

Workshop: Influencing Public Policy

Presenters:

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- Dr Caroline Kenny - social science adviser in the UK Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) & Daniel Slade, PGR, Univ of Liverpool.
- Dr. Robin James, Commons Clerk of the Joint Committee on Human Rights.

PGR's & Pathways to Influencing Public Policy

Dave Richards, Professor of Public Policy,
University of Manchester



That Was Then...This is Now: Policy & Impact IN A CHANGING WORLD

- **When the Butler met the Major [1992]:** ESRC Whitehall Programme (1994-1999) – opening up the black box.
- Last 2 decades, sea change in engagement/impact with ‘private world of W/W’

Why?

Legitimacy - search for ‘comprehensive rationality’, ‘political legitimacy’ etc.in complex governance world created new dependencies between policy makers and social sciences [but i a competitive environment –consultancies, think-tanks etc.]

Timeline of Change:

- 1980s - Whitehall’s monopoly on policy advice eroding
- Late ‘90s - ‘evidence-based policy making’ (EBPM)
- 2010s - ‘What Works’: ‘supports government to make policy in a fundamentally different way: deliberately testing variations in approach, vigorously evaluating, and stopping things that don’t work’ [Cabinet Office]
- Whitehall needs you! CSW (2016) article – policy-makers still unclear where to turn to for evidence!
- But also unforeseen and unintended consequences – more doors now open, but we may knock too often – ‘the fatigue of academic overload’!

Impact and Transmission: Westminster and Whitehall

Getting W/W Elites to Engage with your Research

- How you start can influence impact! R.I. generation - seek-out support of key stakeholders. Can then be drawn on at output/impact stage!
- Build relationships - elites operate in a networked environment – can't be ignored, but can be utilised e.g. make contacts [local M.P., 'practitioner' Hon. Fellows etc.]
- Transmission – 'triple writing' [Flinders], blogging, tweeting, broadcasting, podcasts, etc.
- Language - is there a problem with disciplinary jargon and impact'? [re. Peter Riddell, Tony Wright and Orwell's 'Politics and the English Language' argument etc.]. **CLEAR ENGLISH = CLEAR THINKING**
- Thinks-Tanks – [aren't just a threat], can also present opportunities through partnerships.
- Keep informed - know what's happening – 'live issues'

Select Committees - an Impact pathway

A] SELECT COMMITTEES - THE LADDER OF ENGAGEMENT/IMPACT

Step 1: Written Evidence – what's stopping you?

Step 2: From Written Evidence to Oral Evidence: written contributions often lead to invitation to make oral contribution. More you submit written evidence, more you enhance likelihood as invited witness.

Step 3: From Oral Evidence to Select Cttee Special Adviser: more you make regular contributions, increases potential to become a Special Adviser.

Look out for when these opportunities are advertised and apply

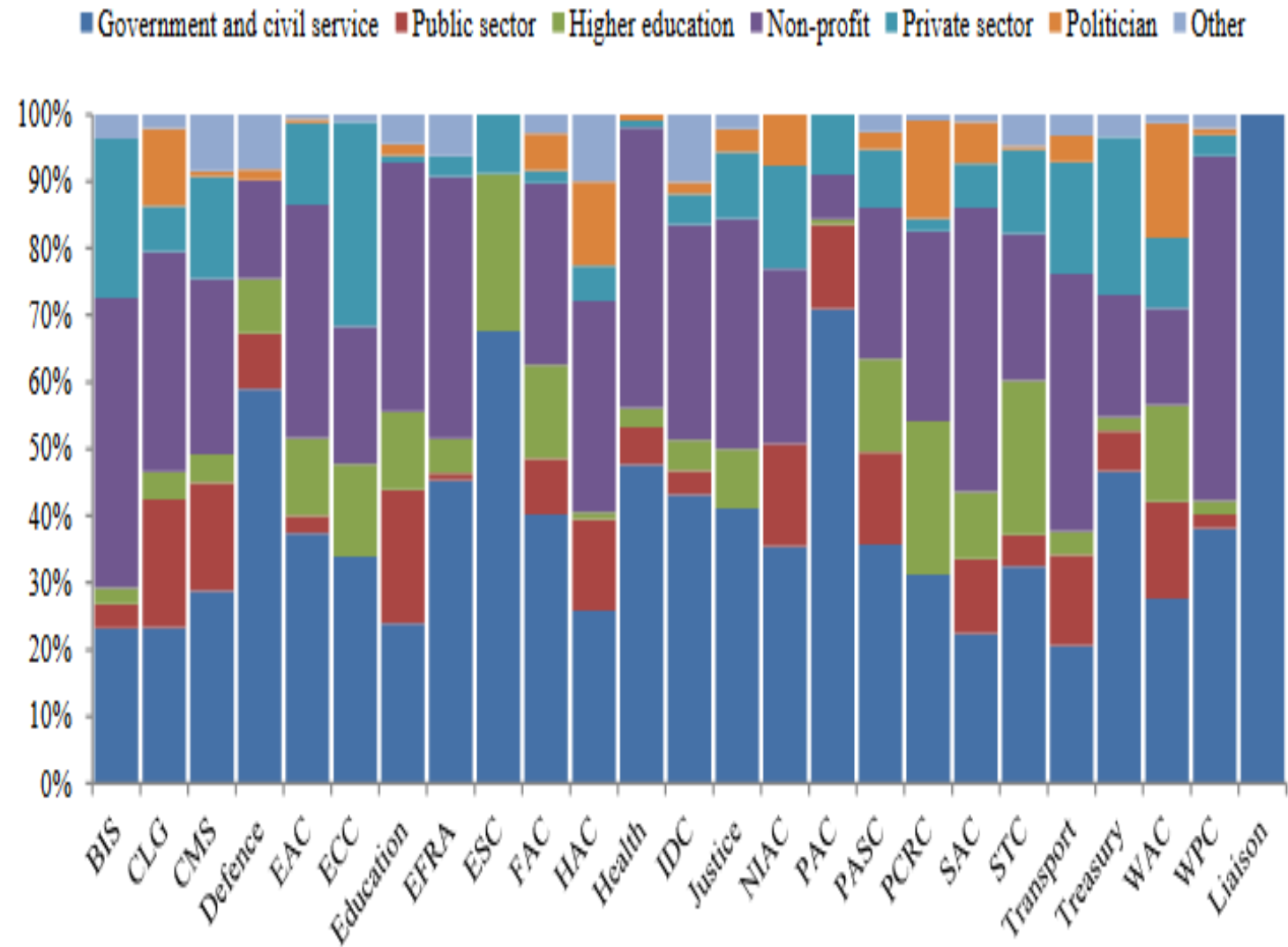
B] Some Thoughts on Select Ctts. and Impact:

- Giving evidence puts you on the W/W radar and can lead to other impact opportunities.
- Emphasis is on your EXPERT ANALYSIS DRAWN FROM RESEARCH/EVIDENCE,
- But there'll also be NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS – i.e. 'what do you recommend we should do'
- Art of a 'killer quote or analogy' but use it sparingly!
- BUT, academic jargon should be avoided, clarity of message.
- Changing Faces - Cttes want to hear from new/different witnesses rather than the usual [grey, male and pale] suspects.

Who's Giving Evidence and Where? Snap-shot 2013-4 Session

[M. Geddes 2016]

Figure 3. Organisational distribution of witnesses by committee



Who's Giving Evidence?

[Geddes 2016]

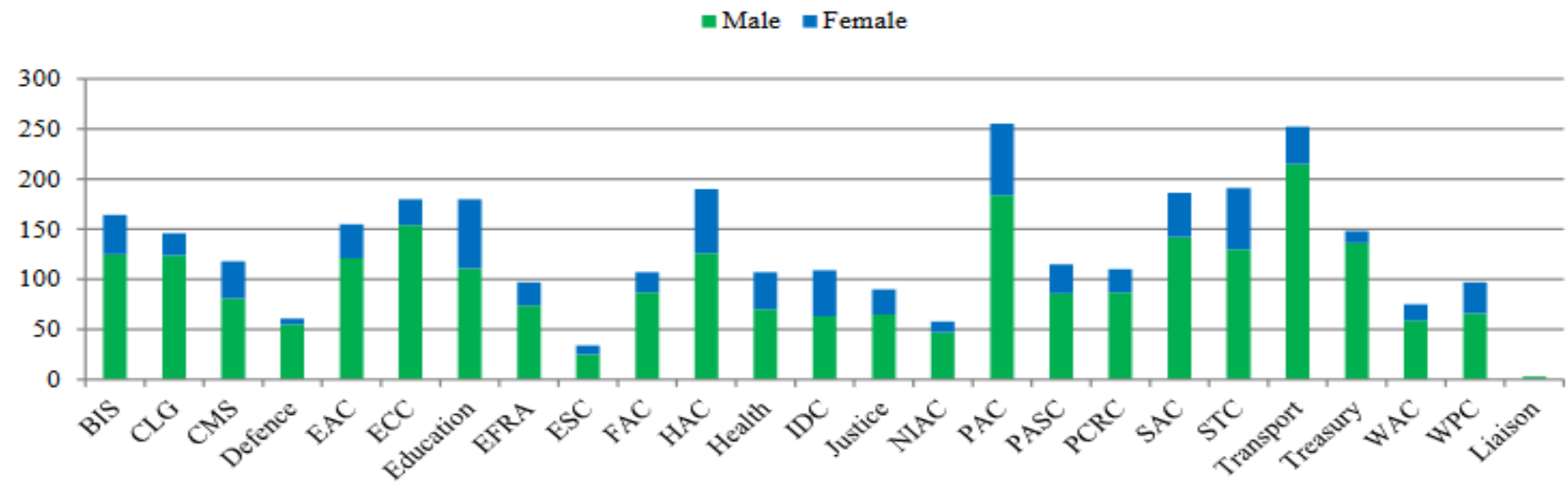
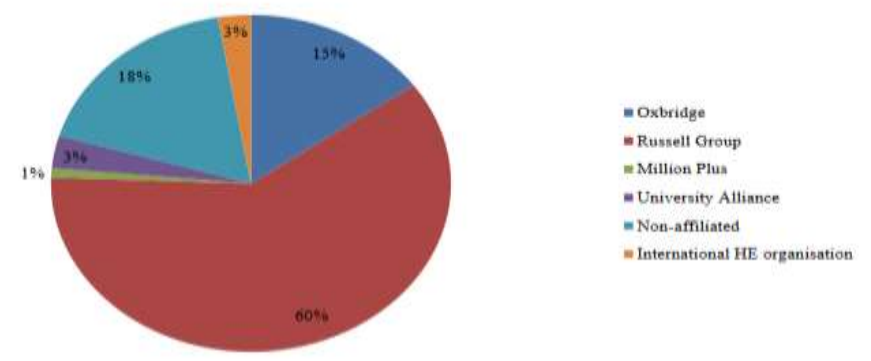


Figure 8. Higher education witnesses (university witnesses only)



Geographical distribution of HE witnesses

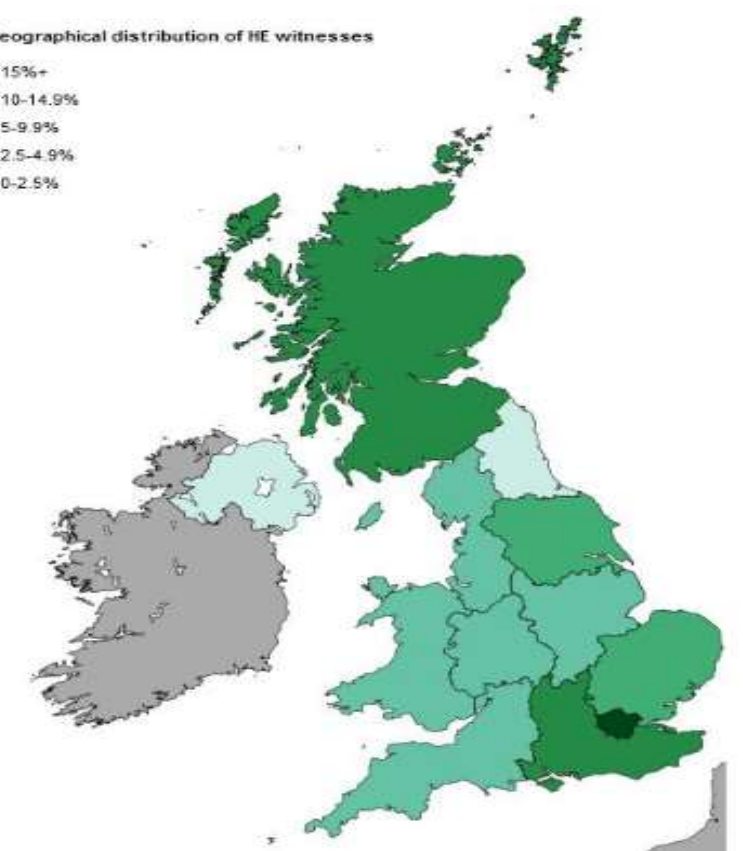
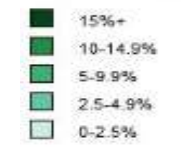


Table 3. Most frequent higher education witnesses

1	University College London (26)
2	University of Oxford (24)
3	London School of Economics (19)
4	King's College London (17)
5	University of Glasgow (12)
6	University of Cambridge (10)
7	University of Edinburgh (7)
=7	University of Manchester (7)
9	University of York (6)
=10	University of Stirling (5)
=10	Cardiff University (5)
=10	Imperial College London (5)
=10	University of Birmingham (5)

Where's Your Research Going?

Who wants to Hear From You?

- A 'smarter state' in an age of stretched resources – social sciences offers a crucial support mechanism.
- Agencies, Devolved Gov, Public Bodies/Services, SE, Civil Society, Private Sector, etc. – offer similar opportunities in seeking out expertise and knowledge.
- Same principles hold for other channels e.g. Europe, Supra-National, other jurisdictions etc.
- **Be proactive not just reactive** – seek out appropriate bodies that might benefit from your research and let them know about it.
- Once networked in – this can lead to further opportunities.
- We can learn from STEM disciplines, who've often been more instrumental at doing this.

A photograph showing a person's hand holding a white protest sign against a blue sky. The sign has handwritten text in black and red ink. The background shows a crowd of people and some buildings in the distance.

WHAT DO WE WANT?
EVIDENCE-BASED CHANGE
WHEN DO WE WANT IT?
AFTER PEER REVIEW