

Dear colleague,

I am writing to you on behalf of the National Association of Music in Higher Education. As the NAMHE representative for your institution, you fulfil a service without which the Association could not function, acting as our 'person on the ground', so to speak. We do appreciate the time you are taking to do this, out of a schedule that is no doubt very busy already.

At our last meeting, however, it was felt by the committee members that we did not do enough to keep in touch with you – that we were inappropriately taking you for granted, that we were generally not keeping in touch with our member institutions as we ought to. This, in some cases, has in fact led to phantom representatives who had long since retired or left the institution, our mailings therefore going into empty space.

The committee has therefore decided to take two steps to remedy this situation. For one, we will contact every institutional representative once a year to keep in touch and indeed to enquire whether you feel that you are still willing to take on this commitment or whether you would like to pass it on to somebody else within your department. We would also be more than happy to have your response of either recommitment or referral include any suggestions how we could serve our members better.

For another, we decided to appoint 'regional representatives' from within the committee, for us to better keep in touch with the individual institutions and to be able to listen better to your concerns. We are in the process of allocating areas and institutions amongst ourselves – expect your rep to be in touch in the not-too-distant future.

Finally, you will remember that in the past winter, NAMHE conducted a department-level survey of UK postgraduate study in Music, the results to be published at the conference in May, in order to build a case with the government and the funders about the highly diversified postgraduate base in our field (and at the same time the parlous state of its funding). While this duly happened, it turned out that only 15 departments – out of a total of c. 100 – returned the survey which of course is a less than representative sample. I know it can be tedious to compile the numbers, and nobody has time to spare, but everybody is in agreement that this might be a potentially very useful tool, and we have decided not to abandon our efforts to collect the relevant information. Thus, if your institution is amongst those which have not returned the survey, might I appeal to you again to make the effort? The questionnaire form will be made available on the NAMHE website.

Thank you again for your service to NAMHE – it is much appreciated.

All best wishes,



Thomas Schmidt-Beste