

Research Assessment Exercise 2020
Impact Overview Statement

University: The Hong Kong Polytechnic University |

Unit of Assessment (UoA): BUSINESS (22) |

Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: 48 |

(1) Context

The unit of assessment comprises two departments in the faculty of business. They are the Department of Management and Marketing (MM) and the Department of Logistics and Maritime Studies (LMS). There are three major research areas under MM, including (a) human resources and organizational behaviours (HR/OB), (b) marketing and (c) management information systems. There are two major academic areas under LMS, including (a) supply chain and operations management (SCOM) and (b) shipping, maritime and transportation studies (SMTS). The major non-academic user groups, beneficiaries and audience of our research are the business community, which includes senior executives, frontline managers, professional associations and industry policy-makers. More specifically, the non-academic stakeholders and beneficiaries vary slightly according to the specific disciplines of our research. For example, our research in SMTS has very specific beneficiaries of the shipping and transportation industries. Our research in HR/OB specifically focuses on HR professionals and managers involving organizational management. Accordingly, our major research in SMTS includes port policy, dry bulk shipping markets, maritime safety and airport congestion problems, among others. Our research in organizational behaviours includes leader-member exchanges, corporate citizenship behaviours and workplace anxiety. Through the dissemination of our research, we have significantly influenced industrial policy and managerial practices, such as government port development policy, maritime safety measures and employee recruitment and selection practice.

(2) Approach to impact

In our UoA, we consider the enhancement of our research impact for the benefit of society as a key strategic objective, and it shapes our policy and directions. In our university, engagement with the community, knowledge transfer and the beneficial results of our research are key performance indicators linking directly to resource allocations of our departments. Accordingly, departments are required to report periodically and to be assessed regularly for their impact engagements and knowledge-transfer activities with the non-academic community. More specifically, to enhance the practical application of our research, individual academics are highly encouraged to engage directly in partnerships with companies/organizations to resolve relevant managerial problems, provide consultation services and participate in public bodies to formulate policy.

To enhance our research impact on the industry and business communities, we regularly launch knowledge-transfer forums, providing important platforms to match the latest findings of our research with the needs of local and global companies. Some recent examples of knowledge-transfer forums include port development policy, workplace anxiety management and logistics expansions under the Belt and Road Initiative. Through such workshops and forums, our researchers share the latest theories and insights from their research with community leaders, influencing their managerial practice and policy formulations.

In fact, Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) is ranked as one of the top universities in research applications and knowledge transfer. We are ranked first in securing funding from the

Research Impact Fund under the Research Grants Council, which demonstrates the significant contributions of our research to the economic development and well-being of the community. We have outstanding achievements in both research and knowledge transfer. We recently obtained 65 million in funding support from the government body for facilitating our research impact to the local community, enhancing industrial performance and directly benefiting society through our research. We regularly review our policy and plans to strengthen the social, economic and industrial applications of our research. For example, our university is planning to further simplify its knowledge-transfer process, allowing academic staff to create start-up companies.

More generally, as an ongoing practice in ensuring the usefulness of our research, we regularly disseminate our research findings to the business community and the public through various means. As a business school, we organize regular talks and seminars to deliver our research findings. For example, our executive seminar series “CEO x Don” is regularly organized every few months in Central Hong Kong hotels, reaching business leaders in the heart of Hong Kong. This forum attracts about 50 to 80 senior executives in Hong Kong each time. We also publish our research findings regularly from a layman’s perspective in periodicals such as *FB Magazine*, the FB e-Bulletin and FB Newsletters.

We also positively affect the international business community by publishing our research findings in widely circulated practitioner-oriented magazines. We reward colleagues who publish in top-tier practitioner-oriented journals such as the *California Management Review*, the *Harvard Business Review* and the *MIT Sloan Management Review*, which have been widely circulated among business leaders worldwide. Publications in the journals are considered an important performance indicator for individuals in our staff-appraisal systems. We also publish our own knowledge-transfer journals hosted in this UoA. For example, we publish the *Maritime Business Review*, which is a popular journal for management executives in the maritime industry worldwide. In addition, we also make sure that our research is well comprehensible by the local business community by communicating our research findings through news media such as the *South China Morning Post* and other media reports. Based on these local publications, our faculty members are often invited to give talks to companies, exploring opportunities for consultancy services or research collaboration. Overall, this allows us to create an impact as research dissemination enhances the awareness of our latest research and creates the opportunity for potential partnerships between academic researchers and businesses.]

(3) Strategy and plans

[Overall, our strategic aim is to ensure that the research findings will positively affect the business community. Currently, as a university policy, academics are given significant freedom to engage in research-impact and knowledge-transfer activities such as consultancy and other services to the community. Our staff members are allowed to spend up to 20% of their time on knowledge-transfer activities and industrial consultancy services. Many of our academic staff members are actively engaged in various external services and provide expert advice to the government and professional bodies based on their research. For example, some of our faculty members are serving in the advisory body of the government, providing expert advice for the development of the logistics and maritime industry. Our Centre of Leadership and Innovation (CLI) also provides consultancy services in the area of leadership and entrepreneurship.

In our university, we organize an annual prize presentation, known as the Outstanding Professional Service Awards, for recognizing colleagues with superior performance in research-impact activities such as consultancy services and other knowledge-transfer activities that directly benefit the business community. In fact, knowledge transfer has long been at the

core of PolyU, where we strive to distinguish our research through real-life applications within the community. Making research meaningful and carrying out knowledge transfers to the business community is a critical part of our organizational culture, and we will continue uphold it in the coming years. We plan to continue our knowledge-transfer forums and industrial workshops as an important mechanism to generate exchange and potential partnerships between academics and businesses. The recent knowledge-transfer forums mentioned above have attracted 150 on-site participants and reached a real-time audience of 100,000 via live streaming. We wish to further enhance such impact in the coming years. We will also more frequently organize our knowledge-transfer workshops. Upcoming events this month include the Belt and Road Cross-Professional Advancement Programme and Port Coordination in Great Bay Area Forum, for which we have invited many top executives from the industry as speakers. We will further simplify our administrative procedures and develop policies for translating research into commercial applications leading to economic benefits to the business community. |

(4) Relationship to case studies

|As mentioned above, we highly encourage individual academics to engage directly in partnerships with companies to resolve relevant managerial problems. For example, we have utilized the management tools we developed to train new employees recruited for a large hotel in China, as stated in our case of “Improving Performance through the Building of Proactive Human Resources...” We have led a team to provide consulting and training services to a Chinese technology company and increased its productivity and innovation while reducing its employee turnover rate. We also engage directly in partnerships with companies and provide consultancy services. For example, our research into management support systems has transformed the tracking operations for aircraft parts maintenance at one of the world’s leading aircraft engineering and maintenance companies. We encourage our academic staff members to actively engage in various external services and provide expert advice to government and professional bodies based on their research. Some of our faculty members are serving in the advisory body of the government, providing expert advice for the development of the logistics and maritime industry. We also formulated a policy report entitled “Supporting Hong Kong to Compete for International Maritime Service Center,” which is an internal report required under the State Council of the People’s Republic of China. We have stimulated public debate and influenced policy decisions on a national scale. Through our research in maritime studies, we have carried out several consultancy projects related to maritime work and safety in one of the world’s largest engineering consulting firms. Based on our research, we have developed a technical guidance document that has been successfully adopted in various engineering and planning studies in Hong Kong and is being used as a reference for assessing maritime traffic impacts and operational improvements. Overall, through our cutting-edge research, we have significantly influenced the industry, directly improving its productivity and performance. We have also provided expert services to the government, influencing decision-making at a national level. |