

## Impact template (REF3a)

**Institution:** 10007857 Bangor University

**Unit of assessment:** 35 Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts

### a. Context

**Our impact stems from research** conducted in Bangor University's (BU) School of Music and School of Creative Studies and Media, especially our shared Research Group, **Creativity, Theory & Practice**. Major impact was generated also from the Unit's other research groups (**Digital Culture, Media & Persuasive Communication, Sacred Music Studies, Early Music, Critical Editing**). **A wide range of non-academic users have benefitted from our research** including the general public; economy and industries; school teachers and examiners; Welsh government initiatives supporting culture, environment and the arts; religious communities and ecclesiastical commissions; professional and amateur musicians, artists and writers. While our unit's most prolific impact is in the area of cultural life, we have also influenced civil society, policy-making, public discourse, public services, economic prosperity and education.

### b. Approach to impact

The Unit's strategic approach to impact has been and continues to enrich the **cultural life** of the **local community** through BU researchers' innovative performances of works from the classical repertoire and encounters with rarely heard or previously unperformed pieces via the Music at Bangor concert series (audience in 2011–12: 2516) and the annual Bangor New Music Festival (audience in 2013: 306), featuring world premieres, first performances in Wales and first modern performances of early music. We also direct the region's foremost amateur music ensembles (including BU Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Chamber Choir, Early Music Bangor, Bangor New Music Ensemble). Further local community cultural enrichment comes through non-academic events, ranging from (co-)organisation of Japanese and Chinese Cinema Days to introduce East Asian Visual Culture to local communities, to the Oxford Lieder Festival (workshops and study days for the general public). Our artists and practice-based researchers produce vertical dance performances (combining dance with rock climbing techniques) on public buildings; and multi-media installations in public spaces (Conwy) and on BBC/ Arts Council online channel "The Space". We regularly hold workshops and outreach events for school children, the disabled and those with limited access to art to encourage their creativity. **Creative practice is influenced**, for instance, through advising on a film script for Leviathan Films, London, and via compositions, commissions and performances, including ElectracousticWALES, the Bangor New Music Festival and the biannual INTER-Actions conference (2012-). These generate synergies between composers, performers and technology (e.g. sonic arts performance with live electronics).

Beyond such periodic events, various **longer-standing initiatives enrich wider cultural understanding**. The Zero Carbon Britain/Centre for Alternative Technology Filmmaker in Residence, for instance, documents scientific research creatively to engage new audiences. The International Centre of Sacred Music Studies deepens the public understanding of music in the context of worship in present and historical contexts. Our critical editions are used for public performances by world-leading ensembles (e.g. Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, generating a commercial recording of Mendelssohn's Symphony no. 3 in the version unearthed by *Schmidt*: Decca/Universal 478 1525), at internationally acclaimed festivals (e.g. the production of Wood's edition of Purcell's *Fairy Queen* at the 2009 and 2012 Glyndebourne Festivals further and performances in London, Paris and New York in 2010) and commercial recording (e.g. Music from Chirk Castle Manuscript, released on Hyperion CDA67695 and published through Cathedral Press). These editions **preserve cultural heritage and generate new ways of perceiving central works of the canon** and forgotten masterpieces in novel and historically accurate forms (Mendelssohn, Blow, Purcell, Elgar).

**Civil society** is influenced through events like Public Oral History Recordings and conferences across Snowdonia National Park that establish the community significance of Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Station's closure. Our dance performances have helped regenerate Belfast City Centre and Caernarfon's Peblig Estate (with Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru) by drawing crowds to reclaim once

dangerous city areas.

**Policy making** is impacted through the *Experience of Worship* project, which influenced CoE's and RC's approach to using (medieval) liturgy; and the advisory function of our researchers in steering committees (GCSE, A level boards, RSCM, Academia Europaea).

**Public discourse** is influenced via mass media and public talks on religious experience (e.g. *Exploring Jews* case study) and identity expressed via music, film and Welsh heritage, e.g. through the renowned Welsh Traditional Music Archive and the Welsh Pop Archive (est. 2008), both housed on our premises and curated by our staff.

**Public services** are improved, for instance, through *Lewis' Wellcome Trust* project 'Lexicon: Dyslexia: sound, sign and sense'. This produced sonic art using spoken text as a raw material, immersing the audience in a 360° spatial sound experience. It highlights dyslexia informed by theory around the role played by deficits in aural, phonological and phonographic processing. Residents of Plas Hedd home in Maesgeirchen were beneficiaries of the artist-in-residence scheme of *Ifan's* project on effects of the arts on dementia. The project investigated the effects of music sessions produced for residents on the musician's career, staff wellbeing and the residents.

**Economic prosperity** is fostered through knowledge transfer from all research groups, comprising KTP (including development of software for publishing and music technology companies), Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships (KESS, 8) and Access to Masters (ATM, 6 from 2010-11, 20 from 2011-12, 13 from 2012-13). The latter two, funded by the European Social Fund, are awarded for postgraduate research projects undertaking in connection with businesses from the Convergence Area. From 2010-13, the School of Music housed music publishing company Cathedral Press (directed by two staff members), specialising in scholarly editions of sacred works unavailable elsewhere, appealing to cathedral, college and church choirs, mediating between research and (professional and amateur) practice. Welsh industry is supported through the feasibility study *Building New Business Strategies for the Music Industry in Wales* (2009) and the Wales Arts International project (under Interreg IVC Tool Quiz), which supports artists and arts organisations from Wales who work internationally.

**Education:** We produced seminal music and media education textbooks for schools (J Harper, handbook of Western liturgy; Woods, Purcell monograph for ABRSM; Bakir & McStay, *Media Studies: Texts, Production, Contexts*). The International Centre of Sacred Music Studies delivers workshops for church ministers, musicians and lay congregations on chant and liturgy. We regularly produce educational programmes via the Bangor New Music Festival. Research groups Digital Culture and Media & Persuasive Communications influenced the A-level English curriculum via talks on video games and advertising to A-level syllabus writers; and the Welsh GCSE Curriculum with research on documentary forming new curriculum materials for post WW2 History.

We use multifarious **routes of dissemination**, including: media appearances, writing for news outlets, blogs, podcasts (pre-concert talks for concerts at Venue Cymru); talks to expert educational and public service bodies and industry, public performances and concerts, organising festivals, PhD students engaged in Knowledge Transfer, membership of creative industries networks and Creative Exchange Wales Network, writing textbooks for A-level students; creating software tools and online information systems for industry, educators and the public; facilitating multi-media events (including first professional music concert through Second Life ), publication of critical editions and performance materials, public lectures and workshops.

**Staff have developed relationships with key users to develop impact** through: forging KESS and KTP partnerships; working with local community groups and firms, collaborations with local, national and international artists, arts venues and concert series; national and international teaching; AHRC and A4B/Welsh Government network partnerships with Welsh creative industries.

**These relationships are evidenced through** projects funded by Arts Council of Wales and bodies like CYMAL (Welsh Assembly Government) and CADW; theatre collaborations; A-level text

book sales (e.g. *Media Studies: Texts, Production & Context* in its 2nd edition); organising concerts, cultural and outreach events, workshops and pre-concert talks (Venue Cymru, Y Galeri, Ucheldre), incorporated into KTP and Knowledge Exchange programmes; developing software and online resources; and facilitating critical appreciation of music and film via media reviews.

**Our impacts are evidenced** through the materials collected as part of funded projects (Arts Council, AHRC), some of which are used for National Museum of Wales exhibition and archived at the National Library; audience surveys from events held in the University and for Welsh artists (Wales Arts International); project reports for KTP, KESS and ATM projects, including increased sales figures as a result of university-business collaborations (especially with regional SMEs); hosting visits from international practitioners; and collaborations with schools for upcoming projects.

**The unit supports staff to achieve impact by** developing knowledge exchange partnerships and collaborative doctoral awards; encouraging staff to identify impacts from their planned research in annual performance reviews, grant proposals and study leave applications; facilitating and funding impactful performances. To monitor and develop impact generation and training, both Schools have Impact Officers, who report to the College of Arts and Humanities' Impact Committee, chaired by the College Impact Champion.

**The unit has used institutional facilities and expertise in undertaking a wide variety of these activities via** collaboration with the Research and Enterprise Office and the Pro-Vice Chancellor with responsibility for Welsh Medium and Civic Engagement; use of Bangor's translation unit to facilitate bilingual communication in Wales; engagement with Bangor's Confucius Institute (Chinese Cultural Centre) and making effective use of specialist equipment (film recording, music studios, instruments etc.) and the university's spaces (rehearsal space, concert halls).

### **c. Strategy and plans**

- Intensify and increase existing links with businesses and companies through knowledge exchange partnerships and collaborative doctoral awards, overseen by the Schools' research and knowledge transfer officers and the Research and Enterprise Office;
- Maintain existing, and seek out new, partnerships with local, national and international community, cultural, governmental and educational establishments, via RCUK grant applications (with their Pathways to Impact plans), and events facilitated by the Unit's interdisciplinary Research Networks and established Research Centres (for Sacred Music, Early Music and Welsh Music);
- Encourage staff to apply for research council grants with built-in impact strategies (as successfully done, for instance, by Ensslin, for the AHRC-funded 'Reading Digital Fiction' project (£240k; 2014-16); grant application is a criterion for staff promotion;
- Raise awareness of, value, and provide feedback on, impact contributions and how to achieve it as part of the Schools' research culture, through impact workshops at School and College level; coordinated and monitored by the College's Impact Champion and its Research Strategy Committee;
- Maintain an efficient monitoring/support system for staff (including identification of future impact and support required in staff's 3-year individual research plans) to enable dissemination of research outside academia and wider engagement.

### **d. Relationship to case studies**

The case study *Exploring Jews* exemplifies impacts on public discourse, civil society and cultural life of research by the Media & Persuasive Communication group, achieved through *Abrams'* grants and links with international media, NGOs and community groups.

The case study *Experience of Worship* grows out of our unit's long involvement in Sacred Music Studies, generating links with churches, lay and professional church musicians and their institutional representations (esp. Royal School of Church Music, directed by *J. Harper* until 2009) nationally and internationally.