



NAMHE

National Association for Music in Higher Education

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NEWSLETTER

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Welcome from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

After having been properly elected to the chair of NAMHE since the last newsletter appeared, I can now greet you in this new function. It has been an eventful year as ever. The RAE is turning into the REF before our eyes, and NAMHE is busy keeping an eye on that on your behalf; metrics seem to be on their way out (or at the very least on the retreat), but 'impact' is with us as much as ever, if not more so, following the integration of the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills, barely out of its infancy, into Peter Mandelson's new Business department. While the recent AHRC report on impact in the Arts and Humanities placed Music at centre stage, this new agenda is of concern to all and may feel a threat to quite a few; NAMHE will make whatever influence it has got felt within the ongoing consultation process. Indeed, our next annual conference (in Cardiff, on 4 May 2010) will have 'Impact' as its topic.

But it was not all about the REF (although it sometimes felt like it) – we are monitoring the situation of music

departments across the UK, in an increasingly tight financial climate, and at our annual conference in Huddersfield in May, we discussed how Music could make a case for itself within the HE sector in general, as well as in individual institutions. Although the data provided by UCAS and HESA is worryingly vague, that case can and should be made, and NAMHE will assist institutions in every way in making it.

We consulted with PALATINE – the Subject Centre for Music, Dance and Drama – on a new and improved set of UCAS course codes for Music, also on their own strategic priorities document. PALATINE itself is under some pressure, and it is one of our priorities to safeguard and support this invaluable resource.

Besides the conference, the NAMHE committee met three times; I take this opportunity to thank all members for giving up time out of a busy schedule to travel to Birmingham on a Saturday – above all I would like to thank our outgoing members, after dedicated service: Andrew Bates, Katharine Ellis, Allan Moore, Jan Smaczny and Geoff Smith.

Thomas Schmidt-Beste

Know Your Strengths: Informing & Empowering HEI Music – Conference Report 2009

Conference – Morning Session Report

The conference was designed as a proactive response to the reality check of the RAE aftermath, and was designed to allow participation from those whose departments had suffered or evaded closure, and research council and HEFCE representatives on whose decisions the future of our community depends – before breakout groups of delegates studied rafts of data on recruitment, research and postgraduate funding in the afternoon.

The morning session's four presentations, from Richard Langham Smith (formerly of Exeter), Pete Stollery (Aberdeen), Emma Wakelin (AHRC) and Derek Hicks (HEFCE), covered salutary but far from negative ground. Indeed Pete Stollery's description of the rise of a new Aberdeen department from a serendipitous merger, and his account of some doughty resistance to the complete annihilation of Music even when it was no longer a

degree programme, showed how keeping modest amounts of academic and library-related activity alive could eventually yield rewards. By contrast, no amount of black humour in Richard Langham Smith's tale of Exeter's demise could disguise the brutality of closure in favour of an 'arts centre' model in which Music simply becomes a leisure activity for an entire university.

The chill wind continued with Derek Hicks' presentation and the long discussion that followed it. Here the focus was firmly on social and economic questions surrounding higher-education Music, and HEFCE's institutional perception of the subject as fiendishly expensive, middle class and ethnically unrepresentative of the UK population. Advising against special pleading to secure extra funds or exceptional treatment, or assertions about wide musical coverage at HE level being enough to secure recognition, Hicks emphasised instead the need for higher-education Music to demonstrate its capacity to deliver the government's goals: employable





graduates, education with demonstrable social and economic impact, and value for money. That said, he also acknowledged that the narrowness of the HEFCE view of Music was unfortunate, and that, class/ethnic diversity in Music Technology aside, HEI Music was to some extent the victim of government policies that had further embedded the link between a middle-class capacity to pay for instrumental lessons at school, and a limited demographic for Music in higher education.

The final speaker of the morning, Emma Wakelin, began by likening the AHRC (in relation to the other research councils) with Music (in relation to STEM subjects): a force always having to justify its claims on the public purse and sometimes held to higher standards of accountability. The value-for-money success story of UK humanities, where 27% of the nation's researchers were supported by just 2.8% of the funding, did not prevent a sense of threat, especially given the possibility of a change of government in 2010. As a broker between researchers and government, the AHRC had, she said, responded by launching partnership schemes to boost its credibility vis-a-vis science (cross-council schemes), skills-based education (collaborative doctorates) and broad thematic areas with the capacity to inflect policy. These strategic ways of inter-relating with wider social worlds had to be balanced against traditional response-mode funding, but (in a view reflective of that of Derek Hicks) demonstrable 'impact' remained the key to success. The ensuing discussion inevitably brought the subject back to music specifically, and to the patchy relationship of HEI music with the creative industries. The advice from both Wakelin and Hicks was clear: band together with other arts and humanities constituencies and emulate the STEM subjects in showing how the UK cannot do without us. And make the most of HEFCE/government openness to policy at NESTA.

Professor Katharine Ellis, Royal Holloway London

Conference – Afternoon Session

Breakout Group Reports

Doctoral and Postdoctoral Research

In this session we examined the figures available to us derived from the census of research students and fellows that NAMHE had initiated earlier in the year. Responses had been received from 15 institutions. With the proviso that the record was incomplete and that it was not always easy to know how to interpret the data, we made a number of observations as follows.

The first two sets of figures related to admission and

completion rates. The rate of PhD/DPhil completion seemed to be relatively low compared with the figures given for admissions to doctoral programmes, although there was a noticeable bulge in 2008 that may have been linked to the RAE. We wondered whether, despite the less than healthy completion rate, there might be an oversupply of PhDs, i.e. more than the current job market can accommodate. The number of MPhil/MRes students was greater than expected by comparison with PhDs.

The third table, which focused on areas of doctoral research, offered some interesting revelations. In the category of Music History, contemporary music studies appeared to be flourishing while other periods – most notably Renaissance, Baroque and Romantic – showed a dramatic decline when compared with the figures produced by NAMHE's previous survey (1970–2003). It was striking to observe a predominance of candidates working on the 20th/21st centuries (a sub-category which did not, in this case, include ethnomusicology or popular music): for the years 2003–2008, a total of 31 PhDs were returned for Music History, of which 19 were entered as 20th/21st centuries. The figures showed a substantial increase in composition PhDs, with 24.4 allocated to notated composition and 17 to electronic/electroacoustic/sonic arts, almost doubling the figures from the previous survey. Performance put in a weak appearance, with a figure of 0.6 entered by a single institution for a single year, as against a total of 59 for the period 1970–2003.

The fourth table showing sources of funding for doctoral research was equally revelatory. We noted a surprisingly high number of places funded by either central university or individual departments as compared with those funded by the AHRC and other public bodies. For the period 2004–2008, a total of 24 PhDs were funded by the AHRC or ESRC, compared with 52.5 by central university funds and 11 by departmental funds; 88 were entirely self-funded. Teaching assistantships/lecturing had become more common in recent years. One studentship only was listed under business/industry partnership, while in the following table for postdoctoral funding not a single entry was made in this category. This would seem to be an area ripe for growth. It was suggested that world music projects focusing on issues of cultural identity and diversity may be especially attractive here.

Regarding the data relating to the funding of individuals, it was noted that composers were well supported by the AHRC but apparently had few other options that would enable them to move away from a standard trajectory. It was not clear how many composers benefited from the AHRC's creative and performing arts fellowships.



Finally, we reflected that it is easier to demonstrate impact in applied areas than in historical studies, which may therefore be more at risk in the current climate. We also questioned whether Music might do more by way of developing transferable skills.

Dr Caroline Bithell, University of Manchester

Research funding

The breakout group discussing research funding noted above all the unpredictability of funds resulting from the RAE: some departments had experienced substantial cuts (Cambridge, Nottingham, Bristol and others) while others had large increases (including De Montfort, Leeds, Keele, Durham). Responding to this extent of change, in either direction, creates uncertainty for departments, which is compounded by the variability in top-slicing and/or devolved funding implemented in different institutions. The supervision allocation calculated on departments' doctoral student numbers had a substantial effect in some cases, and departments could perhaps be encouraged to look at relationship between postgraduate teaching and its impact on staff research time and funding. Music funding as a whole was estimated to be up by 15% for 2009/2010, though there had also been a considerable increase in the number of FTE staff submitted to the RAE which would in part account for this.

The figures from research councils also made interesting reading, though here we were cautious of the incompleteness of the data: much interesting musical research is going on in other departments (sociology, psychology, human geography etc.) and being funded by research councils beyond those who have traditionally supported musicologists. There were few reliable trends to observe across sub-disciplines, since a large grant in one year could give a false sense of changing priorities: nonetheless, music history, ethnomusicology, performance and composition were notably well-supported by the AHRC, while education, therapy and community music were under-represented, though possibly seeking funding elsewhere.

The breakout group concluded that departments still needed to be better informed about where music research was taking place, and how it was being funded. This process could begin with networks within institutions, and several colleagues noted interesting connections with colleagues outside their department: these offer the potential for broadening not just research ideas but also access to new funding streams – as well as chiming with current trends for interdisciplinary research.

Dr Stephanie Pitts, University of Sheffield

Recruitment and Students

The group discussing recruitment and student numbers considered a set of statistical data compiled from information provided by UCAS and HESA. It was noted that both the number of pupils taking A levels in Music and the number of students applying for Music courses at British universities had risen considerably over the last six years, indeed marginally outperforming the overall rise in numbers on both statistical counts. This was seen as an encouraging sign; the sector is holding its own. The discussion then turned to the detailed figures provided by UCAS; these, however, were deemed hardly useful as data protection rules prevent a breakdown by individual courses within Music, thus making it impossible to gauge whether interest in certain sub-disciplines was rising or falling. Likewise, breakdown by School sector and socioeconomic group was of little value as the categories were hazy and there was no basis for comparison. The HESA data conveyed the general message that there was a great richness and variety of courses offered within Music and as a Joint Honours subject, but again it was impossible to construct a robust, numbers-based argument around the figures provided. Leavers data appeared to indicate that, encouragingly, a vast majority of Music graduates progress either to work or further study, and that a very substantial portion of leavers go on to work in which their qualification is relevant; but again, the lack of comparative data, the lack of breakdown into sub-disciplines and (for the leavers' data) the high number of non-answers made it difficult to build any case on the numbers available. Rather worryingly, politicians and funders make their decisions based on the same imperfect set of data. It was agreed to work with PALATINE on strategies to improve this state of affairs. It was also agreed to make the statistical information available on the NAMHE website.

Professor Thomas Schmidt-Beste, Bangor University

The next Annual Conference will take place on Tuesday, 4 May 2010 at the University of Cardiff. Its theme will be *Impact*. Details will be sent to your NAMHE representative and published on the NAMHE web site as soon as available. Member institutions are invited to send two representatives to Conference, free of charge.



HEFCE Consultation on the Research Excellence Framework – an update

The RAE has barely begun to make its full financial impact felt, but the ministry and the funding councils are already busy planning for the 'next RAE', the 'Research Excellence Framework' or REF for which institutions will be asked to make submissions at the end of 2012. Discussions about this started before the previous RAE had even happened, of course, with a first consultation about general aims and purposes in 2007/8 to which NAMHE duly responded. This was followed by the formation of an Expert Advisory Group with academic stakeholders discussing specific options and practicalities. Professor Simon McVeigh (Goldsmiths, University of London) represented Music in this Group, and NAMHE was able to provide input to the Group through him, stressing the importance of a large and balanced assessment panel, the indispensability of peer review as central to the evaluation process, and our concerns about the methodological soundness of 'impact' and 'metrics' within the assessment process. As many of you know, HEFCE has now (perhaps at least in part in response to this consultation) published a consultation paper which lays out in quite specific detail the ways in which the funders envision the REF. Many elements will seem familiar to those who have lived with and through the RAE: peer-reviewed submissions and research environment will still make up a very substantial proportion of the score, and metrics seem to have receded into the background (if not quite disappeared). 'Impact', however, is still the elephant in the room, with many question marks attached to it. Another major change concerns the formation of the Units of Assessment which HEFCE sees as being much bigger and encompassing a number of disciplines and sub-disciplines; Music is to be placed within a UoA together with Drama, Dance and Performing Arts. HEFCE invited responses to this consultation paper by December 2009, and NAMHE has responded on behalf of Music, after having consulted widely with its constituency.

Professor Thomas Schmidt-Beste, Bangor University

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.

Postgraduate Survey

Many thanks to those institutions who responded to NAMHE's request for figures relating to postgraduate research records. We realise that in some cases the task of accessing and compiling the data was not straightforward. We have been able to make some initial, albeit tentative, observations based on the data submitted by fifteen institutions prior to the May conference (see conference report). We believe it would be fruitful to continue to work on this and so would like to issue a second request for additional submissions. Your help would be very much appreciated. Please send completed forms ([available for download](#) on the NAMHE website) to the NAMHE administrator, Alison Marlow (administrator@namhe.ac.uk).

Dr Caroline Bithell, University of Manchester

Committee Membership

Further to the elections held in December, NAMHE is pleased to welcome the following to the Committee for 2010:

Three year terms:

Professor Michael Clarke (University of Huddersfield)
Dr Helena Gaunt (Guildhall School of Music and Drama)
Professor Peter Manning (University of Durham)
Dr Charles Wiffen (Bath Spa University)

One year terms:

Dr Janet (Steve) Halfyard (Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham City University)
Dr Sam Hayden (University of Sussex)

The continuing Committee members are:

Professor Thomas Schmidt-Beste (Bangor University) – Chair
Dr Paul Archbold (Kingston University, London)
Dr Caroline Bithell (University of Manchester)
Ms Celia Duffy (Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama)
Dr Laudan Nooshin (City University London)
Dr Stephanie Pitts (University of Sheffield)
Dr Edward Venn (University of Lancaster) – Treasurer



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday, 5 May 2009

Welcome and apologies

From among the executive committee, apologies were received from Andrew Bates, Celia Duffy, Helena Gaunt and Jan Smaczny.

Minutes of the last AGM in May 2008 were accepted as an accurate record.

There were no matters arising.

Confirmation of chairman

Thomas Schmidt-Beste was proposed by Katharine Ellis and seconded by Paul Archbold. His election was ratified.

Report from Chair

It had been rather a quiet year until the post-RAE storm, since it lay between the official RAE submission date and the date on which financial settlements were announced. The committee met three times. Three members – Mark Everist, Nick Fells and Linda Merrick – stepped down and were replaced at the annual elections by Paul Archbold, Caroline Bithell and Laudan Nooshin. In February, two committee members – Geoff Smith and Allan Moore – resigned. The committee decided to co-opt one member to replace Allan Moore (Helena Gaunt); but not to do so in respect of Geoff Smith, whose term would in any case end later in 2009. The Chair thanked members old and new.

The committee had distributed one newsletter in January, experimenting with online publication only. No adverse feedback had ensued, although an offer to work with PALATINE to alert members to publication of the newsletter was welcomed.

During the year NAMHE had continued discussion regarding the European Reference Index in the Humanities and had secured Arts and Humanities User Group

membership. There was a consultation on new UCAS codes; NAMHE responded. NAMHE also wrote opposing the proposed European copyright legislation extending performer rights on recorded material from 50 to 95 years. The resulting law has extended the term to 70 years; individual nations have two years to update their own legislation. In the aftermath of the RAE, NAMHE had been involved in the Research Excellence Framework consultation undertaken by the Experts Advisory Group; finally, NAMHE was working with the AHRC to help forge a new balance between strategic and responsive modes of funding.

Among member institutions, NAMHE intervened on behalf of Roehampton, which as a result of restructuring now has no single-honours Music at UG level (it will retain some interdisciplinary and Master's options in Music).

The next AGM and Annual Conference was announced for Cardiff, on Tuesday 4 May.

Treasurer's report

The Association's finances appear stable and subscriptions for next year will remain at current level. Members agreed last year that the Administrator's honorarium should be increased; the 2008 conference was also very expensive. Cost reduction has been effected for this year by having a cheaper conference, publishing the newsletter online only, and reducing committee meetings from four to three. NAMHE is however committed to more investment in the website. The Treasurer's report was approved.

AOB

The Chair thanked Administrator and Treasurer for ensuring continuity during the transition period.

Present: 20 members

Summaries of NAMHE Committee Meetings 2009

Meeting of 28 February

The main focuses of this meeting were a review of the outcome of the 2008 RAE and preparation for the May Conference.

The Committee studied the RAE 2008 Standard analyses for 67 Music and the RAE2008 UOA 67 Subject Overview Reports and considered the likely outcomes for Music as a subject (details of funding had not yet been revealed). It was noted that Music had done well in the RAE, but 



that since QR income went to universities rather than directly to departments, there was no guarantee that high achieving departments would benefit. The Committee considered whether NAMHE had a role to play in protecting this QR income, but it was suggested that NAMHE could be more influential in defending departments under threat.

The structure of the Conference was finalised. Jan Smaczny and Mark Everist had produced a list for data packs for conference delegates, which would be made available on the NAMHE web site afterwards. The pack would include RAE data, when available and data from UCAS and HESA on applicant numbers, qualifications and subject spread. UCAS would charge £1165 and HESA £3560 to provide data from 2002/2003 to 2008. It was agreed to ask for data for the last three years, which was likely to cost £2.5k–3k.

Meeting of 6 June

Thomas Schmidt-Beste took the Chair formally for the first time, following ratification of his unopposed election at Conference.

It was reported that the Infrastructure Group, led by Celia Duffy, had formulated and submitted a response to the AHRC Consultation on the Future Directions for Arts & Humanities.

There was a follow-up discussion on the Conference. It was agreed that the Infrastructure Group would produce an advocacy statement for Music to be submitted to the Government and published on the NAMHE web site. PALATINE was carrying out a consultation on their future priorities and it was agreed to propose that they carry out a case study of skills and employment destinations of music graduates.

There was an extended report from Paul Archbold and Caroline Bithell on the May AHRC Subject Associations Meeting. It was agreed in the light of this report that a

possible theme for the 2010 Conference could be Impact in the REF. Paul Archbold was due to attend the presentation of a report on Impact by AHRC in June.

NAMHE had submitted comments on the first set of REF Consultation papers. The Advisory Group had made various suggestions of which the Committee broadly approved and a second set of papers was expected shortly. Simon McVeigh, who represented Music on the Advisory Group, had thanked NAMHE for its input.

Meeting of 10 October

A large proportion of the Committee's time in this meeting was devoted to an extensive discussion of the REF HEFCE Consultation Document.

In his Chair's Report, Thomas Schmidt-Beste informed the Committee that he had written to the Czech Parliament and the Czech Academy of Arts and Sciences to protest about the proposed new funding formula, which would disadvantage the humanities. The Committee also discussed the change in opening hours of the National Archives and the appointment of the new Editor-in-Chief of Grove Music.

Thomas Schmidt-Beste was going to write to the new Chair of AHRC to welcome the recent report on Impact, which was favourable to Music. He and Jan Smaczny had collected suggestions for PALATINE priorities from the membership and submitted a list to PALATINE.

It was confirmed that the theme for the 2010 Conference at Cardiff would be Impact. It was agreed that organisations outside HE involved in Impact would be invited to speak in the morning, while the afternoon session would look at the effect on academic institutions.

The remaining Committee meetings in 2009/2010 are scheduled for Saturday, 30 January and Saturday, 5 June 2010.