

## **Policy Impact Skills for Historians**

This innovative course enables historians at King's London to maximise the impact and reach of their research. It provides the skills and confidence to engage with, and influence, public policy and popular audiences. The course is open to those working with historical themes and methodologies, in any department, centre or institute, from PhD students approaching completion to senior staff. It is offered by History & Policy (H&P), the experts in policy engagement for historians, based in the Institute of Contemporary British History at King's ([www.historyandpolicy.org](http://www.historyandpolicy.org)). The course is enabled by KPI and the School of Arts & Humanities at King's College London.

For more than a decade, H&P has provided bespoke, professional support for historians seeking to engage with and influence public policy audiences, and has run over 20 events across central government, including in the Department for Education, the Treasury, the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Cabinet Office, the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs, and No. 10 Downing Street. Drawing on this expertise, up to 30 participants in this course will be given specialist training and encouragement to design and implement their own action plans for impact.

Participants will be offered support and guidance in

- Pinpointing and communicating succinctly and accessibly the policy relevance of their research
- Identifying appropriate policy audiences to target and keeping abreast of 'competing' voices
- Achieving two-way dialogue and meaningful engagement with policy audiences, rather than just disseminating research
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of their engagement, and adapting their strategy accordingly

The course will comprise three key components:

### **1. Workshop 1: Introduction to public policy engagement**

Lessons from H&P's 10 years of experience engaging with policy makers and shapers will feature through case studies of historians' effective intervention in the public policy process. Through group exercises and individual tasks, participants will practice preparing their research for dissemination and application in policy making. The workshop will also cover King's impact strategy.

## **2. Workshop 2: Public policy engagement – practice and actors**

This workshop will consider the landscape of public-policy making in Britain, and the key actors in these processes. Through panels with historians, civil society actors and policy makers, as well as tasks to develop skills, participants will develop greater understanding of the opportunities for intervention and practise their capacities to do so.

## **3. Workshop 3: The media**

Featuring senior journalists and communications professionals to explain the challenges and opportunities of using history on air and in print, this workshop will offer a lively and informative insight into how different media operate and the implications for historians. A session will be dedicated to historians' use of social media, including Twitter.

## **Workshop 1: Introduction to public policy engagement**

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**22 Jan 2014**

**9am: Registration, coffee & tea**

Chair, **Dr Lucy Delap**, H&P King's College London

### **Session 1: Case studies of historians' engagement**

**9.30-11am**

**Dr Andrew Blick**, Lecturer in Politics and Contemporary History, Institute of Contemporary British History, King's College London

**Prof Pat Thane**, Research Professor in Contemporary History, Institute of Contemporary British History, King's College London

**Dr Pam Cox**, Senior Lecturer in Social History, University of Essex

### **Session 2: The impact environment and H&P's work**

**11.10-12.30pm**

**Dr Peter O'Neill**, Research and Development Officer (Impact and Policy), King's College London

**Dr Ian Lyne**, Associate Director of Programmes, AHRC

**Fiona Holland**, Public Affairs Manager, H&P

**12.30-1.30pm: Lunch**

### **Session 3: Analysis of public engagement case studies and action planning**

1.30-4.30pm (including a break)

#### ***Task 1: Strengths and weaknesses analysis of H&P historians' engagement***

In small groups, participants will discuss different case studies of H&P historians' public policy engagement work, including H&P policy papers and opinion pieces, select committee evidence, seminars in government and media interactions, to assess their effectiveness. REF impact case studies will be considered for ways of evidencing impact.

#### ***Task 2: Introduction to action planning***

Participants will synopsise their research in a few paragraphs and consider the following:

- Key messages – the learning from your research for current policy, ideas, debate. Think about what you want to influence.
- Target audience(s) – who do you need to reach in policy-making-and-shaping-spheres with your key messages?
- Techniques – how will you reach those audiences?

The above is the core of an Action Plan for Policy Influence that participants will finalise as part of take-home work prior to workshop two (26 February). This session will be led by H&P Director Dr Lucy Delap and Public Affairs Manager Fiona Holland.

## **Workshop 2: Public policy engagement - practice and actors**

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26 Feb 2014

### **Session 1: The practice of policy making**

This session will introduce the landscape of British public-policy making, including the challenges and pressures of *realpolitik*, the functioning of Parliament and the legislative process. The opportunities for historians to participate in these processes will be outlined.

**Richard Bartholomew**, formerly Dept for Education

**Rachel Fentem**, Head of Budget project management and presentation, HM Treasury

### **Session 2: Historians, civil society and public policy**

Using environmental issues as a prism, this session will explore the relationship of between policy shapers, such as historians and NGOs, and central government.

**Dr Paul Warde**, Reader in Environmental and Economic History  
University of East Anglia

**Mike Childs**, Head of Policy, Research and Science, Friends of the Earth

**Lord Wilson of Dinton**, cross bench member of the House of Lords, former Cabinet Secretary (1998-2002) and former Permanent Secretary of the first UK Department for Environment (1992- 1994)

Session 3: TBC

**Q&A on engagement**

Participants in small groups themed around similar research topics will discuss ideas for making their research matter to public policy and other audiences, via reviewing the draft Action Plans produced after Workshop 1. This session will be led by H&P staff.

***Take-home task***

Prior to workshop 3, on the media, participants should draft the executive summary of an H&P policy paper.

**Workshop 3: the Media**

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**14 May 2014**

This workshop will provide insights into a wide variety of media, what makes a compelling story and how you can engage more effectively with journalists and use social media. Panellists will include experienced journalists from radio, television and newspapers, social media professionals and historians who use social media effectively. Chaired by **Paul Lay**, editor of *History Today*.

**Session 1: Radio and TV documentaries**

**Phil Tinline**, BBC Radio 4 history programming

**Lucy Delap** – advising on and participating in historical dramas and documentaries

*TBC*

**Session 2: News and current affairs**

**Chris Jameson**, Inside Edge/Radio Five Live

**Glen O'Hara**, Oxford Brookes

*TBC*

**Session 3: Social Media**

**Puffles**, the Dragon Fairy Whitehall watcher

**Caroline Dodds Pennock**, Lecturer in International History and coordinator of *History Matters*, the Sheffield University History Department blog

**Helen Weinstein**, Research Professor, Clare Hall & the History Faculty, University of Cambridge and founder of History Works

**Amanda Vickery**, Professor of Early Modern History, Queen Mary

#### **Session 4: Task**

Participants will draft a press release and a Tweet about their research with feedback from H&P staff.

#### ***Take-home task***

First draft of an H&P policy paper

### **Ongoing skills development**

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June 2014 – May 2015

Editorial advice and support will be provided to develop and finalise participants' H&P policy papers. After this process H&P will select a small group of participants for further support and skills development, based on the viability and relevance of their research for contemporary policy making and shaping.

This subset will be invited, where relevant, to shadow historians in the H&P network, meet with policy makers to discuss areas of common interest, and attend or participate in H&P events in government.

Communications advice and training will be given on seeking media coverage for research, and refining a SMART action plan for policy impact.

Overall, the course will provide participants with a greater understanding of public policy making in Britain, and the opportunities and challenges of engaging history in that process. It will equip historians with greater confidence and skills to enable them to shape the public agenda and enhance their prospects of completing an impact case study in future REF rounds.



History Department  
Institute of Contemporary British History