

Institution: The University of Edinburgh

Unit of Assessment: 35 Music

a. Context

Since its foundation in the nineteenth century the Reid School of Music (RSM) has been centrally committed to engagement with the public. RSM has been vital to the musical life of the city of Edinburgh, both amateur and professional, through the provision of orchestras, concerts, musicians, composers and lectures. Donald Francis Tovey (Reid Professor from 1914-1940) established a model for such activities, which we continue to follow. In addition, RSM has always had a particular concern for good citizenship, in the context of a civic university. It has involved itself with issues of music policy, music education, music as science and technology as well as art, and with the ways in which music can contribute to cultural and economic life as well as to the wellbeing of individuals in our surrounding community. This historic underlying ethos of the department – the expectation that our activities as academics should benefit not just our students and fellow scholars but everyone in the wider community – thus now informs our approach to research and its ‘impact’. We believe that music is centrally important to understanding what it means to be human, and to the practices that underpin the ways in which people live together in societies. The groups with whom we have worked as part of this ethos are listed below.

The public sector and the third sector

Work in this area has primarily been organised within the Institute for Music in Human and Social Development (IMHSD). IMHSD was set up in 2005 to pull together different strands of RSM’s research in response to the needs of our partner groups involved in community music. It involves collaboration with education and health professionals, particularly in the areas of special needs education, health, rehabilitation and trauma. IMHSD now brings together research staff, expert practitioners and doctoral students. Its goal is to have an impact on education and health through collaboration with education and health professionals. To this end, for example, MacDonald and Overy were funded in 2013 by the Carnegie Trust (£32,346) to set up the Scottish Music Health Network, designed to ‘increase collaborative infrastructures and translate innovations from theory to practice’. Other IMHSD research has been developed to have a practical impact through collaboration with classroom teachers, for example in the use of songs and singing in second language learning. IMHSD researchers have also worked with National Health Service and Prison Service professionals, applying research findings to such issues as the treatment of pain, post-operative mobility and the rehabilitation of inmates of Scottish prisons. RSM also has a continuing relationship with NGOs and the charity, War Child. In collaboration with the latter we have applied developments in music psychology to musical therapeutic practice in post-conflict societies such as Bosnia, where we organise an annual music camp for traumatised children.

Performers and audiences

Much music research, for example practice-led research in composition, or historical acoustic research into musical instruments, has an impact through performance practice and on people involved in it, including promoters, performers, musical instrument makers and other music participants. Our policy is to try to systematise such impact. One example is from O’Regan’s contribution to the Wode Psalter research project, on a 16th-century collection of Scottish church music. The music that was the subject of study was recorded as part of the dissemination process. AHRC Follow-on Funding was then used to make the music available and accessible for performance by contemporary church choirs. In this way, research on music for worship in the 16th century will have an impact on music for worship in the 21st century. A contrasting example is Edwards’ *Slippery Chicken* project. Here AHRC Follow-on Funding was used to develop public access to an open-source algorithmic composition system. Software originally tailor-made for the author’s personal composition techniques was translated into general-purpose algorithmic composition tools for use by a range of other composers and music professionals.

The music industry

Frith’s work on music industry policy (now being developed by Brennan) is based on a dialogue with music industry bodies and music policy makers, whether in the form of specific knowledge exchange activities as part of the research process (as with Live Music Exchange) or through seminars focussed specifically on the value of academic research for industry practice. Music

Impact template (REF3a)

industry personnel are suspicious of academic knowledge and the impact approach here has been to develop ways of dealing with 'knowledge resistance'. Work here complements Frith's work with Professor Martin Cloonan of Glasgow University to impact music policy making in Scotland through the political process. Funding from the Royal Society of Edinburgh for policy workshops led to the publication of a *Music Manifesto*, designed to inform both the public's and politicians' discussion of cultural policy during the last Scottish Parliamentary elections and in the subsequent debates about the cultural consequences of independence.

b. Approach to impact

Approaches to impact depend on the type of impact involved, which we classify under three headings. **Application of research findings to specific problems** covers much of the work done by IMHSD researchers in the fields of education and health, in which research findings are applied to specific medical/educational problems. The research has an impact on treatment/pedagogy, where the successes and failures of such practice in meeting clients' requirements are fed back into the research process. Impact collaborators are, in this context, research collaborators.

Disseminating research to improve practice covers community music work, designed, for example, to improve teaching practice, but also research on musical instruments, designed to have an effect on musical instrument makers and players, and research designed to improve the music policy making process. **Using research in the development of practical and commercial equipment** covers research leading to the development of new musical instruments such as the Skoog, software such as Slippery Chicken, and computer applications for acoustic analysis or sound simulation such as those being developed in the NESS project.

A concern for impact is also built into research conception and planning, for example through the development of research programmes through networking events and workshops designed to bring together researchers and practitioners. There is an expectation that even researchers driven purely by individual curiosity will build into their research timetables dissemination events reaching beyond the academy, and consider the significance of their research for musical, music industry or political practice. Kelly's research on music in East Germany, for example, involved the promotion of both public concerts featuring significant East German compositions and seminars discussing the implications of the research for contemporary German music policy. This approach to knowledge exchange was developed through the mentoring system provided by her AHRC Early Career Fellowship. The mentoring of new researchers similarly includes advice on how to establish contacts and networks going beyond the immediate scholarly community. An early career researcher, Brennan, has thus been supported in pursuing a series of knowledge exchange initiatives that have involved various music industry and policy practitioners in the development of research projects, including participants from the Scottish Music Industry Association, Creative Scotland, the Musicians Union, and Edinburgh and Glasgow City Councils.

Support for impact activities is provided in several ways. The RSM's engagement in musical life underlines our commitment to ensuring that its work impacts on both music professionals and the general public. This happens through the organisation of university-funded public concert series (in the Reid, McEwan and St Cecilia's Halls) and of international music festivals such as Soundings and Dialogues, as well as through the support of and involvement in performing ensembles such as the Edinburgh Quartet, Edinburgh Contemporary Music Ensemble and Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra. Research on historically informed performance is also built into our public performance programme, whether through acoustic and technical studies of the musical instruments in the University's collections or through Kitchen's practice-led work on 16th to 18th-century harpsichord and organ music. Similarly RSM's on-going engagement in music in the community provides a setting in which research in sound design (Parker) and recording technology (Williams) can be given practical application.

RSM has benefited greatly from Edinburgh College of Art's Research and Knowledge Exchange Office. As well as the provision of training for early career researchers, this has provided advice and help to established researchers in preparing funding applications, whether to Research Councils (as with the AHRC Follow-on Funding bids for O'Regan, Frith and Edwards) or to charities and foundations (as with Isaacs' music in the community projects funded by a range of private and public sector organisations) and the provision of funds to support network building (through seminars or conferences, such as the international Neurosciences and Music Conference, hosted

Impact template (REF3a)

by RSM in 2011) and commercial development (as with the Skoog).

'Impact' is itself a subject of research in RSM. Frith has addressed the problems of research impact on music industry practice (and the issue of knowledge resistance); and Moran has examined the mechanisms of impact assessment in music education projects such as the Sistema programme at Raploch (and the tensions between the various interested parties in such initiatives).

Such research informs our understanding that 'impact' describes a complex relationship between research and potential research users, and the impact studies now commissioned for each of the Botany Project events will provide a continuing focus for development of this theme.

c. Strategy and plans

Our strategy for the future has two goals. First, to strengthen and deepen our relationships with a broad range of colleagues in education, industry, health and social services, policymakers and the community at large, in order to enhance research design, effectiveness and impact. Second, to ensure that the RSM promotes the dissemination of the highest quality of work, whether research, performance or creative practice, by developing the communicative and entrepreneurial skills as well as the creativity of researchers and students. This was the impact strategy initiated by the launch of the IMHSD, the aim of which was to facilitate the best possible forms of innovative and collaborative practice. The appointments of Moran and MacDonald (who are both performing musicians) were designed to keep this relationship with the health and education sectors at the centre of our research activity, while continuing to combine research in music psychology and neuroscience with research in composition and performance and the practice of music in the community.

This successful strategy will be extended across all other areas of our work. Thus our research should continue to have an impact on music policy through the strategy developed by Frith of regular meetings between academic researchers and music policy makers in both the commercial and state sectors. The appointment of Brennan will enable this work to continue. The integration of RSM into ECA also gave Brennan the opportunity to relate research on live music promotion to research on art exhibition and curation in the development of an ecological theory of cultural space (research supported by the ECA's KE fund) which has been of considerable interest to local music promoters and local City Councils. Similarly, Davison will continue to develop the relationships across ECA in music, film and media with industry partners, and Nelson and Edwards will continue to rethink and broaden the scope and accessibility of creative practice-led research.

d. Relationship to case studies

Two of our impact case studies, developed under the auspices of the IMHSD, involve different kinds of research collaboration, and different approaches to impact. **The Skoog Project** drew on musicology, acoustic analysis, informatics, music education and research into music and the brain, to develop a new musical instrument, the Skoog, designed for special needs music, music therapy and inclusive education. Cross-disciplinary research and collaborative impact assessment, coordinated from RSM, enabled the Skoog to be developed commercially. In this case a specific problem was identified through research on the use of music in special needs education; a cross-disciplinary team was put together to find a solution for this problem; and the resulting new musical instrument was developed and refined through on-going research in the classroom. There was thus a clear relationship between our impact strategy and the impact result. **The Botany Project** drew on RSM's long-established practice-led research on community music. The immediate aim of the project was to give primary school children the opportunity to learn and develop new creative and social skills over an extended period. The project was designed not just for the benefit of the children but also to apply the findings of practice-led research to the development of pedagogical practice, through programmes of music-based professional development for teachers. Again impact strategy was central to the way the result was achieved. **The Live Music Exchange** case study relates to Frith and Brennan's music policy research. In this case a funded research project, on Britain's live music sector, identified a number of problems faced by live music promoters. Follow-on funding to the original research project enabled further dialogue with the sector which led to the creation of Live Music Exchange, a web and networking tool through which academic research findings can impact on live music policy through a series of sustained partnerships.