

Building an impact case: Reflections on an impact case study submitted to REF2021

CREWs Research Seminars

James Richards

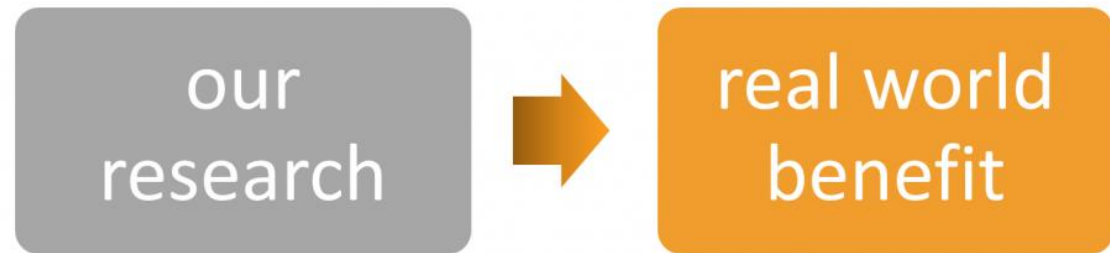
9 February 2022

**Improving equality, inclusion, and
workplace justice for professional
neurodiverse employees**

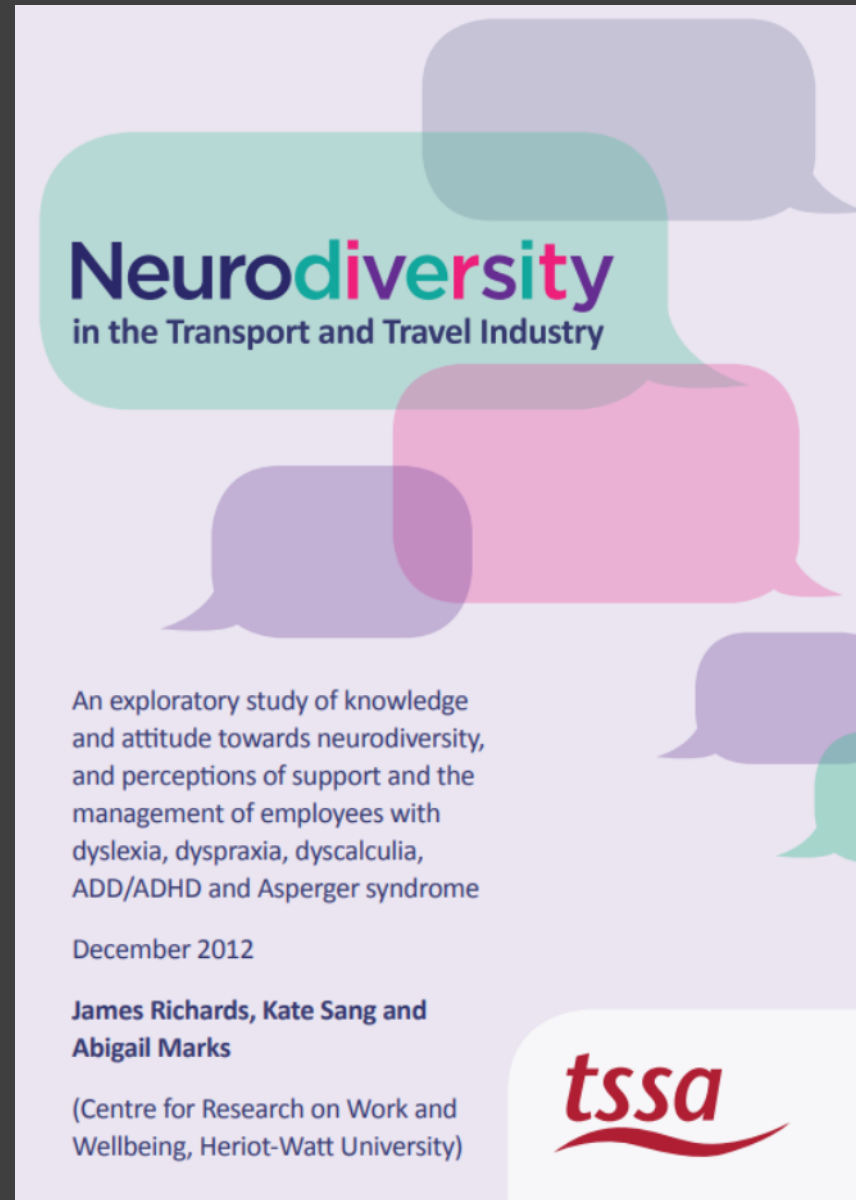
REF2021		
Impact case study (REF3)		
Institution: Heriot-Watt University		
Unit of Assessment: C19		
Title of case study: Improving equality, inclusion, and workplace justice for professional neurodiverse employees		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: August 2012 – present (ongoing)		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr. James Richards	Associate Professor in Human Resource Management	2003 – ongoing
Dr. Katherine Sang	Professor in Gender and Employment Studies	2012 – ongoing
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2013 – present (ongoing)		

Defining a REF impact case

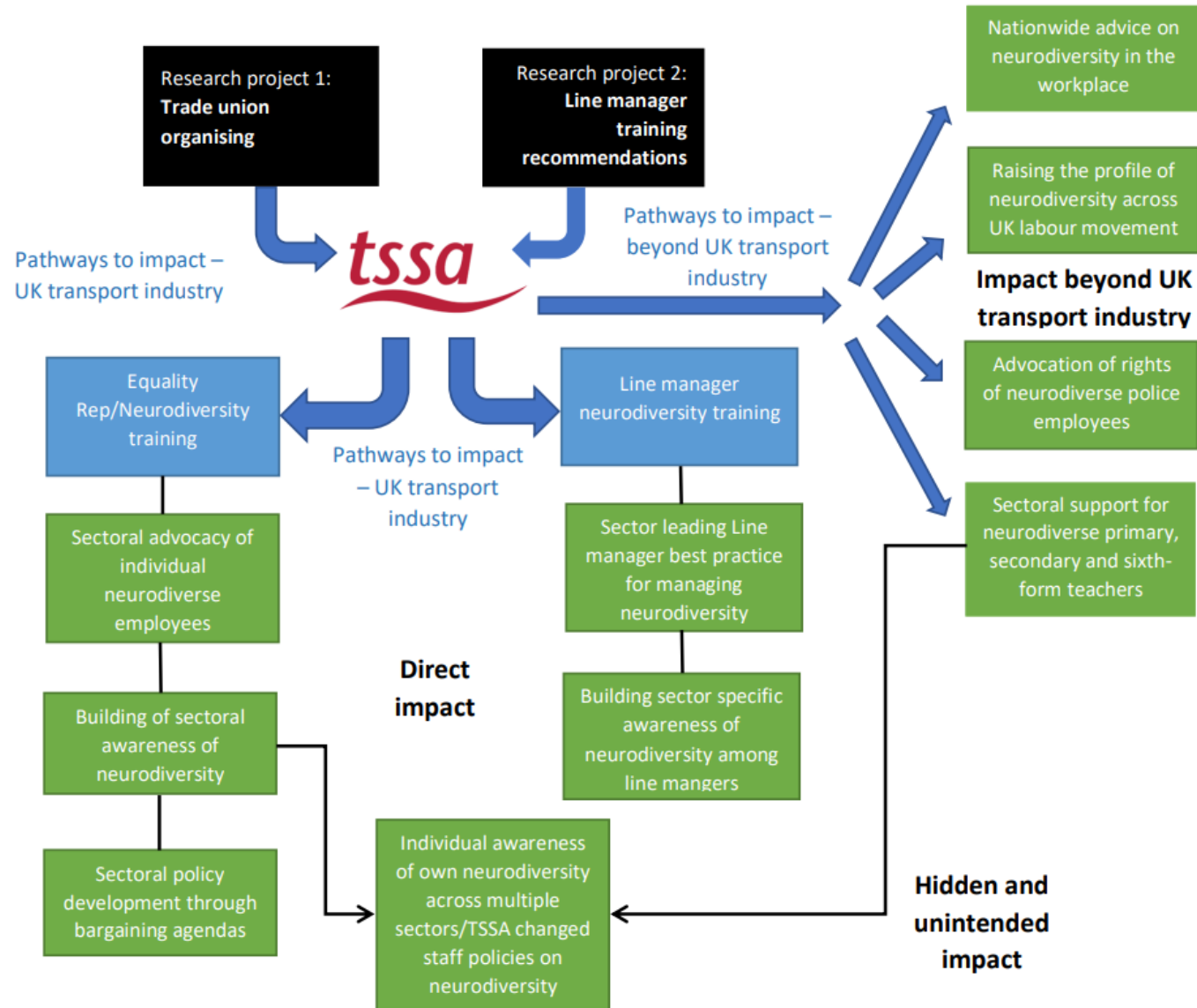
- ... a narrative which describes how research, conducted during a specific time-frame at a named institution, resulted in a change, had an effect on or benefited culture, the economy, the environment, health, public policy, quality of life or society using qualitative and quantitative evidence.
- Impact cases 25% of Unit of Assessment



- Backstory – how it all began
- Pathways to impact
- Impact of our research
- Gathering evidence of impact
- Reflections/lessons learned

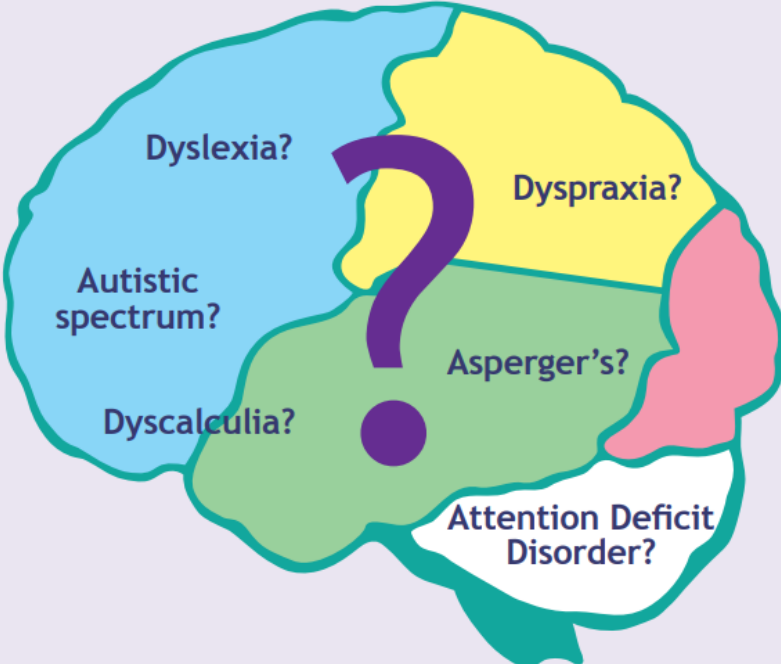


- **Started summer of 2012**
- **Two small research projects funded by TSSA/Union Learning Fund)**
 - Scoping out union member views on neurodiversity/exploring line manager, ND employee and rep/official experiences of neurodiversity (2012-2013)
 - Line manager experiences of managing ND (2016-2017)
- **Key outputs along the way (underpinning research)**
 - Consultancy reports for each projects, including prestigious dissemination events
 - Three journal articles – International HRMJ (2016); Gender, Work & Organisation (2016); Personnel Review (2019)
- **Explored idea of an impact case from 2015**
- **Generated an updated impact case three times until final stages/drafts in 2020**
 - Support from RED, external reviewer, colleagues/critical friends in SoSS



- Building awareness
- Advocacy and representation
- Policy development and bargaining
- Line manager training

Neurodivergence in Transport and Travel: Line Manager Support and Training



The diagram shows a lateral view of a human brain with several regions highlighted in different colors and labeled with neurodivergent conditions:

- Blue region (left side):** Labeled "Dyslexia?", "Autistic spectrum?", and "Dyscalculia?".
- Yellow region (top right):** Labeled "Dyspraxia?".
- Green region (middle):** Labeled "Asperger's?".
- White region (bottom right):** Labeled "Attention Deficit Disorder?".
- Pink region (far right):** No label.

A large purple question mark is centered over the brain, and a purple dot is located in the green region.

Authors:
Dr. James Richards, Professor Katherine Sang
Professor Abigail Marks (Heriot-Watt university)

- Kept a range of information from the start
- Stayed in touch with key contacts at TSSA
- Organised 8 letters as corroborating evidence
- Referenced 2 key documents as further corroborating evidence

acas working
for everyone

Acas
22nd Floor
Euston Tower
286 Euston Road
London
NW1 3DP

† 0300 123 1150

11 September 2020

Dear James

Acas gives employees and employers free, impartial advice on workplace rights, rules and best practice.

I confirm that your 2012 'Neurodiversity in the transport and travel industry' report was drawn on as background reading when Acas designed its own research study 'Neurodiversity at work' 2016'.

- Allowed impact to be built into subsequent research projects
- Strategic management of impact case information – keep a diary of all developments, presentations, outputs, external interest, etc.!
- Keep in touch with research partners
- Take advice from colleagues with experience of impact case studies
- Share what has been learnt

