ESRC End of Award Report

For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This End of Award Report should be completed and submitted using the grant reference as the email subject, to reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk on or before the due date.

The final instalment of the grant will not be paid until an End of Award Report is completed in full and accepted by ESRC.

Grant holders whose End of Award Report is overdue or incomplete will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. We reserve the right to recover a sum of the expenditure incurred on the grant if the End of Award Report is overdue. (Please see the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this End of Award Report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Reference</th>
<th>RES-353-25-0006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant Title</td>
<td>Working Late: Strategies to Enhance Productive and Healthy Environments for the Older Workforce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Start Date</td>
<td>03/11/2008</td>
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<td>Grant End Date</td>
<td>31/03/2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Amount</td>
<td>£1,688,376.53</td>
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<td>Grant holding Institution</td>
<td>Loughborough University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Holder</td>
<td>Professor Cheryl Haslam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Holder's Contact Details</td>
<td>Address: School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:C.O.Haslam@lboro.ac.uk">C.O.Haslam@lboro.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>01509 223086</td>
</tr>
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Co-Investigators (as per project application):
- Dr Diane Gyi: Loughborough University
- Professor Roger Haslam: Loughborough University
- Professor Alistair Gibb: Loughborough University
- Professor Kevin Morgan: Loughborough University
- Professor Laurie Cohen: Loughborough University
- Dr Martin Lindley: Loughborough University
1. Non-technical summary

Please provide below a project summary written in non-technical language. The summary may be used by us to publicise your work and should explain the aims and findings of the project. [Max 250 words]

By 2020 over a third of the UK workforce will be aged over 50. The ageing workforce presents challenges for government, occupational health services, employers, workers and their families. It is now essential to facilitate extended working lives by promoting health in the workplace setting. Working Late investigated the policy issues associated with later life working and developed interventions and design solutions to promote health, productivity and quality of working life of older people. The research involved a mixed methods approach, comprising: focus groups, interviews, surveys and interventions. The project was underpinned by user engagement involving agencies, employers and older workers to inform the research process.

Working Late has produced new knowledge of how organisational policy and practice impacts on the employment experiences of older workers. Investigating experiences of older job seekers has highlighted some of the ways employers may discriminate on the basis of age. The journey to work and the options, enablers and barriers workers may face were investigated and a travel resource was generated to help identify and manage commuting problems. The research evaluated employees’ experiences of previous workplace health promotion initiatives and used the results to inform the development of a new and innovative physical activity intervention. The Walking Works Wonders intervention was designed, implemented and successfully evaluated in worksites across the UK. Finally a web resource: the Organiser for Working Late (OWL) was developed to support workers and managers using tools that aid communication in relation to good design and ergonomics, promoting an inclusive workplace.
2. Project overview

a) Objectives

Please state the aims and objectives of your project as outlined in your proposal to us. [Max 200 words]

The Working Late Collaborative Research Project aimed to investigate later life working across three main contextual themes: employment context, occupational health context and the work environment. The project objectives were to:

1. Adopt continuous and active engagement with agencies, employers and older workers to guide the research process and deliver effective and wide ranging dissemination of the findings and outputs.

2. Identify barriers and facilitators to working late, including examination of work participation and organisational policies, the impact of age discrimination legislation and the logistics of the journey to work.

3. Identify optimal, evidence based occupational health provision and collate current best practice in occupational health services accommodating the older worker.

4. Develop, implement and evaluate workplace interventions to promote health and workability of workers across the life course. Produce evidence based interventions and innovative health education materials to promote health at work.

5. Focus on work environment design to develop the Organiser for Working Late (OWL); a web based resource to facilitate and support the design of work systems, equipment, tools, technologies, facilities and the built environment to achieve inclusive, productive workplaces for all workers.

The objectives were met through a series of interlinked work packages (WPs).

b) Project Changes

Please describe any changes made to the original aims and objectives, and confirm that these were agreed with us. Please also detail any changes to the grant holder’s institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding. [Max 200 words]

There were no changes to the aims and objectives of the project. During the course of the project the PI Cheryl Haslam’s host department at Loughborough University changed from
Department of Human Sciences to School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, due to organisational restructuring. There was virement from the Travel heading to the Other Costs heading to cover additional purchase of pedometers (due to increased sample size in WP3.2 intervention), increased costs for transcription and consultancy fees.

c) Methodology

Please describe the methodology that you employed in the project. Please also note any ethical issues that arose during the course of the work, the effects of this and any action taken. [Max 500 words]

WP1 involved user engagement forums with older workers, representatives from industry and trade unions and members of the NDA Older People’s Reference Group (OPRG) to inform the research programme. A dissemination strategy involved website development, journal articles, conference papers, employer forums, reports, leaflets, videos and exhibitions. A newsletter was produced every 6 months and made available on the website.

http://www.workinglate.org

WP2.1 examined practice and policy implications of working into later life. A literature search was carried out and user engagement panels were conducted involving representatives from the NDA OPRG, industry, trade unions, The Age and Employment Network (TAEN) and Age UK. Interviews were carried out with employees over 50 years of age (n=51), employers (n=20), job seekers over 50 (n=27) and recently retired individuals (n=12). Findings were discussed and validated in 4 expert panels with HR professionals, OH experts, line managers, employment lawyers, trade union representatives and academics.

WP 2.2 investigated the issues associated with the journey to work. Three focus groups with employer representatives and older workers informed the development of a questionnaire, which was distributed to a sample of older workers (n=1,215). Interviews were conducted with employees (n=36) and employers (n=12) and the findings were presented to an expert panel. The results led to the development of a resource.

http://www.workinglate.org/research/journey

WP3.1 evaluated the strategies used by occupational health (OH) departments to promote health at work. Interviews with OH experts and organisational stakeholders (n=51) identified current health promotion initiatives and contributed to the design of an employee survey. The survey (n=1,141) explored employees’ experiences of OH services, general health and job attitudes. Four focus groups were conducted with employees and 2 were conducted with OH professionals to explore barriers and facilitators to delivering health interventions.

WP3.2 used findings from WP3.1 to develop a 12-month workplace intervention, which
promoted physical activity at work. Participants (n=1,120) in 10 different worksites across the UK were recruited from 2 organisations (1 large private sector and 1 medium public sector organisation). A quasi-experimental design was adopted whereby worksites were allocated to 1 of 3 conditions (staged intervention, standard intervention or control group). Physiological and psychological measures were collected at baseline, 6, and 12 months. In line with University ethics procedures, participants with abnormal health readings were referred to their GP for consultation. Post intervention measures were taken at 18 and 24 months. Employees were keen to tell us how the intervention had improved their health, so we conducted additional interviews (n=59) to capture some of their success stories.

WP4 A survey was conducted (n=719) to investigate the design of work tasks, tools, environments and the effects on employees. Ergonomic observations and interviews were conducted with employees (n=32) in 4 collaborating organisations, including construction, office work, manufacturing and animal care. Images, audio and video recordings were captured to highlight individual working conditions. Four focus groups (n=24) were conducted, encouraging workers to reflect upon how health and ageing impacted on their work. The findings contributed to the production of the OWL resource. [http://www.workinglate-owl.org/]

d) Project Findings
Please summarise the findings of the project, referring where appropriate to outputs recorded on the ESRC website. Any future research plans should also be identified. [Max 500 words]

Dynamics of later-life working (WP2.1)
Older job seekers felt that job centres failed to meet their needs, but they highly valued job clubs and job-seeking networks. A small number of employers reported that recruitment, training and promotion practices did not always comply with age discrimination legislation. Removal of the default retirement age was viewed positively. Older workers preferred flexible working policies available for workers of all ages. Employers and employees from age diverse workforces reported a more positive attitude towards older workers. Case studies have been turned into a series of videos with expert responses.

The journey to work (WP2.2)
A quarter reported travel issues (e.g. cost, stress, health, fatigue, time) but the likelihood of reporting difficulties did not increase with age. A wide range of strategies to mitigate these issues were suggested during the interviews. These included actions for employees (e.g. buying a more efficient car or changing routes to avoid congestion) and actions that involved negotiation (e.g. working flexible hours and working from home). A resource (printed and online) was developed to help explore different methods of travelling to work and to facilitate
discussion amongst employees and employers.

**Identification of current occupational health strategies (WP3.1)**

Over two thirds had never had contact with OH and for those that did, common reasons were sickness absence monitoring and musculoskeletal disorders; 62.3% did not participate in OH initiatives because they felt they were not suitable or poorly executed. The proportion meeting the guidelines for physical activity was 22%. Sitting time at work accounted for more than half of daily sitting time (58.3%). Individuals in the obese BMI group reported significantly higher sitting times compared to the normal and overweight groups.

**Interventions to promote health and workability (WP3.2)**

Individuals provided with staged intervention information demonstrated the biggest reduction in BMI. Walking for staged and standard intervention groups increased whereas the control group showed a reduction. The intervention significantly reduced sickness absence (by 1.16 days per person per year) and increased work performance by 10%. Economic evaluation showed for every £1 spent savings of up to £32 could be made in terms of reduced absence and increased performance. There were no differences between employees aged over or under 50 years, demonstrating the value to all ages.

**Ageing productively through design (WP4)**

The survey indicated high levels of musculoskeletal symptoms in both younger and older workers. Older workers expressed concerns about being able to perform their jobs. Focus-groups explored the design of job tasks and personal design stories and over 200 design solutions were identified. OWL evolved by incorporating input from both workers and managers, and includes participatory design tools, personal stories, audio and video clips of design ideas and tools to facilitate discussion of health needs with workers. OWL comprises 2 themes ‘The body at work’ (a suite of image and word cards that consider the body, the work environment, equipment and actions when working) and ‘Healthy ageing though design’ (personal stories and design influences in relation to health and age at work).

c) Contributions to wider ESRC initiatives (eg Research Programmes or Networks)

If your project was part of a wider ESRC initiative, please describe your contributions to the initiative’s objectives and activities and note any effect on your project resulting from participation. [Max. 200 words]

Working Late addressed the 'Workplace design and older worker', 'Active and healthy ageing' and 'Autonomy and independence' themes of the New Dynamics of Ageing (NDA) Programme. During the course of the Working Late project, Cheryl Haslam attended all NDA programme meetings, bringing a different co-investigator or researcher to each event so that all the team had an opportunity to attend. Working Late project findings were presented at the final NDA meeting.
on 17th April 2013. Five NDA Emerging Researcher workshops were also attended by Working Late PhD students/research staff. It was a valuable experience for the research team to network with other NDA funded projects and the NDA Older People’s Reference Group, who have made valuable contributions towards the Working Late project through participation in the user engagement panels.

The Working Late team have contributed to chapters in the NDA book series, and will be actively contributing to NDA dissemination events. Working Late was selected to represent NDA research at the RCUK Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology Event *The Science of Health and Wellbeing*, House of Commons, 4th June 2013. Working Late findings have been prepared for an NDA Findings publication to be widely distributed via NDA networks.

### 3. Early and anticipated impacts

a) **Summary of Impacts to date**

Please summarise any impacts of the project to date, referring where appropriate to associated outputs recorded on the Research Outcomes System (ROS). This should include both scientific impacts (relevant to the academic community) and economic and societal impacts (relevant to broader society). The impact can be relevant to any organisation, community or individual. [Max. 400 words]

The scientific impacts from Working Late currently include: 2 peer-reviewed journal articles, 3 articles under review and 7 articles in draft; 18 peer-reviewed national and international conference publications and 3 keynote presentations. Researchers have also disseminated project findings through 18 practitioner and policy related conferences, including 5 invited presentations and 1 invited parliamentary exhibition.

During recruitment for WP2.1, a press release resulted in a BBC Radio Leicester interview. The case study videos developed as an output of WP2.1 have been used as an educational resource by university Business Schools, employment agencies and senior manager job clubs. These videos are also available online and have received over 1,000 views.

http://www.youtube.com/user/workinglateproject/videos

The WP2.2 Journey to work resource was distributed to HR policy makers at a Business in the Community (BITC) meeting held on 25th June 2012 where delegates discussed its potential use in the workplace. Sitting time data from WP3.1 was presented at the Division of Occupational Psychology Conference and generated a substantial amount of media interest, with the research being cited in over 65 national and international websites (e.g. [www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-16535374](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-16535374)) and on BBC Radio 2.
The WP4 OWL design resource has been promoted in 12 national media articles and 1 BBC Radio Leicester interview.

The Working Late Showcase Event, BT Centre Auditorium, London (12th March 2013) presented the findings from the research and highlighted policy and practice implications. The successful event was attended by over 100 delegates from public and private sector organisations, trade unions, policy makers and academics. The OWL resource and the Journey to work resource were launched at the Working Late Showcase Event and have each received over 600 views. The showcase presentations can be viewed on the Working Late website.  
http://www.workinglate.org/show/

A press release was issued to coincide with the event, which generated significant media interest and an article on the BITC website during Responsible Business Week (15-29 April 2013).

A video showcasing the WP3.2 Walking Works Wonders intervention has been produced which involved collaboration and significant input from participating organisations such as BT and Ipswich Borough Council.  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ZKm9OsclNI

Findings related to the benefits of the intervention have also been cited in an online BBC News article.  http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-21535772

The Working Late website (www.workinglate.org) has been continually updated with research developments and outputs informing the academic community, research network partners, the business community and general public. The site receives over 200 unique visitors per month.

b) Anticipated/Potential Future Impacts

Please outline any anticipated or potential impacts (scientific or economic and societal) that you believe your project might have in future. [Max. 200 words]

Future publications are planned as part of the wide dissemination strategy; in terms of peer-reviewed journal articles and presentations at national and international conferences. We also expect to continue presenting findings at invited conference presentations (3 scheduled), seminars and workshops.

Findings from WP2.1 and video case studies will be packaged into an HR age diversity resource providing an opportunity to present and discuss the challenges, benefits and strategies for age diversity management. Similarly, intervention ideas and material that were tested and evaluated in WP3.2 will be promoted for wide adoption into the occupational health strategies of
organisations in the public and private sector.

The WP4 OWL @ Work Cards will be widely distributed to organisations and design groups to promote healthy workplace design. The WP2.2 Journey to work resource will continue to be available online and promoted with HR managers and organisational stakeholders. Working Late will be presenting the research findings and exhibiting project components at the NDA Closing Conference Exhibition, Business Design Centre (21st October, 2013).

Data from WP2.1, WP3.1 and WP3.2 are being submitted as part of 2 separate PhD theses, further contributing towards the legacy of the Working Late project.

You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.
4. Declarations

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed. Please note hard copies are not required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

A: To be completed by Grant Holder

Please read the following statements. Tick one statement under ii) and iii), then sign with an electronic signature at the end of the section (this should be an image of your actual signature).

i) The Project

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.

ii) Submissions to the Research Outcomes System (ROS)

Output and impact information has been submitted to the Research Outcomes System. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted as soon as they become available.

or

This grant has not yet produced any outputs or impacts. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted to the Research Outcomes System as soon as they become available.

iii) Submission of Data

Data arising from this grant have been offered for deposit with the UK Data Service.

or

Data that were anticipated in the grant proposal have not been produced and the UK Data Service has been notified.

or

No datasets were proposed or produced from this grant.