

<p><b>Institution: Keele University</b></p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment: C22 Social Work and Social Policy</b></p>
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>Almost all the staff engaged in research in Social Work and Social Policy were active in impact activities during the REF submission period. This engagement has been facilitated by the Centre for Social Policy (CSP), supported by the Research Institute for Social Sciences (RISS) and Keele University's Research and Enterprise Services (RES), who are responsible for liaison with business, commerce and industry, which includes social enterprise, local government and third sector organisations. The impacts are evident at local, national and international levels, with evidence of engagement with an extensive range of groups, including local communities, third sector organisations, local and national arts organisations, health service and social care providers, police and probation services, local and national governments (both UK and overseas) and the general public.</p> <p>The principal types of impact are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contributions to public debate through public events and media work:</b> Contribution to public debate can often take the form of challenging normative and populist views on policy relevant issues such as women offenders, migration and asylum seekers, NHS reform, faith, identity and multiculturalism.</li> <li>• <b>Direct engagement through working with specific users such as community groups and organisations, practitioners and policy-makers:</b> Direct engagement is achieved through formal and informal collaborative partnerships and consultancies, some of which are long standing in CSP.</li> </ul> <p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>Social Policy at Keele strives to promote theoretically informed research that engages with policy and practice. Impact activities are embedded into all stages of research design and implementation and across all three research themes. Within this commitment to integrated impact, a number of key types of impact are discernible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contributions to public knowledge and debate.</b> In order to maximise CSP's contribution to public knowledge and debate, all members are supported to promote research in a range of venues outside of Keele, as well as hosting events on campus such as the British Society of Gerontology conference in 2012. This commitment to public knowledge and debate is also evident in CSP's local and national media coverage. Highlights include Dixon's contribution to TV and press coverage of the elections for police and crime commissioners in 2012, comprising interviews for the BBC News Channel, <i>Midlands Today</i> and <i>Sunday Politics Midlands</i>. CSP researchers regularly contribute to local media debates on topical issues such as the UK Census, Banning Smoking in Cars, School Closures during Bad Weather, and the 2011 Riots. The creation of a new Directorate of Marketing and Communications (MAC) in 2011 has led to increased national and regional profile in the media for CSP research activities and findings, and the above examples have been facilitated by MAC.</li> <li>• <b>User-Partnership Research.</b> The Centre for Social Gerontology has established relationships with arts and third-sector organisations, including the New Vic Theatre in Newcastle-under-Lyme and the Beth Johnson Foundation, which have facilitated successful applications for research funding. Bernard's AHRC-funded <i>Ages and Stages</i> project is an internationally-recognised exemplar of user-led research in practice. Working with the New Vic Theatre, this project brings together investigators, theories and methods from the arts and humanities, social sciences and theatre practice, to explore the part that theatre plays in older people's lives. It demonstrates the potential of theatre/drama as a medium for the inclusion of older and younger people, for positive health outcomes and community cohesion. Collaboration with the Beth Johnson Foundation has continued since the nineteen-eighties, and researchers in CSP have recently engaged with them to develop a new methodology for impact, 'Practice-Informed Modelling'. This methodology involves engaging with users of research, both practitioners and members of the community, to identify research questions and issues to be explored. This method has been successfully implemented in Holdsworth's ESRC-funded research on drinking</li> </ul>

in later life.

- **Consultancy research.** Invitations to tender for consultancies have been secured through wider recognition of established research strengths in social policy. Examples include research carried out on behalf of Anchor Trust on retirement villages; Brighter Futures on the provision of services for women offenders; RoSPA, on the attitudes of young drivers; and research on student volunteering on behalf of the charity vInspired (funded by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement). Consultancy research is directly support by RES, who are a first point of call for outside agencies seeking researchers to tender for contracts. Staff in RES work closely with the Head of CSP to identify expertise that can respond to relevant calls. One of the challenges of consultancy research is ensuring wider engagement with audiences beyond the client relationship, and this is promoted in CSP through strategic use of the media and other public forums. For example, Holdsworth has written about student experiences based on her volunteering research for *The Guardian HE Network* in 2012; and Worrall summarised her research on the occupational cultures of probation workers for the ESRC annual public magazine *Britain in 2012*.
- **Community Partnerships.** This form of impact can be more nuanced than formal relationships but is an important strand of social policy research. An exemplar of this is McKay's work with members of the artistic and craft-making community in Baguio City, Philippines, which involved collecting objects, holding a community workshop, doing interviews with artisans and artists, and putting together a museum exhibition.
- **Expert Witness and Advisory Roles.** Given the practice-based approach of much of the research in CSP, researchers are often requested to provide expert witness and advice based on their academic knowledge and involvement in policy and practice. For example, Ray is a National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) social care fellow, whose role is to advise on all aspects of social care in response to the legal requirement on NICE to develop quality standards and good practice guidance.

Members of staff working in all three research themes in CSP (*Ageing and Life Course*; *Crime, Justice and Civil Society*; *Mobilities, Identities and Culture*) engage with all types of impact and different audiences, though there are some important distinctions within the three themes.

- Due to the nature of long-standing collaborations, research on Ageing and Life Course is particularly well-placed to work directly with users, the majority of which are third-sector and arts organisations. This research has flourished at Keele because of the embedded nature of engagement with users and beneficiaries that researchers in the Centre for Social Gerontology have sustained. This goes beyond the immediate point of contact in the key organisations and extends to members of the public who use their services. For example, residents in retirement villages have benefited through CSG's collaborative research with Anchor Trust and older people in local communities through long-standing collaborative partnerships with the Beth Johnson Foundation, Manchester City Council, and Age UK on social gerontology research on active ageing.
- Research in the Crime, Justice and Civil Society strand has also developed direct engagement with third-sector organisations, police and probation services. A key strand of work in this area has centred on raising public awareness and debate about issues to do with gender and crime, racially-motivated crime, and speeding. This research has also directly influenced policy, most notably Dixon's research on hate-crime which has been used by South African legislators to inform policy.
- Direct engagement with communities has been a priority of research in the Mobilities, Identities and Culture theme and this is often initiated through the ethnographic approach that has characterised research on Filipino diaspora (McKay), African Witchcraft shrines in UK/USA (Parish) and practices of domestic labour (Martens). These forms of collaboration are more informal but also seek to engage publics beyond the communities of interest about relevant political issues associated with migration, identity and religion, and gender politics, respectively

The above activity has been supported in CSP through two budget streams: one for Centre activities organised at Keele, and the second for staff attendance at external networking and dissemination events. Staff in both RISS and RES work together to facilitate impact opportunities. RISS provides a dedicated staff member to support and promote activities that are held at Keele,

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as well as providing the venue for events in the Claus Moser Research Centre, a purpose-built hub with excellent facilities for workshops, conferences and other collaborative events. The expertise and resources provided by RES contribute to impact through the provision of legal, financial and communications advice. RES is also responsible for actively seeking enterprise collaborations, and working with academics to develop funded projects. Examples include Keele's successful bids to the HEFCE HE Support Programme in 2012 and 2103 to partnership with UnLtd to promote social enterprise initiatives. Support for impact from RISS/RES is therefore two-way, with both units promoting research to wider audiences and ensuring that staff in CSP are aware of, and able to respond to, opportunities to contribute to policy and practice agendas.

### c. Strategy and plans

The embedding of impact is a key strategy for CSP research and over the REF period research funding has consistently sought to maximise impact and engagement with external groups in the ways outlined above. There are a systematic set of procedures in place, supported by expertise and resources from the wider University, to maximise impact as integral to research. Clearly delineated and persuasive impact strategies will be a core requirement for staff applications for research leave in the post-REF period, and impact of research beyond academia is embedded in promotion criteria, annual research planning and annual appraisals, as well as calculating time for research. Additionally:

- Staff are required to report on impact in their annually-reviewed research plans. All members of CSP are asked to keep an electronic impact folder to record all forms of impact. The interdisciplinary nature of the range of impact activities is explicitly recognised in the evaluation of the research plans, to ensure that active external engagement flourishes in diverse and distinctive ways.
- Direct partnership with users is appropriate for the more client-focussed research that has been at the core of Ageing and Life Course Research, and this will continue to be developed and nurtured in CSP through maintaining established partnerships and developing new ones. For example, recently completed research on HIV in later life has involved new collaborative working with HIV i-base, a treatment activist group.
- Partnerships with civil society organisations, police and probation services are key to creating impact in research in Crime, Justice and Civil Society. Maintaining the public profile of these research activities at Keele will be ensured through the strategic use of MAC resources.

Embedding research in community partnerships depends on staff having the time and resources to maintain these links. This will be secured in two ways: strategic use of CSP funds to facilitate community liaison activities, and the allocation of dedicated research time to free up staff from teaching and administrative duties in order to initiate and continue community collaborative partnerships.

### d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies are exemplars of the different approaches to impact that have been promoted in CSP.

- Impact on healthy ageing and age-friendly cities has developed through user-partnerships, in this case primarily with Manchester City Council, as well as commissioned research from third-sector organisations and National Government. The integrated approach to this research has facilitated its impact on national and local policy.
- Impact on retirement communities has also developed through long-term user partnerships with third sector organisations, and the participatory nature of these partnerships has facilitated impact for organisations and also service users.
- Research on women offenders has developed through both academic scholarship and consultancy research, providing an exemplar of how research can raise awareness about social and policy issues among both service providers and the general public.
- Health policy research is an exemplar of expert witness and how sustained research in a relevant policy field is recognised through invitation to contribute directly to national policy debates.