

Institution: The Open University

Unit of Assessment: D35 Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts

a. Context

Music researchers at The Open University (OU) maximise the advantage of the University's unique position as an institution that operates in all parts of the United Kingdom. In so doing, we take advantage of networks established outside the academy as part of the University's commitment to public engagement. We have a wide array of media facilities at our disposal, as well as major University-wide partnerships with the BBC and Channel 4. We seek to contribute to the growth of economic prosperity and cultural life by aiming at four groups who are the main beneficiaries of the impact of our research:

- Performers and others in the music industry (such as concert promoters and publishers) who benefit from our research outputs, including new performing editions of music, the revelation of new repertoires and new insights into performance practices.
- Music audiences (of all types) benefit from our public engagement and media activities because we increase their understanding of music. This is done through our research outputs, and the expertise that informs major projects such as BBC television and radio series.
- Media, information services and heritage organisations take advantage of our research activities in the preparation of exhibitions, works of reference and other products aimed ultimately at the general public.
- The music business, through the application of acoustical research to musical instrument manufacture.

b. Approach to impact

Our approach to impact builds on our previous incorporation of knowledge transfer into our research strategies. Though we readily acknowledge that 'impact' as it is presently conceived needs to be understood in different terms, the knowledge transfer agenda has provided us with a precedent for an approach that is systematic and capable of immediate utilisation as we transform to a more explicitly impact-based approach.

We will assure impact through six simultaneous processes:

1. Each project cited in the research plan of individuals and groups is expected to contain key statements about impact, the target groups that will be the beneficiaries of impact, and the anticipated effect of the impact. Plans concerning the measurement of impact are explained under 'Strategy' below. This process is embryonic but it has achieved demonstrable success as our academics become more alert to opportunities and obligations concerning impact. For example, Dr Robert Samuels drew on his work on symphonic music in his role as principal consultant for the BBC television series, *Symphony*, and Drs Winters and Richards produced web content for the series, which attracted 1.25 million viewers for each episode, with more than 100,000 hits on OU-related content. The series, made in partnership with BBC Orchestras, BBC Radio 3, BBC Classical Music TV and BBC Symphony Orchestra Learning division, won the 'Best Partnership' award in the 2012 BBC Audio and Music Awards.
2. Wherever possible we place part of our research endeavour outside the University within organisations or agencies that share our concern for public engagement. For example, we have a PhD student permanently based at the National Library of Wales and hope to appoint one at the National Library of Scotland. Such students are jointly supervised by our academics and a nominated member of the host institution. The project at the National Library of Wales has been regarded as outstandingly successful because it furthers the Library's own bilingual

agendas. Other examples that can be cited are Professor Burrows's association with the Handel House Museum and Professor Herbert's collaborations at the Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and the National Museum of Wales.

3. We engage *ad hoc* with any initiatives instigated through Open University media partnerships (especially the BBC), or through other partners that offer the opportunity for direct contact with the general public. This includes the Black British Jazz Conference at The British Library, which drew a capacity public audience, and the contributions of several of our academics to the South Bank's *The Rest is Noise* Festival. Similarly, Dr Sharp was a major contributor to the BBC Radio 4 series, *The Physicist's Guide to the Orchestra*.
4. We encourage direct relationships with industry. Dr Sharp's research association with Howarth of London, one of the UK's major wind instrument manufacturers, has yielded critical impact on factors that affect the consistency and quality of musical instrument manufacture.
5. We also encourage publications and other outputs that are aimed at broadening the skill capacity of audiences beyond the academy. Such work includes the authorship of CD liner and programme notes and textbooks. An example is Professor Herbert's book, *Music in Words: A Guide to Researching and Writing About Music*. This book was conceived of as a way to help the many private teachers of the piano and other instruments, their students and amateur musicians to engage with the values and processes of music research. It was published for this purpose in 2001 by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), the world's largest music examining body. The book is used in all countries of the British Commonwealth. It has been reprinted five times and a second edition was published in 2012. In 2010, the book was adapted for American usage and published by Oxford University Press. It is supported by two independent websites administered in London and New York. It is the standard text for ABRSM candidates.
6. We encourage direct engagement of our academics with performers. Professor Herbert, as a member of the Wallace Collection, was responsible for the discovery and reconstruction of the repertoire of the nineteenth-century Cyfarthfa brass band and the CD, television programme and concerts that emanated from it. Professor Burrows' editions of Handel are regarded as seminal by performers.

c. Strategy and plans

The unit believes that the first stage of its transformation from a knowledge transfer approach to one based on impact as defined in the REF has been broadly successful, but it is also clear that a new strategy for developing this further is appropriate. This strategy will be based on three courses of action:

1. We will continue to react to opportunities that present themselves for public engagement as a part of our contribution to The Open University's mission. However, our proactive approach will be the subject of more detailed planning as part of the annual work plans of individuals, and in the design and monitoring of major, funded research projects.
2. Impact will be planned and measured through three related processes:
 - a. Scrutiny of research schedules and the activities contained in them.
 - b. Monitoring of the nature of research outputs (irrespective of the media in which they appear) with a view to identifying ancillary elements that can contribute to impact.
 - c. Scrutiny of the methodologies used in research and the potential they might hold for sharing for the public good.

The first major project to which these measures could be applied is the *Listening Experience Database* project Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC 2013–15). We have built into its strategy a commitment to share all sources as they are discovered and analysed; the

Impact template (REF3a)

inclusion of creative media professionals on its steering committee and conference organisations (Huw Stephens of BBC Radio 1 and Richard Chesser of The British Library); public road shows as part of a crowdsourcing programme; the strategic use of social media as a part of information flow; and a discrete trajectory aimed at sharing technologies developed for the project's unique linked database system with information services professionals.

3. Additionally we will systematise the way impact is organised and promoted. From May 2013 we have:
 - a. Included the development of impact as a component of the responsibilities of the Director of Research in Music.
 - b. Initiated a formally constituted 'scholarship project' aimed at measuring impact in both qualitative and quantitative terms and applying it to all research by the end of 2014. A team has been formed for this purpose, and internal funding will be sought to test its ideas with interested bodies outside the University.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies are consistent with our broad aims for impact, as articulated above. Professor Burrows's work, which is exemplified in the case study *Performing and contextualising the music of George Frideric Handel*, provides new performing editions of eighteenth-century music ensembles to perform (for example) Handel's sacred and operatic works in formats that Handel himself would have recognised. Many of Burrows's projects reveal fundamental truths for the first time. This does not just contribute to modern performance of music of the past: it contributes to musical commerce through new publishing, recording and broadcasting enterprises. Perhaps more importantly, it casts new light that benefits the many thousands of listeners who make up the audience for this music.

Professor Herbert's case study, *Brass musical instruments in history and the relationship of research to performance* is similarly focused on the synergy between research and musical performance. His background as a performer with Britain's leading orchestras and ensembles has informed his research into brass instruments and he is now one of the world's most important authorities. Herbert has illuminated many aspects of performance practice, discovered new repertoires and his books are major sources of reference for performers. His contributions to the most important international reference materials (*Grove's Dictionaries*, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, *Oxford Bibliographies Online* and so on) are the primary starting points for musicians, the media and popular audiences.