

REF Case Study Survey

Anthony Atkin

Research Impact Manager

University of Reading

a.atkin@reading.ac.uk

Summary

- In response to an email to the ARMA Research Impact Special Interest group, there was a desire within the community to find out how the REF 2014 case studies were to be used by Universities.
- A nine-question online survey was created and circulated in Spring 2014 by Anthony Atkin (Research Impact Manager, University of Reading) to gather this information
- The survey was released *via* the ARMA Research Impact SIG e-mail list and the LinkedIn Impact in UK Academia Group
- The survey was completed by 31 people within these groups
- The responses to the questionnaire are detailed in the following slides

- Thank you to all those who contributed, I hope the results give you a 'feel' for the usage of case studies in the sector
- All comments welcome

Anthony Atkin a.atkin@reading.ac.uk , 01183 787411

Question 1

Please provide the name of your institution and - if you are willing - your name and job description.

- 31 individuals responded from a wide range of institutions (details on next slide)

Institution	Title
Aberystwyth University	Director of Research, Business and Innovation
Aberystwyth University2	Research Impact and Open Access Officer
Bangor University	Research Assessment Manager
Bath Spa University	Research Support Officer
Birmingham City University	Senior Research Officer
Bournemouth University	Research and Knowledge Exchange Development Manager
Cardiff University	Research Office Manager (School based)
DeMontfort University, Leicester	Director of Research, Business and Innovation
Glyndwr University	Head of Research Services
Harper Adams University	Research Co-ordinator
Imperial College London	
King's College London	
London School of Economics	Director of the Research Division
Loughborough University	Research Policy Officer
Manchester Metropolitan University	Impact and Engagement Manager
Middlesex University	Director of Knowledge Transfer
Oxford Brookes University	Research Impact Officer
Plymouth University	Specialist Advisor
Queen Mary, University of London	Research and Enterprise Manager, School of Mathematical Sciences
Sheffield Hallam University	Research Development Manager
UCLan	Research Impact Manager
University of East Anglia	Research and Enterprise Manager
University of Exeter	
University of Kent	
University of Leicester	Impact Development Manager
University of Oxford	Senior Assistant Registrar (Research) Humanities Division
University of Portsmouth	Research and Innovation Services
University of Reading	Science Writer School of Mathematical and Physical Science
University of Southampton	Head of Research Performance
University of Sussex	REF Impact Officer
University of the West of England (UWE)	Research Information Officer

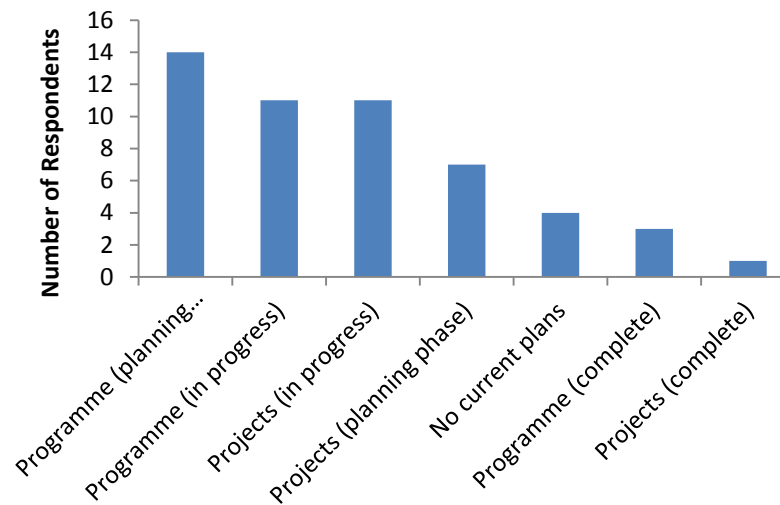
Question 2

How advanced are the plans in your institution for the secondary use of REF case studies? (Tick relevant answers)

- Programme of activities (in planning phase)
- Programme of activities (in progress)
- Programme of activities (complete)
- Individual projects (in planning phase)
- Individual projects (in progress)
- Individual projects (complete)
- No current plans

Question 2 cont.

- Collated answers to Question 2
 - In general, institutions have planned and started projects, but programmes are still in the planning phase
 - 22 institutions out of 30 are implementing programmes (14 institutions in planning phase, 10 in-progress, two complete*)
 - Four institutions identified there were no current plans



*five institutions identified that they are in more than one phase of programmes

Question 2 cont.

- If there are no current plans, please provide reasons (e.g. the challenges faced in using the case studies or the reasons for not sharing them).
 - “We are awaiting meeting of REF project board in May”
 - “We will do something but haven't considered it in details just yet”
 - “We are beginning to discuss the need for a plan (and fully intend to develop a plan), but have not yet got any further than that”
 - “There is uncertainty faced by new faculty structure”

Question 3

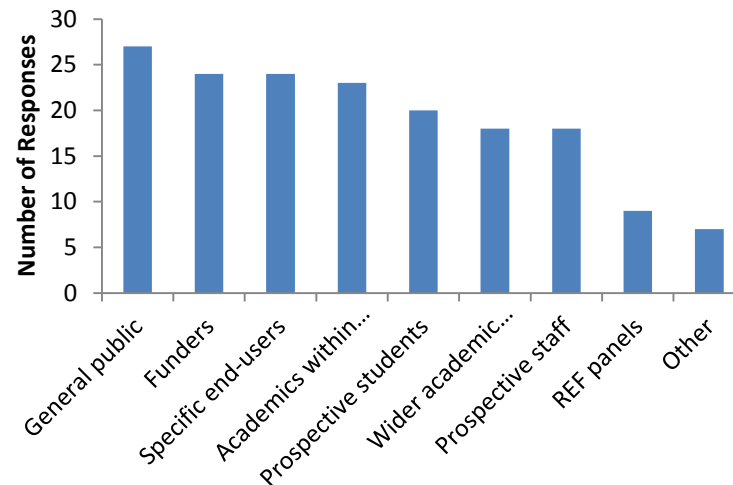
Which audiences are you hoping to reach through these activities? If you have no current plans, please indicate which audiences you would most like to reach. (Tick relevant answers)

- The general public
- Funders
- Academics within your institution
- The wider academic community
- Specific end-users of your research
- REF panels
- Prospective students
- Prospective staff
- Other (please specify)

Question 3 cont.

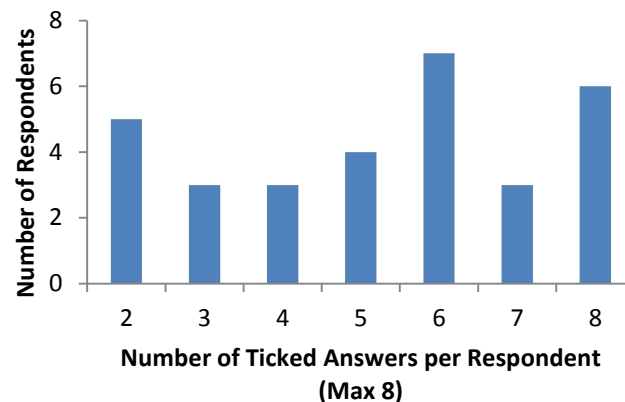
Collated answers to Question 3

- The answers show that there is a very broad range of target audiences for the institutions
- The 'general public' is the most highly identified audience (87% of respondents) with 'funders' and 'specific end users' second (77%)



Question 3 cont.

- **How selective are institutions being in choosing target audiences/how comprehensive are the plans?**
 - All institutions are selecting at least one target audience. The following graph should the number of responses per respondent to the Question 3 (maximum of eight responses per respondent)
 - six respondents identified all of the audiences
 - five respondents identified only two target audiences



Question 3 cont.

- Identified 'Others' include:
 - Prospective non-academic research collaborators
 - Existing PhD students as exemplars of research practice
 - Early career researchers, PGR students
 - Research partners, other prospective partners and end users
 - BIS officials
- And one further comment:
 - It is too late to impress the REF panels at this stage!

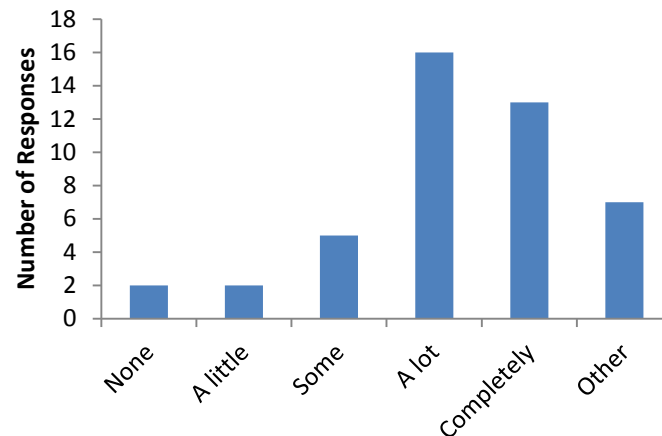
Question 4

To what extent are you modifying/tailoring the information in the case-study in your plans? (Tick relevant answers)

- None, they are being used in their original form (REF3b template)
- A little, sections of the case study text is being used unmodified in a different template
- Some, the case study is being tailored slightly.
- A lot, the case study is being dramatically rewritten.
- Completely, the case study is being used as the basis only for new material
- Other (please specify)

Question 4 cont.

- Collated answers to Question 4
 - The case studies are, in general, to be modified significantly before publication
 - Half of the respondents stated that they will be modified ‘a lot’
 - Only two intuitions are going to release the case studies in their original form



Question 4 cont.

- Identified 'Others' include:
 - A mixture of most of the above!
 - The University will not be publishing its templates
 - TBC
 - We have yet to formulate our plan, but I do not expect us to use the Impact Case Studies in their original form
 - Modification will depend on the use e.g. PhD students will see the proper case study. Promotional activities will draw content and expend on it where relevant.
 - For training purposes, case studies are used in their original form. Particularly the Summary section is utilised in workshops and impact exercises. When it comes to promotional purposes case studies are being dramatically re-written for public consumption.

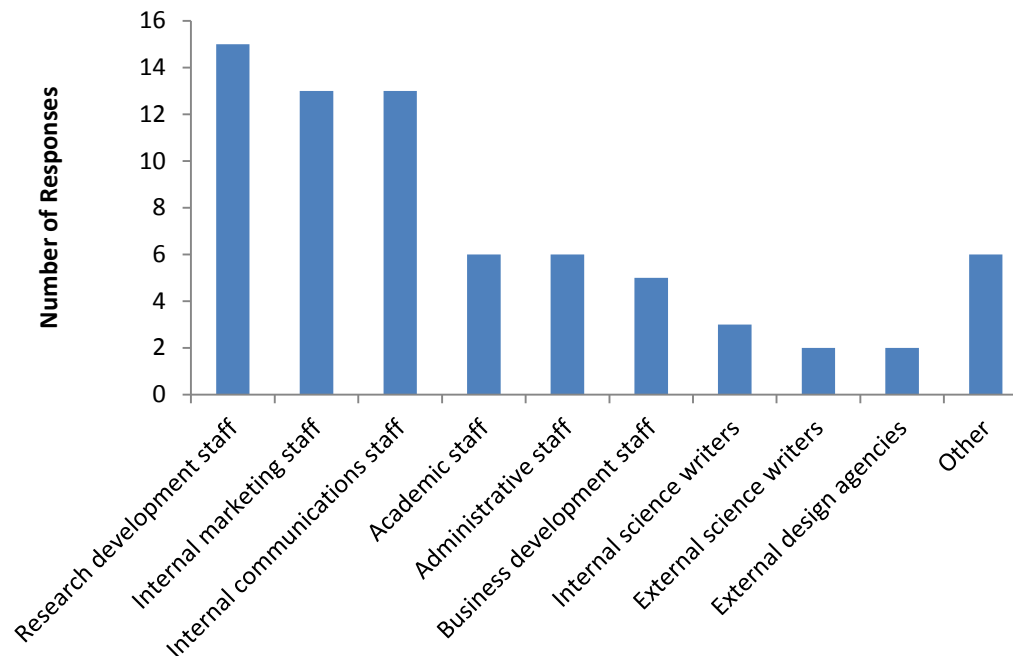
Question 5

Who is doing this modification/tailoring? (Tick relevant answers)

- Academic staff
- Administrative staff
- Research development staff
- Business development staff
- Internal marketing staff
- Internal communications staff
- Internal science writers
- External science writers
- External design agencies
- Other (please specify)

Question 5 cont.

- Collated answers to Question 5
 - In the main, internal staff from Research and Development and Internal Marketing and Communications staff are going to modify the case studies
 - Academic staff are doing the modification/tailoring in only six institutions.
 - Only four institutions are using external agencies/writers



Question 5 cont.

- Identified 'Others' include:
 - “We are going through some significant institutional reorganisation so I'm not sure where the resource for this will be (marketing, comms, research or other)”
 - “hired freelance journalists”
 - “range of people from across the institution”
 - “Probably modified by internal administrative staff, with some oversight from the 'owning' academic staff”

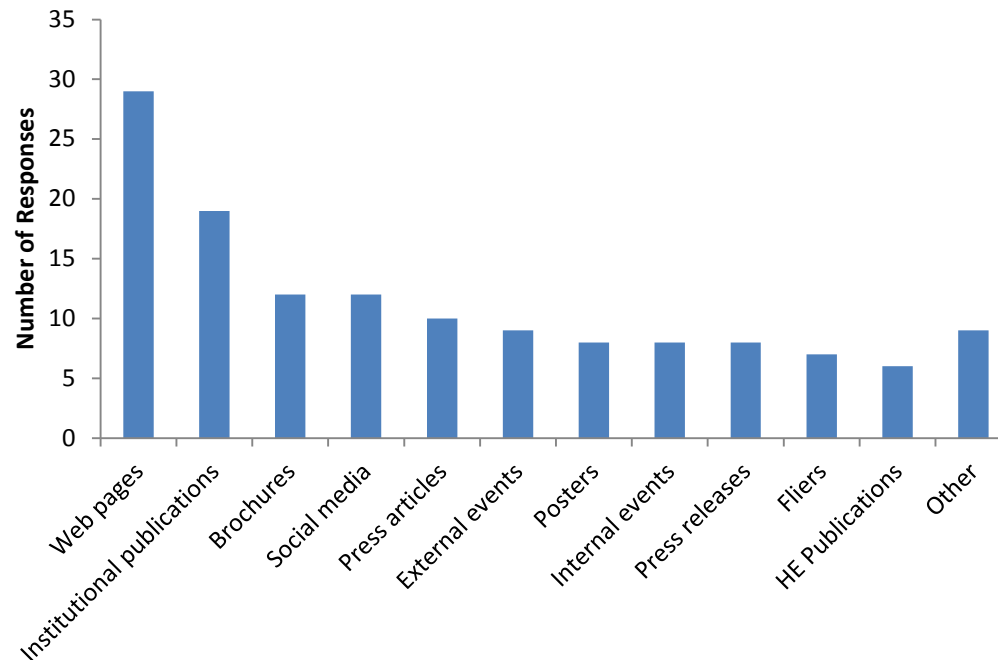
Question 6

What form of media will these modified case studies be incorporated into? (Tick relevant answers)

- Brochures
- Fliers
- Posters
- Web pages
- Internal events
- External events
- Press releases
- Press articles
- Social media
- Institutional publications
- HE Publications
- Other (please specify)

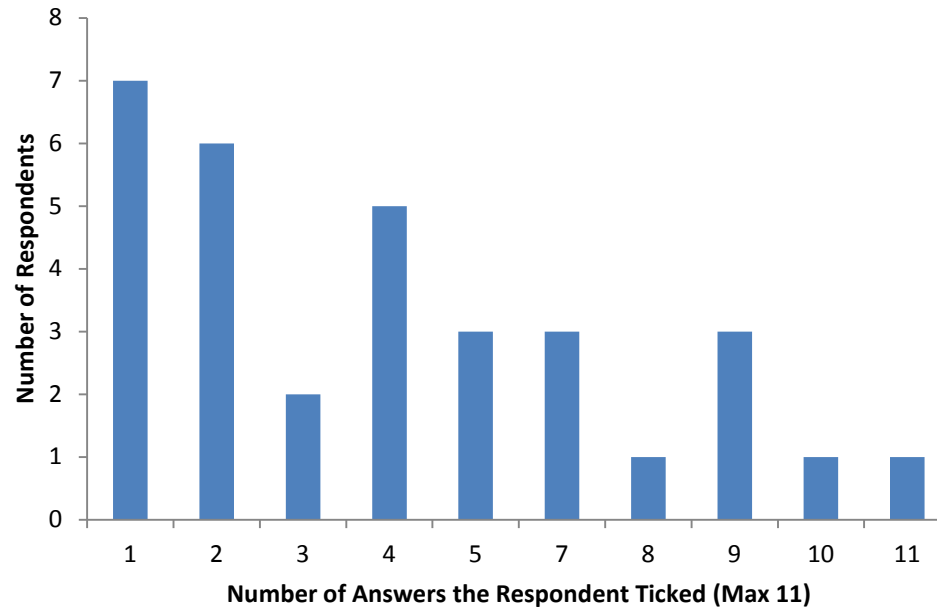
Question 6 cont.

- Collated answers to Question 6
 - The destination of the case studies is commonly web pages (94% of respondents) with institutional publications second (61%)



Question 6 cont.

- **How selective are institutions being in choosing media?**
 - Three-quarters of the institutions are selecting at least one media type. The following graph shows the number of responses per respondent to the Question 6 (maximum of 11 responses per respondent)



Question 6 cont.

- Identified 'Others' include:
 - “Web pages in 1st instance. Just possible that we may later repurpose for other formats”
 - “Initially web pages but will spread”
 - “Very early stages of planning: the media we choose may extend beyond the web.”
 - “We are working on this - not sure yet”
 - “Report”
 - We will do nine of the options “... if resources allow!”
 - “Videos for web site; podcasts on Soundcloud for links”
 - “Film”

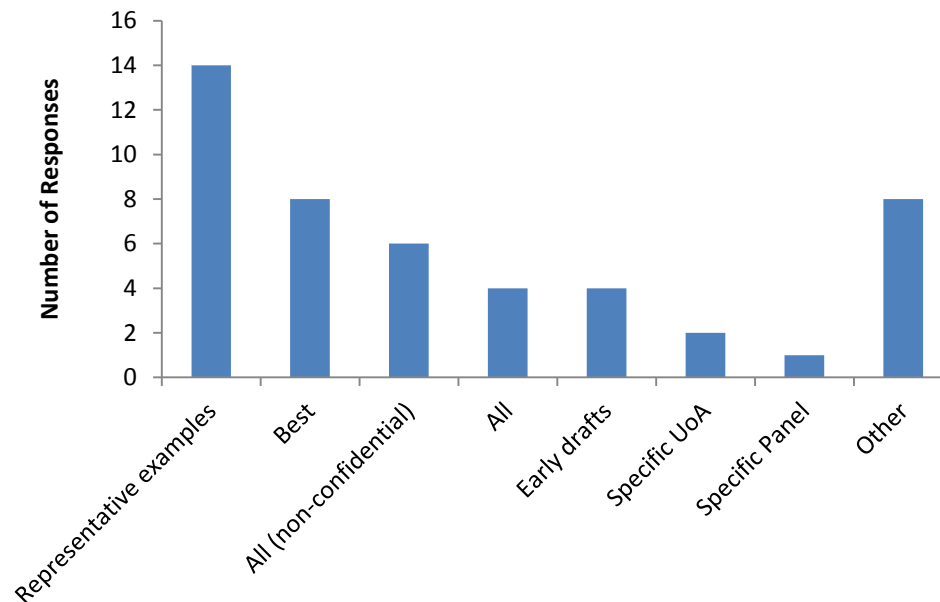
Question 7

How many of the case studies do you intend to use? (Tick relevant answers)

- All the case studies
- All the non-confidential case studies
- Case studies associated with specific Units of Assessment (1-36)
- Case studies associated with specific Panels (A-D)
- Representative examples
- Only the best
- Early drafts of case studies which weren't submitted
- Other (please specify)

Question 7 cont.

- Collated answers to Question 7
 - Many institutions are going through some selection process
 - However, ten are using all the case studies
 - Four are using early drafts too



Question 7 cont.

- Identified 'Others' include:
 - “to be agreed”
 - “I'm from a UoA so I'll only be involved in our ones, but I think the expectation is that pretty much all should have some profile, and I'm keen to use the ones which weren't submitted too.”
 - “plus others not developed for, or used in, our REF submission”
 - “No idea yet, at present have used about 10% of Panel D case studies”
 - “not decided which approach yet”
 - “Both the strongest and weakest case studies are potentially useful to serve as examples of good and bad practice.”

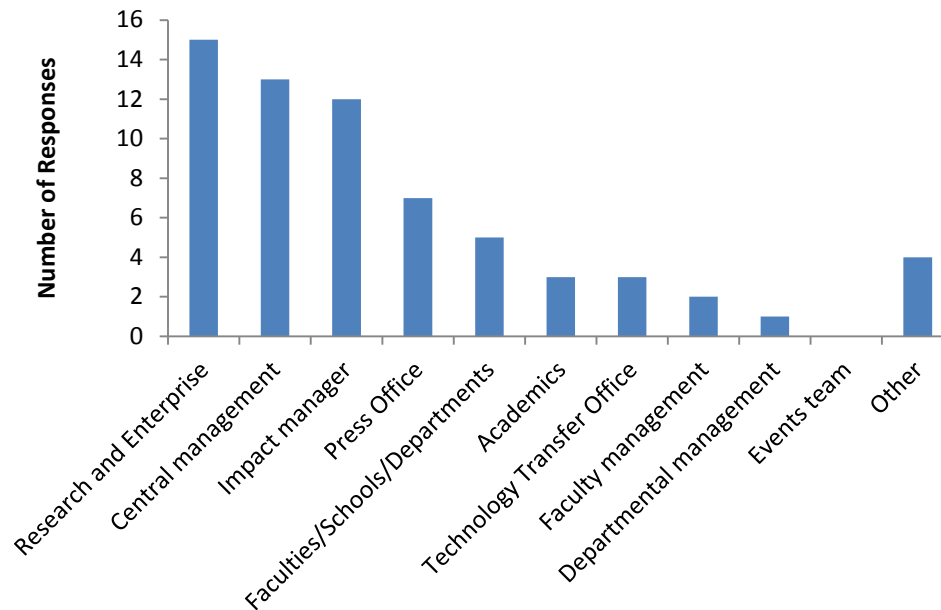
Question 8

Who is leading the use of these case studies in your institution? (Tick relevant answers).

- Academics
- Impact manager
- Staff in Research and Enterprise
- Staff in Technology Transfer Office
- Press Office
- Events team
- Central management (e.g. Pvc for Research)
- Faculty management (e.g. Dean)
- Departmental management (e.g. Head of Department/Director of Enterprise)
- Individual Faculties/Schools/Departments
- Other (please specify)

Question 8 cont.

- Collated answers to Question 8
 - The use of the case studies is being driven from Research and Enterprise in nearly half of the responses. N.B. The majority of respondents were from R&E, this may explain the strong response to this answer
 - Impact managers and Central Management are also significantly represented



Question 8 cont.

- Identified 'Others' include:
 - Head of School
 - Research Communications Manager
 - Planning team
 - Research Impact & Open Access Officer with support from the REF & Research Monitoring Manager and the marking and communications teams

Question 9

- This survey cannot cover the detail of the plans or approaches, please could you use the following box to add any further perspectives or links to web material.
- The following slides combine information from this survey and a survey run by the University of Kent. This data was kindly supplied by Simon Kerridge (Director of Research Services, University of Kent) and Renata McDonnell (REF Support Assistant, University of Kent).

Impact Case Study Web Presence (combined)

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/research/research-with-impact/>¹

<http://www.brad.ac.uk/research/our-research-impact/>²

<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/our-research/case-studies/>²

<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/research/faculties-and-research-centres/>²

www.hw.ac.uk/research/research-impact.htm²

<http://www.met.reading.ac.uk/research-impacts/>¹

<http://videowall.mdx.ac.uk>¹

www.mmu.ac.uk/research/ref2014^{1, 2}

<http://www.staff.mmu.ac.uk/manmetlife/news/view/the-ref-case-study-no6-arts>¹

<http://www.open.ac.uk/research/main/research-impact>²

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/research-impact/impact-films>²

<http://partnership.ox.ac.uk/category/case-studies/>²

¹ From Reading survey

² From Kent survey

Impact Case Study Web Presence (combined) cont.

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/impactke/keit/ ²

<http://www.port.ac.uk/research/research-impact/> ¹

<http://www.port.ac.uk/research/impact/filetodownload,149683,en.pdf> ¹

<http://www.port.ac.uk/portsmouth-business-school/research/research-impact/> ¹

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/research/Impact/res-casestudies.aspx> ¹

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/biologicalsciences/ieo/biosci-casestudies.aspx> ¹

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/maths-and-stats/research-impact/maths-research-impact.aspx> ^{1, 2}

http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/maths/Case_study_-_Maths_-_Elephants.pdf ²

<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/engineering/research/impact.page> ¹

www.sussex.ac.uk/research/impact ^{1, 2}

<http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/research/researchimpact.aspx> ²

¹ From Reading survey

² From Kent survey

Impact Case Study Web Presence (Kent Search)

HEI name	Website
Bangor University	http://irese.ac.uk/impact-research-case-studies.php.en
Cardiff Metropolitan University	http://www3.cardiffmet.ac.uk/english/research/pages/research-case-studies.aspx
City University London	http://www.city.ac.uk/arts-social-sciences/music/research/impact-iranian-music-shahnameh-project
Coventry University	http://www.coventry.ac.uk/research/ref-2014-units-of-assessment/Psychology_Psychiatry_and_Neuroscience/case-studies/
Durham University	https://www.dur.ac.uk/business/research/case-studies/
Edge Hill University	https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/research/ref-2014/uoa/
Heriot-Watt University	http://www.graphicscience.co.uk/g_s_projects/stars-r-us-impact-case-study/
Institute of Education, University of London	http://www.ioe.ac.uk/research/41898.html
Kingston University	http://www.kingston.ac.uk/research/research-showcase/research-case-studies/
Leeds Metropolitan University	https://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/research/ref-2014-case-studies.htm
London Business School	http://www.london.edu/facultyandresearch/research/casestudies.asp?page=1&f=1#case_389
London Metropolitan University	http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/research/faculties-and-research-centres/
London South Bank University	http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/research/case-studies
Loughborough University	http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/our-research/case-studies/youth-football-development-and-coaching.html
Manchester Metropolitan University	http://www2.mmu.ac.uk/research/ref/
Middlesex University	http://www.mdx.ac.uk/research/case-studies/index.aspx
Newcastle University	http://www.ncl.ac.uk/research/ref/unit/

Note: A quick web search was conducted on 142 HEIs – thanks to Renata McDonnell. Impact Case Studies were found on 35 of their websites.

Impact Case Study Web Presence (Kent Search) cont.

University	Website
Northumbria University	http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sd/academic/sass/about/humanities/history/research/makingadifference/ics/
Nottingham Trent University	http://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/ref_2014/impact_case_studies/advanced_textiles/impact.html
Queen's University Belfast	http://www.qub.ac.uk/home/ResearchandEnterprise/OurImpact/CaseStudies/
Southampton Solent University	http://www.solent.ac.uk/business-community/business/casestudies.aspx
Swansea University	http://www.swansea.ac.uk/research_innovation/news/dipleanerdfcasestudy/
The University of Hull	http://www2.hull.ac.uk/hubs/research/research-impact/case-studies.aspx
The University of Northampton	http://www.northampton.ac.uk/research
University of Bradford	http://www.brad.ac.uk/research/our-research-impact/
University of Hertfordshire	http://www.herts.ac.uk/research/research-case-studies
University of Liverpool	http://www.liv.ac.uk/humanities-and-social-sciences/research/ref-documents/
University of Oxford	http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/research-impact/impact-films
University of Reading	http://www.reading.ac.uk/maths-and-stats/research-impact/maths-research-impact.aspx
University of Sunderland	http://www.sunderland.ac.uk/research/ref2014/uoa19/
University of Sussex	http://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/impact
University of the West of England	http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/research/researchimpact.aspx
University of Worcester	http://www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/impact-case-studies.html
York St John University	http://www.timbercladding.org/CaseStudies/CaseStudy2_StJohnUniversity_York.pdf
Open University	http://www.open.ac.uk/research/main/research-impact

Note: A quick web search was conducted on 142 HEIs – thanks to Renata McDonnell. Impact Case Studies were found on 35 of their websites.

Question 9 cont.

Additional perspectives:

- “We are viewing the REF impact case studies as a really good source of information that we should be exploiting for other purposes and audiences, but also trying to consider carefully which we should use to make sure it is the most recent and best examples of impact that we are communicating. We are being careful to adapt the content and not just copy/paste from REF documents. We have also created a small Access database logging impacts, partners, and individuals. We will continue to add to and build up the database until at least July 2015 initially as a means of logging KE activity, but potentially in the longer term to maintain/develop a record of activity, to provide a means of brokering/stimulating new links, and as a 'find an expert' service.”
- “I find the conversation with Marketing/Comms teams frustrating - they say they want to 'use' them but don't give a sense of how, or who they wish to engage - which is odd, because you would think that they would have a better sense of this. I am firmly of the opinion that they are not in the best format for wider dissemination as it stands - I wouldn't just stick them up on a website as they are, as I think many wouldn't. The audience needs to be defined and to what end they will be used - if it's solely for undergraduate recruitment, the fine, but can we be clear from the outset? If we're engaging with industry stakeholders, but then we would presumably want to communicate again in a different way”
- “Schools are moving on this at different speeds. We are also working with an external comms/PR to promote some of the case studies, as part of the university's existing contract with the company.”
- “We intend to use the case studies to inform our research staff development programme, and may also use them to plan public engagement activities”