

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Academic Standards Committee - Friday 13 January 2006

**Responses to the Recommendations arising from the Review of the
Department of Music held on 4 March 2004**

Ms Jane McAllister, Senate Office

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The Review Panel commended the Department highly on the overall quality of its provision and for the upsurge in vitality since the Court Review of March 2000. Members of staff were found to be enthusiastic and committed and students had found them to be knowledgeable and approachable. Both undergraduate students and GTAs spoke warmly of the Department.

The Panel applauded the industry of the Head of Department and the success of the Department under his leadership, and felt that the time was now right to proceed to a greater sharing of the administrative load both in succession planning and enhancing the personal development of members of the academic staff.

The Panel acknowledged that the strong link between the Department and Music in the University contributed to the quality of student learning provision and would therefore wish to alert the Secretary of Court to the potential benefits to the University of subscribing to a University-wide permanent licence for performance venues. [*The Secretary of Court has been informed of this issue and has agreed to look into it.*]

The Review Panel identified two areas of particular concern:

- i. Funding for practical tuition
- ii. Practice accommodation

It was hoped that relocation in the near future would further enhance the Department's provision.

The Panel regretted that it had not had the opportunity to meet with BEng students, despite an invitation being extended to them, and was therefore unable to form an opinion on the teaching, learning and assessment provision for students undertaking the joint programme with Music and the extent to which BEng students were integrated into the Department. Joint provision would be explored with students in the forthcoming review of the Department of Electronics and Electrical Engineering.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

The Panel recommends that the Faculty, as an interim measure, gives urgent consideration to applying for funding from the Teaching Infrastructure Fund to provide an adequate number of soundproofed modular practice facilities that could be placed in

the former Archives accommodation adjacent to the Concert Hall and subsequently be relocated as and when the Department moves to other premises. (*Paragraph F.5*)

Action: The Dean of the Faculty of Arts

Response:

Fulfilment of the terms of this Recommendation will still leave the department with unaddressed issues in terms of the present location's "fitness for purpose", regarding both the number of spaces and our major concerns over sound insulation. However, Estates and Buildings have identified space for two soundproofed modular practice rooms in the basement of the Modern Languages Building in University Gardens. Discussions continue on sourcing the costs (ca. £32,000). If successful, these arrangements will alleviate the problem, but will still leave the department well short of adequate practice facilities. The possibility of using the "Archive" space will be one of the aspects explored through the Faculty Strategic Plan when considering short and long-term solutions.

Recommendation 2:

The Panel recommends that the Faculty look with urgency into the possibility of improved funding provision for practical tuition. (*Paragraph C.5.4*)

Action: The Dean of the Faculty of Arts

Response:

This recommendation follows those for the Court Review of the Department of Music some five years ago. Following the University's successful achievement of the aims of the "Future Shape" savings exercise, discussions will resume on the question of improved funding provision for practical tuition as part of the Faculty Strategic Plan.

Recommendation 3:

The Panel recommends that entrance requirements for the BMus degree be made absolutely clear in recruitment material. (*Paragraphs C.5.3, D.1*)

Action: The Head of Department

Response:

The material referring to entrance requirements for the BMus degree will be reviewed for all future reprints of recruitment materials. The information will also be added to the departmental website during its imminent reconstruction.

Recommendation 4:

The Panel recommends that the Department consider the additional requirement that applicants should offer ABRSM or Trinity College London theory grades 6 to 8. (*Paragraph C.5.3*)

Action: The Head of Department

Response:

These requirements will be considered and, where appropriate, incorporated in the processes noted in the response to Recommendation 3.

Recommendation 5:

The Panel recommends greater clarity and a somewhat more user-friendly approach be adopted in the section in the Department of Music Handbook describing the moderated self-assessment scheme that applies to the Composition course, and clarity in the distinction between the weighting of performance and technical ability in assessing the Performance course. (*Paragraph C.3.3*)

Action: The Head of Department

Response:

The appropriate sections of the Handbook have been amended in order to meet the objectives of the recommendation.

Recommendation 6:

The Panel **recommends** to the Department that the competing commitments of Joint Honours students be given due consideration when drawing up both teaching and assessment timetables to ensure that these students do not encounter clashes. (*Paragraph C.3.7*)

Action: The Head of Department

Response:

The department has now put in place procedures to identify, as far in advance as possible, potential clashes and to make arrangements to deal with any problems thus identified. These have proved successful so far during the current session.

Recommendation 7:

The Panel recommends that the Department give consideration to introducing peer review of staff as a means of maintaining and enhancing quality. (*Paragraph C.6.4*)

Action: The Head of Department

Response:

The department has in place quite extensive review procedures. During the session 2005-06, the research activities and outputs of all staff will be under review by Professor Butt, the Gardiner Chair of Music. In addition, the Head of Department (William Sweeney) will be conducting Performance Development Reviews with all staff. Both mid-year and end-of-year student course feedback exercises are carried out, with the results discussed and reactions decided at full staff meetings. The departmental end-of-year review meeting considers and responds to the draft reports of all three External Examiners and these responses are then incorporated formally into the ACMR process. We will, however, continue to explore how staff can share experiences and develop self-critical skills in a range of formal and informal settings.

Recommendation 8:

The Panel recommends that the timetabling of Aspects of Modernity and Historiography be reviewed. (*Paragraph C.6.7*)

Action: The Head of Department

Response:

These courses are next offered in the same year in session 2006 – 07. Consideration will be given to these issues in the course of timetable planning for session 2006 – 07.

Prepared by: Janet Fleming, Senate Office

Last modified on: Wednesday 21 December 2005