

Environment template (REF5)

Institution: Royal Academy of Music

Unit of assessment: 35

a. Overview

The Royal Academy of Music is the UK's oldest music conservatoire, founded in 1822. It has c.750 students studying fulltime on HE programmes, of whom c.70 are engaged in research programmes at FHEQ levels 7 and 8. Most of its 150+ academic staff are professional musicians who balance their career in academia with professional practice (often involving innovation) at the highest levels of the music profession. A significant and growing number of these staff members are also active researchers and play a role in the delivery of the research degree programmes.

The Academy does not have a research department. Rather, its researchers are members of its academic departments, whether Academic Studies or one of the 'principal-study' departments (e.g. Piano, Jazz, Opera, Strings, Composition, etc).

b. Research Strategy

The Academy's Research Strategy stems directly from the institution's Mission Statement which speaks of encouraging excellence and enriching musical culture through research, creative practice, and engagement with the music profession and the public.

In the 2008 RAE the Academy outlined the strategy for the development of its research environment as: (1) to widen and deepen the base of research active staff; (2) to strengthen existing links, and forge new links, between the research environment, academic programmes, the concerts department, outreach programmes, external organisations (particularly museums and art galleries), and the music industry through Knowledge Transfer developments; (3) to develop the research area of the Academy website to include publications and multimedia research 'packages'.

Progress against the first of these aims has been strong. The Academy's Research Committee has encouraged the development of new researchers through mentoring and through the award of grants to support research activity. The widening and deepening of the research base is reflected in the increase of the FTE of the Academy's submission in REF2 in comparison with RAE 2008.

There has been very strong progress in the strengthening of links between the Academy's research environment, public engagement programmes, external organisations and businesses. New links have been forged between the research environment and the Academy's academic programmes through the establishment in 2008 of a new MA programme and by developments to the elective offerings in the final two years of the BMus. Both these developments enable staff to teach to their research strengths and to share their current research with students. The impact of these enhancements has been particularly acute on the PGT programme where it has encouraged students to develop their own innovative approaches to issues in performance research and modelling musical creativity.

Progress against strategic point (3) has been significantly affected by technological developments in the intervening years. The ease with which personal websites can be set up and managed has made the establishment of multimedia packages on the Academy's website a lower priority than initially envisaged. However, the Academy has in 2013 initiated the process of thoroughly revising its website, including the capacity and structure to establish a

publicly-accessible repository for Academy research.

For the period 2014–2019 the Academy’s research strategy is designed to build on our progress in these areas. In addition, we will prioritise the following initiatives in order to develop our distinctive research environment: (a) to strengthen collaborations with business (especially the music and heritage industries) in research and innovation; (b) to support the career development of researchers by introducing regular research development events to facilitate networking, address generic research skills, disseminate current information, advice and guidance, and share good practice; (c) to invest in mechanisms to track the medium- and long-term impact of research projects and outcomes completed by Academy staff.

The Academy’s Research Strategy may be accessed at www.ram.ac.uk/researchstrategy.

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

The size and specialist nature of the Academy means that we have a large number of active researchers in the field of music. Since 2008 the Academy has sought to develop this position, increasing its research capacity by: (a) recruiting active researchers to academic posts and to the headships of departments; (b) supporting the development of staff research profiles through mentoring, a staff development programme, the award of internal research grants, the timetabling of teaching commitments to maximise research time, and encouragement to participate in research events within and outside the Academy.

Between 2008 and 2013 the Academy recruited 14 active researchers to academic posts in a wide range of departments, including Academic Studies, Composition, Jazz, Piano, Opera, Strings and Professional Development. It has recruited two further AHRC-funded Fellows in addition to the Fellowship held by Burrell from 2006. Six Research Fellows funded by the Lucille Graham Trust and one AHRC-funded Research Assistant have been appointed. The Academy also supports the research of five Honorary Research Fellows who have been appointed because of their research in the Academy’s collections or collaborative performance research network.

The Academy recognises its responsibilities as described in the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* and discharges them through: (a) the development and regular review of equal opportunities and staff development policies that recognise the importance of staff on part-time and fixed-term contracts; (b) support for staff to access bespoke research training; (c) support for staff wishing to pursue a research degree at the Academy or another institution; (d) promotion of team teaching for research-preparation and research degrees programmes; (e) encouragement of academic staff who are not currently research-active to develop research interests based on their professional expertise, and those who have informal interests to formalise them through projects leading to publicly-accessible outcomes; (f) structured collaboration on research projects between experienced researchers, early-career researchers, and research students; (g) provision of support for applications to external funding sources through mentoring and guidance on completing applications; (h) provision of internal funding for research projects, awarded on the basis of open competition.

All members of staff in the Academic Studies department have contracts that involve some allowance for research (approximately 0.2 of their contract) and this element is also included in the contracts of some staff in principal-study departments. As part of the annual cycle of staff appraisal, staff with established or developing research profiles are encouraged and helped to apply for grants in support of specific projects.

The Academy recognises that most of its principal-study staff are engaged in innovative

creative work within the music profession. It aims to develop this innovative practice into a research profile by encouraging staff to reflect critically on their own practice and to develop the skills and habits of mind that will enable them to plan, execute and deliver research projects. Staff who are new to research are mentored by more experienced researchers and are encouraged to participate in research events and collaborative projects in order to help develop their research profiles and foster emerging leadership in new areas. Since 2008 the Academy has financially supported doctoral studies for several members of performance staff with developing research profiles.

Each year since 2008 the Academy has supported the development of staff research through the award of discretionary grants. Between 20 and 35 grants have been made per annum in support of: funding for collaborative projects with national and international dimensions; support costs for recordings, editions and other types of output; travel to and participation in national and international conferences; travel to libraries and archives elsewhere in the UK and overseas; seed funding to allow the development of external grant applications.

ii. Research students

The Academy's doctoral programme has been a key component of its research strategy. The development of an institutionally distinctive research degree culture remains critically important to our ability to articulate the relationship between research and high-level musical practice. There has been extensive cross-fertilisation between the innovative models developed for student research in taught degrees and the doctoral programme. Models created by staff have been woven into the programmes, and approaches trialled at Master's degree level have been developed in PhD studentships and by staff.

Our research student recruitment policy has focused on candidates with high-level performance or compositional skills and who may have already gained significant professional experience in their chosen area. This is to ensure that they are able to have an impact upon the Academy's research culture and to the wider discipline by contributing to the sector's understanding of the role played by high-level artistry in practice research through the generation of innovative approaches and research models. To support these innovative models and outcomes, the Academy provides a high-intensity environment with a low student-staff ratio for its research degree programmes. This enables a rich level of engagement between students and supervisors and allows students to access a wide range of significant collaborative and performance opportunities within the wider Academy research community.

Support and training for research students includes: (a) team and individual supervision by experienced research staff; (b) seminars devoted to the development of research skills and to recent research by students and staff; (c) participation in the annual cycle of public research events; (d) access to the Academy's collections (including its Performance Research Collection); (e) University of London and IMR events; (f) support from the AHRC BGP 1, with seven doctoral studentships awarded since 2009; (g) remunerated research internships; (g) funding for conference attendance; (h) annual monitoring procedures for the research degree programmes and the research environment.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

The Academy's Research Committee oversees and provides support for all research applications. Mentoring by members of the Research Management Team and other senior staff is available from the stage of preparing an application until the completion of the project. Recent successful grant applications include:

Institutional:

Knowledge Transfer Award from HEIF 4 (2008–2011)

HEFCE core grant in support of the running costs of the Museum and collections (2010–)

ARHC BGP1 grant to support research studentships (2009–2013)

Heritage Lottery Fund Award for the cataloguing and digitisation of the Sir Henry Wood Collection (2009–2011)

Lucille Graham Trust funds for cataloguing and digitisation of the Norman McCann Collection (2008–2012)

Becket Trust funds in support of the Becket Collection (2012 onwards)

Calleva Trust funds in support of the Calleva Collection (2012 onwards)

Individual:

AHRC Fellowship in the Creative and Performing Arts for Diana Burrell (2006–2011)

AHRC Fellowship in the Creative and Performing Arts for Christopher Redgate (2009–2012)

AHRC Follow-up funding for Christopher Redgate (2011–12)

AHRC Large Research Grant for Roy Howat (2010–2013)

Infrastructure

Much of the research at the Academy is concerned with innovative creative practice, either in its creation, or in the critical study of contemporary and historical models. There are shared concerns with some of the research themes of the AHRC Research Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice, and the fields of Practice-based Research in the UK, Artistic Research in Northern Europe, and Research-creation in Canada, but the Academy has musical artistry at the highest international level as a central focus of its research. In line with its broader mission the Academy encourages research that draws on professional creative practice, whether through composition, performance, the production of new performing materials, organology, new critical insights, or other types of investigation and output that are likely to have a direct or indirect impact on the music profession.

For an institution of its kind the strength and depth of the Academy's collections as material for research are second to none. The collections act as repositories of information for tracing developing repertoires, concert traditions, interpretational styles, and instrumental cultures, and as models for reflecting on contemporary performance practices. The Academy encourages research based on its collections by enhancing the catalogue of its holdings, improving access to materials, continuing to digitise printed and manuscript materials, and by incentivising researchers through internal funding mechanisms.

Since the 2008 RAE the Academy has consolidated the number of committees overseeing its research, with a view to clarifying responsibilities and streamlining reporting lines. The Academy's Research Committee has a wide-ranging brief in overseeing the institutional research culture and activities. It is responsible for the Research Strategy, for monitoring the institutional research environment, for advising on research project proposals, and for awarding small discretionary research grants to Academy staff. It also acts as an Ethics Committee with regard to all new research proposals.

The day-to-day operational aspects of the Academy's research environment are overseen by the Research Management Team consisting of the Deputy Principal (Programmes and Research), the Associate Head of Research and the Head of Postgraduate Programmes. The members of the team advise and mentor the Research Fellows and maintain operational oversight of all current major research projects.

The quality assurance of the research degree programmes is the responsibility of the Postgraduate Programmes Board, chaired by the Head of Postgraduate Programmes. The Board dedicates periodic meetings to monitoring the progress of research students and to giving consideration of broader issues arising from the delivery of the research degrees. It produces an annual monitoring report for the Academy's Academic Board, and it is responsible for planning the quinquennial review of the programme and for delivering enhancements that arise from annual monitoring and periodic review processes.

Facilities

(a). Library and Archives

Including: (i) large collections of significant performance materials (e.g. the Robert Spencer Collection; the working libraries of Sir Henry Wood and Sir Charles Mackerras; working collections of Sir John Barbirolli, Otto Klemperer, and Ferenc Fricsay; the Foyle Menuhin Archive); (ii) a collection of manuscripts of significant British music (including the unique authentic sources of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* and *King Arthur*, Handel's Gloria in D; Sullivan's *The Mikado*; Elgar's *In the South*; Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* and *Serenade to Music*); (iii) the archives of the Royal Academy of Music (with their unique coverage of almost 200 years of music education in Britain); (iv) a dedicated staff of six music librarians.

(b). Museum and Collections

Including: (i) a globally significant collection of fine stringed instruments (including many Cremonese examples by Stradivari, the Amatis, etc.); (ii) a significant collection of keyboard instruments (including particularly fine working examples of early English pianos); (iii) the Becket Collection of English and Venetian instruments; (iv) the Archive of Norman McCann (containing concert programmes and a rich collection of musical iconography and memorabilia from the 19th and 20th centuries); (v) three York Gate galleries, open to the public, for exhibitions, displays, research events and events related to the collections; (vi) a dedicated staff of ten, including the Head of Collections, instrument custodians, and the Curator of Art and Iconography.

(c). The Performance Research Collection: A collection of approximately 1000 recordings of research events held at the Academy over the last two decades.

(d). APOLLO (Academy Pictures Online): presently containing over 20,000 catalogued items and over 6,000 digital images.

(e). The Creative Technology Suite: A series of studios and teaching rooms housing professional-level recording, mixing and mastering technology, together with an array of music-related IT software. The Suite is staffed by a dedicated team of three recording engineers.

Since 2008 developments in the Academy's facilities has been designed to strengthen its research environment. These include: (i) the acquisition of new working research collections (the Sir Charles Mackerras Collection; the Pello-Fricsay Collection; the Philip Langridge Collection; the Kenny Wheeler Archive; the Becket Collection of Instruments; the Mobbs Collection of historical keyboard instruments); (ii) the long-term loan of the Gardiner-Boulanger Collection of Nadia Boulanger performing materials; (iii) the ongoing development and acquisition of the Calleva Collection of new stringed instruments; (iv) significant progress in the cataloguing and digitization of the Academy's collections; (v) the refurbishment of the ground-floor gallery of the Museum; (vi) the refurbishment of the Creative Technology Suite.

The significance of these facilities beyond the Academy has been recognised in the award of designated status to the Academy's archives and special collections, and the Accreditation of the Museum by the MLA.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

Much research at the Academy is collaborative in nature. Internal collaborations are encouraged through inter-departmental dialogue, through the annual programme of research events (with over 200 events delivered collaboratively between 1 January 2008 and 31 July 2013), and through staff development activities. External and institutional collaborations are encouraged and incentivised through the award of discretionary internal grants.

Collaborations within academia

The Academy recognises the strategic importance of developing collaborations between institutions and individuals as a means of sharing good practice, developing research expertise, promoting research excellence and broadening the dissemination of research output

to optimise the institution's contribution to the discipline.

In the period since 1 January 2008, individual Academy researchers have collaborated with colleagues from the following institutions:

The University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, MIT, the Institute of Music Research, UCL, the University of Southampton, the Orpheus Institute (Ghent), Vanderbilt University, Malmö Academy of Music, and the Hochschule für Musik, Hanover.

Recent institutional collaborations include:

(a). RAM/Nashville Exchange: A biannual exchange project led by Peter Sheppard Skærved in which staff and students from the Academy and the Blair School of Music at the University of Vanderbilt participate in two weeks of collaborative research workshops, focussing on composition and improvisation. The project allows the concurrent development of staff research alongside doctoral and research-preparation masters projects, as well as staff-student collaboration on research that has led to co-publication and co-presentation at conferences.

(b). A project with the University of Roehampton enabling postgraduate composition students to develop new work with postgraduate choreographers and dancers at the partner institution.

Academy researchers have also given presentations at national and international conferences, including: Performance Studies Network International Conference; Tracking the Creative Process in Music Conference; ORCiM Research Festival; International Reflective Conservatoire Conference; Conference on Interdisciplinary Musicology; International Conference on Music and Philosophy; Conference of the British Society of Aesthetics; International Double Reeds Society Conference; International Conference on Indian Art and Culture; Debussy International Conference; Performa Conference; Women and the 19th-Century Lied Conference.

Public engagement with the Academy's research

The Academy is committed to developing its public engagement activities in line with the expectations and definitions published by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement and in the *Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research*. The Academy achieves these aims by: (i) supporting individual researchers and/or research projects that act as models (champions) of public engagement in order to foster public engagement throughout the research environment; (ii) recognising public engagement activities within the staff appraisal process; (iii) supporting research projects in which the modes of dissemination include public engagement through public concerts, events, exhibitions, and/or innovative use of web-based media; (iv) training research staff and research students in the development of transferable skills and other attributes required for successful public engagement; (v) including public research events in the Academy's termly *Diary of Events*.

The Academy's principal mechanism for engaging the public in its research activities and output is its programme of publicly-accessible events advertised in its *Diary of Events* online and in print. A full list of these events between January 2008 and July 2013 is available here [www.ram.ac.uk/researcheventsarchive]. Over this period the number of events has grown from 74 in the academic year 2008/2009 to over 100 per annum in 2011/2012 and 2012/2013. In line with the Academy's mission and its research strategy, these events are dominated by three broad themes: the creation of new work; collaborative research on performance; research on the Academy's collections.

Recent examples of engaging the public include:

(a). Barbirolli Lectures: Part of the series of public events and concerts, the Barbirolli Lectures invite distinguished musicians to reflect on their careers, their development as artists, and the impact they have had on the music sector. Guests since 2008 include Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez, Alfred Brendel, Stephen Sondheim, Dame Janet Baker, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Sir Colin Davis and Sir Charles Mackerras.

(b). One-day conferences on: Cremonese violin makers, the Tourte bow, Music and the Arcadian Ideal, Travelling Opera in Britain (all at the Academy); the music of Boulez, the music of Pärt (at the South Bank Centre); Bach's St John Passion (at Kings Place).

(c). Only Connect: a major exhibition curated by Peter Sheppard Skaerved at the National Portrait Gallery.

(d). Ten temporary exhibitions in the York Gate galleries, on subjects relating to core research projects, the Academy's collections, and the history of the institution. These include 'The Revolutionary Violin' (2008–9), 'Nineteenth-Century Pianism' (2009–2010), 'Orchestral Magicians: Conductors and their Sources' (2010–11), 'Dickens and Music' (2012–2013), '21st-Century Oboe' (2013), Kenny Wheeler (2013–2014).