

Research Assessment Exercise 2020
Impact Overview Statement

University: City University of Hong Kong |

Unit of Assessment (UoA): 24 - Psychology |

Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: 12 |

(1) Context

CityU Strategy is to create applicable knowledge to support social and economic advancement. Psychology at CityU builds on a tradition of problem-based research, applying scientific research to address real-world problems encountered locally and internationally. Applied research conducted in the three research clusters of the UoA (Clinical and Health Psychology, Developmental and Social Psychology, and Cognitive Psychology and Neuroscience) targets well-being (e.g., a positive psychology intervention for survivors of the Sichuan earthquake) and practitioners and services (e.g., the development of new approaches to assess post-traumatic growth and resilience and a new model of correctional intervention for Hong Kong prisoners). The main non-academic beneficiaries are policy makers and practitioners in family and social services, crime prevention, correctional services, gifted education, language education, creativity, mental health, and business, and ultimately the end users of their services. We extend the scope and audience of our research by direct public engagement through University-sponsored events (e.g., the Asia-Pacific Conference on Applied Positive Psychology), forums, media broadcasts and publications. These strengthen our societal impact, including awareness of psychological issues, and behavioural changes of practitioners and target groups. We make extensive contributions to government bodies and statutory committees (e.g. the HKSAR Gifted Education Committee, the HKSAR Education Bureau, and the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications), through which we inform public policy and services.

(2) Approach to impact

The UoA has a strong tradition of connecting academic research on psychological issues with training and public education, bringing innovative approaches to the attention of policy makers, professional associations, and service delivery agencies. These approaches inform evidence-based practice for multidisciplinary practitioners that ultimately benefits the public. They are in line with CityU strategic plan, with ‘enlarging capacity for knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship’ as its mission. The College Research Impact Committee established the Excellence in Knowledge Transfer Awards (EKTA) in 2012/13 to promote impacts. Our UoA member Nancy Yu’s project on resilience intervention in new Immigrants was awarded EKTA in 2013/14.

We provide consultation and training for community professionals to help them solve problems in local communities and wider society. For example, Anna Hui, Hui Fang Chen, and Sam Ye of the Developmental and Social Psychology cluster developed a play-based assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot scheme of the On-site Pre-School Rehabilitation Services delivered by the Social Welfare Department under the Labour and Welfare Bureau. The scheme has been regularized as one of the four government subvented services for 7,000 young children with special needs in over 500 kindergartens in Hong Kong since Oct 2018. Nancy Yu of the Clinical and Health Psychology Cluster designed training manuals for building personal and family resilience as well as well-being outcomes, which have been used by more than 1,500 families in Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

Our staff serve as leaders in government committees, professional associations, and non-government organisations. For example, Anna Hui led the development of the Education Bureau’s Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide in which play-based learning and creativity in arts education are emphasized. For example, the guide has suggested that 30 – 50 minutes should be set

aside for free-play every day in kindergartens. Julian Lai has served as the director of the Hong Kong Psychological Society.

Practical suggestions derived from our research are disseminated to the public through newsletters, media interviews, public seminars, and workshops. For instance, Dannii Yeung of the Developmental and Social Psychology cluster delivered a seminar on retirement preparation for the Hong Kong Housing Department and provided expert advice on retirement planning in the Backchat This Week (a current affairs program) by Radio Television Hong Kong. Bonnie Chow of the same cluster was invited by the Education Bureau to deliver public seminars on fostering parent-child reading culture for the Teacher Professional Development Program. |

(3) Strategy and plans

|In line with CityU's three strategic research areas: One Health, Smart Cities and Big Data, the UoA will continue to engage in more inter-disciplinary work to echo CityU's strategic plan and to impactfully translate its research into practice, policy making, and public understanding in the following ways.

- a. Building an effective network of expertise. Our research clusters possess staff in different disciplines in Psychology and well-equipped laboratories clearly showcase our available expertise. Within a multidisciplinary department, the UoA is in a good position to carry out interdisciplinary collaborative projects with a wider group of potential beneficiaries.
- b. Maximizing funding opportunities. The UoA expects to maintain its current level of success in applying for awards and grants available at different levels (e.g., RGC Knowledge Transfer grants).
- c. Maintaining and extending external connections. Over the years, we have established close connections with government bodies, organizations, and the media. We will not only maintain these connections but also deepen and extend them across sectors (e.g., support groups for new immigrants and carers for the elderly), both locally and internationally.
- d. Maintaining active involvement with policy making. Our staff play roles on various advisory boards and in government bodies and statutory committees, increasing their impact on policy making and practice. We will facilitate their further involvement with community services.
- e. Remaining sensitive and responsive to social changes. We actively monitor important challenges and other issues in society, and develop solutions and inform government policies in response. For example, societies worldwide are facing problems associated with population aging, which affect not only macrosystems such as education and the economy, but also microsystems such as daily activities and social relationships. We will strengthen our efforts to address these problems through our expertise in areas such as elderly people's physical and psychological health (Tina Rochelle, Ben Li, & Anna Hui) and employees' retirement preparation (Dannii Yeung). Similarly, we are responding to a growing awareness of the impact of education on children's development through our expertise in language and cognitive development (Vivien Chan, Bonnie Chow, & Andus Wong). |

(4) Relationship to case studies

|The impact case study illustrates our approach to working with practitioners and policy makers to develop new and evidence-based interventions to benefit the public. The intervention has been widely adopted in practice to facilitate resilience in various groups of beneficiaries, including cancer survivors, patients in hospitals, and prisoners. The intervention was made even more impactful by the creation of related educational materials, including books and TV programs for public education, in collaboration with the government and private organizations. |