

<p>Institution: University of Lincoln</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 21 – Politics and International Studies</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The UoA is one of two which sit within the School of Social and Political Sciences and the Policy Studies Research Centre (the other being UoA22). Research within the UoA is located primarily within three distinct research groups within the Policy Studies Research Centre (PSRC): governance and regulation; participation and representation; and global civil society and human rights. The main beneficiaries, user groups and audiences for this research include different tiers of government – UK central (MPs and Peers), devolved (Scottish government and devolved assembly members), and local (councillors and local government officers). The reach of the research is also demonstrated by its influence on other organisations with interests in these areas. Researchers have also sought to inform wider debates by engaging with national and local media and a number of projects have involved innovative approaches to direct public engagement. The main types of impact generated have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Direct impact</i>, including contributions to government and parliamentary consultations at various levels, for example, in relation to the use of petitions systems at Westminster, in the devolved assemblies and local government (C. Bochel), reform of parliamentary scrutiny of intelligence (H. Bochel and Defty); medical regulation (Allsop); participation in local government (Briggs). • <i>Influencing others</i> – research has featured in the work of a diverse range of other organisations and individuals, including in their contributions to various reform agendas, including the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology (Langlois), the Hansard Society (C. Bochel) and the Electoral Reform Society (H. Bochel) and the Young Foundation (Somerville). • <i>Informing wider debates and public understanding</i>, through the media and direct public engagement, for example in relation to political education and participation amongst young people (Kisby), public understanding of genomics (Langlois), Chinese cultural and political history (Foo), and homelessness (Somerville).
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The UoA's approach to impact has developed considerably since 2008, driven in part by the University's research strategy and an increase in institutional support, and also as the result of initiatives developed by research project teams and individual members of staff. Through these developments there has been a marked shift away from the assumption that high-quality research will naturally have an impact, towards a more active strategy designed to identify opportunities for impact and support efforts to engage potential users. This approach has involved:</p> <p>Policy-relevant research on key issues: while generating impact from high-quality research is by no means guaranteed, the potential for impact has been enhanced by identifying and supporting policy-relevant research on pressing contemporary issues. Staff review existing research and identify opportunities for new directions through regular events such as the PSRC colloquia and seminar series and research away days, while the College Research Administrator provides updates on funding calls. Support, including internal research funding, is then directed at projects with clear policy relevance. Examples include H. Bochel and Defty's research on the House of Lords, which was conducted in the context of ongoing debates about the future of the Second Chamber, while their research on Parliament and the intelligence services identified parliamentary support for reform and, through dissemination, influenced significant proposals for enhancing Parliament's power in this area. C. Bochel's research on petitions systems examined the effectiveness of the relatively new use of petitions in the devolved assemblies in the context of debates about new forms for public engagement and the use of petitions at Westminster. Langlois' ongoing work on bioethics took place in the context of UNESCO's debate on whether there should be an international convention on human reproductive cloning. Other projects are effectively policy-led, as, for example, when Allsop was commissioned by the Department of Health to undertake research that led to reform of medical regulation.</p> <p>Communication of research findings: in addition to the publication of high quality outputs all major research projects must log an engagement plan with the College Research Director. One particularly effective strategy has been the production of short accessible summaries of findings for circulation to potential users. For example, Langlois circulated an executive summary of her research on UNESCO's bioethics programme to 70 UNESCO staff and delegates, policy makers in</p>

Impact template (REF3a)

relevant government ministries in Kenya and South Africa, and geneticists, ethicists and interested civil society organisations (the Wellcome Trust also provided financial support to ensure that her book was made available through open access). Building on this experience, short research summaries are now produced for most research projects, and institutional support has been provided to enable production and distribution, including professional layout and printing, which has helped to generate impact, for example in relation to H. Bochel and Defty's research on Parliament and the Intelligence Services (see impact case study).

Responding to consultations and inquiries: the College Research Administrator provides staff with regular updates on calls for evidence from parliamentary select committees and government departments. As a result, researchers have responded to a range of consultations including: the Green Paper on Justice and Security (H. Bochel, Defty and Kirkpatrick); Green Paper on parliamentary privilege (H. Bochel and Defty); the Political and Constitutional Reform Committee's inquiry into the impact of the Wright reforms (C. Bochel; H. Bochel and Defty); the Joint Committee on the Draft House of Lords Reform Bill (H. Bochel and Defty); and the Youth Citizenship Commission (Kisby). Several contributions have featured prominently in the subsequent responses and reports, in parliamentary debates, and, in the case of C. Bochel's work on petitions, resulted in an invitation to appear before the Political and Constitutional Reform select committee.

Working directly with users: the nature of the research carried out within the School is such that the research process often involves direct contact with potential users of the research, and has, in some cases, led directly to further opportunities for engagement. For example, following meetings with parliamentary clerks and the Chair of the Backbench Business Committee, C. Bochel was invited to give evidence to a Backbench Business Committee/Hansard Society seminar in relation to her work on petitions systems. Langlois' work on bioethics led to her producing a briefing for MPs and Peers for the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology. Other examples include Somerville's research on homelessness, and Hick's work on adolescent neglect, where she worked with a whole tier of managers in a local authority to change policy and practice, among others.

Working with local stakeholders: the University has an established Knowledge Exchange Scheme, and the PSRC has a longstanding partnership with local organisations, including local government. Examples include work with City of Lincoln Council in relation to neighbourhood governance, Lincolnshire County Council on racism in schools, 'troubled families', and youth political participation. A team, including Briggs, C. Bochel, Kisby and Defty, are currently working with the City Council on a number of programmes aimed at enhancing democratic engagement.

Engaging with the media: researchers within the School contribute to an average of one story per week in the local and national media. While many of these are in response to requests for comments on current events, with the support of the University Press Office, the PSRC has begun to develop a more active media engagement strategy. The University Press Office works with staff to draft and distribute press releases to accompany all research projects, and also provides media training, including on the use of new media such as podcasts and Twitter. The Press Office maintains an *Experts' Blog*, to which staff in this UoA are frequent contributors, and which has led to stories being picked up by the local and national media. Projects in this submission which have had substantive media coverage include H. Bochel and Defty's work on Parliament and the intelligence services and on expertise in the House of Lords, both of which have featured on BBC Radio 4 (see impact case study), Foo's research on Chinese cultural and political history, which was the subject of a Radio 4 documentary in 2012, and Parks' research with della Porta (EUI) on social movements in the EU, which has featured in the national media in Italy and the UK.

Events and exhibitions: PSRC members have participated in a number of innovative projects designed to generate interest and wider understanding of their research, such as exhibitions and other public events. Foo's JISC funded research on *Historical Photographs of China* has led to exhibitions in London, Durham, Barcelona, Singapore and Hong Kong, and she has recently been involved in the establishment of a permanent exhibition at the Museum for the Site of Modern History in Nanjing. As part of her Bright Ideas Fellowship at the Genomics Forum in Edinburgh, Langlois initiated and chaired a high-profile panel discussion at the Traverse Theatre, including one of the team who cloned *Dolly* the sheep, which followed a reading of Caryl Churchill's play about cloning, *A Number*, and following an AHRC project, Anitha curated an exhibition, *Striking*

Women, charting women's involvement in industrial disputes from the Grunwick strike of the late 1970s to the Gate Gourmet walk-out in 2005, which was shown at a venues across the UK.

Sharing best practice: in addition to a significant increase in institutional support for impact-related activities, there is now considerable experience within the PSRC of a range of different approaches to user engagement and impact generation, and there has been considerable sharing of experience and best practice, through the biannual research away days, staff colloquia and individual peer support.

c. Strategy and plans

We will seek to build on our existing approach, and also to identify and explore new opportunities for impact. Our strategy is built on the provision of support and the development of opportunities for impact at the levels of the University, the PSRC/School, and individual research teams.

The University will:

- continue to direct internal research funding and other support at projects which have clear policy relevance, and a clear engagement strategy;
- provide support for the production and distribution of short user-friendly research summaries to potential users at key points during, and at the end of research projects;
- through professional service departments, such as the Press Office and the institutional repository, ensure that research is both intellectually accessible and widely available;
- provide training in user engagement and utilising resources for dissemination.

The Policy Studies Research Centre will:

- identify opportunities for research which is salient and useful by monitoring the priorities of potential users and funding bodies, and provide opportunities to discuss research agendas;
- provide staff with regular (at least monthly) updates of opportunities for impact by, for example, circulating details of calls for evidence and consultations;
- ensure that impact-related activities are included in all research projects through the peer review of internal and external funding bids and the logging and sharing of engagement plans;
- bring potential users into the University to discuss their needs, including representatives from Parliament, central and local government, the business and charitable sectors and the media.

Individuals and research teams will:

- ensure that user engagement is considered at an early stage in all research projects;
- continue to share experience and best practice in an area in which relatively few staff have broad experience, but in which many can demonstrate particular expertise and successes.

d. Relationship to case studies

The impact case studies presented here exemplify aspects of the approaches outlined above, but have also provided a model for the overall future approach within the UoA, reflecting both long-term research and impact and interim and ongoing impact:

Elected Bodies: Participation and Representation – reflects a body of research on elected bodies, predominantly around issues of representation and participation, at UK, devolved and local tiers, which has taken place within the School over the past twenty years. It includes research by: H. Bochel on Scottish local elections; C. Bochel, H. Bochel and Briggs on political representation in local government; C. Bochel on petitions systems at Westminster and beyond; and Briggs and Kisby on political participation, particularly amongst young people. The case study not only demonstrates a consistent commitment to policy-relevant research over a considerable period of time, but also reflects a number of approaches to generating impact, including contributing to select committee inquiries (C. Bochel) and working with users (C. Bochel; Briggs; Kisby).

Legislators, Representatives and Experts: influencing parliamentary reform – relates to a number of pieces of research focused in particular on various aspects of parliamentary reform most notably in relation to the House of Lords and to parliamentary scrutiny of the intelligence services (H. Bochel and Defty). The case study demonstrates the potential to generate significant impact by responding to a number of government consultations and select committee inquiries, and also the value of communicating research findings in an accessible format, both in terms of significant direct impact and also generating wider reach.