

Institution: University of Aberdeen

Unit of Assessment: UoA 35 – Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts

a. Context

The Music Department embeds impact in all research activity. Scholarly editions and compositions create cultural capital that expands the lives, imaginations and sensibilities of practitioners (individuals and groups, both amateur and professional). Through professional and amateur performance of editions and compositions, there is impact on wider audiences, including those with pre-existing knowledge of particular genres and new audiences. Publication of scores and recording of music embodying research not only provides a mechanism for impact, but contributes to the economic prosperity of publishing houses (e.g. Novello, empreintes DIGITALes) and record companies (e.g. Decca). Amateur performance of editions and compositions has an impact in the domain of (usually) non-formal education. Composition and editions embody sustainable impact that makes a long-lasting contribution to concert repertoire.

All conferences and festivals include events open to the general public which enrich the cultural and spiritual life of the community in which we operate. Many take place within a broader context of public engagement. **sound** (dir. **Stollery**) is an annual international festival of new music founded in association with the department in which works by staff and PGR are showcased alongside other leading new music practitioners. In 2013 it was shortlisted alongside the Proms for a Royal Philharmonic Society award. The bi-annual North Atlantic Fiddle Convention (NAFCo; dir. **Russell**) places an academic conference at the heart of a festival of concerts, masterclasses and workshops. A thematic strand of the Royal Musical Association Annual Conference (Aberdeen, 2008; dir. **Smith/Stollery**) celebrated the acquisition of *My Ladye Nevells Booke* (a manuscript of keyboard music by Byrd copied in 1591) for the nation; it was exhibited in Aberdeen Art Gallery on loan from the British Library (BL), and the research of **Smith** and **Jürgensen** contributed to a series of 7 public lectures, recitals and lecture-recitals culminating in the conference. Staff have contributed talks on their research to festivals and events elsewhere: **Campbell** spoke at the Edinburgh International Festival (2009) and the Fringe (2011, 2012); **Smith** has given lectures to the general public at the York Early Music Festival (2008, 2011). Staff work for TV: **Russell** was consultant and interviewee for *The Truth about Christmas Carols* for BBC 2 (2008; repeated on BBC 4: 2009, 2010), and **Mealor** has made frequent broadcasts related to his research, including guest presenting an episode of BBC Radio 3's *The Choir* (2012) and *Basshunter* for Russian TV and Sky Arts (2012). Staff give talks locally (e.g. **Stollery** on Bennachie project). The Elphinstone Institute's Traditional Song Forum (2011) attracted an audience of about 36, of which half were academics and half user groups (e.g. performers).

Editing is an area of strength. Scholarly editions have impact through performance. **Cameron's** editions of Ruggieri have been performed professionally and recorded. All her editions are available for amateur performers; her edition of Vivaldi's *Gloria* was prepared on scholarly principles and published by Novello for use by amateur choral societies. The conference Musical, Cultural and Religious Networks in Early Modern Europe (2011) included performances by **Smith** and others of music from his *Musica Britannica* (MB) volume of Philips's keyboard music, and pre-publication performances of consort music from his MB volume music by Philips and Dering; works by Dering were performed by Phantasm (August 2012). Editions extend their reach through performers to audiences. **Bishop's** *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs* embodies original research in a format accessible to a wider audience, and sales have reached 12,000 copies.

Performance is one mechanism by which research in composition can achieve impact, with beneficiaries including professional and amateur practitioners; specialist and non-specialist audiences; funding bodies and others responsible for commissioning works. Performances of new music challenge the imagination, especially where novel explorations of sound worlds are created by combining instrumental, vocal and electroacoustic composing (**Stollery/Mealor** – Case Study 2). Musical impact enriches lives culturally and, in the case of liturgical performances of **Mealor's** sacred vocal music, spiritually (Case Study 1).

Impact template (REF3a)

The lives of amateurs are enriched educationally when performing from editions by **Smith** and **Cameron**, when performing **Mealor** (Case Study 1), or when engaging in community composition workshops with **Stollery**. The commercial publication of both scores and recordings of **Mealor**'s music by Novello and Decca has contributed to economic well-being (Case Study 1). Impact in Music arises not only from research outputs of individuals, but also from collaboration between composers, and between composers and librettist (Case Study 2).

b. Approach to impact

A general principle of public engagement underlies all research activity in the Music Department, pervading musicology, composition and performance. This accords with an institutional commitment to cultural engagement: **Stollery**, **Russell**, **Mealor** and **Smith** all served on the University's Cultural Engagement Strategy Group, established in 2007. In 2011, its members devised new structures in support of public engagement. An Advisory Group on Public Engagement is supported by three task-specific sub-groups: the Events & Public Engagement Programming Group, the Public Engagement with Research Group and Special Collections and Museums Group. **Russell** continues serving on the first, which is convened by **Stollery** (2011-12) and **Smith** (2013); the convener is a member of the Advisory Group on Public Engagement. Staff play a significant role in the formulation of strategy surrounding impact at an institutional level.

The approach to interacting with non-academic users is collaborative. This involves working with sponsors and those commissioning musical works; arts organisations (e.g. **sound**, Scottish Opera, Aberdeen Art Gallery); performers (amateur, professional); other colleagues (e.g. library). Cultural engagement surrounding research on the *My Ladye Nevells Booke* involved Music staff collaborating with Chris Banks, University Librarian at the time (who had been responsible for its acquisition for the nation), the British Library and Aberdeen Art Gallery to mount an exhibition of the manuscript with accompanying events. Staff liaised with the Council to include music from the manuscript performed by staff in three concerts forming part of a regular lunchtime recital series. There were three further public recitals by Davitt Moroney (Berkeley), Rachelle Taylor (McGill) and Pieter Dirksen (Göteborg Organ Art Center) as part of the Royal Musical Association annual conference. The latter also showcased departmental research in acousmatic music and included a public keynote presentation and performance by Jonty Harrison (Birmingham).

As well as collaborating with individuals, the department is closely involved with the **sound** Festival, to which the University makes a financial contribution as part of its cultural engagement. **sound** is the department's 'research playground', where staff and PGR students have the opportunity to experiment and to bring their music to a wider audience. **sound** has commissioned works from departmental composers (**Stollery**, **Mealor**) and has included works by them in festival concerts (**Palmer**). The relationship is a close one, with several **sound** festival concerts belonging also to the department's recital series. Composers work with Visiting Fellows in Performance, who provide opportunities for their music to achieve impact. Jeremy Huw Williams has been a particular advocate for younger PGR composers, also providing a professional performance opportunity for undergraduate composers, the researchers of tomorrow.

Impact can be foreseen when it results from a commission from an arts organisation such as Scottish Opera which intends to take a work on tour (Case Study 2). Impact can be serendipitous as well as planned; sometimes the latter can lead to the former. **Mealor**'s recording of his own works with Con Anima is an example of research impacting on local performers which had a far greater reach and significance following the exposure of *Ubi Caritas* at the Royal Wedding (Case Study 1). The collaboration of the University Chamber Choir with choirs from St Andrews and Edinburgh universities was financed by the John Armitage Memorial Trust (JAM), resulting in a regular annual series of concerts in the three cities. Performances of **Mealor**'s works in these concerts was foreseen impact; as a direct result of this planned impact, the Royal commission came about, leading to a global impact which in terms of both reach and significance could not have been predicted (Case Study 1). In the case of serendipitous impact, our approach is to maximise the opportunities arising from it.

Editors play an active part in making their research achieve impact with performers and audiences. **Smith** programmed recitals of music by Philips in the Musical, Cultural and Religious Networks

Impact template (REF3a)

conference (Aberdeen, 2011) which made use of his published and unpublished editions. The editions were used also in concerts at the Networks of Keyboard Music c.1600 conference (Montreal, 2011), demonstrating international reach. The published edition of Philips's keyboard music has been used by other professional performers in recitals (e.g. Davitt Moroney). As with composition, impact of research – even before its publication – can take place at the instigation of performers: Phantasm performed consort works by Dering and Philips edited by **Smith** (2012). Parts without barlines were created especially for Phantasm, demonstrating how musicologists respond to the practical requirements of specific user groups when preparing editions.

Stollery's public art work demonstrates impact of his work on communities in Aberdeen, with the creation of a sound map of Aberdeen, populated by sounds recorded and uploaded by the public to create the audio heritage of the future for the City.

The department encourages and supports staff in achieving impact, incorporating recitals and performances of research generated by its staff into its recital series. The department paid for travel and accommodation for chamber choir performances of **Mealor** in Edinburgh and St Andrews (Case Study 1). Collaboration with **sound** at a departmental level, including involvement in programming, provides a framework within which individuals achieve impact. The University's excellent communications team was instrumental in attracting media coverage and publicity for opera performances at the Word Festival (Case Study 2), and publicised events associated with *My Ladye Nevells Booke*. It played a significant role managing the media attention surrounding *Ubi caritas* (Case Study 1). The expertise of the University Librarian (Banks) was employed in the events surrounding the exhibition of *My Ladye Nevells Booke*.

c. Strategy and plans

The main strategic aims are:

- To build on existing relationships with partners (**sound**, Scottish Opera) to create new opportunities for researchers at all career stages to engage actively with the impact agenda.
- To work with partners (e.g. McGill) in scholarly activity to achieve international impact.
- To create relationships with new partners to achieve impact, following the model of existing ones.
- To continue to include cultural engagement activity that achieves impact for research carried out within the department within plans for conferences, festivals and other scholarly encounters.

Editing: working in partnership with Stainer & Bell and the Board of the Musica Britannica Trust, **Smith** will explore possibilities of publishing performance parts alongside his edition of consort music by Philips and Dering.

sound and New Music: the collaboration with **sound** will continue, and will be expanded to allow greater opportunity for musicologists to engage in impact-related activity, using the 2013 conference *Beyond the Semitone* organised by **Palmer** and **Jürgensen** as a model. Concerts embracing research-led practice will engage the general public. **Campbell** will curate a weekend on European modernism. The success of the *74 Degrees North* led directly to the theme of new opera in the 2012 **sound** Festival. A new relationship with Scottish Opera will be developed which will include the promotion of new opera and thus impact.

d. Relationship to case studies

Case Study 1 involves the impact made by **Mealor's** vocal music. It illustrates how a conscious effort to promote impact of a body of work amongst student and amateur choirs led to further impact on a global scale. *Case Study 2* demonstrates how collaboration lies at the centre of much impact, and how the involvement of user groups at the outset is a key ingredient to success in terms of impact. The work is a collaboration between instrumental/vocal and electroacoustic composers and a librettist. It was commissioned by the user (Scottish Opera), and its success hinged on the relationships between Scottish Opera as an institution, the composers/librettist, the performers and the performance contexts. It illustrates how impact can be enhanced by repeat performances in a number of locations.