

Institution: De Montfort University
Unit of Assessment: 30 History
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The impact created by the History unit is diverse in nature, spreading into many different ‘categories’ of impact. The research undertaken by staff has key contemporary relevance and thus is of interest to much wider audiences and stakeholders outside the academy – our work on migration, food security, sports history and heritage, relations in the former Yugoslav states, all being excellent examples. Key categories of impact arising from our research in these areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public discourse</i> – through extensive contributions to different media productions on topics related to our research, including sports history research for Radio 4 (Collins, Holt, Williams, Carter, Taylor and Porter) and World War Two agricultural history for BBC2’s Wartime Farm (Martin). • <i>Contributions to cultural life</i> – for example, Burrell’s research on post-war Polish forced migration has contributed to a bestselling novel on Polish migration and Williams’ expertise on the history of women’s football has informed a fictional book series for young adults. Other staff have used their research to contribute to an international exhibition on partition in the Punjab at the Royal Geographical Society (Virdee), a Jewish sporting history exhibition at Manchester Jewish Museum (Dee), the Tate Museum’s 2012 exhibition <i>Migrations: Journeys into British Art</i> (Panayi) and to preserving local, national and international sporting heritage, for example by contributing to an exhibition of Leicester’s sporting heroes (Carter, Williams), aiding the National Football Museum’s Hall of Fame (Holt, Taylor, Williams) and taking a key leadership role in sports heritage organisations (Collins). • <i>Contributing to processes of commemoration and memorialisation</i> – for example, two projects within the unit, based on research into Britain in the First World War (Panayi), and the former Yugoslavia in the Second World War (Morrison), are leading to the creation of new monuments to commemorate different war-time developments in the Isle of Man and Montenegro. • <i>Supporting ethnic minorities and minority identities</i> – for example, oral history migration research supporting South Asian ethnic identity in the UK (Virdee), and Polish migration research being used to inform MPs about the UK Polish community (Burrell). <p>As such, the main users, audiences and beneficiaries of the impact created by the History unit are also diverse. Some are quite specific (Punjabi diaspora, MPs) others have a much broader reach (Radio 4 listeners, BBC2 viewers, novel readers), and others, such as the commemoration work (Montenegro, Isle of Man) have huge local and wider national and international political and cultural significance.</p> <p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The unit has sustained an active and open approach to impact during this census period. Openness to different collaborations outside of academia has been an important part of the dissemination of staff research findings and of staff activities. The unit’s approach to the development of impact has been a two-pronged initiative. Firstly, the unit has historically supported original research, which leads directly to impact outside of the academy and ‘pathways to impact’ are embedded into research projects at the time of their inception. Secondly, the unit has promoted a strategy of pro-active dissemination of research findings to as large an audience as possible (through attendance at conferences with stakeholders, acting upon invitations from the media etc) coupled with flexibility to react to opportunities to maximise and develop serendipitous and unplanned impacts as these opportunities arise. Staff associated with the Unit have been supported in this endeavour by the Unit in several concrete ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been investment in research which clearly reaches beyond academic boundaries. A good example here is support for Morrison’s ‘memory work’ research on the airlift of British soldiers from Yugoslavia in 1944 – an episode which was ‘forgotten’ under Tito’s rule, and which in late 2009 was marked with the unveiling of a memorial sculpture in the village of Brezna in Montenegro. Furthermore, history staff have actively pursued university funding to support impactful research. For example, DMU’s Higher Education Investment Funds scheme has supported Collins and Carter’s collaborative project in 2011–12 on the history and heritage

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of Leicester City FC. The project produced a history of the directors for the club website and led to permission for a Blue Plaque to be located at the site where the club was founded.

- Internal funding has been made available to allow staff to develop and present their work at different venues, academic and non-academic, ensuring as wide a dissemination of their research and expertise as possible. For example, Morrison has used such funding to chair an evening session on south Slav literature at the European Commission office in London, reaching out to a non-academic audience of 40 people, including the ambassadors of Montenegro and Bosnia. Dee has been supported to share his research with the Jewish Historical Society in Leeds, which has a substantial non-academic membership, and to contribute to an exhibition with the Jewish Museum London on Jews and football.
- History staff have worked closely with the University's press office to ensure that their research is disseminated widely. For example, Press Office promotion of the ICSHC's work on race and sport led to a series of public talks in Bradford and Leicester in 2011 (Carter, Collins and Taylor) and a partnership with the Professional Footballers' Association (the players' union) and football's equality and inclusion campaign 'Kick It Out' in 2012 to organise a series of events around Black History Season. These included a public panel discussion on the lack of black representation at soccer's managerial levels, involving current and former players and managers and the Deputy Chief Executive of the PFA (as well as Taylor), and a careers day for 130 local schoolchildren at Leicester City's stadium (described as 'a great initiative' by Ravinder Masih, Community Relationship Manager at Aston Villa FC).

While some impacts arising from History research have been planned, for example, the projects already described involving commemoration (Montenegro, Isle of Man), many other resulting impacts have been unforeseen, underlining both the importance of producing excellent research as a starting point for any worthwhile impact, and of having a strong dissemination strategy for all research.

ICSHC research has informed the policy of governments and sporting bodies in a number of ways. In 2011, Holt was asked to appear at a pre-briefing of the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee to discuss the history of football governance, while in 2012 the ICSHC was consulted by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport about the granting of an export licence for the 1859 Sheffield Football Club rules. Arising out of Carter's expertise on sport and the body, a joint project with the University of Leicester, focusing on the Special Olympics GB (SOGB) Summer Games in Leicester in 2009, produced a popular history of the SOGB as well as a 277-page report for the SOGB and Leicester City Council. This research has already had a significant impact on the organisation of mega-sporting events and the future of the Special Olympics, and is likely to have future impacts on central and local government policy for learning disability sport. The Minister of Sport, Hugh Robertson, commented that 'lessons learned from this study are immediately transferable as the nation prepares to host other major sporting events, such as the Olympic Games and the Rugby World Cup [2015]'.

In 2008 and 2009, Virdee used her expertise in South Asian matters to undertake consultancy work for the Open University and the BBC World Service on their development of the BBC Urdu service. As a reflection of his standing as an expert on the region and extensive research on the former Yugoslav states, Morrison regularly advises on developments in the Balkans, writing reports for Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), the UK Defence Academy Advanced Research and Assessment Group (ARAG), Balkan Insight (BIRN), Jane's Intelligence Weekly (JIW), Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst (JIAA), and 'The World Today' (Chatham House). He is also on the advisory boards of both Transconflict Serbia (Belgrade) and BIRN Consultancy (Sarajevo). His work and commentaries in this area regularly impact upon policy and defence understandings of regional developments.

Staff have also been very successful disseminating their research to a wide audience (demonstrated in the accompanying case-studies) via collaborations, most notably for BBC Radio 4 (Sport and the British), Lion TV for the BBC and Open University (Martin, Wartime Farm series), BBC Radio Five Live and The Guardian (Panayi, food and Migration). Another good example, however, is Dee's research on Jewish sporting history and his collaboration with Manchester Jewish Museum. Having used the archives at the museum for his research into British Jewry and

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their experiences of sport, identity and discrimination, he was instrumental in shaping an exhibition there, 'Playing the Game: Sporting Life in Jewish Manchester', which attracted over 2000 people between June and September 2012, generating very positive visitor feedback. This exhibition has increased the financial turnover of the museum too, contributing to a 7% rise in visitor numbers between June–Sept 2012, compared to the same months in 2011. In addition, staff contribute to various cultural, media, literary projects using their expertise and linking to their research work, to help create exhibitions, exhibition guides, television and radio programmes, a music event, popular books for young adults and a literary novel.

c. Strategy and plans

Staff are very aware of the value that their work has outside of the academy and the potentially wide reach of the impacts of their research. The unit's impact strategy has developed in line with the 2013 University Research Strategy and understandings of 'impact' emerging from funding and research councils. A new five-year strategy, comprising several goals, is detailed below:

- *Prioritise and support impact in the most appropriate areas.* The strategy of the subject team will be to review all research activities annually to identify possible pathways for impact and from this to focus on enhancing impact in the most significant and appropriate areas.
- *Continue to support active dissemination of research, outreach activities, collaboration and approachability.* Simple dissemination of research findings, outreach and other activities such as public talks, openness to invitations and requests for information and assistance, can all lead to significant impacts, and staff will continue to be active and open to the promotion of their work and in their response to external queries. Internal funding will continue to be made available to facilitate these activities. The Unit will look to embed questions about impact in the appraisal process to ensure that staff consider the potential impacts of their work.
- *Cultivate projects where impact underpins the research* - for example, commemoration, exhibitions. There is potentially very strong wider public interest in the areas of staff expertise within the unit – migration, food security, former Yugoslavia, sport.
- *Continue to seek internal and external funding for impact rich research.* Staff will be able to apply for internal funds for projects which have a significant impact element, and will be supported with external funding bids for impact rich projects. Staff will also be able to apply for internal funding to support impact related activities such as network meetings and speaking events. Funding decisions will take into account the wider value of the impact resulting from different research activities.

d. Relationship to case studies

The selected case studies illustrate the range and significance of the impact generated by the unit. They reflect the work of both clusters as well as other individuals from within the unit, and showcase both planned and more diffuse forms of impact characteristic of the unit's strategic approach.

Both Martin's work as chief consultant for Lion TV's 'Wartime Farm' and the ICSHC's contribution to the acclaimed Radio 4 series 'Sport and the British' demonstrate how the production of ground-breaking research combined with the careful formation of collaborative relationships with key users over a significant time frame can lead to varied forms of impact. In both cases, interaction with media and heritage agencies was facilitated by a strong research reputation beyond the academy and the strength of the dissemination strategies of the individual and research clusters concerned. The impact detailed in both case studies was built upon relationships with media and public history providers which pre-date the assessment period. But they also resulted in a flexible and agile approach to impact and a willingness to respond pro-actively to media interest, as well as to incorporate newer, short-term research findings into high-profile media projects.

The collective sports history case study, in particular, exemplifies both the maximisation of impact when opportunities arise and the embedding of impact within original research projects and topics. Collins' work on the history of rugby is a particular example of how some research projects within the unit are constructed from the start with plans and strategies for public impact prioritised (in this case through involvement in heritage work, popular publishing and theatre) alongside academic outputs.