

Research Assessment Exercise 2020
Impact Overview Statement

University: The Chinese University of Hong Kong |

Unit of Assessment (UoA): Law - 19 |

Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: 24 |

(1) Context - context for the individual case study(ies)

Since its establishment in 2004, engagement with non-academic users of our research has been central to the mission of the CUHK Law Faculty. Young and vibrant, we are developing a strong reputation for high-quality legal research with an impact outside academic life for the benefit of the broader society. An array of initiatives and resources have been developed to enable us to connect researchers, policy-makers, regulators, international organisations, as well as other groups and individuals across the world, thereby facilitating the translation of the research conducted by our colleagues into real world impact. Our research has had far-reaching influences on the development of laws and regulatory policies, and contributed to improvements in everyday lives, not only in the Greater China region but also in other parts of the world. |

(2) Approach to impact - the unit's approach to impact during the assessment period for impact

Over the past six years, our approach to impact has been to broaden the influence of our research from Hong Kong, where our roots are, to the Greater China region and the rest of the world. This reflects the Faculty's diverse and international staff (from over 20 different jurisdictions), the broad range of subjects and jurisdictions our research focuses on, and the robust local and international networks through which we maximise the reach of our impact.

The Faculty is inclusive and egalitarian in its approach to impact: we encourage all colleagues at different stages of their career to be publicly engaged. A recently proposed project on global constitutionalism involves Abeyratne, Bui, Chopra, Hargreaves, Malagodi, Mitchell, and Roberts, of whom five are at the Assistant Professor rank and two are Associate Professors.

We allocate significant resources to support the Faculty's impact ambitions. We continue to invest in projects with high potential and public profile, enabling us to deepen the real-life effects of our research endeavours. |

(3) Strategy and plans - strategy and plans for supporting impact

The Faculty has set out, and will continue, to place impact at the core of our research mission. Central to our impact strategies and future plans are:

Integrating impact into research: The Faculty nurtures and deepens strategic partnerships – locally, regionally and internationally – to connect our academic staff to non-academic users of our research. The appointments of prominent practitioners – such as Dr Andrew Li (Chief Justice of HKSAR, 1997-2010), Ian Grenville Cross (Director of Public Prosecutions of HKSAR, 1997-2009), Lord Woolf (Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, 2000-2005), Dame Elish Angiolini (Lord Advocate for Scotland, 2006-2011), and Dr Serge Brammertz (Chief Prosecutor of the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, 2008-2017) – to visiting roles help to strengthen the links between research and legal development. The Faculty has begun, and will continue, to explore innovative partnerships with a range of non-academic user groups, directly engaging them, as appropriate, in the conception, design, implementation, dissemination and/or utilisation of research conducted by our colleagues. This process helps our researchers to form a deep understanding of what the needs of non-academic users are and how best our research can help to address

them. It will also enable the Faculty to plan and organise our impact more strategically and, also, to allocate resources to maximise impact.

Facilitating both individual and collaborative impact projects: Individual impact projects are currently central to the Faculty's achievement of its impact ambitions. The Faculty will continue to support individual projects. To realise its impact potential more fully, the Faculty has commenced, and will continue, to adopt a strategy that encourages an organic formation of research clusters focusing on problems of regional and global significance, such as the ascendance of a global constitutional order and the Belt and Road Initiative ('BRI'). Solving these problems entails collaborative projects that transcend traditional subject areas and that are multi-jurisdictional and interdisciplinary in nature. For example, the Faculty's collaborative project examining the legal aspects of the BRI involved Lee (intellectual property), Miao (criminal law), Villalta Puig (investment law), Wolff (jurisprudence), Xi (financial law), Xu (tax law), and Zou (labour law). It drew considerable attention in diplomatic and policy-making circles. The resulting book launch event was featured by keynotes delivered by senior diplomats (e.g., the State Secretary of the German Federal Foreign Office and four of his team members). Another major collaborative project on global constitutionalism, part of which has already received significant Faculty impact funding support, has a strong focus on multiple Asian jurisdictions: PRC Mainland, Hong Kong SAR, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Vietnam.

Identifying, developing and cultivating high-potential impact areas: The Faculty endeavours to develop an impact agenda that identifies, develops, supports, and reinforces potential, high-impact areas of research. The Faculty has set up an Impact Review Panel to prioritise, guide and monitor the impact projects selected for focused impact support by the Faculty. The Faculty also emphasises on cultivating an impact-friendly environment: we held impact workshops and will organise away-days for all staff to further raise impact awareness. We will offer seed and follow-up funding for impact initiatives to incubate and nurture 'start-up' impact areas.

Institutionalising support for impact: The Faculty has appointed an Impact Director and a Deputy Impact Director to coordinate the development of impact initiatives and resources. Working closely with the Faculty's Research and Scholarship Committee and assisted by a full-time staff member acting as Impact Officer, the appointments help to integrate impact as one of the pillars of our research mission. The Faculty will also explore strategies for ensuring that impact builds into recruitment, annual performance review, promotion and retention processes. The Faculty will also continue to set aside funding for impact projects. |

(4) Relationship to case studies - the relationship between the unit's approach to impact and the submitted case studies

|The two case studies carefully selected by the CUHK Law Faculty reflect our overall approach, and our strong commitment, to impact. They fall squarely in two of the Faculty's core areas of research strengths, i.e., comparative energy law and Chinese law.

The studies show how CUHK legal research has impacted on a wide range of non-academic user groups, including governments (Boute), regulatory agencies and the judiciary (Huang). They also demonstrate our success in achieving our impact ambition, which transcends Hong Kong, helping to shape legislation, regulatory strategies and judiciary initiatives in the Greater China region (Huang) and other parts of Asia (Boute).

The case studies also reflect the Faculty's inclusive approach to impact: both of our case study authors were Associate Professors, subsequently promoted to Professors, at material time the case studies were formulated. |