



NAMHE

National Association for Music in Higher Education

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NEWSLETTER

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Welcome from the Acting Chair

Dear Colleagues,

I am still not altogether sure how I got into this. As many of you may know, Mark Everist's term as chairman of NAMHE came to an end after four very distinguished years earlier this year, and the Committee duly elected a new chair, Celia Duffy from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, at their March meeting. When Celia told us at our meeting in October that, for personal and professional reasons, she could not continue as chair, we knew we had to elect an acting chairman straight-away, and somehow that acting chairman turned out to be me. I hope to be able to serve you well until the Committee (which will elect four new members at the end of this year) elects a chairman in the proper fashion in the spring of next year. Temporary as my appointment may be, I would still like to take this opportunity – on behalf of the Committee and, I think, NAMHE as a whole – to extend my warmest thanks to both Mark and Celia for dedicating their time and efforts to the Association. Mark's service to the Committee will end in December, but Celia, who only joined us in January, will continue to lend us her expertise.

When I say that we knew we had to elect an acting chairman straightaway, I do not mean that only in the formal sense – an association such as ours, technically, cannot be without one. It was also clear to us that there are too many things happening in (or to) Music in Higher Education which do (or, at the very least may) require immediate attention and reply. Much of the chair's job consists of fire fighting – a new initiative by the AHRC here, some proposed legislation there, and before you know it, you have spent a day drafting responses. This may be as good a time as any to bring you up to date on a few recent developments that could affect us, and also some plans the Committee hatched at their last meeting in order to serve the community better and more efficiently.

We all know that the RAE results will be released in but a few weeks – but even when we do know them, it will take a while until we know how they will translate into financial gains or losses. NAMHE will monitor this process closely on your behalf. Potentially even more worrying, however, is what comes after the RAE – the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and its underlying philosophy to evaluate research quality by quantitative methods – bibliometrics. One particularly egregious

development which has come to be associated with the REF has been the ERIH (or European Reference Index for the Humanities), a scheme through which journals throughout Europe are classified into the categories 'A', 'B', and 'C' (which, as the AHRC continues to assure us, is not meant to be a qualitative judgment... nor ever to be used as a bibliometric tool...). In order to more efficiently combat this and other nonsense, NAMHE has joined AHUG (the Arts and Humanities User Group), an advocacy group co-ordinating our efforts vis-à-vis the AHRC and other funding and political bodies. Katharine Ellis, who has been more closely involved in these discussions, details the issues surrounding the REF and bibliometrics in a separate column in this newsletter. Another initiative in which NAMHE has become involved regards the proposed EU legislation to extend copyright on recorded music from 50 to 95 years – you will find a separate item on that in this newsletter as well.

Closer to home, you will soon see some changes to our website which, we hope, will make it more attractive and useful to you. The external examiners database which has lain somewhat dormant for a while will re-appear in a more attractive and user-friendly format – this is also an appeal to all of you to supply us with updated information for this database so it can once more become the helpful tool it could and should be.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to NAMHE's plans for the 2009 annual conference, to take place in Huddersfield on 5 May. Its title will be "Know Your Strengths – Informing and Empowering HEI Music". As we all know, the sector is changing, and Music within it. We are asked to respond to demographic changes, to changes in the way Music is taught at A-Level (or in the BTEC or Diploma context), to be ever more international and diversified, to engage in external grant capture, in Knowledge Transfer and in Widening Participation – while at the same time maintaining or increasing application and conversion rates on all levels, not least on taught and research postgraduate level. Anecdotal evidence actually suggests that Music, certainly within the Arts and Humanities, is not doing badly at all in its efforts to square that circle – but that this success, not least because we are an 'expensive' subject, tends to be under-appreciated. Therefore, the Committee has decided to stage an event where the strengths of Music within the HE sector can be discussed and where, not least, NAMHE member institutions will be supplied with factual information (mostly in the form of statistics) with which to back up these claims – a stash of





ammunition, if you will, to be used in the inevitable disputes with senior management. We intend to supply numbers and their development regarding, amongst other things, overall numbers, recruitment patterns (also with regard to sub-disciplines within Music) both from home and from abroad, conversion rates, fields of postgraduate study, postgraduate funding, research funding, the position of Music in the national surveys (Guardian, Times Higher, NSS, etc.) The Committee has taken it upon itself to collect such data as is available from publicly available sources such as HESA, UCAS, PALATINE, the funding and research council websites etc. Some of the information, however, (e.g., on internal funding), would have to be supplied by the institutions themselves, i.e., by you. We are aware that some of this data could be seen as rather sensitive – however, we assure you that all data will be treated completely confidentially and will appear in the presented data only as an anonymous part of a statistic, never institution-

specific. We will approach the NAMHE contacts in the member institutions in due course with a letter detailing our request – please view this as an opportunity, not as just another form that is wasting your time. The more institutions participate, the more meaningful (and indeed powerful) the information will be.

The day itself will be spent with presentations and discussions on how to best position ourselves within our institutions based on the information we have. We will also distribute the information electronically at the conference and subsequently make it available on a password protected area of our website. We hope that this will provide a service making your NAMHE all the more worthwhile.

In the meantime, I remain with best wishes,

Thomas Schmidt-Beste

Performance in the Curriculum – Conference Report 2008

Following the AGM the conference was opened with a welcome from Pat Macpherson, Head of Childhood, Adolescent and Creative Studies at Cumbria. We then heard four contrasting views of performance studies from colleagues around the country.

Paul Rodmell gave an outline of performance at the University of Birmingham. Birmingham attracts students who see themselves as performance-oriented. Performance is thus made available at all u/g levels and p/g level through Performance Practice. There is no formal entry requirement for performance year 1, but most students have Grade 8, and Grade 6 in a keyboard instrument is recommended. Year 1 is assessed through teacher's reports, and year 2 is assessed by recital. In the final year, performance is optional, and is assessed through two formal recitals totalling 45 minutes, split between January and May. Generally students receive 24 hours of tuition in a single study. In 2008–09, there will be a minor performance option of 20 credits rather than 40, to encourage performers who do not want to take a risk on a major performance study. The University contracts its performance tuition out to the Birmingham Conservatoire, though some tutors are employed by the University (in early music for instance). Only staff from the University are engaged in assessment of recitals. There is a Director of Performance who liaises with the Conservatoire, and a University Music Administrator who helps to run ensembles etc, but all academic staff are involved to some extent in performance. There are other

opportunities for performance within the curriculum, for instance through small ensembles, conducting options, and performance practice options. The larger campus ensembles are extra-curricular, with some run by the Music Department and others by the University Music Society; however all these are felt to benefit the Department.

Angela Space, Head of Performance at the University of Southampton, pointed out the very different perspective on performance studies here compared to the US, where there is not such a distinction between Conservatoire and University styles of music education. She described her role as including co-ordinating performance courses, exams and concerts, assisted by a performance administrator. Students take a foundation year plus two elective-based years and exams are video-taped. There are seven heads of sections, contributing to ensemble coaching, performance classes, administration and some tutoring; there are also ca. 45 tutors. In solo performance in year 1, students receive 20 hours of teaching (single Hons; or 10 hours combined Hons) and the focus can range from baroque flute to heavy metal drumming, so long as the student is competent and a tutor can be found. Assessment is by 15 minute exam which includes technical exercises. Year 2 students have 20 hours teaching and are assessed by a 30–35 minute exam, and year 3 students also have 20 hours teaching and a 40–45 minute exam. A tutor/lesson grade is also included in assessment. Popular music performers are



assessed 'on location' in suitable gig venues. Heads of studies along with other academic staff act as performance examiners, and allowance is made for the half tuition time of combined Hons students through choice of repertoire etc. Students may choose ensemble performance as year 2 or 3 electives. These involve 12 hours of coaching, and two 20 minute exams. Some ensemble members may not be under assessment, and this can be a problem. Postgraduate study is also offered (Masters and PhD). Performance is considered important in supporting other types of study.

Laudan Nooshin discussed in great depth performance studies from a world music perspective, initially giving some background using Hood's notion of bimusicality: becoming a 'musical insider' through performance. The UK lagged behind the US in ethnomusicology up until the mid 1980s, with performance usually being informal or peripheral to formal assessment. However ethnomusicologists in HE in the UK have effectively doubled in 10 years, and there are now some departments that offer ethnomusicological performance, to the point where ensemble performance can be a co-requisite or pre-requisite for other studies. It is interesting to note the way some musics (e.g. gamelan) lent themselves to the study environment and there are now many tutors that originated at York and Dartington, for example. There is now a massive range of ensembles covered though some are privileged over others and group performance is privileged over solo performance. Ensembles tend to be led by a wide range of people (f/t staff, p/g students, visiting musicians), and there is some one-to-one tuition both at u/g and p/g level (e.g. SOAS offers an MMus performance degree). It is an expectation of students in the field to be engaged with performance in approaching ethnomusicology. Participation is crucial in studies making sense (for instance, Simone Krüger's PhD on pedagogy finds that there are diverse reasons for valuing performance, such as intimacy, ownership, understanding relevance, and social interaction, even when performance is culturally decontextualised). It also provides an understanding of the difficulty of handling instruments. The practical activity engages the student in different ways. There are issues however such as balancing breadth and depth, avoiding tokenism, the danger of students gaining only a simplistic view of complex traditions, and the formulation of assessment criteria. Many departments are still finding their way. It is particularly difficult to avoid terminology such as 'appropriate to the level'. At this point in the session there was much discussion of assessment criteria across institutions.

Derek Scott tackled performance in popular music, starting by considering the role of 'originality' and 'creativity' in assessment criteria. There are parallels

with the world of classical music here. 'Creativity' in performance could imply that performance revitalises our experience of music, whether familiar or unfamiliar; for instance, bands might 'cover' songs by recreating rather than imitating. 'Originality' could signal departure from convention, but this could similarly arise from confusion; so originality could be most valued when it operates within stylistic conventions (e.g. understanding timbre as a signifier of style). One difficulty is the constant flux in popular styles; teachers and assessors must be aware of this. Some styles seem to be fairly homogenous (e.g. heavy metal) and others not. Stylistic diversity is not unique to the popular domain however; classical music tends to use consensus to arrive at stylistic 'appropriateness'. Other issues affecting popular performance are: 'star' status vs. artistic status; the crucial role played by visual impact (e.g. of clothing style and spatial layout); balance of mix is crucial (which relates to orchestration in the classical domain); how soloists relate to groups; creation of a canon; the work concept; improvisation; and the establishment of persona. Pop assessors cannot rely on the body of knowledge available in assessing classical performance, and the associated consensus about what is 'good' and what constitutes a particular style. They do need to know basic elements, yet must draw on relevant expertise. Assessors should not feel inadequate though: students must explain how their performance illustrates their technical/artistic development; must not limit themselves excessively in style (e.g. 'we just do thrash metal'); and should present both technical and interpretative skill. The ethos of departments should have a role, since each will expect a different approach. Also, Rockschoool exams extending to Diploma level could be required as a co-requisite for performance studies, for instance.

Dr Nick Fells, University of Glasgow

Helena Gaunt (Guildhall School of Music & Drama) opened the afternoon session by widening the perspective from the practicalities of running a performance curriculum to more fundamental questions about the nature of performance teaching on a higher education level. Based on empirical studies conducted by herself and others, she scrutinised the format which is at the core of practically all performance programmes – the one-on-one lesson. This format (which implies a physical and emotional closeness between tutor and student that is possibly unique within the HE sector) is unquestioningly accepted as the 'only possible way to do it' and is seen by many students as the centrepiece of their entire course, but Gaunt showed up the potential pitfalls that this format implies (and the expectations associated with it both by students and by teachers) ➤



as well as the doubtless advantages.

In the second paper of the afternoon, Graham Barber (Leeds) gave the audience insights into decades of experience as a performance teacher in higher education, emphasising once more its place in the ‘complete’ music course as traditionally taught in British institutions. He placed particular emphasis on the role that performance studies and performance students play in the wider cultural context of universities – providing the infrastructural and personal basis for orchestras, choirs and whole concert series, as well as providing music for academic events such as graduation ceremonies. This might be (and has been) used as a political argument against university managers wanting to curtail performance teaching which is often seen as inefficient and too expensive (in its focus on one-on-one tuition).

This argument was then also taken up and discussed at some length during the panel of all speakers which concluded the conference. There was wide agreement that performance teaching (classical or otherwise) was a fundamental aspect of music courses as they are taught in the UK, not least since recruitment depends heavily on the amount of performance tuition offered, and institutions curtailing their offer would suffer (or have

suffered). The ‘cultural’ argument (i.e., performance programmes being vital to the concert life of an institution) was felt by some to be a powerful tool – but held against that were the cautionary tales of institutions such as Aberystwyth or Reading which have closed their music departments while maintaining a concert series and student ensembles through a music director. In the end, an element of an academic course has to be justified by academic arguments.

Professor Thomas Schmidt-Beste, Bangor University

**The 2009 NAMHE Annual Conference
“Know Your Strengths – Informing and
Empowering HEI Music”
will be held at The University of
Huddersfield on Tuesday 5th May 2009,
commencing at 10.45 am, preceded as
usual by the Annual General Meeting. A full
programme will be circulated to NAMHE
representatives in the spring.**

Current Consultations

**AHUG (Arts and Humanities User Group):
NAMHE nominated representative Katharine Ellis,
k.ellis@rhul.ac.uk**

This is a relatively new grouping of around 20 subject associations, initiated by the Classics community, with the aim of co-ordinating responses to consultations and reviews (such as from HEFCE, UUK, RCUK, the AHRC, etc) which would benefit from a collaborative approach across disciplines. The group was formed as a result of the ERIH project, in which several subject areas shared common ground and, having established the nature of that common ground, were able to pool ideas, build a sense of solidarity, and present a coherent and informed set of responses to the AHRC consultation. NAMHE will work with AHUG where it is evidently in the association’s interest to do so, while always reserving the right, where necessary, to opt out or to present perspectives different from the majority view.

**ERIH (European Reference Index in the Humanities):
NAMHE nominated representative Thomas Schmidt-
Beste, mus205@bangor.ac.uk**

In the last newsletter we flagged up the continuing debate in the UK about the ERIH journals lists. As you will know, the European Science Foundation has consistently stressed that the ERIH lists are an exercise in categorisation by type rather than ranking by quality. There has been little news on the lists themselves since we last wrote, but we are still interested to know to what extent, and in what context, the lists are being invoked within the sector. Members may be interested to know that while the latest information from HEFCE in relation to the Research Excellence Framework seems to sideline lists such as ERIH in the UK by foregrounding the HEI sector’s commitment to an REF promoting ‘excellent research wherever it is found’ (para 8 of the *Analysis of responses to HEFCE 2007/34, the Research Excellence Framework consultation* (see REF link below), considerable disquiet is being expressed by colleagues in the U.S. at their increasing use as proxies for quality of publications output in tenure and other promotion



processes. Please send comments, which will be treated anonymously, to Thomas Schmidt-Beste at the email above.

REF (Research Excellence Framework): the latest public information, in the form of an analysis of the consultation that closed last February, is on the HEFCE website at www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/consult/outcomes/ref.asp. While we await further developments, the Charles Oppenheim & Mark Summers research project – the abstract of which is featured below – provides food for thought within Music specifically.

Oppenheim, C. & Summers, M.A.C. (2008). "Citation counts and the Research Assessment Exercise, part VI: Unit of assessment 67 (music)" Information Research, 13(2) paper 342.
(Available at informationR.net/ir/13-2/paper342.html)

Abstract

Introduction. This study aimed to explore research assessment within the field of music and, specifically, to investigate whether citation counting could be used to replace or inform the peer review system currently in use in the UK.

Method. A citation analysis of academics submitted for peer review in Unit of Assessment 67 in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise was performed using the Arts and Humanities Citation Index and checked for correlations with the Assessment scores. A Spearman rank order correlation coefficient test was used to assess the significance of correlations between citations and scores.

Results. At a departmental level, citation counts correlated strongly with scores awarded by the Assessment Exercise. A weaker correlation was found between scores and individual counts. The correlations were significant at the 0.01% level. Types of submission were analysed and trends were found within the author group. However, the Arts and Humanities Citation Index was found to be unrepresentative of music research

activity in UK universities due to its choice of source material.

Conclusion. The Arts and Humanities Citation Index alone is not a suitable data source for citation analysis in the field of music. However, if an alternative data source could be found, there is potential for the use of citation analysis in research assessment in music.

Possibly the most important question in the replacement of the RAE with the REF is how metrics are to be used. The main metrics issue is the bibliometric indicator. Studies, such as the one above, show that there is a correlation between bibliometric measures and the peer review of the RAE. However, that there is a correlation is not an indication that the two measures are necessarily like-for-like.

Currently underway, the HEFCE bibliometrics pilot exercise does not stray far into the humanities, if at all (geography is about as near as it gets), and certainly not near the arts. This could be seen as a hint that such indicators will not be used in arts and humanities subjects, possibly being classed as “not yet sufficiently mature to be informative” (www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/pilot/REF.pdf) – our study shows that citation data for music academics are exactly that.

It is not so much that many academics had no citations in this study (a previous study of archaeology also showed a large number of zero counts), it is more that there is no index that could hope to record citations to and from all the types of research output that the music academics produce. To place a large proportion of the assessed community at an immediate disadvantage (composers, performers, etc.) is folly.

In the next few months, I will be undertaking another counting exercise with the intention of providing more evidence of music citation practice. I would value comments from the NAMHE community so please feel free to get in touch: m.a.c.summers@lboro.ac.uk

Dr Mark Summers, University of Loughborough

NAMHE joins campaign against the extension of copyright on sound recordings from 50 to 95 years

As many of you may have heard, there is a proposal for new legislation before the European parliament which would extend the copyright on sound recordings within the EU from currently 50 years to 75 years. There has been growing opposition against this legislation from

virtually all quarters of the artistic, scientific and legal community. As studies by the Max Planck Institute for Intellectual Property Law in Munich (www.ip.mpg.de/de/data/pdf/stellungnahme-bmj-2008-09-10-def.pdf) and by the Centre for Intellectual Property





Policy and Management at Bournemouth University (www.cippm.org.uk/publications/) have demonstrated, the new law would almost exclusively benefit the major record companies and some major artists, not the “thousands of anonymous session musicians” it purports to support. Furthermore, a re-distribution of funds in favour of older recordings would (assuming no change in the total sum of fees collected) by simple arithmetic disadvantage younger, currently active artists.

While the benefits are thus doubtful at best, would make access to and research into historical recordings difficult if not impossible; a weak ‘use it or lose it’ clause in the legislation (meaning that only such works that are still available from the publishers/labels would enjoy this protection) could easily be circumvented by short-term publication on obscure websites at prohibitive prices.

The possible consequences are best seen in the U.S. with its 95 year copyright period where only 14% of all pre-1965 recordings are publicly available (www.clir.org/pubs/execsum/sum133.html), as opposed to an estimate of more than 50% in Europe. To protect access to this vital part of our musical heritage (and indeed something many of us study) against a few commercial interests, NAMHE has joined CHARM (the Centre for the History and Analysis of Recorded Music) and others in protesting this proposal with the European Parliament (for further information, see www.charm.rhul.ac.uk/content/resources/copyright_safeguard_access.html).

The legislation is currently at Committee stage, and we hope that the worst can still be averted.

NAMHE Committee Meeting Summaries

Meeting of 19 January 2008

Four new members were welcomed to the Committee and portfolios for the year agreed, including the appointment of Ed Venn as Treasurer. A draft new procedure for the election of the NAMHE Chair was devised and it was agreed that the Chair’s term of office should begin and end at the AGM, rather than the January meeting, to provide some continuity for the new Committee.

The Committee noted its concern that small music departments and individuals working in music within other departments were currently underrepresented in the NAMHE membership. It was agreed to offer these colleagues free attendance at the 2008 Conference, plus one year’s free membership of NAMHE.

A draft letter to the AHRC regarding the methodology of the ERIH project was discussed, along with comments on the draft lists received from the NAMHE membership. It was agreed that NAMHE would not involve itself in the inclusion, exclusion or regrading of journals and that the membership would be advised to respond on an individual basis if they wished to.

The paper by Charles Oppenheim and Mark Summers on Citation Counts and the RAE, pt 6, mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter, was discussed in some detail and it was agreed to invite one of the authors to address a future meeting.

Ed Venn reported that he had received an informal

approach from PALATINE about a possible cross-disciplinary project on the assessment of PhDs with a practical component. The project would examine the transparency of procedures across institutions. General support was expressed for this project.

Allan Moore reported that the response rate to his questionnaire on Transferable Skills had been disappointing and that some departments had been reluctant to share information that was regarded as sensitive to their institution. He had been hoping that the project would provide ammunition to help small departments argue that music was philosophically essential in higher education.

Meeting of 8 March 2008

Final arrangements for the Annual Conference were agreed. The procedure for the election of the new Chair was finalised, subject to ratification at the AGM.

Mark Everist reported that, following NAMHE’s letter to the AHRC on the ERIH project, he had been invited to a meeting at the MRC, at which 22 subject associations had been represented. Points of discussion had included AHRC funding and reductions in research leave scheme, and PhD studentships. The establishment of an Arts and Humanities User Group (AHUG) had been proposed. The Committee expressed concern about changes due to staffing issues at the AHRC. There appeared to be more focus on research defined by the AHRC than on individual academics’ own research areas and it was unclear who was making these decisions. It



was agreed that Mark Everist would write to Philip Esler about this.

Stephanie Pitts reported that the HE Academy (formerly Learning & Teaching in Higher Education) was putting together its second stage plan, in which it had identified five key aims. Feedback had been invited on which should be the primary aim. Four aims focused on 'enhancing the student learning experience', the fifth focusing on the teachers. The Committee recommended that 'raising the status of teaching in HE' should be the Academy's primary aim.

Meeting of 7 June 2008

Celia Duffy took the Chair, following the ratification of her election at the AGM.

The meeting began with a presentation on Citation Counts and Bibliometrics by Dr Mark Summers.

It was agreed that the Conference had been a success, having featured varied papers and sharing of good practice. The Conference Dinner had been a worthwhile innovation that deserved repeating. It was considered that no formal Conference follow-up was needed; it was expected that delegates would follow-up at a local level. It was noted that representation from the conservatoires had been low and there was concern that performance staff might not feel part of the academic community.

The Committee gave its views on Specialist Advisor Nominations for the RAE in three areas.

The decision of the Government to withdraw funding for second degrees of equivalent or lower level qualifications was noted with concern, since this was a particular problem in Music for late maturing singers. It was agreed that Celia Duffy would pursue a joint NAMHE/CUK campaign.

It was decided that NAMHE should join AHUG, provided that the Association did not lose its distinctiveness.

Celia Duffy was due to meet with Shearer West, the new AHRC Director of Research and a preliminary agenda for this meeting was discussed, including the Research Leave Scheme.

Meeting of 11 October

Celia Duffy resigned as Chair for personal and professional reasons. Thomas Schmidt-Beste was chosen as Acting Chair to take the Committee up to the AGM in May.

Ed Venn reported that NAMHE's finances were currently looking healthy, but that expenditure was increasing,

particularly on the Annual Conference. It was agreed that subscriptions would be held at their current level for 2009–10 and then reviewed. The Committee was pleased to welcome Access to Music and Rose Bruford College as new members.

Celia Duffy reported that she had been in correspondence with the Vice-Principal of Arts at Roehampton Institute regarding their decision to close their Music Department. There appeared to be nothing that NAMHE could do to influence Roehampton otherwise. There was a lengthy discussion arising from this which resulted in the Committee's decision to structure the 2009 Conference around strengths in HEI Music, which might help departments under threat to fight their corner.

Election results

Further to the election held in November 2008, the following have been elected to serve on the NAMHE Committee for a period of three years from January 2009:

Dr Paul Archbold, Kingston University, London

Dr Caroline Bithell, University of Manchester

Dr Laudan Nooshin, City University

Dr Edward Venn, University of Lancaster (re-election)

Need to update your details?

Please contact administrator@namhe.ac.uk if your department changes its NAMHE representative, Head of Department, contact address or email details.