

Institution: University of Chester
Unit of Assessment: 35: Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
<p>a. Overview</p> <p>The Performing Arts Department comprises three subjects (in Drama, Dance and Popular Music) and four undergraduate degree programmes (Drama, Dance, Popular Music, and an interdisciplinary Performing Arts degree). It runs MA programmes in all three subjects, and an MRes that runs across programmes. Staff research takes place both within and across these academic disciplines, in conjunction with other departments and faculties, other HE institutions, and other organisations (see below). The department seeks to promote and support research and practice as research in the performing arts, and to develop and support interdisciplinary research projects. It has used QR funding, gained following the 2008 RAE, to further develop the department's research profile.</p> <p>Ten staff from the department are being submitted in the current exercise (as opposed to 4 in the 2008 RAE). In 2008, no early career researcher was submitted to the RAE, the current submission includes 3 ECRs. The number of research students has grown from 2 in 2008 to 10 in 2013; in the period 2008-2013, research income has been generated from a number of sources, including the AHRC, the EU, the World Bank, and the British Council; the department now has 2 post-doctoral researchers, as opposed to none in 2008; and 3 Visiting Professors and a Visiting Research Fellow have been appointed to the department.</p> <p>Representative achievement list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Pattie is an investigator on <i>Staging Beckett</i>, an AHRC-funded three year project, co-organised with the University of Reading and the Victoria and Albert Museum. • Allan Owens has been invited to develop process dramas and practice-as-research projects in Palestine, Finland and Japan. • Peter Harrop co-organised two international symposia on the ethnography of performance. • Mark Duffett has been invited to edit two editions of the journal <i>Popular Music and Society</i> on music fandom. • Darren Sproston's scholarship on Roberto Gerhard has been disseminated through two international conferences organised by colleagues at the University of Huddersfield which will culminate in the first major study of the composer being published by Ashgate Press.
<p>b. Research strategy</p> <p>Strategy 2008-2012</p> <p>The department's 2008 RAE submission proposed two areas of development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of interdisciplinary work. This has been achieved. Links have been made with the University's Art and Design department (Julian Waite's work on the relation between performance and illustration crosses between the two disciplines, and he has collaborated with one of the Fine Art staff (Dinu Li) on a major art project (featured at the Tatton Park Biennial in 2012)); with its Media department (Pattie's and Sproston's work on creativity in music and its reception links to Duffett's work on popular music fandom and Simon Morrison's work on dance cultures); and with the Education department (Owens, Jane Loudon, Shelley Piasecka and Evelyn Jamieson work on the relationship between performance and education in various contexts, and the department co-supervises three PhD students with Education). • The development of longer-term research projects. This has been achieved. Owens has

continued to foster and develop long-standing research projects in Palestine, Finland and Japan. **Pattie**, with colleagues from the University of Reading, successfully submitted a bid to the AHRC (the proposal, a three-year project to study the impact of Beckett's work on the British stage from 1955 to 2010, secured £668,000 for both institutions); the project will, *inter alia*, serve as a test-case for a national performance database, and will include a programme of public lectures and conferences. **Harrop** engaged in a long-term ethnographic study of folk performances (this resulted in two jointly hosted international symposia, and a number of other outputs). **Sproston** is a leading authority on the Orchestral Music of Roberto Gerhard and has presented internationally (ROI, Spain), examined a PhD student and peer reviews for the Journal of the Society of Musicology in Ireland; he contributed to the first major study of Gerhard (Ashgate 2013).

Both objectives were facilitated by the application of QR funding. In the first part of the period under review (2009- 2010), support was given to well-established researchers (**Owens, Pattie, Harrop**) to enable them to develop longer term projects; **Owens** and **Pattie** were given teaching relief, and a part-time post-doctoral researcher (**Njaradi**) was appointed, partly to support **Harrop's** research.

Money was used to facilitate the maintenance of a viable research infrastructure through the appointment of a post-doctoral researcher (**Njaradi**) partly, as noted above, to support **Harrop's** research, but also to contribute to the Departmental research environment and the broader faculty infrastructure by taking an active role in the relaunch and organisation of the faculty research centre (**CCRAM, Chester Centre for Research in Arts and Media**). This coincided with the second half of the period, (2010-) which saw the change in title and remit of the research centre (from CPaRA, the Centre for Practice as Research in the Arts, to **CCRAM**) which had two functions: to include non-practice-based research and to incorporate the Media department's developing research into the life of the faculty. Since its inception, **CCRAM** has run a series of Symposia (three each academic year) at which staff present research; each event includes an invited keynote speaker, and PhD students from across the faculty are encouraged to give papers on their developing research. MA students are also encouraged to attend the events. **CCRAM** also administers targeted small grants, open to staff across the faculty; these provide financial support and teaching relief for staff engaged in research projects with definable outcomes. These grants not only aid established researchers, but also give Early Career members of staff experience in bidding for research grants. Finally, the centre (in both its forms) has given support to conferences. For example, the interdisciplinary conference *Silence* (2009); **Harrop & Njaradi's** conference *Contemporary Ethnography and Traditional Performance* (2012); and **Duffett's** symposia '*Fan Words: Towards a New Vocabulary of Fan Theory*' (2011) and *Popular Music and Automobile Culture* (2012).

In addition, the department runs its own internal research seminars, administered by **Njaradi**; PhD students and new members of staff have found that these, and **CCRAM**, are invaluable in gaining research experience early in their careers. The application of QR funding, in addition to internal staff development funding and support from the faculty and institution, has in other words created a viable, sustainable and diverse research culture within the department; this culture is rooted firmly in the faculty as a whole, and is linked closely with research developments in the wider academy.

Finally, the university has signalled its commitment to the department's research culture by awarding a number of professorships to research active members of staff (**Owens, Pattie, Harrop, Sproston**). In addition, four appointments – three Visiting Professors (**Susan Melrose, David Fligg** and **Louise Gibbs**) and a Visiting Research Fellow (**Dr Eva Osterlind**) – have been made, to help the department develop links with other institutions, both nationally and internationally.

The department currently has three well-established research groups:

- A group researching Applied Performance in a number of contexts (**Owens, Loudon, Piasecka, Jamieson, Amanda Clarkson**). The work of this group covers the use of applied drama and performance techniques in conflict resolution, the role of applied drama

in working with specific target groups (prisoners, youth groups) and the role of performance in education (from school through to HEIs). The group have a long track record in collaborative practices, and has fostered strong links with other HEIs, educational establishments and client groups, both across Britain and internationally.

- A group researching Creative Practices (**Duffett, Pattie, Sproston, Morrison, Manny Emslie, Sarah Spies, Karen Quigley, Julian Waite, David Tucker, Richard Molony, Ben Broughton, David Bebbington, Kaya Herstad Carney** and **Matthew Warnock**). This group is well placed to take advantage of the integrated interdisciplinary nature of the department, including as it does representatives from Drama, Dance and Popular Music. This group has developed common links and approaches between researchers working in the three disciplines. For example, **Pattie's** work spans Drama and Popular Music (for example to **Duffett's** study of fandom and the work on staging and audience reception undertaken by **Quigley**); **Waite's** work on the aesthetics of performance links both to **Emslie** and **Spies**, and to other departments (Fine Art) in the faculty; and **Tucker** was able to call upon **Sproston's** expertise in musicology while writing on Beckett and Modernist composition.
- A third group (which draws on personnel from the other groups) is engaged in Ethnographic research: **Harrop's** and **Njaradi's** work on performance ethnography, **Duffett's** work on the ethnography of fandom, **Morrison's** research into dance cultures, and the work done in Dance on ethnography and creative practices by **Emslie** and **Jamieson**. **Layton** also employs an ethnographic methodology in his PhD research.

Dialogue between the research groups is already well facilitated by **CCRAM** and the departmental research seminar programme. They provide a firm functioning base for the next stage of the department's research development.

Strategy 2014-

The departmental research strategy from 2014 onwards will have two main objectives:

- The creation of a dedicated research centre within the department but not exclusive to it, which will subsume the work done by **CCRAM** and the departmental seminar programme at the present time. As the three research groups currently within the department maintain a close dialogue with each other, the next logical step will be to link them together into a cohesive research centre, which will have as its central remit the development of research into the analysis, creation and reception of performance. The three clusters will continue to develop their areas of research seeking collaboration with other cognate groups nationally and internationally. This has already begun with **Owens, Pattie, Harrop, Sproston, and Duffett**. The centre would also further embed the mentoring process for newly research active staff, by facilitating links between researchers in different subject areas. For example, **Broughton's** emerging research in creative practices in musical composition shares common features with **Spies' work** in Dance and **Molony's** and **Brendan O'Sullivan's** emerging research in popular cultural performance; a departmental research centre would provide a natural forum for a mutually supportive dialogue to develop.

This new centre will further strengthen the department's research culture, and will provide a support mechanism both for the research of individual staff members, and the development of research funding capability (see below).

- There is considerable scope within the department for the development of interdisciplinary research, both internally and externally. **Pattie's, Sproston's, Duffett's** and **Morrison's** work on (popular) musicology embraces a variety of different perspectives. **Waite's, Spies' and Emslie's** work on somatic practices in performance crosses between drama and dance. **Harrop's** and **Njaradi's** work on anthropological performance, and **Owens', Loudon's, Jamieson's** and **Piasecka's** work on applied performance are testament to the

interdisciplinarity which is a key feature of the department's research. In the next period, with the support of the new departmental research centre and the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Office, and the mentoring input of established staff members, the department will aim to develop funding proposals to support and strengthen its interdisciplinary work. In doing so they will aim to work collaboratively with colleagues in other institutions, both nationally and internationally.

c. People, including:

i. Staffing strategy and staff development

In the period 2008-2013, it has been the department's policy to recruit staff to support and develop existing research strengths, and to mentor the research of both new and established staff; this has been facilitated through the work of senior researchers within the department, through the work of the research centre at Faculty level, and through the Research and Knowledge Transfer Office across the University as a whole.

1. Staff recruitment.

Staff have come to the department from a variety of institutions at a variety of different stages of their careers: as recent post docs (**Tucker** from Sussex/Oxford), ECRs (**Quigley** from King's College London, **Morrison** from the University of Leeds and **Warnock** from Leeds College of Music) or established scholars (**Sproston** from Leeds College of Music); staff who have left the department have moved on to other academic roles: **Dani Abulhawa** to a lecturing post at Sheffield Hallam University and **Simon Piasecki** to a Professorship at Liverpool Hope via Leeds Metropolitan and Salford Universities. When staff are recruited, attention is paid to the fit between their research and existing strengths within the department: for example, **Piasecka's** doctorate and developing research profile fitted with the Applied Performance cluster; **Quigley's** research into theatre historiography fitted with the Creative Practices group; **Njaradi** was appointed to support and develop **Harrop's** work in the Ethnography group.

2. Staff Development

When new staff are appointed, they are mentored by a senior staff member; they are also invited to share their research via **CCRAM** and the departmental seminars, with a view to integrating their work with one or more of the research clusters within the department. For example: **Piasecka and Quigley** were given mentoring and guidance through the final stages of their PhDs (this included viva preparation), as are current staff who are working towards a PhD (**Jamieson, Layton**); over the REF period, three members of staff have gained PhDs (**Waite, Piasecka, Quigley**) senior staff members then advised them on the process of publishing their research, and their work was integrated with other researchers in the department (**Owens, Emslie, Loudon**) who have produced outputs in the similar areas. In addition, **CCRAM** events give both new and established staff an opportunity to discuss developing research in a collegiate atmosphere, before they seek a wider audience.

CCRAM grants have been awarded to staff at an early stage of their research careers (**Quigley, Njaradi, Piasecka, Tucker, and Abulhawa**); these targeted grants (facilitated by QR funds) have enabled younger members of staff to buy themselves out of undergraduate teaching for a defined period. The allocation of these grants is dependent on a clearly defined and achievable outcome (which can be an output, or a tranche of research within a wider project). These grants are also available to more established staff members (**Sproston, Duffett**) and, in addition, all staff are entitled to staff development funding (which is factored in to the annual departmental budget).

Staff have the chance to develop their research profile and skills through university-wide initiatives and support mechanisms. Research features as a topic in the annual staff conferences and staff have access to training in PhD supervision. In Performing Arts, both **Waite** and **Piasecka** have

recently benefitted from this training, and have begun to co-supervise PhD students. The Research and Knowledge Transfer Office also provide support to staff members developing external bids; both **Owens** and **Pattie** have benefitted from expert assistance in the developing and costing of bid proposals.

The Research and Knowledge Transfer Office also provide training in using research funding databases and publishes regular bulletins on research activity, giving details of training and funding opportunities both within the institution and externally. Staff research is assessed, where necessary, by the Faculty Ethics Committee (which retains the right to refer cases to the University's Research Ethics Advisory Board, if necessary). The University of Chester supports activities promoting equality and diversity. There is a long-established annual University Diversity Festival to which all staff and students are invited. The University has a Disabled Staff Group that has been active since 2007 and provides a safe and supportive environment in which to discuss issues relating to disability. The Human Resources Department monitor regularly for equality issues as part of the recruitment process for staff and funded research students, and the University is currently working towards an Athena Swan award.

Looking forward, the department will work to develop staff members' research careers through its new research centre (see above), and through other initiatives, such as a new MRes programme (supervision of MRes projects will help new staff acquire the skills necessary for PhD supervision). In addition, the department will seek to strengthen and develop links with researchers and groupings at other institutions, both nationally and internationally. This process has already begun, with the appointment of **Susan Melrose** from Middlesex University, **David Fligg** and **Louise Gibbs** from Leeds College of Music as Visiting Professors, and Dr **Eva Osterlind** from the University of Stockholm as Visiting Research Fellow (in collaboration with Education). It is through this relationship that a number of overseas PhD students have been recruited: these students are co-supervised by Dr **Osterlind** in Sweden and **Owens** at Chester.

ii. Research students

In the period since the 2008 RAE, the department has substantially increased its PGR intake, from 2 in 2008 to 10 (3 shared with Education) in 2013. More staff are qualified to supervise PhDs, and a close collaboration with colleagues in the Education department has resulted in the recruitment of PGR students, co-supervised between the two departments. Given that most PGR students study part-time with the department, there has only been one successful completion over the period; however, it is worth noting that the successful student went on to have her thesis published by an established academic publishing company (Shyrane, *Blixa Bargeld and Einstürzende Neubauten: German Experimental Music*, Ashgate 2011).

The subjects studied by PhD students reflect the interdisciplinary work of the department (topics covered include Dance in Education, Applied Drama and Drama in Education, music and digital culture, Bergsonian duration in contemporary performance, Identity and Irishness in the work of second-generation Irish comedians, and an ethnographic study of the jazz scene in 20th Century Chester). Students also benefit from the work of the interdisciplinary research centre, and the departmental research seminars; these give PGR students a chance not only to reflect on the progress of their research, but also to trial material for conferences and publications. PGR students are encouraged to attend conferences, where appropriate, and funding is available for this. PGR students are given the opportunity to teach on undergraduate courses in order to prepare them for a career in academia. PGR students, like full-time staff, are able to use the library budget for materials to support their research.

Students are also well-supported by the University: training and support for PGR students is a shared responsibility at Chester, between the Graduate School (with responsibility for providing generic training and support) and the subject department which provides supervision and specialist training and support. PGR students are offered face-to-face training sessions by the Graduate School, supported by a Moodle site providing on-line access to training materials written and

contributed by academic staff from across all subjects and faculties. Students experience both a central University induction, and a local induction within the department, so that they have a full understanding of the regulations and services provided by central support departments as well as of the local support staff and facilities in the building where they are studying. All students undertake a skills audit to help them to identify their training needs, and they are welcome to attend taught sessions from within the postgraduate curriculum, as well as seminars and training sessions specifically designed for PGR student needs. Students who will be involved in teaching are expected to undertake specific training to prepare them for this activity, and may, if they wish, undertake modules leading to Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, which provides a good basis for future applications for academic posts.

Every student is supported by a team of at least two approved supervisors, one of whom is designated Director of Studies, and who has supervised at least one student to successful completion of the award. Supervision meetings take place frequently, with at least one meeting per month being recorded with outcomes and targets. Following a probationary period of 6-9 months, student progress is reviewed formally. If the student's registration is confirmed at the probationary review, a termly meeting of the full supervisory team reviews progress with the student subsequently and an Annual Progress Review (chaired by an independent academic staff member) reviews progress against objectives and expectations on an annual basis before the Annual Progress Board meeting. Students must submit a report, give a seminar and attend an interview before their upgrade from MPhil to PhD can be confirmed. There is a similar rigorous process to consider applications to transfer to 'writing up' status. Each Faculty has at least one Faculty Postgraduate tutor who is available to see PGR students by appointment and to resolve any issues or questions they may have. Postgraduate Tutors represent their Faculty and its students at the regular Graduate School meetings and also represent the Graduate School as appropriate in their Faculty.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

All staff have individual offices, with full IT provision, they have access to a library with extensive physical and electronic resources, and the department's library budget is used to support and facilitate staff research as well as to support undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. The department also has four dedicated, substantial performance and rehearsal spaces, a number of soundproof rooms and booths, and extensive technical resources; these are overseen by three departmental technicians.

The University Library subscribes to over 1,000 printed journals and more than 13,000 electronic journals which can be accessed online. The Library has approximately 260,000 printed volumes in its collections and books can be borrowed from any of the libraries at the University's different sites. The collections also include 15,000 e-books which are core academic texts plus access to many other online materials. At the main campus library there is 24/7 access to computers, printing and quiet study space throughout the year and extended access to all collections across all sites is provided during term-time and at peak periods. Within this overall allocation, Performing Arts has a stock of 16,000 books, 40 journals, and access to the most important databases in the field (JSTOR, Project Muse, Digital Theatre Plus, Jazz Music Library, Oxford Music Online and Rock's Backpages).

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

Esteem indicators/International links

Owens' practice based research in Palestine has developed over an eighteen year period (1995-2013). During that time he has worked with the Universities of Al Quds Jerusalem, An Najjar Nablus, Al Rowdda Technical College, Bethlehem, Hebron and Islamic University of Gaza and a wide range of educators in schools and advisers under and in the Ministry of Education in

Ramallah and Gaza. This has been funded by the Department for International Development (DfID 1995-2000), the World Bank (2011-13), and British Academy (2013-2015). The British Council Palestine are funding a three year PhD scholarship for study with **Owens** (2013-2016). **Owens** receives regular study visits from Japanese professional performers and academics to Chester. He is regularly invited to perform/run workshops/seminars/courses/keynotes by national bodies internationally including, in addition to those countries above, for example, Sweden, Estonia, and Austria.

Waite held a residency at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore, 28th January to 1st February 2012.

Harrop is a consultant on curriculum development for the Royal University for Women, Bahrain.

Spies has performed at the Kalamata International Dance Festival, Greece.

Pattie was invited to contribute to two book series, both published by Methuen, and to contribute essays to three other volumes (all published by Methuen). He was also invited to give a paper to the *Samuel Beckett: Debts and Legacies* seminar series in Oxford.

Duffett is the guest editor of two special issues of the journal *Popular Music & Society* on fandom: he was also asked to give the MARS conference keynote address in Seinjoki, Finland in February 2012.

Njaradi delivered a public lecture: 'Performance Ethnography: Dance and Theatre through the new study of Ritual', 17th December 2012, hosted by Department for Ethnomusicology, University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia.

Membership of academic/professional bodies/ Contribution to discipline.

Pattie is a member of the AHRC Peer Review College, and has twice served as an AHRC panel member; he has also co-facilitated AHRC training events. He has acted as a peer reviewer for a number of journals, both in drama and in popular music, and has published book reviews in a number of theatre journals. He is on the editorial board of the *International Journal of Scottish Theatre and Screen*. He has examined PhDs at the Universities of Reading and Aberystwyth.

Owens has worked with Theatre Academy of Finland; with the Universities of Aalto, Aabo, Joensuu, Jyväskylä, Helsinki, Lappeenranta, Metropolia, Ostrobothnia, Oulu, Rovaniemi, Tampere, Turku; with Municipal Theatres including Espoo, Kokkola; with prisons in Kerava and Helsinki; with business in Helsinki and Lahti; and with professionals from health authorities, social work and the third sector throughout Finland. Funding for this has come from all the above institutions plus Tekes the National Innovation funding body. In Japan (2000-2013), **Owens** has worked regularly with the Katayanagi Institute, Tokyo University of Technology, Taichi Kikaku Theatre Company, the Japanese Children's Theatre Association (JCTA) and also with Tokyo Gakugai University, Tokyo City University and the New National Theatre Tokyo. Work has been funded by these institutions and the Japan Foundation, London.

Njaradi is a member of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM). **Njaradi** is Associate and Book review editor for the *Journal of Dance, Movement and Spiritualities* (Intellect); she also conducted peer-review assessment of funding proposals for the Austrian Science Fund (FWF).

Duffett refereed an application for a Postdoctoral Fellowship submitted to the Research Foundation - Flanders (Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek - Vlaanderen, FWO).

Harrop is closely involved with the Traditional Drama Research Group (based at the University of Sheffield).

Sproston is a peer reviewer for *Journal of the Society of Musicology in Ireland*, was external examiner of a PhD at the University of Huddersfield and is a member of the International Programme Committee for the Innovation in Music Conference Series.