

**Institution:** The Open University

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

### a. Overview

The Open University (OU) is a national university with staff, students and physical assets in all four UK nations and elsewhere in the European community. Its musicians are able to draw on this national and international reach in the interests of its research agendas, and also to draw on the OU's unique media collaborations for public engagement. Music researchers benefit from research being a strategic priority for the University, and this commitment facilitates high levels of internal resource, which includes a sophisticated and highly efficient research support structure.

The Music Department is part of the Faculty of Arts and is one of its seven departments. However, as was the case in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), it is the focus and coordination point for all inquiry into music across the University and unites the work of acousticians (in the Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology) and cultural theorists (in the Faculty of Social Sciences).

The present submission emphasises and evidences a greatly enhanced research environment for music, significant improvement in external funding, a clear strategy for future music research and a systematic approach to impact. Retirements have allowed the recruitment of a group of researchers who were not in post at the time of the 2008 RAE submission, all of whom are research-active and make an important contribution to our research environment.

### b. Research strategy

Music research at The Open University is especially strong in historical musicology. In most key areas of performance (external funding and PhD studentship, for example) there have been considerable advancements since the 2008 RAE. The research endeavour in music is led by a Director of Research in Music who chairs a Music Research Steering Group and, along with other Directors of Research in the Faculty, represents the department at the Faculty Research Committee and monitors the progress of individual research plans and the progress of research students. The Director of Research in Music also signs off external research grant applications at departmental level, liaises with departments in other faculties with which the Music Department collaborates for research, and oversees the organisation of a series of research events and seminars.

Individual research plans are written each year and are often linked to the schedules of funded research projects. Funded research projects are subject to the monitoring arrangements of funding agencies, and these too form part of the annual reporting process. The existence of an efficient research support infrastructure, and the mandatory requirement for rolling research plans for individuals and projects, are two of the strongest elements that ensure the sustainability of our research strategy.

The Music Department has recently revised its processes so that impact planning is included in all annual individual research plans and embraced in the routine annual reviews of the Director of Research in Music. At the time of writing, research impact is the subject of a formally agreed Music Department 'scholarship project' aimed at defining effective routes to impact and means of measuring it. The project will establish a set of protocols for defining and measuring impact by the end of 2014 ('Scholarship projects' are formally constituted, short-term projects aimed at improving University practices and systems).

All music researchers at the OU gain advantage from the interdisciplinary nature of research life at The Open University and all engage fully with this important aspect of our environment. One of the main forums that foster interdisciplinarity is the Arts Faculty's Digital Humanities Group, which is led by a steering committee that includes representation from all departments and is supported by a full-time research associate.

Seminars by external and internal presenters are held at least six times a year, and facilities are always available for virtual as well as personal attendance. The ideas and methodologies that have

emanated from the work of this group have had a decisive influence on the direction of individual music researchers (including those from other faculties) and the project teams in which many work.

Research in music is centred on a range of musicological themes and topics with particular strengths in historical musicology. Specialisms in the department cover musical analysis, editing, performance practice, film music, music iconography, ethnography, acoustical research, cultural theory and organology. We have no wish to limit our musical scope, and the University's commitment to interdisciplinarity and the provision of a widely based teaching curriculum encourages such diversity. However, since 2008 the Music Department has put in place a strategy which it has applied consistently. In addition to improving workload planning, great success has been achieved by encouraging the simultaneous adoption of five key precepts for all research plans:

- Focus on research projects that engage more than one member of the University, so as to maximise the potential of ideas and the sharing of resources.
- Collaboration with at least one external person, agency or institution, so as to further extend the potential for the exploration of ideas by engaging with research cultures independent of the University.
- Pursuit of large-scale external funding. We regard this as important because it facilitates expansion, creates focus and momentum, and routinely subjects projects and the researchers within them to high levels of independent scrutiny.
- Integration of research themes with research student recruitment. We see this as a critical element of both the research endeavour and our vision of a research training culture that places students alongside experienced professional investigators for mutual benefit.
- Where possible and appropriate, implement the strength of the Arts Faculty's Digital Humanities expertise in the service of research projects. Linking to this group is the OU's Knowledge Media Institute, a research institute that uses advanced and experimental computational processes in the interest of research, analysis and dissemination. The music researchers have several formal links with this unit.

This strategy has led to the acquisition of extensive external funding for music research in the present review period. Major projects include the *What is Black British Jazz?* project, which traced the historical and geographical routes along which black British jazz developed. In so doing, our researchers explored a number of themes relating to repertoire, style, cultural transmission and entrepreneurship. The project led to several published outputs and events, including a major British Library conference.

The *Music and the British Military in the Long Nineteenth Century* project examined previously neglected questions concerning the influence of the British military music project (the largest single music recruitment scheme of its time) on the music profession and its infrastructure in the long nineteenth century. As well as several published outputs, members of the team gave presentations at several conferences, including the 2012 International Musicological Society conference in Rome and the 2013 American Musicological Society congress in Pittsburgh.

The *Handel Documents* project seeks to compile, annotate and contextualise all known documentary sources relevant to George Frideric Handel. The five-volume series, which will be published in full by the end of 2014, is complemented by extensive engagement with the main Handel forums throughout the world.

Two new major funded projects, which align exactly with the main precepts of our strategy and will run well beyond the present assessment period, are *Atlantic Sounds* and the *Listening Experience Database* project. Dr Tackley leads *Atlantic Sounds*, which seeks to examine the role music played in cross-cultural encounters around the Atlantic rim from the mid-eighteenth century. The *Listening Experience Database* project is led by Professor Rowland. This project, undertaken in collaboration with the Royal College of Music, will create a publicly accessible mass of data about the personal experience of listening to music in all cultures, places and times. This project builds on the experience of the Reading Experience Database, which was formally launched by the English Department in 1995.

The *Listening Experience Database* project will run under its current funding arrangement until the end of 2015, and plans are already in hand to develop that project further in partnership with overseas institutions. The *Atlantic Sounds* project, which is funded until the end of 2014, will also be the subject of further large-scale funding applications and collaborations.

Other members of the department are also developing plans for larger scale projects. Dr Coffey is developing a project that will investigate the role of German musicians in eighteenth and nineteenth century Britain. Dr Dueck, having completed his role as a co-investigator in the *What is Black British Jazz?* project, will continue his research on North American indigenous music and dance, examining the roles these play in contemporary aboriginal education, child welfare service provision and in confrontations with the legacy of colonialism, including in the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in Canada.

Dr Winters is developing a major project on the commercial and artistic pressures behind Hollywood film score composition in the 1930s. Dr Barlow, who is currently a full-time research associate on the *Listening Experience Database* project, is developing an expertise in the identification and interrogation of personal writings about music by women and will play a major part with Professor Rowland in the development of the *Listening Experience* project beyond its current funding period. As we say below, many members of the department are in receipt of smaller British Academy and other grants. It is the acquisition of these smaller grants that have usually led to larger funded projects.

### **c. People, including:**

#### **i. Staffing strategy and staff development**

An online, rolling, annual academic workload planning system supports time management and enables OU academics to plan their commitments to teaching and research. The ongoing accuracy of the planning process is monitored at mandatory annual Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA) sessions. Each of these sessions conforms to a similar format determined by the University and designed so that they routinely determine staff development needs. The personal research plans of musicians, and the progress of funded research projects for music, are captured in this process so that the necessary research time and funding can be guaranteed. An allowance of a minimum of 79 days research leave, along with the University's system of teaching, enables research leave to be taken at almost any time of year by arrangement, giving research planning considerable flexibility.

Extensive facilities are available for staff development, including media training carried out in-house using the University's own specialist staff and consultants and production facilities, or externally if necessary. Staff development requirements are identified as a mandatory component at CDSA and followed up by the Arts Faculty's dedicated staff development officer. Promotion is also a topic of discussion at CDSAs, and decisions about promotion from lecturer to senior lecturer are taken by a panel made up of members of all departments who work to University-wide criteria. A similar but different process applies to promotions to readerships and chairs.

Since the last RAE there has been significant turnover in the Music Department, but new staff have been appointed to the vacant posts. A demonstrable record of research and potential for research development has been an essential requirement in the person specification for each post, and the resulting appointments reflect the department's strategic research priorities. They have maintained our commitment to breadth across the academic discipline of music, and have also strengthened the areas in which we are an established centre of excellence: interdisciplinary approaches to musicology and the study of music outside the repertoires of the Western classical canon (whether of a different cultural function, such as jazz or film music, or of a different geographical origin, as in ethnomusicology).

In terms of personnel, Dr Philip (recordings and musical style) and Dr Mateer (sixteenth-century English music) have both retired, and Professor Clayton and Dr Leante (both ethnomusicology) have transferred to the University of Durham. Their posts have been taken by the following scholars, all at much earlier stages of career than the departing staff and all included in this submission to the REF exercise. Dr Tackley (née Parsonage; jazz studies), Dr Winters (film music), Dr Dueck (ethnomusicology) and Dr Golding (history of musical education) have joined the

department as full-time permanent members of staff. Dr Coffey (née Green; German music before 1900) has been appointed to a full-time lectureship having previously held a Research Assistantship, and Dr Barlow (music iconography) has been appointed as a full-time Research Associate having previously held fractional posts in OU music research projects.

The three professors in the department, Professor Burrows (the music of G.F. Handel), Professor Herbert (brass instruments, bands and cultural musicology) and Professor Rowland (Clementi and early nineteenth-century musical commerce) remain in post. There are two non-research support staff in the department: a project officer, and a music research laboratory officer who has responsibility for the music studio. The shape of the department is currently well balanced with three professors, three senior lecturers, five lecturers and a full-time research associate. The department, as needs require, also recruits short-term fractional lecturers who do not have research in their contract.

## ii. Research students

Research degrees (MPhil and PhD) are offered in a range of topics that match or are allied to the research areas of academic staff in the Music Department and the other University departments with which we work. These include historical and contemporary study of musical texts, contexts and performance, interdisciplinary themes in music research including film and literature, music computing, acoustics and the social and cultural study of music. More specific research themes are advertised when studentships are intended to complement particular research projects.

Some studentships contain a prominent digital humanities element, and the department now offers the option of submitting a non-text thesis (for example, a web-based output supported by a written commentary) as an alternative to the traditional dissertation. The funded student at the National Library of Wales has elected to take this option and has been provided with appropriate technical training and support. This option has been introduced since the 2008 RAE.

The Music Department currently has seventeen postgraduate research students. We have a further three current students in music acoustics, and three current research students attached to Dr Toynbee. A further group of students based in other faculties (such as Maths, Computing and Technology) also receive support from musicians. Since 2008, ten students supervised wholly within the Music Department have been awarded the PhD degree, as have four students supervised jointly with other Departments or Faculties, resulting in an overall total equivalent to 11.83 degrees, as submitted in the REF 4a form. Some applications are received from students in response to the department's web-presence, and there is also an annual University-wide recruitment process. Full-time students (an increased number since the 2008 RAE) are also recruited to major projects through the provisions of the external funding agency or by internal funding. Additionally, the department has benefited from the Arts Faculty's success in the AHRC's Block Grant Partnership: Capacity Building scheme.

In addition The Open University is now a member of CHASE (Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England). This initiative links the Arts Faculty at the OU to those of other CHASE members (Essex, Kent, Sussex, University of East Anglia, Goldsmiths and The Courtauld Institute). A new CHASE Block Grant Partnership (BGP2) bid has resulted in the award of an AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership grant of c. £17,000,000, which will result in 232 fully funded studentships across the consortium over five years. The first cohort of students will commence study in October 2014 and the department aims to secure at least one funded PhD studentship in Music every other year in the period 2014–20. Furthermore, musicians at the OU will aim to develop joint research seminars and conferences with colleagues within CHASE, and build on the two existing CHASE/AHRC Skills Development Programmes that the OU is involved in ('Becoming a Public Intellectual' and 'Digital Humanities').

A comprehensive and systematic Research Career Development Programme is provided for all research students from induction to viva preparation, complementing the research methods training that is provided at generic and personal level. Face-to-face and online careers services provide personalised advice and frequent dedicated sessions are offered by the Library. An annual research poster competition feeds into the Vitae competition.

From September 2013, a dedicated web portal has provided access to a virtual environment designed and built to the OU's world-leading standards, providing access in one place to a range

of skills development opportunities, news, careers services, supervision, library, social media and administrative resources, and ensuring parity of experience to all OU research students regardless of their physical location. Part-time students interact with full-time students at induction sessions, research days and seminars. Part-time support and training is personally tailored and typically comprises visits to the OU, local visits by supervisors, phone, letter, internet and email support. All are encouraged to attend appropriate meetings and conferences and are offered financial support to attend conferences.

Registered PhD students in music have automatic access to the online research training materials that comprise the taught MA in Music. Our infrastructure for PhD research meets or exceeds the requirements of all research councils and Quality Assurance Agency standards. Each student has at least two supervisors, with one as the main supervisor. Progress and training are monitored through six-monthly progress reports, with initial MPhil registration upgraded to PhD following satisfactory performance in a presentation and mini-viva assessed independently of the supervision team. Progress and probationary reports are scrutinised and approved by the Director of Postgraduate Research Students at faculty level. The Music Department complies with the University's strict quality assurance standards that prohibit the final examination of a student by a member of staff who has been involved at any stage of her or his supervision.

Full-time students are allocated workspace and a networked computer, and all students have full remote access to the Library, computing resources and printing. All full-time students can spend up to £1000 a year ('baseline funding') on research expenses and may bid competitively for further funding. Part-time students have baseline funding of £500 a year.

All research students are expected to acquire the variety of skills appropriate for PhD graduates. These skills are delivered through the induction process, regular training sessions and sophisticated online facilities. Skills audits are monitored at each probationary and review point through which a student passes.

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

In the present review period there have been several major AHRC grants awarded for music research: *What is Black British Jazz?* (PI Dr Toynbee, £487,736, 2009–11); *Music and the British Military* (PI Professor Herbert, £255,516, 2009–12); *Handel Documents* (PI Professor Burrows, £287,485, 2008–11 and £20,000 from the Handel Institute); and the *Listening Experience Database* (PI Prof Rowland, £388,619 of a grant valued at £750,300, 2012–15). *Atlantic Sounds* (PI Dr Tackley) received £13,892 (2012–14) from AHRC. Dr Sharp was awarded a Newton International Fellowship (£91,720, 2009–11) to investigate the *Consistency and Quality of Musical Wind Instrument Manufacturing*. Some of these researchers and others in our submission have also obtained smaller grants (each less than £20,000) from the British Academy and other external funding sources. In all, the external income for music research exceeded £1.3m in the present assessment period, with many very large grants overlapping the end of 2013.

Research support services that assist the preparation of bids for external funding are provided by a dedicated team at faculty level, which in turn are supported by central teams for grants and contracts. The OU Library provides staff and research students wherever they are with online access to a world-class collection of over 94,000 academic journals, 300 online databases, more than half a million e-books and a vast selection of newspapers, images, video and sound, with 24-hour helpdesk support and a range of face-to-face and online training sessions available.

The multi-million pound investments in online services include one of the UK's largest open access research repositories, Open Research Online (ORO), with more than 23,000 OU publications and about 40,000 visitors a month from around 200 countries. All research publications of our music researchers are included in ORO and, where possible, the full-text content of these publications is available freely online. The Music Department also benefits from the work of the University's Knowledge Media Institute (KMi), a research unit that develops systems for artificial intelligence, including high-level development projects relating to linked data processes and the semantic web.

The University routinely provides personal research support to all staff who have research in their contracts. Central funds are available for strategic investments and cross-disciplinary research, such as post-doctoral appointments in promising new research areas, professorial appointments in

## Environment template (REF5)

new collaborative fields, and research studentships to ensure continuation of a vibrant postgraduate research community.

Internal research funding is provided by right to individual musicians through the auspices of the Arts Faculty (or other home faculties) by three routes:

1. A personal allocation of £500 'baseline' funding a year for each individual academic.
2. 'Additional funding' beyond the £500 baseline that can be bid for by individuals who need it (for example, for presenting papers at foreign conferences or extended periods of research leave).
3. Funding for events such as research seminars and for project support (such as the purchase of image rights).

Bids for external funding are initiated by individuals, or more usually by groups, and approved for submission by the University after development in the faculty through internal peer review and a dedicated research support team.

An important additional resource is the routine allocation of two months research leave each year to all academic staff. This leave can be accumulated to a maximum of 12 months. Additional research leave can be applied for. The planning of research leave is routinely included in workload planning.

Since 2008 the University has developed a leading-edge music facility at a cost of £1.5m. This is a multi-functional audio/video recording studio with a full-time dedicated and specialist audio laboratory technician.

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

Between 2008 and the end of 2013 Open University musicians have collaborated with a wide range of other public and commercial institutions and agencies, and collaboration now forms part of our overall research strategy. This is achieved through four methods:

- *Major externally funded project research* in which Open University musicians work in partnership with a group of researchers at another institution, an example being the *Listening Experience Database* project, which is in collaboration with the Royal College of Music.
- *Strategic research projects*, which aim to realise research targets, especially in respect of research student teaching, while simultaneously achieving key objectives of the University's mission. An example of this is the permanent placing of funded students at The National Library of Wales, jointly supervised by the library's staff and OU musicians. A similar plan is in hand for the National Library of Scotland. The students work on specialist areas of the collections that the libraries have defined as being in need of specialist research.
- *Media partnerships*, which form an important strand in our impact strategy. The most important of these partnerships is with the BBC for the creation of radio and television programmes for transmission in the UK and the several countries in which BBC Worldwide operates. Open University musicians act as consultants for these programmes, write material for the Open University websites to which they are linked, and engage with public events associated with the programmes.
- *Personal research collaborations* in which a single researcher has a formal partnership with another organisation for the enhancement of research method and the delivery of outcomes. A good example of this is the work carried out by Dr David Sharp in his Newton Fellowship. This project, directed at the measurement of the quality and consistency of the manufacture of musical wind instruments, was conducted with Howarth of London, one of the country's major manufacturers of musical wind instruments.

This work builds on and nourishes our research endeavour. The Open University has a long history of public engagement and it is a foreground part of the University's mission. Open University musicians are especially engaged with it because of the popularity of music programmes or programmes in which music has an important place; this also promotes the interdisciplinary aspect of our work.

The Open Media Unit is the OU office that coordinates the relationship with the BBC for all

academic units across the University. Fifty-five of the programmes broadcast in 2009–10 drew on Arts Faculty research, and garnered an audience of 70 million. In the same year, Arts Faculty academics were directly involved in 179 public engagements, including TV and radio appearances, lectures and performance arts, which attracted 1.7 million viewers or attendees. Because of the popularity of music in BBC programming, musicians are at the heart of this endeavour. Major series include: *Sacred Music*, BBC Four, 4 x 60 minutes, March 2008; *Symphony*, BBC Four, 4 x 60 minutes, November 2011; 2010/11; *Sound and the Fury*, BBC Four, 3 x 60 minutes, February 2013; and *Discovering Tchaikovsky*, BBC Four, 2 x 60 minutes, January 2007.

### Contribution to the discipline

Musicians at The Open University aspire to make important contributions to the understanding of their subject by providing outputs from which the entire discipline will benefit. This contribution is apparent in the content of outputs but also through methodologies and the web-based dissemination of datasets. We believe that our major projects have met these aspirations and that the contribution of individuals to international research and scholarly infrastructures has been significant.

The five-volume *Handel's Documents* project will be the global reference point for the scholarship of this canonical composer. The *Music and the British Military* project will reveal an entirely new source domain and perspective from which the study of music in the nineteenth century and beyond will be seen. A similar claim can be made for the *What is Black British Jazz?* project, which provides unprecedented insights into a realm of musical activity that has previously received little attention.

The *Listening Experience Database* project, in collecting a massive body of data on the intimate experience of listening to music, will provide an entirely new perspective on why and how music gains effect and it will be entirely open to a global audience. Equally significant will be the project's collaboration with the University's Knowledge Media Institute to create a new type of linked data search mechanism for music materials.

Several individual researchers are members of editorial boards, contributors to works of reference and trustees of external bodies. Professor Burrows is a trustee of the Handel House Museum. Professor Herbert is a contributor to *American Grove*, the *Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments* and *Oxford Bibliographies Online*. He is a member of the editorial boards of the *Historic Brass Society* and *Musical Theatre* journals, and is the AHRC nominee on the steering committee of the Musical Performance as Creative Practice project at Cambridge University.

The University's 'Four [home] Nations Strategy' is advanced by Professor Herbert's membership of the editorial board of *Welsh Music* and Dr Moohan's membership of the editorial board of *Musica Scotica*. Dr Samuels is Secretary of *International Word and Music Association*, and was the joint organiser of its ninth international symposium in London in 2013. Dr Dueck is audio reviews editor of the *Yearbook for Traditional Music* and a committee member of the *British Forum for Ethnomusicology*. Dr Sharp is Secretary of the *Institute of Acoustics Musical Acoustics Group*.

Most of our researchers act as reviewers for the major international journals and publishing houses, and are regularly engaged as external examiners for undergraduate and research degrees. Each of these contributions to our discipline internationally and nationally is recognised as legitimate components of the workload planning process.