

<p>Institution: University of Worcester</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 30 - History</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>Strategic development of two research groups - the Transnational Studies Research Group (TSRG); the Early Modern Research Group (EMRG) - underpinned impact achieved by the submitting unit post RAE2008. Alongside research excellence, staff recruitment explicitly prioritised research with the potential for wider impact, and academic appointments in the period consequently enabled the unit to expand and enhance the range of benefits that it cascaded beyond the academy. TSRG and EMRG capitalised upon the national and international research standing of members, and their established and newly established links with leading research centres, public organisations and charitable bodies, to ensure that non-academic benefit variously impacted globally, nationally and regionally. University of Worcester (UoW) state-of-the art investment in archival, library and conference facilities at The Hive (the first joint University/public library in Europe) resulted in an unique focus for public engagement with nationally and internationally significant research. Events attended by public as well as academic audiences directly addressed themes central to TSRG's and EMRG's work. Dissemination activity was underpinned, recognised and supported by successful peer reviewed grant applications to funding bodies (the Leverhulme Trust, the British Library and the AHRC) as well as by collaborations with public organisations (The National Archives of Sierra Leone (NASL), The Royal British Legion (TRBL), the National Maritime Museum (NMM) and the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA)). The unit's research benefited non-academic users including archivists, museum curators and librarians, users of archives and libraries, policy makers, charitable organisations, media organisations, television and radio audiences, and public audiences interested in personal, family, collective and community histories. Crucially, research directly informed strategies and public debate addressing post-conflict recovery in West Africa, Europe and the Middle East. It also directly influenced policies for the preservation and dissemination of archival and library resources, as well as the formation of policy related to archival practice in a national setting beyond the UK.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>External collaborations and networks facilitated the international and national reach of TSRG's and EMRG's engagements with non-academic audiences. Impact was clustered around: post-conflict recovery and remembrance; heritage and archival provision; educational provision and visitor interpretation; broadcasting; collaboration with learned societies with a public history remit. External and UoW funding enabled both Groups to disseminate research beyond the academy through engagement with diverse publics in the UK, North America, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. UoW £60M investment in The Hive, and other University funding, served significantly to enhance public awareness of, and access to, the unit's research, via seminars and other events.</p> <p>Research by Profs Andrews and Schwarz through TSRG informed strategies for post-conflict recovery in national and international contexts. Schwarz's research on the origins of Sierra Leone's multi-ethnic population led to the first major international conference of historians in Sierra Leone following the end of the civil war. The conference, <i>Sierra Leone, Past and Present</i>, directly addressed the role of historical scholarship in shaping public understanding of the country's complex history and heritage. It was attended by policy makers, government officials, archivists, museum curators and members of the public. Recognition of the wider significance of the event was demonstrated by the decision of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Company to broadcast it live on national television and radio. The impact of Andrews' research on the mediation of grief and remembrance in the aftermath of warfare was developed through long-term collaboration with TRBL and the NMA. Andrews also provided expert advice to the Worcestershire County Council Archive & Archaeology Service on development of its successful World War 1 centenary Heritage Lottery Fund bid (£353,000). Non-academic engagement was encouraged through public dissemination and debate strategically located in contexts directly connected with the research concerned. Conferences at the NMA were attended by members of TRBL, veterans' associations, the War Widows Association, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Western Front Association and professionals working in archives and museums services. Dr Arielli's research on the experience of Jewish volunteers in the Spanish Civil War, first published in the <i>Journal of</i></p>

Contemporary History, was published in Hebrew in a book accompanying a 2012 exhibition, *From Here to Madrid*, staged by the Eretz Israel Museum, Tel Aviv, and attracted significant local press coverage.

Specialist advice on the preservation, presentation and digitisation of rare archival and library resources in Britain and West Africa was underpinned by the unit's research. Schwarz's research informed the provision of professional training for the Deputy Government Archivist of Sierra Leone, Alfred Fornah, with Fornah's resulting, bespoke training with librarians and archivists at UK libraries and archives serving to raise professional standards in preservation of the National Archives in Sierra Leone. Schwarz's lecture on the Sierra Leone archives at Hull History Centre was attended by the city's Senior Archivist and Deputy Archivist and apprised them of the nature of surviving sources in Sierra Leone and their relationship to collections in Hull. In the UK, EMRG's collaboration with the Diocese of Worcester supported cataloguing of the contents of the Hurd Library by History PGRs. Andrews, Dr McNally and Schwarz all contributed specialist advice on historical themes and methodology to planning meetings in preparation for exhibitions on regional history at The Hive, and Schwarz represented UoW on the Joint Hive Programming Committee concerned with public engagement.

Strategic links with museums informed the wider dissemination of knowledge arising from the unit's research. Dr Fleming shared findings from his Caird Research Fellowship, on the Navy League, at a research seminar for curators and staff of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (March 2013). Schwarz spoke to members of the Hull Maritime Society at Hull Museums on the long-standing links between Hull and Freetown. Dr Oldridge's research was the focus of a public event on 'The Devil in Body and Mind' at the George Marshall Medical Museum in Worcester in October 2012. Members of the unit also regularly provided expert advice to external societies and organisations concerned with the dissemination of research beyond the academy, underpinned by its extensive networks with professional societies and scholarly organisations. Andrews's collaboration with TRBL and the NMA informed policy-shaping public engagement with remembrance, memorialisation and commemoration. Schwarz served as an elected Member of Council of The Hakluyt Society, a scholarly society with a remit to disseminate research to the wider public nationally and internationally; she leads a Society working party to increase recruitment and engagement. She was also a council member of the Worcestershire Historical Society.

A range of public facing activities resulted in widespread dissemination of specialist research findings. Andrews undertook extensive media dissemination (eg Radio 4's *Today Programme*, June 2013; working with the BBC as a regional advisor for the AHRC-funded 'World War One at Home Project'; briefing scriptwriters and editors on their forthcoming BBC Radio drama on the Home Front). Oldridge acted as a consultant for a BBC4 documentary, *How the Devil Got His Horns*, broadcast in October 2012. Fleming's research underpinned his contribution to *The Story of Wales Debate* on BBC 1 Wales, transmitted March 2012. He also gave a live radio interview on BBC Radio Hereford and Worcester in June 2013 focusing on Andrew Easton. Schwarz was interviewed on national television and radio in Sierra Leone, and the proceedings of an international conference on Sierra Leone were streamed live by the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Company and reported in the national press (April 2012).

The unit organised a range of successful events which achieved high public participation rates, with participation in regional history events successfully extended through their strategic siting in city centre locations including The Hive and Worcester's Guildhall. Institutional investment in The Hive underpinned the unit's fuller engagement with public interest in history, with events attracting participants from across the UK as well as the region. Members of the unit disseminated their research regularly through publications and presentations specifically intended for non-academic audiences. In August 2010, Oldridge delivered the first of a series of EMRG-organised presentations in St Swithun's Church, Worcester, on 'The Concept of Satan in Tudor and Stuart England'. As well as providing an opportunity publicly to share his research, the event allowed Oldridge to present an early version of material later published as an article in *The Seventeenth Century* (December 2012). Fleming wrote for non-academic audiences in the *Conservative History Journal*, the online journal *History & Policy*, and in *Memo: The Winston Churchill Memorial and Library in the United States*. Andrews lectured to non-academic audiences, including branches of

the Women's Institute and mixed academic and public audiences at the NMA and The Hive. Schwarz's research was disseminated to large audiences at the annual meeting of the Historical Association in May 2012 and at the prestigious Hakluyt Society annual lecture in June 2013.

c. Strategy and plans

The unit is committed to maintaining and expanding impact activity linked to TSRG and EMRG research, reflecting UoW's broader commitment, in its 2013-18 Strategic Plan, to development of research with social/community benefit (with the "arts, culture and heritage" targeted as an area of distinction in this regard). International, national and regional impact will be expanded through strategic collaborations with a wider range of public organisations in Europe, North America, Latin America and West Africa. Through continuing collaboration with the British Library Endangered Archives Programme, the impact of heritage preservation in Sierra Leone will expand to include other countries around the Atlantic rim affected by the African diaspora in the 19th century. The unit will build on collaborations with museums and archives in Freetown, Cape Town, Hull, Rio de Janeiro, Liverpool and London to develop international touring exhibitions informed by research expertise on warfare, empire, colonialism, slavery, diasporas and remembrance. Thus, TSRG will extend the reach of impact derived from the unit's research on post-conflict recovery. To 2018, the unit will be involved extensively in publicly focused activity to mark the First World War centenary. Continuing work with the NMA and the BBC over the next 5 years will broaden critical engagement with World War 1 practices of commemoration. Partnership in relation to the *Worcestershire World War One Hundred* project will involve academic and public engagement with archives, museums, heritage sites, the NMA and the BBC (eg hosting of the Women's History Network National Conference on *Home Fronts: Gender, War and Conflict* <http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org/>, September 2014 and Andrews's collaboration with Worcestershire's Records Office manager to produce a book *Voices of the First World War: Worcestershire's War* Amberley Press, 2014 for a public readership).

The unit will extend the range of engagement activity focused on The Hive through high profile annual public lectures and day conferences, and will develop joint research projects with the Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology team focusing on conflict in early modern/modern Europe, slavery, migration and abolitionism. Archivists and archaeologists will be drawn more fully into TSRG's and EMRG's research activities and inform strategy for dissemination to national and regional audiences. Resources available via UoW's Vacation Research Assistantship scheme will be capitalised on to investigate the regional and national dimensions of international debates on warfare, post-conflict recovery and remembrance, humanitarianism, slavery, and migration. A focus of bids to external funding sources will be on support for PGR students' and early career researchers' development of research impact, thereby building on the markedly upward research and research impact trajectory of the unit since RAE2008.

d. Relationship to case studies

Case studies describe and evidence impact derived from Andrews's and Schwarz's research, which contributes to the work of both TSRG and EMRG, in which UoW has invested significantly in the period through the award of bursaried PGR studentships and Vacation Research Assistantships, and through new academic posts (most recently awarded to outstanding early career researcher Dr Bowersox, whose work on race and colonial culture in Germany is anticipated to make an important contribution to TSRG and its public impact agenda over the next 5 years). Case studies exemplify the unit's broader vision to achieve internationally and nationally significant research capable of meaningful and practical application in societal, cultural and, in some cases, economic contexts, and of contributing to the life and culture of UoW's immediate region – through public engagement with internationally cutting-edge research and its application to regional histories and contemporary realities, and establishment of The Hive as an internationally significant centre for public debate and understanding of historical research.