involvement, enhancing health and improving well-being across the life-span, thereby creating active, healthy and culturally enriched communities. It can also be drawn upon to inform practitioners about the psychological and socio-cultural processes that underpin different forms of engagement with sport and physical activity.</p> <p>Research produced by staff working in each group has had demonstrable impact locally, nationally, and internationally. The principal beneficiaries and audiences for the research conducted by UoA 26 members can be divided into three groups. The first comprises coaches, coach and physical educators, coach governing bodies, those managing the professional development of coaches, sports governing bodies and sport participants. Research on the process of athlete motivation has direct application to these groups and the reach of the research conducted by UoA 26 researchers ranges from local to international. For example, since 2009, we have been involved in the training of FA coach educators and grass roots coaches in North Yorkshire as part of an EU funded project enhancing children’s physical activity and health in grass roots football. Training workshops, supporting training materials and electronic resources have been developed. The YSJU project lead (Hall) was invited to present findings from the project to coaches and coach educators in Taiwan and Norway. Furthermore, UoA 26 staff participated in an international dissemination event at St Georges Park, in collaboration with the project partners and the FA education department. The second group of beneficiaries comprises sport policy makers, sport governing bodies, local government and educational authorities, community sport partnerships and national governments using sport as a vehicle for addressing social issues. The research on athlete motivation, bullying in sport and gender inequalities conducted by members of UoA 26 (Velija &amp; Mierswinski) has local and regional reach through consideration by local government organisations and schools in North Yorkshire and sport governing bodies. Research on how sport policy can be used to combat HIV/Aids in sub-Saharan Africa has international appeal and is being applied specifically in Zambia by the national sport organisations and by university educators. The third group of beneficiaries comprises local, regional and national health care practitioners and local GPs. UoA 26 research into exercise as a therapeutic modality (Smith, Brown) has had local, regional and national reach, informing strategies for engaging in preventative healthcare, leading healthy lifestyles and managing long-term health conditions.</p>

## b. Approach to impact

### UoA 26's approach to impact and infrastructural mechanisms to support staff to achieve impact:

The UoA 26 approach to impact is reflected in the way it implements the University research strategy to engage with and influence users of research. The approach to impact encompasses support for staff to:

*(i). Develop collaborative partnerships and seek funding that supports research which has reach and significance.* Banda has been supported for travel to Zambia to work with National Sport Organisations to advise on HIV/Aids policy formation and implementation within sports organisations and schools. He leads a development partnership in Higher Education which is jointly funded by the Department for International Development and the British Council to support curriculum development in teacher training colleges in Zambia. Hall and Jowett are members of a consortium involving partners from the University of Birmingham, UK, University of Bergen, Norway, University of Valencia, Spain, Joseph Fourier University, France, University of Thessaly, Greece, Norwegian University of Sport, Autonomous University of Barcelona who, since 2008, have received €3.8 million of EU Framework 7 funding to support research using coach education as a vehicle to promote adolescent physical activity (PAPA).

*(ii). Establish networks and relationships with research users which seek to embed the user in the research process and ensure research impact.* Banda is Corporate Social Responsibility Programme Advisor for One Team Programme - Euroleague Basketball, and through this partnership he has developed a training manual on corporate social responsibility which has been adopted by teams in Europe, China and the USA. Hall and Jowett have been supported through the EU funded PAPA project to develop links with the North and East Riding Football Associations and community clubs in the York region and have delivered several workshops to FA coach educators and local football coaches. Their work as part of the PAPA project has international reach and significance of an indirect nature as the training from the project has impacted approximately 100 coach educators in five EU countries, over 1000 grass roots coaches and almost 8,000 children across Europe. Smith has established links with local GPs through his position on the York Primary Care research group and he has been a member of the BASES steering group guiding an application to the Health Professions Council.

*(iii). Seek positions of influence on advisory boards in order to facilitate research impact.* Banda is a member of the Board of Trustees for Skillshare International which, through the Coaching for Hope programme, attempts to create positive futures for youth in West and Southern Africa. Hall has been supported to develop links with local sports partnerships. As a function of his research in youth and community sport he was invited to Chair Active York, the City of York's sport and active leisure partnership, and through this position he sits on York at Large, the community partnership designed to implement the community strategy for enhancing the culture of the city. He is an advisory board member for the development of the new Community Stadium for York, where YSJU proposes to have a visible presence enabling UoA 26 staff to further establish research impact through the delivery of initiatives concerning physical activity and well-being.

*(iv). Contribute to policy-making events that ensure research impact.* Banda was invited by the Speaker to the House of Commons to speak at the parliamentary conference on the Millennium Development Goals in Africa. He has also been Chair of a special Human Rights and Sport-for-Development workshop session organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat in London 2012. Watson has been an Advisory Board member for the Centre for Sport, Spirituality and Religion at the University of Gloucester. He has also been an academic consultant on a working group for the Society of Religion technology project for the Church of Scotland, and an invited member of a think tank on Sports and Christianity, sponsored by Baylor University, and a member of the Theos Public Theology think tank in London, 2012, which focused on reclaiming sport for the common good.

*(v). Develop knowledge transfer opportunities to facilitate research impact.* To support staff to deliver research impact, the HLS Faculty employs a full time Business Development Manager whose work involves developing research and knowledge transfer opportunities with public, private

and voluntary sector organisations. UoA 26 staff have worked with the HLS Faculty Business Development Manager to establish a successful partnership with Nestle to deliver corporate well-being and work related fitness programmes.

### c. Strategy and plans

UoA 26 plans to maximise impact from its current and future research in the following ways:

(1). *By implementing a process of research impact consultation.* The Faculty Leadership Team and Faculty Research Committee, on both of which UoA 26 researchers are represented, facilitates strategic networking opportunities for staff to plan how research impact is evidenced.

(2). *By raising staff awareness of the importance of impact as part of the research process.* In their personal research plans staff are expected to stipulate how they will (i) extend the reach and significance of research impact, (ii) denote the potential beneficiaries and audiences for their work, (iii) implement strategies for engaging these beneficiaries and (iv) identify a process for collecting and collating evidence of impact.

(3). *By co-opting the Faculty Business Development Manager onto the Faculty Research Committee.* This liaison will facilitate increased business networking opportunities for research active staff and ensure that research planning is outward facing.

(4). *By involving beneficiaries in the initial planning and development of research.* As part of the EU funded PAPA project, Hall was involved in initial planning meetings with members of the FA Education Department and staff from the University of Birmingham who led on the project. Hall has subsequently developed a relationship with the University College of Football and Business (UCFB), a private HE provider of football related courses based at Burnley FC. UCFB has agreed to fund a PhD student, supervised by Hall, to undertake research on perfectionism and psychological well-being in professional football contexts.

(5). *By nurturing long term research partnerships with key beneficiaries.* UoA 26 researchers are, under the auspices of the HLS Faculty, currently working in partnership with the York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to deliver health and well-being programmes for York residents through the York Community Stadium.

(6). *By ensuring that UoA 26 research informs the external CPD portfolio offered by the HLS Faculty.* This will provide opportunities to deliver impact through workforce development.

(7). *By working with University marketing to ensure that UoA 26 research has an on line presence and a media profile.* This will promote UoA 26 research through media advocacy. Its widespread dissemination will increase the probability of the research exhibiting impact.

### d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies reflect the UoA's approach to engaging with and influencing users of research locally, nationally and internationally. The case studies reflect research conducted over sustained periods by established leaders. The HLS Faculty has facilitated local, national and international networking to support Hall's leadership roles as Chair of Active York and President of the Association of Applied Psychology, Division 12. The Faculty has provided funded research studentships, supported international travel and hosted coach education workshops for the PAPA project which is presented as the first case study reflecting an evidence-based approach to influencing children's health. The unit has also supported Smith in various leadership roles in professional organisations and in the development of a national profile which has enabled his research on exercise and health, presented in the second case study, to have considerable local and regional impact and to influence national policy.