The Policy Commissions: Why Birmingham?

The University of Birmingham has an excellent reputation for translating research into policy and practice and we have considerable academic resources to draw upon both in skills and expertise but also in our connectedness to policy makers and practitioners in a variety of policy areas. The Birmingham Policy Commissions are hosted by the College of Social Sciences and build on a wide variety of policy impact activities being undertaken within the College, including -

Mini-Commissions – 24 hour roundtables of experts from all fields, together with University researchers, to discuss and develop policy proposals on key local issues.

- The **Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (http://www.gsdrc.org/)** (GSDRC) led by the University's **International Development Department (http://www.idd.bham.ac.uk)**, funded by UK and Australian governments and several international agencies to improve international development policy and practice through the provision of information, advice and expertise to practitioners, academics and policymakers throughout the world

Though hosted by the College of Social Sciences, the Commissions engage colleagues from across the University to ensure that they bring the best skills and expertise to each issue considered.

The Birmingham Policy Commissions work to a tight timescale - approximately ten months - depending on the issue. In that time the Commissioners scope the issue, invite and consider evidence from a range of organisations, experts and interests as well as drawing on relevant research from within the University, and arrive at conclusions and recommendations. The Commissions produce high-profile reports that are launched through the media and other channels and discussed and debated in policy and practice workshops and seminars. The findings of the Policy Commission will inform future research, teaching and knowledge exchange activities within the University.

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