

## Environment template (REF5)

<b>Institution: University of Salford</b>
<b>Unit of assessment: 35 – Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts</b>
<p><b>a. Overview</b> The <b>Salford Music Research Centre (SMRC)</b> and the <b>Performance Research Centre (PRC)</b> at the University of Salford conduct international research at the highest level, engaging in practice-led and text-based cross-disciplinary work which has a significant impact on a variety of different communities. Already well established as a research centre, as demonstrated by the 2001 and the 2008 RAE returns, music at Salford has generated a significant increase in activity in existing areas of expertise (Brass Bands and Jazz &amp; Popular Music Studies), as well as developing new areas (Interactive Digital Music). Music at Salford is located within the School of Arts and Media, and so this submission now also includes researchers in Drama, Dance and the Performing Arts. Since 2008 our researchers have moved into leading international roles within their areas of specialism, having work performed in, or leading collaborations with, major international venues such as Carnegie Hall, Banff Center for the Arts, London Jazz Festival, North Sea Jazz Festival, Tempo Reale (Italy), European Jazz Network, the Albert Hall (London), and Bridgewater Hall (Manchester), the Barbican Centre, and the Venice Biennale.</p>
<p><b>b. Research strategy</b> Since the 2008 RAE, the cultural and economic landscape of the region has been transformed by the move of large parts of the BBC to MediaCityUK, placing Salford at the centre of one of the largest hubs of digital content creation in the world. Within this context, the new School of Arts and Media, and our move to a new £50 million purpose-built facility scheduled for occupation in September 2015, our overarching strategy in research for both research centres consists of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. the creation of interdisciplinary collaborative partnerships and networks within the School, across the university, and outside the university.</b> This objective has been promoted by the appointment of Alan <b>Williams</b> as Professor of Collaborative Composition; an example of collaborative work is the digital opera by Alan <b>Williams</b>, premiered in September 2012. This involved researchers and PG students from Music (including Brendan <b>Williams</b>), Creative Media (camera work and projection), Journalism (<b>Lin</b>), Performance (<b>Talbot</b>), national collaborative partner institution Liverpool Institute of the Performing Arts and from international collaborative partner institution UNIRIO (Brazil – Dr Marcos Lucas as co-composer), as well as outside artistic partners (instrumental performers Psappa, singers and director).</li><li><b>2. the integration of the digital into as many aspects of research.</b> Within the context of the University's move to state of the art facilities in MediaCityUK, the spotlight is on the development of activities within what might broadly be termed the 'digital sphere'.</li><li><b>3. the diversification and expansion of sources of research income.</b> The research centres contributing to this submission have had success with diverse sources such as Arts Council England, AHRC, Leverhulme Trust, HERA/European Community 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. Expertise in bidding success will continue to be expanded and best practice spread as part of our ongoing research strategy.</li></ol> <p>Within the subject areas, <b>Music's</b> strategic aims are to develop its structure around 4 main areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>a) maintaining and expanding the world-leading reputation in practice-based research in Brass Band studies.</b> This will be achieved by developing a collaborative network in which Salford assumes a leadership aimed at exploring the field from practice-based socio-historical, and musicological points of view. This network is a collaboration with Brass Band Researchers in the Royal Scottish Conservatoire (Prof. John Wallace, Principal) and at the Royal Northern College of Music (Prof. John Miller,</li></ol>

Deputy Head of the School of Wind, Brass and Percussion).

- b) **developing our world-leading reputation in jazz studies**, building on the largest funding grant ever awarded in Europe for jazz studies, (€996, 318 for the Rhythm Changes research project) to develop an interdisciplinary approach based on collaborative and a combination of practice-based and musicological approaches. In 2013, the University hosted the Rethinking Jazz Cultures Conference, the largest event of its kind within the field, welcoming over 100 speakers from 22 countries and a new monograph series, entitled 'Transnational Studies in Jazz' will be launched in 2014 and edited by **Whyton**.
- c) **maintaining and expanding our long-standing reputation for international excellence in popular music studies**. Alongside colleagues from the Culture, Communications and Media Research Centre, our strategy is to build on the valuable legacy work of former colleague Prof David Sanjek and through expanding our links in international networks such as IASPM (International Association for Study of Popular Music), hosting conferences such as the IASPM UK and Ireland conference held in September 2012.
- d) **developing our activities in digital music, including production, electroacoustic music, algorithmic and emergent music programming, and sound environments**. Salford's unique approach in this area is a combination of technologies derived from the IRCAM approach, such as MAX MSP, with those derived from popular music. In electro-acoustic music, we already have established international networks in, for example, the EU-funded Listening Cities project, with partners Tempo Reale (Italy), Alte Schmiede (Vienna), Ionian University (Greece), Groupe Musique Vivante de Lyon (France). In production our staff and students already have an expanding reputation for recording and producing popular music bands such as Dutch Uncles, but are also collaborating with leading ensembles on projects such as recording for Psappha's UK premiere of Steve Reich's *Sextet*.

**Performance's** key strategic aims in research are: **developing the integration of live performance with digital arts** through the As Yet Impossible series of talks and symposia, plus performances at the purpose-built Digital Performance Laboratory at MediaCityUK; **developing the area of interaction and participation including Immersive Theatres**: interests in alternative personae, play and gamification are being developed in partnership with public organisations such as the National Trust and leading practitioners such as Blast Theory, Triangle and Look Left Look Right; and **developing performance and production techniques in broadcast media**: Research interests are concerned with representations of identity, and specifically with non-naturalistic performance, writing and production techniques which disrupt hegemonic narrative structures and normative identities.

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

Our approach to staffing strategy balances the need to develop early career researchers, by offering training and collaborative opportunities, with the need to release world-leading research staff to take on significant leadership roles within research, such as **Whyton's** membership of the AHRC Peer Review College. Similarly, this strategy has enabled **Oliver** to develop the As Yet Impossible research project which explores the application of performance methods in unusual industrial and experimental applications. All staff undergo a regular unified Performance Development Review with their line manager which includes research activity as part of overall academic workload. Line managers consult with Research Centre Heads beforehand to ensure senior research manager input is included properly within the review. All staff are eligible to apply for research leave after seven semesters of normal service under the School's sabbatical scheme. To ensure that equal opportunity is given to early career researchers, half of the School's sabbatical awards each year are reserved for non-professorial staff. This has paid off significantly: Alan **Williams's** *Wonder* was the result of Leverhulme funded research/sabbatical leave. All staff in the School are given the opportunity annually for review against the Academic Career Path criteria, either for HERA regrading to Senior Lecturer (in the case of Lecturers), or for promotion to Reader/ Professor by the

University Professorial Promotions Committee. In this UoA during the period 2008-2013, **Wise** has been promoted to Senior Lecturer, **Dewhurst** to Reader, and **Williams** and **Whyton** to Professors.

Newly appointed staff are all placed on a one-year probationary period, and are allocated a formal mentor from amongst senior staff in their disciplinary area to support them through their first year of employment at the University. Research training and development is included within the induction programme. Early research career staff are encouraged to apply to the University Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Researcher scholarship, which provides financial support for research activities. **Talbot** benefited from this scholarship during the REF assessment period (£2000). Early Career Researchers and new members of staff are encouraged from a very early stage to fully participate and present their work in training programmes and are given weighted workload allowances for research which supports their development. Pump-priming research funds are provided to support research costs such as conference attendance. In addition, the University operates an international conference attendance scheme, where funds for staff giving papers at international conferences have their costs match-funded.

As a significantly practice-led School in the Creative Arts, a clear area of strategic planning has been in encouraging staff without PhDs to gain them. This forms an important part of the mentoring of early career researchers, with more senior research staff acting as supervisors to less established colleagues. The School has invested £62,929 over the period 2008-2013 in the mentoring and supervising of staff, both full- and part time. Supervisory training is also provided to all PhD supervisors as part of improving supervisory skills as well updating staff on new regulations associated with PhD provision. Such training also includes equality and diversity and widening participation. All members of staff are positioned within one of the Research Centres in the School, and can also become associate members of other centres. This allows members visibility and active participation in the development of thematic research strategies, making explicit research synergies across centres, and ensuring research cohesion. In 2010, the University was one of only 10 institutions recognised by the European Commission for its work in supporting the professional development of its researchers, and meeting a Concordat to support Career development of research staff. In addition, the researcher development opportunities offered at Salford played a significant role in retaining the European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award in October 2012. External researchers are linked to activity within the School through the University's Visiting Research Fellow and Visiting Professor schemes, which allows Research Centres to link high-profile staff to the work, and promote the Centres' research. In this UoA our commitment to a wider variety of musical genres is reflected in our appointment of Visiting Professors Richard Wigley, General Manager BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and of Johnny Marr, composer, former guitarist with The Smiths.

ii. **Research students** Postgraduate research studies and activities are managed within the School. We implement a formal Learning Agreement between the student and the University, allowing the optimisation of student experiences and expectations. We also have close links with the North West hub of Vitae, which is committed to working with universities, supervisors and other national organisations to support doctoral researchers. Postgraduate research supervision is supported by a supervisory team (two supervisors for each candidate) and a Personal Tutor for each candidate. Postgraduate Research Representatives are elected from the student body and sit on School committees to make sure that the voice and expectations of students are heard and acted upon. We have diverse PhD modes/pathways which also enables us to maximise the number of students we recruit. These include full-time, part-time, split site and PhD by published works.

We strongly believe that a supportive research-focused environment is critical to research students in terms of the quality of their research, and the general satisfaction of their research experience and so we take active steps to ensure that we provide an

environment which is supportive of postgraduate activity in order to foster and nurture young talent. The University-wide Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) policy, which started in 2003, funds PhD studies and provides training for teaching for the candidates, and has been very successful. To date this has funded over 30 GTAs across the University. Over the period 2008-2013, the School has invested £20,750 in GTA funding. The University is an active partner in the Northwest Consortium for the AHRC's Doctoral Partnership Scheme, which will fund 40 PhD studentships per year in the creative arts and media over 5 years across 7 HEIs, and in collaboration with BBC, the Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (FACT), FutureEverything, Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI), Opera North, Tate Liverpool, and Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archives & Heritage Service. In conjunction with the University of Keele, Salford held an AHRC Block Grant Partnership award for 2011-13 which included studentships for PhD in Music and for Professional Preparation Award in Film, Digital and Media Production.

All PGR students in the Research Centres complete their doctoral studies under the University regulatory framework for progression, which requires students to meet formal requirements at fixed points in their research period. The University, College and School all provide appropriate development in generic and subject-specific skills for PGRs. The University Research and Innovation unit provides generic training through its Salford Postgraduate Research Training programme (SPoRT) workshops, which are aligned with the national Researcher Development Framework. These cover aspects of doctoral study, such as "surviving the viva", as well as introductions to core research skills, such as getting published, making a presentation, writing conference papers. It also provides introductions to key methodological approaches and software – interviewing techniques, focus group research, NVivo and SPSS. The University also runs the Salford Postgraduate Annual Research Conference (SPARC) where students and early career researchers across the disciplines can present their research and gain feedback. SPARC has run for over 12 years and attracts students from many other institutions including the Universities of Reading, Bristol, Exeter, and the Open University. Using Blackboard Collaborate, R&I and the Library have also expanded the availability of one-to-one online support for students to access off campus.

The School organises a series of research seminars for PGR students which encourages interdisciplinary engagement with other Research Centres, including CCM (UoA36) and Design (UoA34). We also organise more subject specific, practice-based research events, such as weekly Composition seminars, performance masterclasses, and the Jazz Research Group – an open forum for leading research scholars, early career researchers and postgraduate students working across the UK. Set up in 2008, the group meets 6 times per year and is the only forum of its kind in the UK. The School further supports practice based work, by funding professional performers to come and engage with PGR students through workshopping compositions. PGR students have recently (since 2009) worked with the Manchester Camerata, Scottish Horn trio, Psappa, pianist Nicola Meecham, Xenia Pestova, Voxare String Quartet, BBC Concert Orchestra and players from the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.

The University considers diversity as one of the routes to quality and the experience, insight and knowledge that people of varied backgrounds bring to teaching, engagement and research as essential to success. Equality assessment of University policies is undertaken as a matter of course, (including for the REF), and there is a well-established network of equality and diversity co-ordinators across Schools and Colleges, in addition to other staff networks such as the Black & Ethnic Minority Forum, the Salford Staff Women's Action Network, the LGBT Staff Network and the Salford University Disabled Staff group. In 2012 the University initiated the Staff Diversity Awards as a means of celebrating and rewarding outstanding achievement in the area of equality and diversity. In 2013, for the third year in a row, Salford was listed by Stonewall as one of the UK's most 'gay-friendly' universities.

**d. Income, infrastructure and facilities** The University has been a major partner in the development of MediaCityUK at Salford Quays, which encourages creativity, innovation and collaboration between researchers, professionals, communities and industry. Located at the heart of six national BBC departments and a hub of independent specialist creative, digital and media organisations - our location at MediaCityUK opened in 2011, and we are developing links with user groups such as an audio research partnership with the BBC, links with large multinational corporations including Adobe, BT, CISCO, Hewlett Packard and public, community and voluntary sector organisations, public sector bodies and SMEs. MediaCityUK enables us to provide a trans-disciplinary research and innovation environment, driving forward the boundaries of knowledge at the heart of a globally significant digital and creative cluster. Within the building there is unique set of dedicated research facilities, such as:

- the Research Hotel, an innovation space where academics, businesses, communities and practitioners can interact together to invent the future in a unique multidisciplinary collaborative space;
- the Egg, a multimedia Living Lab which includes an 8K resolution high definition screen, integrated touch tables and gesture recognition technology, high definition audio, all based in our public foyer to encourage interaction and audience participation;
- the Digital Performance Lab (DPL), a unique black box theatre space enhanced by the latest in screen technology and interactive devices, designed to explore interactions at the boundary between human performance and digital devices;
- a range of other leading-edge media facilities which includes HD TV and radio studios, broadcast and audio laboratories, visual effects studios, edit suites all linked through an industry-standard Media Asset Management system.

Both Music and Performance have made innovative and creative use of these facilities in their research. The DPL has one of the largest internal projection screens in the UK and is networked to TV studios and audio recording facilities in the same buildings. These facilities, which opened in September 2011, have already hosted several high-profile interdisciplinary events and projects. In April 2012 Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Master of the Queen's Music, came to supervise the recording and filming of Psappha's performance in the DPL of *Eight Songs for a Mad King*; this project now appears on the BBS/Arts Council England funded "The Space" site. The facilities also host the annual Sonic Fusion festival, the As Yet Impossible Series, and in September 2012 hosted Alan **Williams'** digital opera *Stefan and Lotte in Paradise* featuring a live link-up between the DPL and the EGG space. The MediaCityUK building has also gained a reputation as an international conference venue, with the SMRC hosting both the IASPM UK Conference in September 2012 and the groundbreaking Rethinking Jazz Cultures event in April 2013.

Researchers also have access to the Adelphi Recording Studios, a suite of 5 specially designed and adapted recording spaces with integrated live rooms; Peel Hall, a 220-seat purpose built concert hall dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century with a Steinway model D grand piano; Maxwell Hall, a flexible space seating 500 which historically was the venue for gigs from bands such as the Smiths, Wings and the Fall; the Robert Powell Theatre, a 210 seat proscenium arch theatre with wings and full lighting rig. The University is beginning construction of the Gateway Building, a purpose built £50million project which will house the School of Arts and Media and feature a full height theatre space seating 400 and the largest music recording suite in the UK HEA sector. The project will be completed and ready for occupation in September 2015, and represents one of the largest capital investments by the University to date. Alongside the development in MediaCityUK, this will mean that Music and Performance will, from 2015, be operating in the best designed and located facilities in the UK.

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

**Jazz** is a rapidly growing area of research which is led by **Whyton**, with **Brendan Williams** and **Dewhurst** also active. **Whyton** is the editor of *Jazz Research Journal* and *Jazz* [Ashgate Library of Essays on Popular Music] (Ashgate, 2011) and the founding editor of the new Routledge series 'Transnational Studies in Jazz'. The SMRC has led the largest academic study of jazz ever undertaken, with €996, 318 (£855,947) of funding from the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA). The project partners work in 7 HEIs across 5 European countries: Universities of Amsterdam, Stavanger, Copenhagen, Music and Performing Arts, Graz; as well as non-academic partners such as the Copenhagen Jazz Festival, London Jazz Festival, MaiJazz Stavanger, Vienna Jazz Festival, North Sea Jazz Festival, Rotterdam Film Festival, Live! Singapore, Jazzahead, Darmstadt Jazz Institute, Jazz Research Institute (Graz); with national arts agencies such as Jazz Services (UK), Music Centre Netherlands, JazzDanmark, Music Information Centre Austria, NorskJazzForum, and with broader networks such as the Europe Jazz Network, IASPM, and the Association of European Conservatoires Pop/Jazz Platform. We are also engaging with partner institutions via the Jazz Research Group. This Salford hosted group regularly welcomes participants from institutions across the UK and further afield including Salford, MMU, Lancaster, Leeds College of Music, Ulster, University of West London, Birmingham City, Goldsmiths', Open University, University of Amsterdam, Liverpool Community College and the University of Huddersfield. We have organised the following international conferences relating to jazz over the period 2008-13: New Jazz Histories Symposium, 19 November 2008, University of Salford (**Whyton**) included a keynote from Alyn Shipton (BBC Radio 3); Mediating Jazz Conference 26-27 November 2009 included a keynote presentation from Professor Krin Gabbard (SUNY); Rhythm Changes Conference, 1-4 September 2011 organised in collaboration with University of Amsterdam with keynotes from Ronald Radano and Bruce Johnson; Rhythm Changes conference Media City 11-14 April 2013 – this featured keynote presentations from David Ake and E Taylor Atkins as well as a rare in conversation event with Val Wilmer and participation from the BBC.

**Composition** is a well established area of practice-based research, led by **Graham, Davismoon, Alan Williams** and **Dewhurst**. Within this large area, SMRC members have produced works for a huge variety of media and ensembles, and created artistic collaborations with other academic partners, including: Jodrell Bank Centre for Astrophysics, University of Manchester – Alan **Williams'** Oratorio *Wonder* which featured an education project, online content and creative output from Year 8 pupils at Salford Schools in collaboration with the BBC Philharmonic as part of the International Year of Astronomy (2009) (Arts Council England funding, and Leverhulme fellowship); Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) – Alan **Williams'** collaborative opera *Stefan and Lotte in Paradise* (2010-September 2013) (Arts Council England funding); Ohio State University (USA) – **Davismoon'** s collaborative work for rock musicians and orchestra *Deeper than all Roses* featured staff and students from both institutions; Senzoku Gakuen Conservatoire of Music (Japan): **Graham** was composer/conductor in residence July 2012; **Dewhurst** was composer-in-residence with Stavanger Brass Band (Norway) 2008-2013; Tampere Conservatory of Music, Finland (**Davismoon's** orchestral piece *In the Highest*)

As well as international partnerships, researchers in this UoA have participated in artistic collaborations with: BBC Philharmonic Orchestra & BBC Singers (Alan **Williams: Wonder**, 2009); MDR Radio Choir (Alan **Williams: Divers**); Psappha - UoS Media City UK Ensemble (Alan **Williams, Brendan Williams**); Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (Master of the Queen's Music) (Alan **Williams, Brendan Williams**); Scottish Clarinet Quartet (**Davismoon**); Voxare String Quartet (New York) (**Williams** and PhD student Steve Kilpatrick); Richard Casey (contemporary pianist in residence) (Alan **Williams**); Central Band of the RAF (**Graham**); Band of the Royal Marines (**Graham**); National Youth Orchestra of Scotland (**Davismoon, Alan Williams, PhD student Steve Kilpatrick**); Sarah

Watts, bass clarinetist (**Davismoon**); Stavanger Brass Band, Norway (**Dewhurst** - composer in Residence); Black Dyke Brass Band (**Graham**); Fodens' Brass Band (**Graham**); All-Japan Universities Wind Ensemble (**Graham** composer/conductor in residence)

Our composers' work has been performed the highest profile of venues, including Carnegie Hall, New York – March 2012 (**Graham**); Royal Albert Hall: Mountbatten Festival of Music - February 2008 (**Dewhurst**); Royal Albert Hall: Finals of the National Brass Band Championships – October 2009 (**Graham**); Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada – January 2011 (**Davismoon**); and also broadcast on national radio stations, both in the UK and abroad: **Graham** was the subject of a BBC Radio 2 2009 *Listen to the Band* edition; in 2013, **Graham**'s work *Radio City* was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 in a slot devoted to British music, both orchestral and band; Alan **Williams**' choral piece *Divers Winged Creatures* was broadcast live on MDR in Germany in April 2008; **Williams**' piece *Bog Bodies* was broadcast on Brazilian national classical music station Radio MEC, 2010. Our practice-led researchers and composers have created a new festival of contemporary music in Salford - the Salford Sonic Fusions Festival (SSFF). This has now been staged twice, in April 2012, Media City UK including jazz bassist and Ornette Coleman sideman Jamaaladeen Tacuma (USA), narrator Federico Sanguinetti Marco Visconti-Prasca (Italy), and in March 2013 at Media City UK, including Roberto Fabricciani. This was featured on BBC Radio 3's *In Tune* programme with Suzi Klein, with an interview with festival director, **Davismoon**. **Davismoon** and Alan **Williams** are both on the board of *Contemporary Music Review*.

**Popular Music:** In this similarly well established research area, SMRC members have organised 7 international conference events in the field: "Sound Property? Investigating the Legal Status of Sound Recordings: An Interdisciplinary Conference on Music & Copyright" May 2009; "Bigger Than Words, Wider Than Pictures: Noise, Affect, Politics" (international conference July 2010: Michael Goddard, Ben Halligan, Dave Sanjek of Salford Music Research Centre) 2010; "Sight and Sound: Interrogating the Music Documentary" (international conference 2010); "Rare Records and Raucous Nights: Investigating Northern Soul" (November 2010); "Making things whole again: the Take That Reformation" conference June 2011. *Popular Music History* journal has recently published a special issue, guest edited and introduced by **Wise**, devoted to the Take That reunion and this conference, and associated exhibition "Fan Networks in the Pre-Digital Age: Take That Fandom 1990 to 1996" which ran at the Kraak Gallery in June 2011. The conference and exhibition received international coverage on BBC World Service and West Deutsche Rundfunk. "Community Music: A Symposium, an AHRC Connected Communities event on community music, its social history and digital future", Oct 2011, ThinkLAB, University of Salford; International Association for the Study of Popular Music UK/Ireland Conference, Media City, 5-7 September 2012.

**Performance** is a recent and growing area of research, and this is the first time that it has been submitted in its 'home' UoA. Artistic collaborations with Blast Theory (**Woods**, Associate Artist) have resulted in performances at the Venice Biennale *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant*, 2009). In 2009, **Oliver**'s residency at the Banff New Media Centre created two major outputs in the field of digital arts: *Swimmers* and *The Screaming Head*. The PRC has organised "The As Yet Impossible: in human performance" series of talks and a conference, May 2011, at the Lowry Centre. Visiting speakers in the series have included cyberneticist Prof Kevin Warwick; Steve Benford, Professor of Collaborative Computing Uof Nottingham; Urban design specialist Michael Joroff from MIT. PRC also organised the 6<sup>th</sup> International Comedy Conference: Drawing The Line – Comics, Comedy & Comics, Salford /MMU, May 31-June 1 2011. **Peters**' Radio play *Bell in the Ball* was broadcast on BBC Radio 4 (June 2010).