

## Environment template (REF5)

<b>Institution: Newcastle University</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 35 (Music)</b>
<b>a. Overview</b>

Newcastle University's International Centre for Music Studies (ICMuS) sits within the University's School of Arts and Cultures (SACS), part of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HaSS). The Centre's vitality emanates from a distinctive culture in which music and research into it are experienced as *pluralist* – though, crucially, not in any casually eclectic sense. The mutual presence of apparently incommensurable types of music and approaches to them is embraced as a challenge to question assumptions, and to test and cross boundaries – between theory and practice, and between methodological paradigms. Even research conducted within established models may be affected by this environment's critical, radical edge. Cultural musicology and creative practice remain important thematic areas for us, and so do issues of major consequence – music and meaning, identity, social and cultural trauma (violence, genocide, sectarianism, the AIDS/HIV crisis), consciousness, landscape and place. We regard these as equally subject to interrogation through writing, performance, improvisation or composition. Linked to this has been a move towards a deeper interdisciplinarity, and significant extra-academic engagement that has had impact; regionally, nationally and internationally.

ICMuS staff operate as both solo and collaborative researchers – as evidenced by numerous single-authored outputs and a growing number of collaborative projects. Wider institutional mechanisms and infrastructure have been valuable in supporting such activities and in achieving growth in the total value of research grants obtained since RAE2008. Future strategy includes focusing resources on what is distinctive in our research culture, and on developing an even more richly discursive community that thrives on robust debate, creative exchange and integration of PGR students.

<b>b. Research Strategy</b>
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In RAE 2008 we voiced our principal strategic aim, post 2007: 'to establish ICMuS ... as one of the world leaders in radical approaches to musicology and innovative, cross-generic approaches to creative practice'. Strategic priorities included; promoting world music and ethnomusicology, popular music studies, improvisation, and music and consciousness. This has been achieved (see REF2), and with it a maturation in which we have retained a commitment to the radical, while evolving and expanding the envelope of our research. New appointments (see **People**) have been a contributing factor, along with the new directions and interests undertaken by existing staff (e.g. Biddle – noise, genocide; Clarke – Indian music; Edmondes – multi-media installation; Hogg – environmental and sound art). Another strategic goal has been to build on the intellectual legacy of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) for Music and Inclusivity – a major collaborative programme led by ICMuS, whose prominent research dimension has transformed our pedagogy and enhanced the research environment for staff and students alike (see <http://www.cetl4musicne.ac.uk/>). Interdisciplinarity and risk-taking have been aspects of our radical strategy: ICMuS researchers have sought out territories (e.g. new historicism, philosophy, sociology, film and media studies, ritual studies, visual and sonic art) which, while connecting with music, have meant inquiry well beyond its disciplinary boundaries. A further strategy has been to become more outward-facing; our projects (often grant-funded) have involved engagement with groups at regional, national and international levels.

To illustrate the above points with some selective examples:

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(i) *World music and ethnomusicology* have been the pursuit of various ICMuS researchers (Plastino, De Jong, McKerrell, Wilkinson, Biddle, Clarke) – as projected in RAE 2008. While not all are formally trained ethnomusicologists, their blurring of sub-disciplinary boundaries is typical. Also distinctive is the way in which this has included *research on and with communities*. For example, De Jong's work on music linked to Africa led to a significant EU-funded project on South African Cultural Leadership (see REF3 ICS); McKerrell's practical and theoretical work on folk and traditional musics of the UK and Ireland led to an ethnographic project on sectarianism (and to a symposium and book contract); Clarke's work on Indian music led to an AHRC-funded project examining the role of South Asian musics in the North East of England. On related fronts, Laurence's work with children and music led to socio-musicological research in villages effected by the Israel/Palestine conflict, in collaboration with academics, educationalists and United Nations personnel; while Fernández's *Misa de Corpus Christi* was the focus of a major engagement with young people in Bolivia (see REF3 ICS).

(ii) Research on *popular and vernacular musics* also reveals a significant global reach – see outputs by Biddle, De Jong and Plastino; also Plastino's instrumental role as co-editor of the *Routledge Global Popular Music Series*. Ethnomusicological, sociological and historiographic approaches to the vernacular variously feature in academic research on folk and traditional music by Gammon, Macdonald, McKerrell and Wilkinson, who, along with Tickell, also examine these fields through performance and composition. The interrogation of contemporary popular genres in improv-based lo-fi electronic compositions by Edmondes reflects an embrace of the vernacular as a means to a reinvigoration of modernism.

(iii) We have continued to lead the field in research on *gender and sexuality*, with work such as Attinello's ongoing project on Music and AIDS, and several outputs by Biddle and Gibson (including their co-edited volume). The historiographic and cultural-critical aspects of these (Biddle on the 19th century, Gibson on the early modern) also point to a mutual concern for;

(iv) *non-traditional approaches to music historiography* – thus bringing *Early Music* into no less radical a frame than other areas of our work.

(v) A further way in which boundaries are deconstructed is in the *application and theorisation of technology* – for example, Savan's digital 3-D printing of early brass instruments and Hogg's revisionist theoretical treatment in his chapter on Music technology.

(vi) New and emerging ICMuS themes have concerned the relationship between musically (or sonically) constructed subjects and their *environment*. This may be urban – as in Biddle's work on noise and soundscapes (also in collaboration with Gibson). Or it may be focused on rural environments, as in Hogg's AHRC-funded Landscape Quartet project. In the latter, praxis includes a concern for;

(vii) *phenomenology and philosophy*, which overlaps with a further research theme, *music and consciousness*, explored most clearly in the eponymous edited book by Clarke (with Eric Clarke, University of Oxford), among whose contributors were four other ICMuS researchers; related outputs include Attinello's 'The universe will tell you what it needs'.

For further information see <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/icmus>.

## Strategic priorities for next five years

(i) We seek to further evolve as a discursive community – where ideas flow and develop between diverse types of music, modalities of knowledge and groups of people (also fostering an uncontrived approach to impact). This process is already seen in connectivities between staff, PGR

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and undergraduate students, and external constituencies described here and in REF3a. (We also acknowledge, true to theorisations within our own research – e.g. Clarke, ‘Elvis and Darmstadt’ – that these discursive spaces may at times be necessarily agonistic rather than merely liberally pluralist.) As a practical goal in this spirit, we seek to diversify our research fora: recognising the importance of our visiting-speaker seminar series, we aim to multiply the styles of scholarly and creative encounter – exploring different timescales, different kinds of venue, and varying degrees of formality. This also includes building on our links with the University’s Culture Lab (see section d.), recently re-energised by the appointment of John Bowers as Professor of Creative Digital Practice.

(ii) Prioritise research areas. We will *target resources towards what is distinctive in our culture*. We will continue to affirm the importance of the solo researcher, but also support collaborative projects. For example, paradigms for future work in creative practice are suggested by collaborative ventures such as Northumbrian Exchanges, whose community engagements include juxtaposing – and even mixing – diverse genres such as folk, electroacoustic and early music, and in which PGR students play as hands-on a role as staff investigators. Extending aspirations expressed in RAE2008, we seek to *make ICMuS a leading centre for the study of ethnomusicology, world musics and traditional musics* – one whose distinctiveness includes a spectrum of approaches across theory and practice, and a concern for the vernacular. Complementing this, we seek to capitalise on the proximity of departments that share an interest in Indian music (e.g. Durham and Edinburgh), to develop a centre of gravity for UK-based research on South Asian musics. Similarly, we aim to extend our growing networks around early music, and to explore further the roles of technology and digitisation in this field.

(iii) Review management of resources. Research grant bids and allocation of BGP2 awards will be directed towards prioritised areas. Through co-ordination of our bought-in teaching budget and research grant income, we will set up a postdoctoral teaching fellowship scheme for newly graduated PGR students, to help them negotiate the transition towards full-time academic posts while providing research-active staff with targeted teaching relief in order to develop research grant applications or complete major outputs. We will review our spaces to best facilitate the kinds of discursive ethos outlined above, and review our teaching curricula, both to ensure the most effective balance between the demands of teaching and research, and to extend synergies between them.

**c. People, including:****i. Staffing strategy and staff development**

We have maintained the significantly increased staffing levels achieved before RAE2008 (16.7 FTE). The current REF period saw three new lecturer appointments: Jamie Savan, whose expertise as an early music scholar–practitioner builds on growth in these areas promoted by Richard Wistreich before his move to the RNCM to become Dean of Research; Simon McKerrell, whose skills in the field of folk and traditional music (again as both practitioner and scholar) progress the contribution of Gammon following his change of role to Strategic Research Adviser; and Paul Fleet, who was initially appointed within the CETL programme to develop and research Music Skills pedagogy, and now pursues research on 20th-century music and music theory. Richard Middleton’s retirement had already been anticipated by Clarke’s appointment to the chair. The objective in all appointments was congruent with ICMuS strategy: to maintain continuity in our research profile, while embracing opportunities for its evolution.

The University’s research leave system grants staff one semester’s sabbatical in every eight, and additional time for research is also bought out through research grant funding. ICMuS policy

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allocates staff one research day per week during term-time, and affords strategic periods of additional leave (up to four weeks) to help bring outputs to publication. All salaried staff have a personal Research and Development Account (£500 p.a. with a discretionary £450 enhancement).

Staff are supported at all levels of their careers. Early-career researchers are mentored by senior colleagues, who advise on projects and career development, and review drafts of research outputs and grant applications. ECRs are represented *ex officio* on the ICMuS Research Committee, and training sessions are offered through the University's staff development programme (for example, Savan has received training for Terminal 4 software). For all staff, their annual Performance and Development Review is an opportunity to review personal research goals and strategies, including those for promotion. For senior staff, Departmental policy supports periods of remission from major management roles in order to focus on research.

In 2012 and again in 2013 the University reviewed its performance and was satisfied that it was fully compliant with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity; the practices of ICMuS staff, who comply with the University's internal procedures (on such matters as ethical approval), are congruent with this position. We support diversity and equality. Diversity is monitored throughout the appointment process; and ICMuS staff represent a wide range of nationalities. Male and female members of staff have identical research opportunities, and we are mindful of representing male and female researchers equally among our academic visitors.

### c. ii. Research students

ICMuS has sustained buoyant recruitment to its PGR programmes. Figures for 2012/13 are typical: 31 PhD and 19 Masters students studying in FT or PT mode. The vitality of our research student culture inheres both from students recruited externally and from students who, flourishing within the ICMuS research ethos, progress from bachelors to masters, and/or masters to PhD level. Our masters scheme is pivotal in this process, and in 2012 we integrated our MA and MMus degrees into a single programme: an MMus run as a fully-fledged research degree that allows flexibility between practice-based and musicological research.

Progression through to doctoral level has been facilitated by a substantial number of AHRC studentships won under the BGP1 scheme (totals for programmes starting in the years 2009–13 were 12 Phd and 10 Masters). Prior to BGP1, for programmes commencing in 2007 and 2008, five doctoral and two masters students received AHRC studentships, together with a collaborative doctoral award with The Sage Gateshead. ICMuS has annually awarded additional endowed studentships, and we have also disbursed six awards to MMus students from the Sager Foundation to support working musicians. Projects within the CETL programme also supported research students, including one doctoral and three MMus studentships. The REF census period has seen a growth in PhD completion rates: 20 as opposed to 15 in RAE2008.

Research training is provided at doctoral level via the HaSS Faculty's HEA award winning programme (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hss/postgrad/training/>), to which ICMuS contributes. This comprises a rich and wide-ranging menu, developing epistemological and methodological research skills (and is also foundational to the University's implementation of the AHRC's BGP2 scheme (for which it successfully applied in partnership with Durham University and Queen's University Belfast). At master's level, ICMuS provides a 40-credit research training module which cultivates approaches from musicological and practice-based perspectives, and encourages students to be reflexive regarding their identities and aspirations as researchers.

PGR students are supported by well-governed institutional mechanisms – e.g. a University code of practice, an *e-portfolio* system for documenting supervisions and monitoring progression, and an Annual Postgraduate Review process. Complementing these formal structures, we place the

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supervisor–supervisee relationship at the heart of research students’ experience. Supervisors act as mentors at every stage, including after graduation, advising on such issues as publication of theses, and postdoctoral applications (and supervisors are in turn supported through staff development programmes and annual updating sessions). In a further, collective version of this principle, our ICMuS PhD Forum offers students a place in which to present work in progress; to read texts together; to discuss career trajectories; and to receive mentoring on undergraduate teaching. PGR students participate in ICMuS research seminars alongside staff, presenting papers, providing input on the choice of visiting speakers (Tricia Rose’s visit in 2013 was one outcome of this process), and joining informal social gatherings with speakers afterwards.

Postgraduate integration and career development are also fostered through professional collaboration between PGR students and staff. Examples include Marie Thompson and Biddle’s edited volume, *Sound, Music, Affect* (Bloomsbury), and Edmond’s *Felt Beak* project (see REF2). Undergraduate students too have been involved in such collaborations – for example, Fleet mentored UG student Jonathan Winter in turning his final-year project into an article, now due for publication in the peer-reviewed journal *Popular Music* in 2014. PGR students also work alongside staff as teaching assistants, and gain additional formal training on the University’s Introduction to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education course. Students are encouraged to present at conferences, workshops and creative events nationally and internationally, to which end the School Research Committee offers financial support (also for library visits, field trips etc.).

The efficacy of all the above is evidenced by PGR career trajectories. During the REF period, 12 of our former PGR students achieved employment in academic posts. PGR students and graduates have also authored professional recordings, scholarly articles and books (for example, Harriet Manning’s *Michael Jackson and the Blackface Mask* (Ashgate, 2013)). Prestigious awards were won by Tom Astley (Dale A. Olsen prize for best paper at the Society for Ethnomusicology) and Emily Portman (‘Best Original Song’ in the 2013 BBC Folk Musician of the Year competition); while Peter Brewis was nominated in the Mercury Music Awards. For further information see <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/icmus/people/pgr>; <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/icmus/people/ug>.

### **d. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

RCUK grant income attached to projects led by or involving ICMuS staff aggregated £237K, drawn from a total award value of c. £668K – up from the equivalent award value of £300K in RAE2008. The principal projects (some of which extend beyond the REF period) are Ageing Creatively, Northumbrian Exchanges, and Landscape Quartet. This last has generated further income: £15K from the Swedish funding agency RANK, to fund residencies and additional dissemination in Sweden.

The HaSS Faculty supports our strategic planning, not least through financial schemes that help staff develop individual outputs and research grant applications; ICMuS staff have received over £12K from these funds. The School of Arts and Cultures Research Committee further co-ordinates support and administers a School Strategic Research Fund, to which ICMuS staff have successfully applied for a total of £16K. ICMuS has its own departmental research committee, which formulates research policy and strategy at subject level; it is chaired by the Head of Research, and membership reflects our various areas of activity. The ICMuS Research Forum (funded by the School) convenes regularly in term time; this brings in a series of external speakers, promotes symposia of various kinds, and provides a platform for the dissemination of our own and others’ research, as well as affording networking opportunities.

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Our infrastructure includes studio and workshop spaces vital to the work of practice-based researchers (whether staff or PGR) – largely housed in our state of the art Music Studios (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/music/facilities/studio/index.htm>). This £4M investment by the University was commissioned in 2009. It is linked – both physically and figuratively – to Newcastle University Culture Lab (see [www.ncl.ac.uk/culturelab/](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/culturelab/)), an interdisciplinary research centre whose concerns include the practical and theoretical exploration of technology and the arts. Several ICMuS projects have been developed here – including Hogg’s ‘Music and Machines’ series ([www.musicandmachines.co.uk/](http://www.musicandmachines.co.uk/)) and Savan’s real-time multi-track realisation of Gabrieli’s *Sonata XX a 22* (<http://jamiesavan.com/page6.htm>). Technical support for such projects is provided by two technicians (1.6 FTE), themselves creative practitioners. Culture Lab and the Music Studios also provide a base for a number of our PGR students, offering studio facilities, desk space and opportunities for networking with other resident researchers. John Ferguson was one such incumbent during this REF period: his AHRC-funded PhD on postvernacular improvisation (also supported by the CETL programme) was completed at Culture Lab; he now develops this work (see [www.johnrobertferguson.com/](http://www.johnrobertferguson.com/)) as Visiting Assistant Professor at Brown University, while subsequent and current PhD students based at Culture Lab continue his experimental legacy.

ICMuS researchers benefit from a well resourced range of library facilities. Holdings of books, journals, serials and microfilms are continually enhanced, and an expanding collection of electronic resources is available – see <http://libguides.ncl.ac.uk/content.php?pid=235465&sid=2039995>.

### e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

We have generated collaborations regionally, nationally and internationally. These have emerged from over a dozen projects and participation in various research collectives (see <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/icmus/projects> and [http://research.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/icmus/engagement\\_and\\_impact](http://research.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/icmus/engagement_and_impact)). Such activity reflects our commitment both to our own discipline and to the traversing of its boundaries; characteristically for ICMuS, such ventures often also have a strongly social, cultural, critical and/or political emphasis. For example, Performing Prejudice, a research group on sectarianism founded by McKerrell, and the Genocide Research Group, founded by Biddle, bring musicology into dialogue with other disciplines through symposia and ongoing web-based forums.

Further projects build upon long-standing collaborations between ICMuS staff and researchers in other HEIs and disciplines. These include Williamson’s role in the AHRC-funded Experience of Worship project (<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/music/AHRC/>) and his co-sponsorship of Prof. Hartmut Möller as visiting fellow in 2011 (undertaken in tandem with the HaSS Faculty’s Medieval & Early Modern Studies Research Group, of which Williamson is a member – see <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/mems/>); a permanent legacy of this visit is a new UG and staff exchange programme between ICMuS and Möller’s home department at Rostock.

Collaboration is also at the heart of creative activity by ICMuS practitioners. Edmondes, Fernández, Hogg, Macdonald, Savan, Tickell and Wilkinson have all worked with international-calibre artists on ventures that have opened up new ground in practice-based research in the fields of contemporary, folk and early music – manifested in the production of some 30 CDs and dozens of live performances. These researchers are at the heart of international networks that have manifested fruitful exchanges and international visits both inward and outward. For example, Edmondes was included as a featured artist on UbuWeb; Fernández curated a new music festival at ICMuS in 2009 that focused on visiting Swedish artists Stefan Östersjö, Kent Olofsson and Terje Thiwång. Further, Östersjö, Sabine Vögel, and Matthew Sansom (Surrey University) are regular visitors to ICMuS as part of Hogg’s Landscape Quartet project; while the longstanding project

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Music and Machines curated by Hogg and Sally Jane Norman (Sussex University) has promoted dialogue between a panoply of visitors working freely across the boundaries of creative practice and academic discourse (browse <http://www.musicandmachines.co.uk/>).

Amidst further intellectual exchange, Biddle was visiting Professor at the University of Alicante (2010) and a *doutor colaborador* at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa. ICMuS hosted a visiting professorship from Tricia Rose, Brown University, in November 2013. Clarke won a visiting fellowship to Cambridge University's Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) in 2011, where he participated in its interdisciplinary project 'The Future University'.

Plastino's role as Chair of IASPM provides another example of ICMuS's promotion of popular music research. Clarke, Gammon and McKerrell's participation in, respectively, the South Asia Music and Dance Forum, the Traditional Song Forum, and the Newcastle and Northumbria Critical Discourse Group further illustrate our wider contribution to scholarship. Staff and PGRs participate actively in conferences, symposia etc., among which over 40 have been invited presentations; Attinello, Clarke, Edmondson, Hogg, Laurence, Plastino, Savan, Wilkinson and Williamson have all featured as keynote speakers or artists. The international reach of these presentations includes Stockholm, Rome, Naples, New York, Jerusalem, Tunis, Malta, Guelph and Lisbon.

Another significant contribution by ICMuS to the discipline is its hosting of the online journal *Radical Musicology*, which has an international editorial board, with Biddle and De Jong as co-ordinating editors, and ICMuS PGR students providing editorial assistance (so gaining professional development). The journal, founded in the last RAE period, has demonstrated its sustainability, having now reached six volumes (see <http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk/>). Staff also serve on the boards of *Consciousness, Literature and the Arts*, *Folk Music Journal*, *Journal of South Asian Studies*, *Music Analysis*, *Popular Music*, and *twentieth-century music*; Edmondson was co-curator of Vol. I of the online series *Experiments and Intensities* (2012). Staff are regularly invited to review journal articles and book proposals for publishers such as Ashgate, CUP, OUP and Routledge.

Fernández is adviser to the Carnegie Trust. He and Biddle have served on the AHRC reviewers' college; other staff have reviewed research grant applications for the AHRC and British Academy (Attinello, Gammon, Hogg, Laurence, Wilkinson) and for the IRCHSS (Wilkinson). Attinello is a member of the Selection Committee for Cambridge University Press Award. Gammon has advised The English Folk Dance and Song Society on education strategies, and has a strategic relationship with the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. Around two dozen PhDs have been externally examined by 12 ICMuS staff.

ICMuS researchers have advised on, and featured as experts in, television documentaries and BBC Radio programmes (e.g. Gammon – 'London Calling', 'Rude Britannia', 'The Night Visit' and 'A Very British Murder'; Savan – 'In Tune', and 'The Early Music Show'; McKerrell – BBC Radio Scotland). Wilkinson has served as artistic co-director of the *Harmonies celtiques* biennial festival, Montreal, and as talent scout for 'Circle du soleil'. McKerrell was a judge for BBC Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year Award 2013. Tickell founded, raised funds and reviews bursary applications for the Young Musicians' Fund of the Community Foundation, Newcastle.

Among Staff receiving prestigious awards are: Fernández (Koussevitsky Foundation Commission, 2011); Gammon (Gold Badge of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, 2011); Tickell (Queen's Medal for Music, 2009; BBC Folk Musician of the Year award, 2013); Williamson (Claude Palisca Prize, American Musicological Society, 2011). Books shortlisted for prizes include Biddle and Vanessa Knights' *Music, National Identity and the Politics of Location* (Ruth Solie Prize, 2008), De Jong's *Tambú* (Albert J. Raboteau Prize for Best Book in Africana Religions, 2013); and Gammon's *Drink, Desire and Death* (Folk Society, Katherine Biggs Award).