

Research Assessment Exercise 2020
Impact Overview Statement

University: Hong Kong Baptist University |
Unit of Assessment (UoA): 28 Social Work and Social Policy |
Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: 12 |

(1) Context

As an exemplar of our overall impact profile, the department five-year-long impact case study, “Career and Life Adventure Planning for Youth-At-Risk in Community Settings” (CLAP), received HK\$62.21 million funding from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust (the JC) in 2015. Our unit’s impact strengths derive from research-driven initiatives of this type on Hong Kong **youth and youth work studies**, which constitutes one of three research clusters in our unit with a long history of serving Hong Kong. Established in November 2005, the Centre for Youth Research and Practice (CYRP) has produced locally informed and data-driven research of global impact on youth policy, youth work and services, youth and young adult transitions, childhood and youth wellbeing, as well as clinical and therapeutic practice with youth-at-risk groups and their families. Prof Victor Wong, the PI of the impact case study, served as the Associate Director of the Centre for ten years (2007-2016), and has been working with the current Centre Director, Dr Simon Chan, as well as twelve Centre Fellows to conduct innovative research collaborations with local and regional NGOs for facilitating impactful knowledge transfer in support of youth work professionals and service users in the field, and conducting empirical assessments, project evaluations, policy analysis, as well as outcomes and impact studies achieved by cluster-specific and/or cross-cluster research effort.

(2) Approach to impact

- a) to design and implement training courses and workshops organized by the CYRP and the Social Work Practice and Mental Health Centre (SWPMHC) of the unit with empirical findings and case studies drawn from a wide spectrum of cluster-specific and/or cross-cluster research effort since 2005;
- b) to produce quality quantitative and qualitative research studies adopting an exploratory, evaluative or impact-research study perspective to inform social work education delivered at undergraduate and postgraduate levels with a particular emphasis upon disadvantaged/marginalized groups characterized by diversity and difference not only in three specific research clusters, i.e.: 1) youth and youth work studies, 2) mental health and well-being, and 3) social policy, gender and community development, but also across two or three research clusters as a whole for the sake of promoting among undergraduate and postgraduate students an inter-disciplinary angle for informing and integrating research and practice in the field including social work, counseling, career guidance, community development, etc.;
- c) to disseminate and apply the findings of impactful journal articles published by department members as essential references for substantiating course curriculum, training courses and workshops locally, regionally, and internationally;
- d) using a “top-down” approach, to ensure that globally informed “best practices” research produced by department members could achieve meaningful impact with a local (Hong Kong), regional and international footprint, including social work and other helping professions and by means of adopting a “bottom-up” approach to involving various groups of direct beneficiaries served by local NGOs and practitioners at different regional and international conferences jointly organized by the unit and its two Centres over the years;
- e) to publish scholarly monographs, books, critical editions, videos and peer-reviewed journal articles disseminating research findings on aspects of youth social work, clinical therapy, community mental health interventions, etc., and to make UoA’s research-generated materials accessible to both local/international professional and public audience;

- f) to develop and deliver tailor-made, introductory and interdisciplinary year-long/semester/short course materials on narrative therapy generated and delivered by department faculty and alumni to field professionals, interested NGOs, and other public-private sector entities and stakeholders with exposure to youth-at-risk and other social welfare concerns. Since 2005, 3,000 participants have graduated from UoA “on-demand” courses;
- g) to develop and deliver tailor-made staff training short courses, at both entry and intermediate management levels, for the Correctional Services Department (CSD) of the HKSAR Government. Since 2012, four CSD officer cohorts have completed such training, and the Centre’s “Enlightenment III” course, also funded by the CSD, won the “Best Practice Award in Social Welfare 2015” awarded by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service.

(3) Strategy and plans

- a) with the provision of coaching and mentoring guidance from experienced professorial members of the unit, our new staff in particular are supported to develop research projects within and across the three research clusters to generate benefits derived from joint synergetic effort;
- b) our partnership with district-wide, social service NGOs and other public-private entities, including the HKSAR government, ensures the widest possible coverage and application of our interdisciplinary research geared toward impactful and outcomes-based practice, research with different Hong Kong disadvantaged/marginalized groups as its direct beneficiaries. Our research recognizes, documents, and promotes the mobilization and empowerment of local community organizations’ capacity to engage with and implement their own practice-based findings in tandem with our own research, instilling the wisdom of professional collaboration;
- c) the Centre taught five cohorts of the “One-Year Postgraduate/Advanced Training Program in Narrative Therapy (NT)” during 2011-2017, with the sixth cohort having begun training in April 2019. An NT alumni group was formed in 2017 creating a platform from which to leverage and sustain the contacts created and research-informed interventions delivered through the community of our 110 programme graduates;
- d) on-going overseas research collaboration introduces benchmarks for our HK-based research practice. For example, Dr. Jiayan Pan was recently awarded HK\$6 million for collaboration with a Sweden-based group of scholars conducting cross-cultural Online Cognitive Behavioral Intervention research which will benefit local & international practitioners.

(4) Relationship to case studies

- a) prior to launch, CLAP received generous funding from the JC for the implementation of its Expanded Notion of Work (ENOW) model, which correlates findings from the analysis of paid and unpaid work experiences of youth. “Snapped in” with ENOW, outcome-based and impact research protocols continue to inform on-going interventions made by the five, CLAP service teams ($n=80$ social workers) since the project’s beginning;
- b) as PI of the CLAP Community-Based Team (CBT), Prof Victor Wong is collaborating with other scholars, bringing together colleagues and other providers on a cross-disciplinary, local, and international platform: the HKBU English department (ethnic minority youth in Hong Kong); the HKBU Computer Science department (building a cloud-based interface for CV360, <https://cv360.org/>); as well as renowned overseas scholars ([Prof. Tristram Hooley](#), University of Derby; and [Prof. Johanna Wyn](#), University of Melbourne) currently consulting for CLAP as to the emerging impact profile of ENOW-VASK (Values, Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge) relative to international benchmarks;
- c) [Dr. Jacques Pouyaud](#), a renowned proponent of the “Life-Designing approach” to career counseling, and currently a member of the UNESCO Chair of “Lifelong Guidance and Counseling”, will visit the department as a Visiting Scholar (December 2019 – July 2020). Dr. Pouyaud’s mandate is to incorporate our case study’s ENOW-VASK framework into the [Life-Designing approach](#) methodology for global delivery via the [UNESCO-UNITWIN network](#).