UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

# Musicians at the Margins: A Case Study of the Role of Instrumental Music Teachers in a University Music Department.

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## ABSTRACT

This study presents the outcomes of an exploration of the ways in which instrumental music teachers (IMTs) engaged to teach in UK university departments experience their work and interpret their role. It provides the basis for realistic steps for enriching their contribution to and relationship with the department in which they are situated. The area of activity was examined through a qualitative research approach within a single case study design that highlights the particularities and complexities of the case and of its context. It progressed through semi-structured interviews, document review, job-shadowing and a research diary that engaged participants in an iterative process aimed at generating rich descriptions of the situation and increasing the veracity of its subsequent interpretation.

The findings echo the isolated location found in earlier studies of IMTs in HE (Burwell, 2005; Haddon, 2009; Purser, 2005, Young et al, 2003) but note that they did not display the secretive or isolationist tendencies previously espoused. Instead there was a narrative of neglect and exclusion by the employer that contributed to a low sense of entitlement from these employees who occupy a peripheral and static position at the margins of departmental operations. It concludes that IMTs do not form a convenient organisational sub-unit (Weick and Orton, 1990) or a community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) that would respond in a uniform fashion. Instead, they experience their engagement with the university in an individual manner framed by their personal and professional environment or umwelt (Uexküll, 1985) and interpreted according to their particular interests, needs and priorities. Finally it suggests that the employing department must recognise this diversity and facilitate greater participation of its IMTs through the creation of permeable boundaries that permit but do not require involvement in curriculum design and assessment, teaching innovations and research into instrumental pedagogy

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Acknowledgements** vii

**CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION 1**

1.1 Origin and Motivation 1

1.2 Background and Rationale 4

1.3 The Setting for the Study 5

1.4 Contribution to Knowledge 8

**CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW 13**

2.1 Introduction 13

2.2 The Nature of the Profession: Isolation 16

2.3 The Nature of the Profession: Self-Taught 18

2.4 The Nature of the Profession: Autonomous 21

2.5 The Nature of the Profession: Conservative 23

2.6 Envisioning the Role 24

2.7 Monitoring and Evaluating the Role: Quality Assurance 27

2.8 Organisational Interactions: Legitimate Peripheral Participation 29

2.9 Organisational Interactions: The Loose-Coupling metaphor 32

2.10 Dimensions of Power 34

2.10.1 Visible, Hidden and Invisible Power 35

2.10.2 Collaborative Expressions of Power 38

2.10.3 An Alternative Framework: Foucault 38

2.11 Identity 40

2.12 An Ecological Approach: Organisational Umwelten 43

**CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY 47**

3.1 Theoretical Framework 47

3.2 A Case Study Approach 48

3.3 Research Purpose 49

3.4 A Critical Approach 50

3.5 Positionality 51

3.6 Ethical Framework 54

3.7 Research Design 56

3.7.1 Participant profiles 57

3.7.2 Gender and age 58

3.7.3 Background and training 59

3.7.4 Sampling theories 60

3.8 Instrumentation 61

3.9 Procedures 63

3.9.1 Document review 63

3.9.2 Interviews 64

3.9.3 Shadowing 65

3.10 Data Analysis: Constant comparison method 66

3.11 Generalisation and Trustworthiness. 67

**CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS 70**

4.1 Key Themes: Access to Facilities 70

4.2 Key Themes: Communication 75

4.2.1 Communication with music staff 76

4.2.2 Communication with students 79

4.2.3 Communication with administrative staff 83

4.3 Key Themes: Role 87

4.3.1 Relationship with students 88

4.3.2 Role in assessment – selecting materials 91

4.3.3 Role in assessment – attending assessments 93

4.3.4 Role in assessment – assessment feedback. 95

4.3.5 Role as Professional: Career 97

4.3.6 Role as Professional: Status 98

4.4 Code Table (Combined) 103

**CHAPTER FIVE ANALYSIS: 104**

5.0 Themes and Interpretations 104

5.1 Access 104

5.2 Communication 109

5.3 Role 111

**CHAPTER SIX THEORETICAL DISCUSSION 121**

6.1 Degrees of Marginalisation 121

6.2 Expectations and entitlements in organisational practices. 122

6.3 Connectedness and Participation 125

6.4 Summary 135

**CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION 138**

7.1 Stuck in the Margins, Alone 139

7.2 Role definitions - an individual approach 140

7.3 An Open Secret 141

7.4 Connections 142

7.5 Summary and Recommendations 144

7.6 Further Study 147

**REFERENCES 149**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY 157**

**Appendix A:** Advertisement for Head of Brass Studies 159

**Appendix B:** Procedures for the ethical scrutiny of work within the University. 160

**Appendix C:** University Policy Document on Ethical Procedures 161

**Appendix D:** Request for Ethical Approval (Competed) 165

**Appendix E:** Research Diary Notes (Extract) 168

**Appendix F:** Interview Prompts 169

**Appendix G:** Research Diary 170

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# CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this study, instrumental music teachers (IMTs) are defined as those staff employed to provide tuition (usually one-to one) on a specific musical instrument or voice in support of the acquisition of skills in music performance. Throughout this work, the term instrumental music teaching will include vocal teaching.

## 1.1 Origin and Motivation.

The student of a music degree at a UK university or conservatoire has been historically provided with individual lessons on an instrument or voice in support of the development of performance skills. In former times, and this includes my own experience in the 1980s, one hour each week was provided for a one-to-one session with a specialist visiting tutor on what was usually termed one's 'first study' instrument or voice, and a further half hour on a 'second study' instrument. In fact, in my case, I was to be permitted to study a third instrument too, but the downward trend in this provision seems to have started at that particular point and the third instrument entitlement was removed in order to save funds. Over time, but after my own period as an undergraduate student, the second study entitlement was also withdrawn and no longer features in the UCAS offering of any mainstream university music programme. The provision of lessons to support the study of a first or main instrument remains, although a survey of this may reveal different levels of provision, some of which is likely to fall short of the historic rate of one hour per week. The decision to develop a study of instrumental music teachers (hereinafter referred to as IMTs) arose out of a personal interest in the developments in the pedagogy of trumpet playing since the 1980s and as a

result of my reflection upon the work of IMTs attached to the university music department in which I am employed as a full-time member of the academic staff. As a musician whose principal instrumental study was orchestral trumpet playing, I had begun to reflect upon my own experience in those weekly, individual lessons with a trumpet teacher that was part of the delivery of my BA Music degree for each of the three years of study and to consider the nature and organisation of the lessons. Having reflected upon the rather repetitive nature of these sessions and the lack of any reference to texts or research to inform our weekly practice, I began to ask questions of my university colleagues in other disciplines where skill acquisition was a feature. In particular, I engaged with colleagues in the areas of Dance Science and Sports Biomechanics to see if, in the intervening decades since my own student experience, approaches that drew from technological advancement had emerged in relation to the development of performance skills. In pursuing this line of enquiry I contacted several current music instrumental tutors who work in the university sector in order to discuss their approach to teaching the technical aspects of performance to their students. These interactions were valuable exchanges, and revealed a lack of connection between the research that has been undertaken into instrumental technique and the professional knowledge of the teachers. This applied both to pedagogical research and to more technical, experimental approaches regarding skill acquisition, practice or training regimes and investigations into muscle development.

These conversations highlighted the possibility that the music department in which I work may employ tutors whose work might not be informed by research or reflective practices. They also suggested that while other full and

part time teaching staff at the university were supported to engage with research activities, the IMTs appeared to occupy a very different organisational space that restricted their involvement to such an extent that they did not participate in any aspects of curriculum design, delivery or assessment and did not feature beyond the one-to-one meetings with individual students. This limitation enabled the organisation to impose and justify a much smaller level of remuneration upon this group of teachers that suggests that at some point in its history, the department had drawn these boundaries around the participation of IMTs and perhaps deemed a restricted sphere of involvement to be sufficient and desirable.

Once I had raised the issue that research seemed to have made few inroads into day-to-day instrumental teaching, informal discussions developed around differing perceptions of the expectations, roles and levels of participation of the instrumental teacher within the music department and I began to frame an inquiry that would examine this matter. I was motivated by a sense that the department and wider organisation may be undervaluing key participants and, to some degree perhaps, exploiting colleagues who exhibited a great deal of personal drive and enthusiasm and a sense of professional pride and commitment to developing the abilities of their students. I became aware, through initial conversations and investigations that IMTs seem to have been largely absent from the formal and informal academic discourse of my own department and from the professional development opportunities and practices of the organisation.

## 1.2 Background and Rationale

The work of peripatetic teachers employed to teach music instrumental skills in the school sector in the UK has been the location for a range of research projects that has produced insights into the motivation of pupils and their levels of engagement (Creech, 2010; Hallam, 1998; Harrison and O'Neil, 2000; McPherson, 2000; Mills, 1991), examinations of the way that teachers experience their careers through life-cycle studies (Baker, 2006) and exploration and advice regarding lesson content, purpose and planning (A Common Approach, 2002; Gane, 1996; Hallam, 1998; Harris, 2006; Harris, 2008; Mills, 2005; Mills, 2007). In contrast, the work of Instrumental music teachers in the university sector has received limited attention and the research that has been undertaken has largely been located in the atypical context of the music conservatoires. (Corkhill, 2005; Mills, 2002; Purser, 2005) The development of high-level instrumental skills is, perhaps, the raison d'etre of the conservatoire system and so the role of the instrumental music teacher is central to their organisation and operations, whereas the role and contribution of IMTs within a university music department is less clearly defined. Initial investigations have uncovered a range of views of the purpose and value of individual instrumental lessons for undergraduate music students from what might be termed a 'conservatoire-lite' approach for the development of technique, to a process aimed primarily at developing wider vocationally-relevant skills or at the discovery of the individual, creative voice. In the context of increasing financial restriction in the HE sector, the development of clarity of purpose and identification of the key contribution of

IMTs to the broader student experience may become a vital factor in retaining this aspect of the organisation and delivery of the music curriculum.

### 1.3 The Setting for the Study.

The provision of music in higher education in the United Kingdom has some particular characteristics that impact upon this field of study. Three main sub-divisions may be identified: There are a number of conservatoire-styled providers such as Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Birmingham Conservatoire, who are organised and funded around a model of music education that centres on the individual performer and their acquisition of performance skills. These institutions are philosophically inclined, and financially assisted to be able to provide a large number of one-to-one teaching sessions with instrumental music teachers. A second subdivision includes older universities, some of which have a long tradition in the delivery of music degrees that focus upon classical music, ethnomusicology and electroacoustic composition. These departments tend to place less emphasis upon performance and more upon research and analysis, and so give relatively little prominence to instrumental music tuition. The largest sub-division in UK HE is the post-1992 universities, consisting of former polytechnics and institutes or colleges of higher education. The music departments in these organisations are more diverse in nature but can be seen to offer more popular music, music technology and music education content in their degree programmes. (CUKAS, 2013)

While there will be similarities in the approach to music provision in all of the UK providers, this present study is located in a post-1992 university and recognises that this location has an ethos and educational philosophy that is

shaped by its history and its evolution within the UK HE context. It was devised, therefore, in order to examine the role of IMTs within a HE music department but specifically outside the conservatoire setting, with a view to understanding their perceptions of their own role and their degree of participation and engagement with the curriculum, department and fellow staff members.

An interesting and important aspect of the location of this study within this particular music department is the broad range of its curriculum that sees the inclusion of students studying classical music degrees and students following popular music degrees. The presence of both traditions is atypical and is regarded internally as a strength of the department and of the experience that it offers to students, but it may also make the outcomes of the study relatable to a wider range of contexts where IMTs are employed in the HE sector.

My own position as a member of the academic staff in the department brings with it the challenges of the insider researcher (see later discussions) but also provides the benefit of familiarity with the environment and after twelve years of employment, with the subtleties of its history, ethos and organisation. It also provides a particular ease of access to the IMTs who work in close proximity in geographical terms, and with whom I have a degree of familiarity. As Stake (2005, p. 455) points out,

> 'When… a researcher who is given enough time and access can become personally knowledgeable about the activities and spaces, the relationships and contexts, of the case … he or she can become experientially acquainted with the case. The case is then embraceable.'

My relationship with the team of IMTs was not one of direct line management, although I recognised that, as part of the employing department, this

relationship was inflected by the influence that any member of the academic staff could exercise over the continued engagement of IMTs whose work is subject to a yearly contract. A more subtle positioning of my role is also necessary here and one that recognises the existence of different sub-cultures within the department, for there is a distinction between the culture of classical musicians and that of popular musicians that needs to be taken into account. This is significant here because this difference was apparent in the background and training of the participant IMTs and showed itself in the language or argot that was employed to express ideas, concepts and expectations. My own background as a trained classical musician is attenuated by a career spent largely as an advocate and active developer of popular music provision, first in the FE sector and later in the development of the specialist popular music degree at my university. I have also performed in both classical and popular music events and mixed in both circles with equal comfort. My own conception of my musical persona may not, however, have been shared by the participants with whom I interacted in this study and the nature of the interview conversations may have been nuanced by these differing perceptions. The split between these different spheres of musical activity would probably be invisible to a non-musician, but is an area in itself deserving of further study. In undertaking this investigation I had to take account of the lack of confidence of popular music staff when faced with a ‘trained’ classical music teacher and attempt to assert the relevant aspect of my pop or classical ‘self’ when engaged with individual IMTs.

## 1.4 Contribution to Knowledge.

There is a range of stakeholders whose actions and perceptions have an impact on the arena in which IMTs practise, including senior managers, administrators and facilities staff, music department staff and music students, but this study focused upon the IMTs themselves in order to give a voice to a body of participants who appeared to be absent from the day to day activities, documents, quality assurance processes, consultations, conversations and social interactions of the university. It undertook to address this gap in knowledge by providing new understandings of and explanations for the realities of practice among IMTs engaged in the particular circumstances of this case. It aimed to seek out, acknowledge and value the experiential knowledge of participants and looked for reasons, influences, causes and commonalities that emerged from an analysis of the data and show how these influence the working patterns and interactions between IMTs and the university. In this sense it aligns with the notion of an intrinsic case study (Stake, 1995, p. 3) in that it sets out to study the specific, singular case that is bounded by its particular situation, history, organisational, social and micro-political context.

It should be noted that, while this research has an underlying emancipatory ethic, it does not campaign for a particular constituency, but seeks to present an outline of the case that can form the basis of research-informed engagements. In part, this is because such an approach would betray an assumption about the level of heterogeneity among the researched group that would be difficult to substantiate, and in part due to the sharp distinction I

would seek to maintain between campaigning activities and an appropriate research stance. As Thomas (2009, p. 77) puts it,

> '…there are many legitimate kinds of activity in life and…research…is governed by some fundamental ground rules, which include a duty of balance, fairness and thoroughness. Research, in this respect, is different from campaigning.'

It was anticipated, however, that the outcomes of the research, and even the knowledge of its occurrence, would lead to significant developments in the relationship of the music department to this key resource. It would also bring greater visibility of the IMTs and a broader institutional acknowledgement of their contribution to the experience and achievements of students and the standard of work of the department. The insights gained into the working patterns and perceptions of IMTs would be a resource that would inform the development of effective interventions to facilitate greater integration and enrich the participation of these members of the department. The knowledge and understanding gained may prove relatable to other institutions who see in the setting for the study described above, similarities to their own context, operations and interactions. It may therefore offer insights into the experiences and practices of participants in other sectors of employment where the locations, connections and interactions share similar traits and particularly where the use of a distributed workforce is a feature of the organisation. However, the design parameters of this study focus upon the epistemological question of what can be learnt from the single case; the in-depth exploration of the peculiarities, specificities and institutional contexts in which the participants undertake their activities.

The research questions have been framed in order to establish and maintain the focus of the investigation on the IMTs:

1) How are the routines and practices of Instrumental music teachers experienced in the music department of a UK university?

2) What meanings are constructed about their own role by the Instrumental music teachers employed within this university music department?

The first of these aims to provide a view of organisational operations as they are experienced by these particular participants in their daily interactions with the university. The second question invites participants to critique their engagement with the organisation and to consider factors that restrict or facilitate their teaching and wider involvement in the life of the department. Together they provide an examination of the field that adds to work that has explored the student perspective or organisational structures and systems by seeking out and valuing the perspective of the IMTs themselves.

Having outlined the background, rationale and the specific location of this study above, chapter two surveys the literature of instrumental music teaching before turning to theories that aim to provide an understanding of organisational interactions. Chapter three outlines the qualitative case study methodology of the research, including the theoretical approach and the ethical principles that underpin its design and implementation. It considers the advantages and dangers of insider research, attitude to sampling theories and the approach to data collection and analysis. Chapter four gives voice to the participants of semi-structured interview and other engagements and applies the constant comparison method (Lincoln and Guba 1985) to produce code tables that reveal the categories, concepts and themes that emerged. Chapter five is in two parts; the first discusses the matters of access, communication

and understandings of the IMT role that emerge from the data. It shows these to represent degrees of marginalisation in the experiences of the participants. The second part expands on this through an examination of the underlying issues of a low sense of entitlement, varying levels of connectedness and limited participation. These are considered in the light of the literature outlined in chapter two and show a change from the isolationist tendencies of earlier studies of IMTs, an accidental, semi-autonomous position and marginalisation that result from a peripheral and limited organisational involvement. Finally, it postulates an ecological metaphor for understanding the multifaceted attitudes and approaches of participants whose individual engagements with the university and interpretations of their role are seen to be dependent upon their individual umwelten.

Chapter six reflects upon the design and implementation of the study before drawing together the outcomes into a narrative that outlines the marginalised and largely static position of IMTs in this university. It discusses the degree to which this can be attributed to the clear lack of co-participation and involvement in a community of practice but shows the tension between the autonomy and independence that some IMTs valued highly and the perception of a lack of care and exclusion from wider participation that was reported by other participants. Finally, it points to significant operational changes that should be considered by the music department but highlights the more fundamental need to define the purpose and scope of the IMT role in this context. It suggests that this should take account of the benefits of a loose-coupled location for these teachers whose varied career trajectories

and umwelten demand a fluid, flexible approach to their integration and participation in the life and work of the department.

# CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

This investigation is primarily concerned with the work of Instrumental teachers in the United Kingdom Higher Education environment. It transpires, however, that most of the research that looks at this field of educational activity is focussed upon instrumental teaching in Primary or Secondary schools (Mills, 2005b) and in the private, often home-based teaching context (Harris, 2006; Harris, 2008). While such work is unlikely to enrich an understanding of the organisational and contextual issues that impact upon IMTs in university departments, it does reveal areas of common experience in relation to aspects of practice. Examples of where the examination of a breadth of literature offers greater insights include the discussions of how the role of the instrumental teacher might be envisaged, the approach to selecting materials for lessons, and the experience of the processes by which tutors learn to teach. It should be noted also, that individual teachers, including some in the sample engaged in this study, do not restrict their work to the HE sector and operate across a broad range of teaching contexts. Naturally, the research that has been undertaken and located within, and with a specific focus upon the work of instrumental teachers in university departments will be examined for insights and frameworks that inform the current study.

Alongside the material devoted to an understanding of the instrumental music lessons (teacher or student/pupil), must be an awareness of the more general work that has been undertaken to analyse activity within organisational contexts. In particular, it is instructive to consider studies that seek to understand how participants learn and develop their role and to research

relating to the specific nature of educational environments and the manner in which they connect and interact. In response to the multifaceted and highly differentiated nature of the participants in this study, an approach drawn from outside the field of organisational or pedagogic study will examine an ecological metaphor (Uexküll, 1985) as a means toward greater understanding of the specific characteristics of the professional practice of instrumental music teachers located in a UK University music department.

A prime example of a practitioner who worked across the age-range and sectors of education in the UK, Dr Janet Mills worked as secondary school teacher, university teacher trainer, HM Inspector for Schools and a Research Fellow at the Royal College of music. Her work includes an examination of the student perspective on the character and effectiveness of instrumental lessons in a conservatoire setting, (Mills, 2002) but the greater part of her output examines school-based activities. In a rare combination of contexts, Mills and Smith (2003) set out to explore beliefs about effective instrumental teaching in both school and university contexts through a process based upon the recollections of current teachers about their own experience as learners in these contexts. That this work does not involve the teachers concerned should be noted, alongside unease with the notion that the student, as sole judge, is best placed to evaluate the effectiveness of a series of lessons. What this study does reveal, however, is a marked difference in what is regarded as good teaching in school – using words such as fun, enthusiastic and communicative, compared to good teaching in HE described as focussing on technique, the development of an individual voice and a wide repertoire. Mills and Smith reported that '…many teachers consider that the hallmarks of

effective teaching in schools are different from those in Higher Education.' noting that '…teachers refer to students having fun when writing about effective teaching in schools, but none use this word when referring to effective teaching in higher education (pp. 42-43). In later work, Mills (2007) noted similarities in the qualities expected of all IMTs in all sectors such as being knowledgeable, communicative and positive, but that the hallmarks of school-based IMTs were expected also to include enthusiasm, inspiration and patience alongside the aforementioned need to 'make it fun'. The language and concerns of many studies and texts highlight the differences between the sectors in which the work is located: For example, Harris (2006), when discussing private teaching, uses the term 'pupil' throughout his text and makes reference to school situations, basic level grade examinations and gives advice for the teaching of a learner's very first lesson (p. 49) while the companion text (Harris, 2008) focuses exclusively on teaching beginners. There are elements in his work that might be generally useful to the reflective practitioner in any sector, but the particular focus of the text and the presentation of experiential advice rather than research-based observation do not readily invite the attentions of the university-based reader. Likewise, Creech, (2010), Creech and Hallam (2003), Davidson et al (1996) and Scutt and Davidson (1999), examine the parent-teacher-pupil interactions around instrumental music tuition located in schools or arranged privately and much of the work that has studied lesson content and organisation are similarly located. (A Common Approach*,* 2002; Hallam, 1998; Mackworth-Young, 2004; Mills, 2005b) There is, therefore, a significant body of material for examining and informing instrumental teaching to younger students or pupils, but

something of a gap in relation to teaching within the post-compulsory education environment. It is with this in mind that this review turns toward those studies that reflect upon the specific nature of teaching practices within a music department located in the UK HE environment.

An important milestone in the development of understanding of the HE context was the special issue of the British Journal of Music Education (2005) authored or co-authored by active performer-teachers. These writers (Burwell, 2005; Haddon, 2005; Purser, 2005) were each located within different university music department or conservatoire settings and offer particular insights into the nature, roles and attitudes of the instrumental teaching profession itself. In so doing, these studies stand apart from the more frequent concern of other writers (Gaunt, 2007; Jorgensen, 2008; Mills, 2002; Pressland, 2005) for an understanding of the student experience in this sector.

### 2.2 The Nature of the Profession: Isolation.

A key aspect of the experience of working as an IMT in Higher Education appears to be the sense of isolation that is reported. In one of the BJME articles, Burwell (2005), while anxious to point out that the teachers studied '…were engaged in highly sophisticated practices, drawing upon advanced levels of instrumental expertise…' (p. 199) describe a number of less positive features that typified the profession. Foremost among these was the isolated nature of the work that IMTs undertake. Burwell reports that her sample was welcoming of the opportunity to discuss their work with others but noted that opportunities for this to occur were limited since the part-time, hourly nature of their work made such interchanges difficult, sporadic or non-existent. Her

methodology included the videotaping of instrumental lessons and so it is likely that her participants were more disposed to discuss their work, given that they had shown themselves willing to open their one-to-one sessions to the gaze of the camera and analysis of a researcher. Purser (2005) was able to make use of his insider position, having enjoyed a high-profile performance career at the highest level in the UK brass arena, yet was also employed in an academic position in a conservatoire, to achieve in-depth and frank interviews with practitioners. He also reported the isolated nature of the experience of the work but highlighted a more defensive, self-isolation that was based on an unwillingness to share 'trade secrets' honed over years of practice, or conversely, a fear expressed by the teachers of exposing their particular approach in case their peers deemed it to be in some way deficient. This latter concern echoes the findings of Schwartz and Webb (1993) who considered this to be a feature of all university teaching staff across subject disciplines who were also found to be fearful of discussing their work and for much the same reasons. However, several years of focussed developments in Higher Education teaching and learning, and the modern practice of posting teaching materials to on-line learning facilities has brought about a greater openness and willingness to share to the mainstream delivery of university provision as evidenced by the JISC Model Licences and Creative Commons Licences for shared teaching resources and the iTunesU framework, but it remains to be shown that such approaches and facilities have induced a greater openness within the world of the instrumental music lesson. Whether self-inflicted or the outcome of organisational circumstance, both Burwell and Purser outlined the professional isolation of IMTs as a key feature of their work. Other

researchers use different language, yet highlight the same issue by reference to the secretive, (Young et al. 2003) detached, (Haddon, 2009) hesitant nature of the profession. Haddon is of particular note here in that she sought to examine the processes by which students learn to become instrumental teachers. While her approach of qualitative research, progressing through semi-structured interviews makes her report an in-depth discussion of aspects of her subject, it is interesting to note that the participants in her study were final-year students who did a little instrumental teaching, rather than members of the body of experienced IMTs that would have been employed by the university music department in which her work was located. Whether the students were more accessible or specifically chosen as objects-of-study is not discussed but the absence of the voices of the department's own IMTs in this exploration does suggest either that they were reluctant, unwilling, or disregarded in the design of the project.

## 2.3 The Nature of the Profession: Self-Taught.

A contributory factor to the existence of these particular characteristics of instrumental teaching in HE may be the lack of a background in formal teacher training of most practitioners. Burwell reports that none of the nineteen tutors in her sample had any teaching qualification in specialist instrumental teaching and Purser describes his entire sample as '…self-taught in terms of teaching.' (p. 297). Gaunt's (2007) study of twenty conservatoire IMTs, found that only one had pursued a teacher training course and even this one had not competed it, and noted their '…lack of training as teachers or opportunities to reflect, experiment with and evaluate generic learning and teaching issues.' (p. 11) As long ago as 1993 the Gibbs report into private

music teachers highlighted the need for a formal training programme for instrumental teachers while 16 years later Haddon (2009) still had to comment as follows:

> In the UK, a lack of provision and awareness of formal training programmes means that musicians often begin to teach with little support from significant others, and can have a very partial understanding of how to teach effectively. Their teaching 'evolves', and with experience and reflection they *may* become more reflective teachers. (p. 57)

The underlying ethos of the profession is that accomplished players who have pursued successful performance careers can be assumed to be equipped to pass on their performance skill to others. (Persson, 1996a). Regarding conservatoire tutors, Purser (2005) indicates that 'Playing, rather than teaching ability has generally appeared to be the major factor in making an appointment', and in other organisational contexts the possession of graded examinations in *performance* is seen as the main qualification to becoming an instrumental music teacher. My own experience of taking a trumpet-teaching diploma (LGSM) in the mid 1980s illustrates this point. The examination consisted of a lengthy programme of the performance of repertoire and technical exercises and ended with a ten-minute viva about teaching. In preparing for this, my own teacher gave no advice, never discussed approaches to teaching and only pointed me to a single text on trumpet technique (Dale, 1965) in preparation for this aspect of the qualification. In awarding a pass grade, the examiners' feedback stated that my approach to teaching was naive but would develop with experience. In spite of my lack of knowledge of trumpet pedagogy I found myself highly qualified, in terms of paper qualifications, as a trumpet teacher. The situation may have improved since that time and a more rigorous approach is evident in current ABRSM

diploma examination syllabi where the assessment components, especially at LRSM and FRSM levels, include educational theory and philosophy, curriculum studies and aspects of educational administration. Nevertheless, advertisements for the recruitment to HE posts as instrumental teachers continue to make little reference to teaching experience and are highly unlikely to mention the need for formal teacher-training qualifications of any kind. (See advertisement for Head of Brass at Trinity Laban College - Appendix A)

It is reasonable to assume that at the university level of teaching, the instrumental teacher might not look to general pedagogic materials, but at specific texts and articles that relate to their particular instrument or family of instruments. In this way, while largely self-taught in terms of pedagogic practices, the individual teacher would be connected with a body of expertise and accumulated knowledge from research with which to inform their practice. There are grounds for supporting this assumption since it can be shown that each instrument in the classical orchestra has its own tradition of famous pedagogues who have produced texts that have become ubiquitous to students and teachers over several generation. An example from trumpet pedagogy will reveal this aspect of the culture of instrumental pedagogy for there will be few, if any students of the trumpet who do not own a copy of Arban's (1859) trumpet method textbook. This text contains exercises and advice that has been the foundation of approaches to trumpet pedagogy since the genesis of the valved trumpet in the 19th Century. It has framed the expectations of technical abilities on the trumpet and provided a common core to pedagogic practices around which tutors have been able to feel secure in

their teaching methods. It might be argued, however, that it has also provided a complacency and unquestioning adherence to a single text that was produced long before modern explorations of the physiology of skill development, and encouraged an insular approach that takes little notice of research outside of its own immediate culture. Teachers of other instruments will be able to identify equivalent seminal texts that have guided the approach to pedagogy in their field. In the case of the piano, this will include the technical exercises and study materials of Czerny (1844), while for advanced students of the oboe it is likely to be the complete method text of Barret (1850). It remains a matter of debate as to whether these have contributed to the insularity of each instrumental teaching community or provided a valued basis upon which to draw for confidence and success in teaching. What none of these kinds of method texts appear to offer is advice on reflective practice in the act of teaching. The certainty and confidence of the authorial voice and the respect given to these writers, usually as a result of their own high standard of performance ability, has tended to deter criticism and hinder further development. There is little consideration in these texts of the processes of learning and teaching and of differences of approach that might be employed in order to take account of the individual needs of students or to overcome physical or technical obstacles.

### 2.4 The Nature of the Profession: Autonomous.

A more positive perspective on the detached, isolated nature of the profession is the degree of autonomy that is retained by the university instrumental music teachers. While school-based teachers have the attentions of their music

service and the Ofsted inspection regime, universities seem to allow their IMTs to work in an environment where the content of lessons is often a matter of negotiation between tutor and tutee. Kemp (Kemp, 1996, p. 230 in Haddon, 2005, p. 58) viewed this in a negative light and described it as an unregulated and unsupervised circumstance, with no inbuilt process of monitoring or quality control. Gaunt, (2007) working in a conservatoire setting, discussed the range of aims in teaching expressed by her sample and in so doing, showed the degree to which, even within one department, the focus and intention of the lessons varied widely depending upon the particular interests of the teacher and the student. Here there was no outside concern beyond the general need to develop skills for final assessment performances and no formal mechanism for the monitoring of learning or teaching. As such, the individual instrumental music lesson may be considered as representing a rare arena for autonomous professional practice in the modern educational system that is otherwise replete with internal and external Quality Assurance processes. While Mills (2007, p. 42) touched upon the matter of the autonomy of instrumental teachers, her outline of the supervision and inspection that followed was entirely school-based and, on this issue at least, did not reflect upon the HE environment. It might have been assumed that the support, training and practices of school-based instrumental music teachers have become much more fully developed and that the planning of lessons and recording of progress has benefitted from the corporate approach of the music services and the publication of guidance documents such as *A Common Approach* (1992). However, the recent triennial report from Ofsted (2012) has highlighted their concern that '…professional isolation remains an issue for

many music teachers who had limited access to and take-up of quality CPD training and/or local networking.'

### 2.5 The Nature of the Profession: Conservative.

While such autonomy may be regarded by some as a positive trait, this detached, secretive, isolated sphere of activity has been shown to be particularly conservative in outlook, with little sign of the innovation in teaching approaches and technologies that have developed elsewhere in the HE sector. Haddon (2009) attributes this to the lack of training and the prevalence of the master-apprentice relationship (see also Jørgensen, 2000) that continues 'by default' as untrained teachers refer to their own experience as learners.

> '…the books I went along with were the ones that I used … I followed them because that's what I did and I knew they worked'. (p. 61 in Haddon, 2009)

King (2003) also found that teachers tended to repeat their own learning patterns and exhibited the same attitudes and beliefs in relation to a preference for individual one-to-one teaching over group lesson delivery, simply because that was the way that they had been taught themselves. The result of these characteristics is a profession in which innovation is relatively inhibited and new ideas find little purchase. Purser (2005) also highlighted this trait and noted that none of his participants made use of any pedagogic textbooks or articles in their teaching and that they too passed on their own learning through the same methods and the same teaching materials with which they had been taught.

## 2.6 Envisioning the Role.

The approach to teaching instrumental skills that was my own experience and that of my peers has been characterised by Harris (2006) as ‘modelling and correction’ where the teacher might demonstrate and then ask the student to perform. This was followed by advice and usually by repeated attempts, after which the student might be given additional practice routines to focus upon in the following days. The next lesson would probably follow a similar pattern with an approach that Harris calls ‘Bar One teaching’:

> ‘Off we go from bar one; the first mistake is made and corrected. Sally feels a mixture of embarrassment at not having practised well enough, chastised for making the mistake and tense because she’s not sure whether she’ll get it right second time around…’(p. 15)

While this scenario may remain a common experience for aspiring musicians, there have been a number of key developments in instrumental teaching that have challenged this approach and led to the recommendation of more engaging and varied methods in line with general developments in learning and teaching. What is certain, however, is the limited extent to which recommendations developed for school instrumental teaching (A Common Approach, 2002) and exhortations to reflect upon teaching activities outlined in Harris (2006) and Mills (2007) have made an impact upon the activities of instrumental teachers in UK universities.

As mentioned above, there are those who see the role of the IMT as a master/apprentice relationship (Jørgensen, 2000; Haddon, 2009) where the apprentice is there passively to receive and to imitate the knowledge from the master. However, others identify a more nuanced vision of the role that sees the teacher as a mentor or a guide, engaged in generic learning and teaching

approaches and encouraging reflective learning practices in their students as a route to independence. (Burwell, 2005) In fact, it is common to find the relationship of teacher to student described, at least in theory, as a more equal exchange and to see the role as facilitating autonomous learning and developing general vocational skills (Gaunt, 2007), although the passing on of musical craft and tradition remains a strong theme. Mills (2004d) studied instrumental teachers at her own institution, the Royal College of Music and described these practitioners as 'accomplished novices' as opposed to 'answer-filled experts', the former being characterised as 'proud of their achievements, but continually striving to know more…' while the latter are described as '… know(ing) and communicat(ing) the information associated with their expertise in a more self-contained way.' (p. 25) Her report clearly intended to maintain a positive position towards the teachers that she had studied and is distinctly different to the findings in the studies of Burwell, Purser and Haddon. Mills continues to present a more up-beat analysis in relation to conservatoire practices and is particularly concerned to distance these from anything resembling an apprenticeship model. Mills and Jeanneret (in Mills, 2007, p. 35) state the following:

> Conservatoires do not train performers simply by apprenticing them to an instrumentalist. While students' academic relationships with their main instrumental teachers are important, they also learn from a range of musicians. The idea that one could learn to teach through apprenticeship to a single teacher is, we would argue, even more gross.

Since IMTs in the conservatoire setting are recruited on the strength of their performance abilities it may be assumed that the modelling or demonstrating of performance, i.e. playing passages to students, would feature prominently in the instrumental lesson. However, Yarbrough and Price (1989), reporting

on their observation of taught sessions, found that very little of this activity took place. Instead, teachers gave directions about what, where and how to play, relying on spoken directions as a primary means to communicate learning. Practice varies greatly in this matter however, and other research, also based on lesson observation, has reported a greater level of modelling behaviour at the higher ability levels (Duke and Simmons, 2006). Purser's interviewees showed the differences in thinking in this matter in that, while all acknowledged that demonstration had some potency as a teaching tool, one saw it as the very key to effectiveness, some were prepared to admit to the 'usefulness' of their own playing during lessons while another preferred to allow students to sit in on rehearsals and refrained from playing in lessons, stating that '…unless you can give your best, you don't set a good example' (Purser, 2005, p. 295). A similar anxiety was expressed by other interviewees in Purser's study who thought that regular demonstration in lessons represented a danger to their own playing, fearing that they would begin to sound like their students rather than vice versa. Confusingly, the teaching of invisible techniques such as the use of the tongue in a wind instrument led one of **the** conservatoire teachers to state that demonstration was the only method available and another to explain that only a verbal description could work.

Most of the research on music education modelling has focussed on the classroom or the ensemble (often choral) rehearsal room where the technique has been shown to be successful (Brooks, 1995; Dickey, 1992; Sang, 1987). In individual practice settings, Rosenthal (Rosenthal, 1984; Rosenthal et al. 1988) studied the effects of modelling on the performance of university

instrumentalists and concluded that listening to a model alone, without the opportunity for play, might actually be just as effective as practising with the instrument in hand. Haddon's (2009) incipient teachers favoured demonstration because they believed firstly, that it promoted musical understanding, secondly, that they had themselves learned from such experiences, and finally, that it was a motivational tool for young learners. Interestingly, however, it was felt to be less appropriate for more advanced performers who, they feared, would simply be copying the model rather than responding musically. For the purpose of this study it is sufficient to note that there is no agreed approach to the method and content of instrumental teaching because, in part, at least, there is no agreement about how the role of the teacher is envisaged. The disparity between teachers' views gives further credence to the characterisation of the profession of IMT as conservative in nature and isolated from a body of professional opinion. It also illustrates Purser's observations that instrumental teachers operate in a 'cloud of ambiguity' with 'no agreed orthodoxy' relating to teaching and an 'insecure professional knowledge.' (Purser, 2005)

## 2.7 Monitoring and Enhancing the Role: Quality Assurance

The concept of quality in education is a broad term with variable meanings that range from individual student performance to the outputs of a programme of study, the student learning journey or the teaching provided by lecturers. It has been sub-divided into several categories that include:

> Quality as 'excellence', a traditional view which aims to demonstrate high academic standards,
> Quality as 'zero errors' which industry and commerce employ in their processes but which can relate to learning materials provided in support of education courses.

> Quality as ‘fitness for purpose’ that focuses on customers (or stakeholders) needs,
> Quality as ‘transformation’ that applies to students being changed as a result of their studies,
> Quality as ‘threshold’ that defines minimum standards of skills, knowledge or graduate attributes (e.g. subject benchmarking)
> Quality as ‘enhancement’ that emphasises continual improvement.
> (Adapted from Harvey et al, 1992)

While all of the above provide insights, the last two of these are particularly evident in relation to curriculum delivery in the HE environment where a threshold or benchmark is established by the UK Quality Assurance Agency but which institutions are expected to use their autonomy and academic freedom as means for enhancements to the basic provision. There are also strong elements of the ‘fitness for purpose’ approach to quality in an era where the development of students’ employability attributes is a particular focus in the development and delivery of the curriculum.

In this context, the notion of a ‘secret garden’ described by Purser (2005) raises the question of whether an important aspect of music education in the UK HE sector operates outside of the established approaches to quality assurance that characterise the contemporary landscape. While the Quality Assurance Agency outlines the framework for external audit of educational provision, (QAA, 2014) institutions are expected to develop robust internal monitoring and enhancement mechanisms through which to exercise their responsibility in this arena. These typically include the evaluation of individual staff members through systems such as student feedback questionnaires, peer review systems, mentoring for new staff or regular appraisals. Furthermore, the Quality Code for Higher Education states a particular concern for the participation of students themselves in quality enhancement and quality assurance processes as a means to inform institutions of the

quality of delivery and facilitate the enhancement of provision for future cohorts. (QAA, 2014, Ch.B5: p. 2)

While notions of professional autonomy may have some currency in relation to curriculum content and delivery style, the deployment of mechanisms through which institutions can ensure the quality of the education that they supply is a key responsibility placed upon managers by external funding bodies. McKimm (2009) points to this balance between external demands and '…the discipline-based practices and institutional culture' as one of the factors that 'set the context for lecturers.' (p.186)

## 2.8 Organisational Interactions: Legitimate Peripheral Participation.

Having considered research relating to the nature of the profession of the instrumental music teacher, attention now turns to the consideration of the social and organisational aspects of the role as it is practised within a university music department. The work of Lave and Wenger (1991) in developing the concept of situated learning through legitimate peripheral participation within a community of practice offers a framework for consideration of the way in which members of a profession learn, understand and interpret their role. In this concept, for a community of practice to develop it must have mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire of routines, tools and symbols, and go beyond a simple aggregate or network of people to exhibit '…dense relations of mutual engagement.' (Wenger, 1998, p. 74). For such a community to be sustained it must go beyond mere social interaction and develop solid, congealed practices through the process described by Wenger as reification. As Cousin and Deepwell put it, '…a work-based community of practice cannot be sustained if its members just hang out

with each other, talking about, say building bridges; it has to build the bridge or at least provide the drawings.' (Cousin and Deepwell, 2005, p. 62)

Notwithstanding the highly developed personal musical skills that led to the engagement of the IMTs into a university post, (albeit part time and 'casual'), the methods of learning to do the job itself are seen by Lave and Wenger as located in the processes of co-participation and not in the heads of the individual. (1991, p. 13) For them, learning the job is a process that takes place in a participation framework and is mediated by interaction with the perspectives of these co-participants. In fact, Lave and Wenger were so strongly convinced from their study of the centrality of this social interaction that they state that without engagement there is no learning and that this participation cannot be internalised and private, but rather that it resides in the constant interaction between knowing, understanding and experience. (1991, pp. 50-52)

<u>Participation: the constant interactions between Knowing and Situated Learning</u>

| **Private World** | **Interactions** | **Social World** |
|---|---|---|
| Abstraction | ←→ | Experience |
| Contemplation | ←→ | Involvement |
| Cerebral activity | ←→ | Embodied activity |

The emphasis placed on social engagement by Lave and Wenger rejects, to some extent, an approach that looks at the mastery of a job role as the acquisition of knowledge of systems and processes employed in a particular situation. They do, however, recognise that participatory frameworks are

always subject to some kind of organisational structure and that these structures inform practice and pre-form experience. What their analysis reveals is the importance of access for participants, provided formally or informally, to those interactions that enable learning to occur. The case of Marshall's 1972 study of apprentice butchers in an American supermarket exemplifies this in their text (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 76), for here there were several practical factors that limited the development of the participants and inhibited their progress towards mastery. Of particular relevance to the context of instrumental teachers in a university department are the following factors:

Marshall's butchers:

- They were physically separated from each other and were unable to observe more experienced operators.
- Economic factors dictated day-to-day interactions and so expensive interactions were seen as unnecessary and avoided.
- The notion of division of labour limited learning activities.

They go on to state that 'Once raised, the "dark side" of questions of *access*, vividly laid out in the butchers' example, helps to underline the crucial character of broad, and broadly legitimate, peripheral participation in a community of practice as central for increasing understanding and identity'. (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 85). Becker also raised concerns about the matter of access and pulls in the structural issues – highlighting '…the disastrous possibilities that structural constraints in work organisations may curtail or extinguish apprentices' access to the full range of activities of the

job, and hence to possibilities for learning what they need to know to master a trade.' (Becker, 1972 in Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 86)

Given the identification of the isolation experienced by IMTs in the work of Burwell (2005), Haddon (2005) and Purser (2005), Lave and Wenger's observations about the social and participatory nature of learning and the centrality of access to the activities of a community of practice, present a valuable background for consideration of the experiences of the participants in this study. The divergence of experience of practitioners who have been doing the job with differing degrees of 'connectedness' for many years and the theories of Lave and Wenger raise questions about what it means to master the role, how participants have developed definitions of that role and what might be considered desirable from the perspective of IMTs and the employing organisation.

### 2.9 Organisational Interactions: The Loose-Coupling metaphor.

The music department that forms the location for this study has a central core of staff who work full-time and a number of part-time visiting lecturers. The central staff work closely in a shared office, develop and validate courses together and collaborate in the development and delivery of the curriculum. A small number of visiting lecturers form another layer around this core and are included in the delivery stage of operations, although rarely in curriculum design. The location of the IMTs is in another layer, a further step removed from the core staff and their formal involvement is restricted to the one-to-one meetings with students. These initial observations of the interior workings of the department raised the notion of connectedness that are echoed in Weick's metaphor of loose-coupling developed in the educational landscape of the

1970s (Weick, 1976) and revisited in 1990 (Orton and Weick, 1990). Through this metaphor, Weick sought to understand the connections that exist within an organisation, and in particular, those connections that are ignored, marginalised or suppressed by formal bureaucratic theories. In considering this approach it is important to recognise the passage of time and the key changes that have since taken place in the higher education arena. Meyer and Rowan (2006) point to the way in which '…widespread calls for more accountability have led to a shift to more tightly coupled and narrowly controlled practices in organisations that were once exemplars of loose coupling.' Greater central control of academic practice by bureaucratic processes and the growth of managerialism must question the relevance of Weick's metaphor in the current organisational climate. However, the loose-coupling theory has proven to be a durable concept because it provides a different lens to the simplified neatness of rational approaches to organisational theory and enables the analysis to recognise that different parts of an organisation may display differing goals and motivations. As Orton and Weick (1990) explain:

> Loose coupling suggests that any location in an organization (top, middle, or bottom) contains interdependent elements that vary in the number and strength of their interdependencies. The fact that these elements are linked and preserve some degree of determinacy is captured by the word coupled in the phrase loosely coupled. The fact that these elements are also subject to spontaneous changes and preserve some degree of independence and indeterminacy is captured by the modifying word loosely. (p. 204)

There are several linkages that might be explored in relation to IMTs in this study including connections between tutor and student, tutor and course leader, tutor and head of department, tutor and school, to list only internal,

organisational examples. However, at this stage it is sufficient simply to identify the theoretical basis of Weick's concept upon which an analysis might be based. Loose coupling can be said to be a feature of the organisation where the following can be observed:

Elements are responsive but retain evidence of separateness and identity
Elements affect each other suddenly rather than continuously
Elements affect each other negligibly rather than significantly
Elements affect each other indirectly rather than directly
Elements affect each other eventually rather than immediately
(Weick, 1982a, p. 380)

This framework may prove fruitful to a consideration of the practical engagement and experiences of IMTs in this study, particularly in relation to the patterns of interactions, timing and frequency of contacts between the university music department and IMTs and of the flow of demands upon and expectations of the role that occur during an academic year.

## 2.10 Dimensions of Power

Having considered the matter of organisational coupling as a means to examine the location of IMTs in this case study, attention now turns to approaches to the concept of power and the insights that they offer to an analysis of the experiences of these participants.

While, as Dahl stated, 'Most people have an intuitive notion of what power means' (Dahl, 1957. p. 201) the concept of power and the way that it is understood remains a complex and highly contested area among social and political theorists. The first framework outlined below considers three dimensions of power that focus on visible, decision-making mechanisms, hidden, agenda-setting powers and invisible, social conditioning and ideology-creating powers. It also considers the matter of access to the mechanisms of

power through the control of access to spaces for participation. The second framework looks at how these dimensions of power can be approached through more positive and collaborative expressions of power that consider power with, power to and power within as forms of more equitable, relationship-based interactions. The third framework expands upon invisible dimensions of power and considers the approach developed by Foucault that sees power as diffuse rather than concentrated and as enacted rather than a possession of people or groups.

**2.10.1 Visible, Hidden and Invisible Power**

Power has been described as having three dimensions after the work of Lukes (1974, 2005), VeneKlasen and Miller (2002) and Gaventa (2006). Lukes' first dimension is termed 'The Issue method' and built upon Dahl's view of the concept of power as that described by the phrase ' *A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do.* (Dahl: 1957, p. 202-3) and can be summarised as 'he who prevails has power.' This equates with the notion of visible power and is often set within formal structures such as those of large organisations and these necessarily limit access to the decision-making processes to those invited to participate through their organisational role or position. Such an analysis must also take account of Lukes' second dimension that he termed 'Setting the Agenda' that looks at hidden power and draws from Bachrach and Baratz (1962) who state that real power exists if one is able to set the agenda in a particular situation and therefore control the debate and consequently exercise power over its outcome.

> To the extent that a person or group - consciously or unconsciously creates or reinforces barriers to the public airing of policy conflicts, that person or group has power. (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962, p. 949)

The issue of access is central here too as pointed out by VeneKlasen and Miller who outline the hidden power exercised by '…controlling who gets to the decision-making table and what gets on the agenda.' (2002, p. 40) The committee structures of UK universities provide mechanisms for consultation through different levels of the organisational hierarchy and make plain the decision-making processes, but those who are positioned outside of these processes may be excluded altogether or limited to indirect forms of participation such as the production of shadow reports or other forms of lobbying.

Lukes' third dimension, 'Manipulating the Views of Others', relates to invisible power and takes account of the way that power is employed to get people to do things willingly that seem to be against their own interests. This is seen to operate through the creation of a pervasive ethos, ideology or false consciousness. It draws upon Marxist philosophy in Lukes' description of the use of covert power as a means to manipulate others. His critique of these forms of power holds that the third dimension is the most '…supreme and most insidious exercise of power' as it allows the powerful to maintain their dominance and to determine the preferences and perceptions of 'the masses' and to prevent them from becoming aware of potential grievances. (Lukes, 1974, p. 23)

VeneKlasen and Miller pick up on these aspects of power in their work with marginalized groups through a rights-based approach. Echoing the work of Lukes, they state:

> Probably the most insidious of the three dimensions of power, this third level operates in ways that render competing interests and problems invisible. Significant problems and issues are not only kept from the table, but also from the minds and consciousness of the different players involved, even those directly affected by the problem. By influencing how individuals think about their place in the world, this level of power shapes people's beliefs, sense of self and acceptance of their own superiority or inferiority. (VeneKlasen et al, 2004. p. 48)

The outline above has touched upon the matter of access as it relates to participation in the mechanisms through which power is exercised. This has been expressed in terms of closed, invited and created spaces that provide a framework to inform observations in this case study of the involvement that IMTs experience in aspects of organizational life. VeneKlasen et al (2004) point out that it is rare to find an occasion where participation in decision-making is implemented on an equal basis where those involved share power and set the agenda together. Rather, they note that in such circumstances

> The agendas are preset or prescribed in ways that principally serve to legitimize the institution's prior goals and do not offer…real opportunities to engage on key policy questions. (VeneKlasen et al, 2004, p. 5).

Gaventa (2006) provides the following summary:

> Spaces are *closed* when decisions are made behind closed doors – often without providing opportunities for inclusion. This may include formal spaces open only to those in official positions or as formal representatives.
> Spaces are *invited* when various kinds of authorities invite people to participate in decision-making processes as citizens, beneficiaries or users. Although these spaces could become opportunities for genuine collaboration, agendas are often pre-determined.
> Spaces are *created/claimed* when less powerful people come together to create their own space, and set their own agendas.
> (Gaventa, 2006, p. 26)

### 2.10.2 Collaborative Expressions of Power

In the context of international development projects for the empowerment of marginalised groups (particularly women), Veneklasen and Miller drew together approaches to power that looked beyond negative and coercive perspectives (expressed as 'power over'). The outcome produced three expressions of power as follows:

> Power to: the individual ability to act to shape his or her life and world.
> Power with: collective action, the ability to act together.
> Power within: individual or collective sense of self-worth, value, dignity.
> (VeneKlasen and Miller, 2002, p. 46)

This framework builds upon Lukes' (1974) work and recognises the three dimensions of visible, hidden and invisible power but offers ways of engaging with these dimensions in a manner designed to create positive strategies that lead to opportunities for change. As such, they are seen as complementary perspectives and together have been adopted and deployed in a range of global development projects. (Pantazidou, 2012)

### 2.10.3 An Alternative framework: Foucault

Foucault's approach to power is markedly different from other conceptions but has been influential in leading the focus away from individuals, classes or institutions wielding coercive power through formal structures towards an understanding of power as ubiquitous, dispersed and embodied in discourse and relations. Rather than seeing power as something that people or groups employ to dominate or coerce, Foucault states that 'Power is everywhere' and 'comes from everywhere' (Foucault, 1998, p. 63) and so is not embodied in organisational hierarchies or structures. Instead he refers to 'regimes of truth' that are pervasive in society but constantly in flux and negotiated. In his view,

each society has its particular regime of truth that is apparent in the types of discourse that it accepts and makes function as truth. This aligns with the invisible power of Lukes' third dimension of power in relation to a pervasive, regulated consciousness, but Foucault sees this operating not as Marxists would claim, at a macro-level, but in the micro-political level in relationships and the discourses through which power is produced.

Cornwall states the following:

> Foucault's work alerts us to the constantly shifting ground upon which struggles for control are waged. He highlights the ways in which power permeates through spaces, sparking a multiplicity of points of resistance as well as producing and embedding particular institutional forms, patterns and practices. For Foucault, discourses …shape not only what is said and done, but what is sayable and do-able in any given social space, constituting what counts as knowledge and whose knowledge counts. As such they define the very boundaries of action: "the conduct of conduct". (Cornwall, 2002, p. 8)

Foucault's approach provides a perspective on the manner and extent of organisational participation that is deemed acceptable for IMTs and the boundaries that they encounter in their university work which are created through the discourses that take place or indeed, are absent. The way that IMTs are constructed through discourse as 'insider'/ 'citizen' or as 'client'/'user' will influence what they are perceived to be able to contribute or entitled to know or decide upon in their engagement with the university. Within this lies the possibility for positive, productive effects in that the power to engage in discourse is not embodied in structures nor something that is possessed by the powerful, but is a strategy, and as such, something that can be appropriated, for as Foucault observed, the human individual can be seen as an active subject, not as a simple object of power:

> Power is something that circulates, or functions in the form of a chain…Power is employed and exercised through a netlike organisation … Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application. (Foucault, 1980. P. 98)

Indeed, Foucault provides an approach to power that sees it not merely as uni-directional, coercive and negative, but as multi-directional, productive and potentially positive.

> We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces: it produces reality: it produces objects and rituals of truth. (Foucault, 1975, p. 194)

Foucault proposed that change is possible through the opening up of marginalised and repressed discourses, making them available as alternatives from which people fashion their identities.

## 2.11 Identity

In an expansion of his work on communities of practice, Wenger (1998) identifies five connections between identity and professional practice:

The first of these sees Identity as 'negotiated experience' based on regular, practical engagement in relevant activities and in the owning of an identifying label or labels. (E.g. teacher, academic, performer.)

> What narratives, categories, roles, and positions come to mean as an experience of participation is something that must be worked out in practice. (Wenger, 1998, p. 154)

The second of these connections is 'Identity as community membership' based upon mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire, but translated as an identity as a form of competence.

Wenger's third connection sees identity as a 'learning trajectory' wherein identity is regarded as a work in progress that is being shaped by the interplay

between individual background and history and collective participation in communities of practice. He highlights the temporal nature of identity, stating that '…as we go through a succession of forms of participation, our identities form trajectories, both within and across communities of practice.' (Wenger in Blackmore, 2010, p. 133)

The fourth connection looks at identity as the 'nexus of multi-membership' in which individuals define themselves by reconciling various forms of membership into one identity. This has the potential to resonate strongly with the experience of part time employees who work in different contexts and especially where these also include varied types of professional activities. In the case of the IMTs of this case study, the range of activities in which they are involved extends beyond levels and contexts for teaching and includes professional lives as performers, promoters, recording artists and other forms of musical activities.

The final connection identified by Wenger sees identity as 'a relation between the global and the local and is expanded thus:

> We define who we are by negotiating local ways of belonging to broader constellations and of manifesting broader styles and discourses. (Wenger in Blackmore, 2010, p. 141)

While an instrumental music teacher may be viewed by their employer as a part-time lecturer, the IMTs themselves may relate the local context of their university work to the broader portfolio of contexts, employers and activities that make up their professional lives. This, as Wenger points out, has an impact on the ways in which they develop and continue to negotiate their sense of identity.

Wenger also notes that the context in which people operate can have the effect of determining identity in relation to practices that they come into contact with, but in which they are not engaged. In the context of the role of IMTs in this case study, the proximity of musicians who are also full-time academic staff engaged in teaching and research provides a potential parallel where the formation of notions of identity are developed accordingly:

> We not only produce our identities through the practices we engage in, but we also define ourselves through practices we do not engage in. Our identities are constituted not only by what we are but also by what we are not. To the extent that we can come in contact with other ways of being, what we are not can even become a large part of how we define ourselves. ... In other words, non-participation is, in a reverse kind of fashion, as much a source of identity as participation. (Wenger in Blackmore 2010, p. 148)

An extreme manifestation of the view of human behaviour as the inevitable outcome of prevailing discourses would be to suggest that a person is unable to change their situation by their own thoughts and actions – that they lack agency, defined as the capacity to make choices and to act upon them. However, as Burr notes,

> Foucault proposed that change is possible through opening up marginalised and repressed discourses, making them available as alternatives from which we fashion our identities… This view thus sees the person as simultaneously constructed by discourse and using it for their own purpose. (Burr, 2003, pp. 120-122)

If social or organisational participants are repeatedly positioned through discourses and actions in a passive role, the organisational talk can both manifest and reproduce power relations that then become reified in the psychology and subjectivity of IMTs. As Burr states, 'If repeatedly given exclusionary positions, people come to habitually adopt ways of speaking about and thinking about themselves that are not agenic. (Burr, 2003, p. 189)

Consequently, my study must not, through its outcomes, impose another identity on IMTs, but instead, seek to open up alternative perspectives that may develop and challenge their current way of understanding themselves in relation to their University role.

## 2.12 An Ecological Approach: Organisational Umwelten.

The particular lens provided by an organisational analysis of units and sub-units will tend to examine the needs of the organisation and the way in which it utilises human resources to achieve its goals. This may be useful in an attempt to understand the role of persons engaged on a full-time, permanent basis, or who are engaged in the organisation for a significant proportion of their working lives. However, if none of these categories hold true, and if the employee is engaged on a regular, perhaps long-term, but hourly basis, then they may neither form a community of practice nor attach to one, and may not be considered an element or sub-unit of the organisation that might be coupled in any particular manner. A different lens may therefore be provided by an ecological perspective that grew out of the examination of an environment that, while providing the common arena for activity, is characterised by a great deal of diversity. The notion of Umwelt is a concept derived from Uexküll's (1909a) studies on how living organisms subjectively perceive and interpret their environments. While ecologists tended to assume that all organisms in an ecosystem share the same environment, Uexküll considered that organisms have different umwelten – even if they live in the same place. Hence, as Sharov (2001) puts it, 'A stem of a blooming flower is perceived differently by an ant, cicada-larva, cow, and human.' and as Deely (2001) observes, 'The bee unfortunate enough to fly into the classroom will

not see a blackboard.' Thus the umwelt is not an objective reality but a subjective one, based on the sensory perceptions employed by the inhabitant and constructed in the mind. As such, with particular implications for the researcher, it is difficult directly to measure umwelt since access to the perceptions of others is only partial and secondary.

In the present study, the reference to 'organisms' are representative of the instrumental music teachers who, while referred to here as a single category of employee, would define themselves as individually distinct, not least by virtue of their different instrumental background. To the insider, the brass teacher is distinct from a string teacher and might be viewed as a different sub-set or species, possessing a different view of the musical landscape in terms of an approach to rehearsal, repertoire, social networks and career patterns. Similarly, individual IMTs will view their work in a university differently dependent upon the way that this aspect of their work fits into their overall personal and professional environment or habitat. To these two perceptual positions could be added a range of others that pertain to private and professional, organisational and philosophical stances that lead to specific reactions and interactions with the particular environment of the music department. When semioticians have employed umwelt theory to study human interaction (Sharov, 2001) they have noted that 'Humans share a large proportion of their umwelt because of a highly developed horizontal communication system', which echoes Lave and Wenger's recognition of the need for co-participation and social interaction. In translating umwelt-theory to organisational analysis, the matter of communication, or what Lave and

Wenger might recognise as the issue of access becomes a key aspect in understanding the environment for instrumental music teachers.

The umwelt theory and the accompanying metaphors serve to frame a discussion of organisational behaviours that is not predicated solely upon structures or collective relationships and clustering, but recognises an individual perspective within a common, but not necessarily shared environment. It allows for the disparate interpretations that individuals can place upon the same structures, processes or personnel in a situation and pulls into an analytical framework the multiple perspectives exhibited in the study of human interactions.

This review has sought to outline perspectives that offer something to an examination of the scene of this study. The in-depth engagement of researchers with the specific profession of the instrumental music teacher has shown varied experiences and understandings of the characteristics of the profession, the nature of the role and of the training and support that might be encountered. Other approaches, drawn from outside of music education have been explored that offer frameworks for understanding and analysis. Within these there can be seen a tension between Lave and Wenger's co-participation perspective and the isolation of a physical, professional and social nature revealed in the research of Burwell, Haddon and Purser, one seeing the need for interactions for role mastery, the other seeing mastery as located in the private realm of the teacher. The turn towards Weick's loose-coupling metaphor offers a framework that holds these two perceptions together for, while IMTs and students may be tightly-coupled, participating through the sharing of the same resources, communication networks and

goals, at the same time, a loose-coupling may be observed between IMTs and the music Department or between IMTs and the school administration. A shift of lens from examining approaches to organisational analysis to a consideration of the concept of the individual umwelt may provide a means to avoid over-simplification of the research field and of the perceptions of its participants. Together, they provide a tool-kit for understanding the diverse, multi-faceted world of the instrumental music teachers who contribute to the work of the university department and to the delivery of its curricula.

# CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

The research was designed to explore the following questions as outlined in chapter one:

1) How are the routines and practices of instrumental music teachers experienced in the music department of a UK university?

2) What meanings are constructed about their own role by the instrumental music teachers employed within this university music department?

## 3.1 Theoretical Framework

The aims of this inquiry centre on the desire to explore the experiences of a sub-section of staff located within a HE music department; it seeks to investigate how individuals in this group interpret their role and give meaning to their contribution to the department. While it may have proven possible to engage with these matters through the use of structured interviews and questionnaires, I was fortunate to have good access to the field of study which allowed the opportunity for a closer engagement. This possibility, and the small number of participants involved, invited the use of one-to-one interviews and observation as plausible qualitative tools within a case study and an interpretivist framework.

The complexities and varieties of interactions, perspectives and contexts made the field of study particularly appropriate to an approach that employed qualitative methods of in-depth, semi-structured interviews and a form of job-shadowing that combined observation with conversation. I adopted the latter strategy because I was concerned to get as close as possible to the lived experience of the teacher-musicians in their day to day interaction in the institution and, while no data collection method is without its drawbacks, limitations and manipulations, by shadowing individuals I felt that I would be

able to build a rapport through greater familiarity with the practicalities of daily engagements and interactions.

Clearly, the research focus does not suggest a hypothesis to be proved or disproved, but rather suggests a search for layers of meaning concerning the experiences of participants. Such a search more firmly bases the study in an interpretivist tradition. My emphasis is on an interpretivism in which one seeks to explore the ways in which participants in a social world construct meanings and adopt strategies and identities *in conversation with* the contexts in which they operate. Thus the study is predicated upon a constructionist view that people '…construct knowledge and meaning from experience and from relationships between things, people (and) events.' (Wisker 2008, p.69) The knowledge gained through this approach will not be an abstract truth; rather it will concern what is true for those involved. This is because what people perceive to be true has practical consequences.' (Cousin 2009, p.185)

The hope is that the research will provide useable knowledge that has the potential to inform developments in professional practice in this area of the department's operations. I will return to this issue below.

### 3.2 A Case Study Approach

Several writers have identified the work of the university-based instrumental music teacher as isolated, detached and secretive (Haddon, 2005; Burwell, 2005; Purser, 2005). However, the degree of interaction and engagement between a music department and the IMTs that it employs is unlikely to be clearly delineated and may be contingent on a range of formal and informal, practical and personal considerations. In response to the heterogeneity and complexity of these relationships I decided to employ an intrinsic case study

approach (Stake, 1995) where a case is studied for the intrinsic interest in the case itself, using qualitative methods in order to facilitate an in-depth exploration that could take account of these phenomena. Simons' expansion of Stake's definition describes this approach as '…an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexities and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution… in a real-life context.' (Simons, 2009, p. 21) and it was this focus on the particular case – in this instance, this University's IMTs - that held the promise of a situated critique that would lead to greater knowledge and understanding of the context and circumstance of the study. As indicated, the design and context of this study enabled the research to delve deeply into the case and to provide greater professional knowledge of the IMTs and their routines, practices, perceptions, beliefs and experiences of their work.

### 3.3 Research Purpose

I cannot claim that my research was strictly in the emancipatory tradition of action research (Carr and Kemmis, 1986) but, like this tradition, my aim has been to give 'venting space' (Skeggs and Loveday, 2012, p. 478) to an outsider group and to take their accounts as the basis for ameliorating their conditions of work. In her study of working-class women in North West England, Skeggs describes how her research into those whose views are rarely sought in dialogic fashion, offered valuable 'rhetorical space' to this group. She spoke of producing knowledge with a purpose and of providing '…a rhetorical space where the experiences and knowledges of the marginalized can be given epistemic authority, be legitimated and taken seriously.' (Skeggs, 1997, p. 38) Similarly, in commenting on his own work,

Willis declares it to be about drawing out the humanistic creativity in people (Kleijer and Tillekens, 2003, p. 4). In Willis' view people never simply submit to marginalised conditions and often subvert them with ingenuity. His aim was to explore ethnographically what form this ingenuity takes.

### 3.4 A critical approach

I have sought to follow some of the methods evident in Willis (1979) and Skeggs (1997). Each of these researchers took a critical cultural studies focus by developing opportunities for those normally at the social margins (failing school pupils or working class females) to offer their versions of what is happening in given contexts. The IMTs in my own study can also be seen to occupy a similar marginalized position. It should be noted, however, that marginalization does not imply a victim positioning. As is evident from many of the comments I have gathered, this is far from how the teachers view themselves, not least because their centre of gravity is with their music communities.

In the case of Willis, he shadowed a small group of underachieving, marginalised pupils (known as 'the lads') and asked questions as issues arose but with an informing research question as a guide, combining observation with what Burgess has called 'a conversation with a purpose'. (Burgess 1984, p. 102) This methodology requires that the researcher is open to learning from and with the research subjects (typically called informants). By remaining with his group for a year, he was able to conduct an ethnography. His work is rich with his conversations with the lads and his theoretical reflections. Staying in the field for a sustained period is a condition for ethnography which I could not replicate strictly although I strove to borrow

from critical dimensions of this approach in two key respects: firstly, I treated my IMT colleagues as 'informants' from whom I could learn; secondly, I approached interviews as opportunities for dialogue, probing with them how they lived (or subverted) the conditions placed before them.

Within the critical research tradition, it is accepted that all research takes a perspective that involves foregrounding some things and erasing others. This does not make the research fruitless but it does oblige the researcher to be open and reflexive about what he or she brings to their interpretations. I outline my 'insider' status below but note here that, as Skeggs insists, interviews will always be shaped by power. This is particularly evident in Willis' study where 'the lads' were invited to read his completed study; they were unable to master his complex sociological language and this compromised the dialogic dimension to his research.

Finally, Willis and Trondman (2002) call for 'recording and presenting the nitty gritty of everyday life (p. 398). In so doing, their aim is the promotion of 'theoretical informed-ness' rather than grand theory (p. 394). They call for an approach to theorising that 'unfolds' from inquiry with the empirical data. I have tried to do this in this case study where I have offered possible conceptual hooks to advance my inquiry. As indicated, a critical research stance requires reflexivity about researcher positionality to which I now turn.

### 3.5 Positionality

An important factor to be outlined is my own position as researcher, and the close connection that I have to the field of study, since any claim to understanding of a social world stands stronger if the researcher is '…a participant in the research situation and understands it as an insider (Cousin,

2009, p. 76). My personal location within the institution is that of full-time lecturer in the music department and Course Leader for the Masters level programme. I am a tutor on many of the modules that engage instrumental music teachers and often assess the students' performance that results from the individual lessons provided. As such, I am closely acquainted with the working environment of the IMTs, although I am not directly involved in their recruitment or other contractual arrangements. Instrumental music teachers would not be expected to see me as a direct manager – a role undertaken by undergraduate course leaders and the head of department, and this provided a measure of distance for me from the communication channels and administrative processes that they encounter and experience. During the period of this investigation I was not fulfilling the role of module leader for any undergraduate performance work and was not, therefore responsible for communication with IMTs in any official capacity. However, these distinctions, while clear in the minds of full-time academic staff of the department, meant little to some of the IMTs who were largely unaware of the different sub-roles and lines of responsibilities. It would be difficult, therefore to maintain that the distance I sought from the relationship between IMTs and music department processes was effective, although in some contacts, notably with those who had closer personal connections with and knowledge of full-time staff, respondents were able to make distinctions within and between roles and responsibilities. I acknowledge therefore that the testimonies I gathered may be influenced by the fact that I am a permanent member of staff with certain gatekeeping (or perceived gatekeeping) powers. Equally, it has been

important for me to resist over-identifying with my research group; the danger here is 'finding' what I am looking for.

As outlined in the introduction, my musical positioning as both popular musician and trained classical musician, and identity as a brass – rather than string, drummer, bass or other player, had to be taken into account in understanding the subtleties of interaction between myself as interviewer and the various types of musician that made up the participants of the study. I must also make explicit my own political, philosophical position as it relates to institutions and power, and in particular to my view of the role of staff (full or part-time) in a university: I recognise the need for leadership and control over processes within an organisation but believe that the rise of managerialism, quality control mechanisms and bureaucracy in the university sector to be a damaging development, based on a misplaced assumption that universities can be treated like, and modelled upon private sector companies. Deem's (2001) study of 150 academic staff in UK HE described 'new managerialism' as '…the imposition of a powerful management body that overrides professional skills and knowledge.' My own view sees the management role as that of a facilitator charged with enabling the teaching and research of the University to progress unhindered, while ensuring the smooth running of administrative necessities that support the work of students, academic and support staff. To seek to impose adherence to hierarchies and systems of line-management is, I believe, condescending to academic staff and acts to disempower otherwise highly motivated professionals.

The consequence of this stance for my research is that I bring to it a strong empathy with those who offer a great deal to students and the curriculum but

who feature low down in the university hierarchy, perceived status and pay-scale and have little voice or representation in organisational life.

This study acknowledges the challenges faced in undertaking insider research and the ‘delicate dilemmas’ than become manifest (Mercer, 2007). Drake and Heath (2008) unpick the particular nature of the professional doctorate that investigates institutions from within and note Hammersley’s view that ‘…no position guarantees valid knowledge, and no position prevents it either.’ (Hammersley, 1993, p. 433). This study, I would maintain, benefitted from my insider stance in relation to knowledge of the setting and the people in it, of the power relations that pertain and of the opportunity to use my professional status to gain access to information and participants. Set against these advantages is the possibility of a lack of breadth in perspective and the danger of being influenced by the dominant discourse of the organisation or by my own relationship to my employer. To mediate these matters and stimulate critical discourse and reflexivity I employed a research diary as a form of ‘self-triangulation’ (Drake and Heath, 2008, p. 30) when approaching the interpretation of data.

### 3.6 Ethical Framework.

The ethical framework that was developed in support of this study was based upon the procedures outlined and overseen by the university in which the research was undertaken. The proposal and outline plan for the study was submitted to the appropriate school of the university for scrutiny by its ethics sub-committee and only after that body was fully satisfied that it complied with published research policies was it permitted to begin. The university demand that ‘All research carried out with human participants is done so with informed

consent.’ (see Appendix B and Appendix C), and I went beyond this requirement by adopting a system of ongoing consent that gave participants pre-publication access to data collected from their interviews for editing, expanding and clarifying the representation of their views. (See Appendix D) In line with the recommendations of Cousin (2009, p. 78), I sought to engage participants in a sustained dialogue on the content of the transcript and on the concepts that emerged as I reflected on the interview process. At an early stage the notion of ‘lack of harm’ was expanded to include not only the participants, but also the organisation in which the case study was located. Anonymity and confidentiality was required to be maintained such that each specific participant’s age, gender, musical instrument and length of service, was invisible to the reader, but also, that the university and its staff members would remain unidentified in the report. Where necessary, particular roles would be included, but such references would, as far as possible, be presented in a general manner. Thus, while course leaders and module leaders are mentioned, the particular course or module is not specified and so the anonymity of personnel is maintained.

The adoption of this framework proved to be facilitative (Cousin, 2009, p. 17) in that it provided a comfort zone within which individuals could participate, safe in the knowledge that they could continue the conversations of the interview after the formal event, correcting, removing and clarifying as felt necessary. It also had the effect of placing the interviewee at the centre of the process, not only in its focus, but also in the location of power and control in a more equal manner. In particular, the thorough planning of mechanisms to ensure confidentiality had the effect of easing the potential problems of a

small-scale study wherein it might be possible to recognise individuals in the report, and to attribute comments if this aspect was mis-handled. I had to recognise that individual full-time staff might easily be upset by critical observations of processes for which they had responsibility. I was always mindful of the precarious nature of the contracts by which IMTs are employed at the university, and that it would an easy thing for a member of the music staff who felt criticised, simply to employ an alternative teacher of an instrument, without having to account for such a decision. This made a careful, ongoing approach to ethical practice (Miller and Bell, 2002, in Cousin, 2009, p. 29) a vital aspect of my interactions and casual conversations with colleagues and participants, and in the framing of the details contained in the final report. I was careful to refrain from discussing any aspect of my research with colleagues during the period of the case study, in part to avoid any breach of confidence with my participants, but also as a way to minimize the desire of those responsible for processes involving IMTs to seek to alter their routines and established practices and so introduce short-term distortions to my field of study.

### 3.7 Research Design

The boundaries of this case study are outlined below, taking the approach outlined in Cousin: (2009, p. 141)

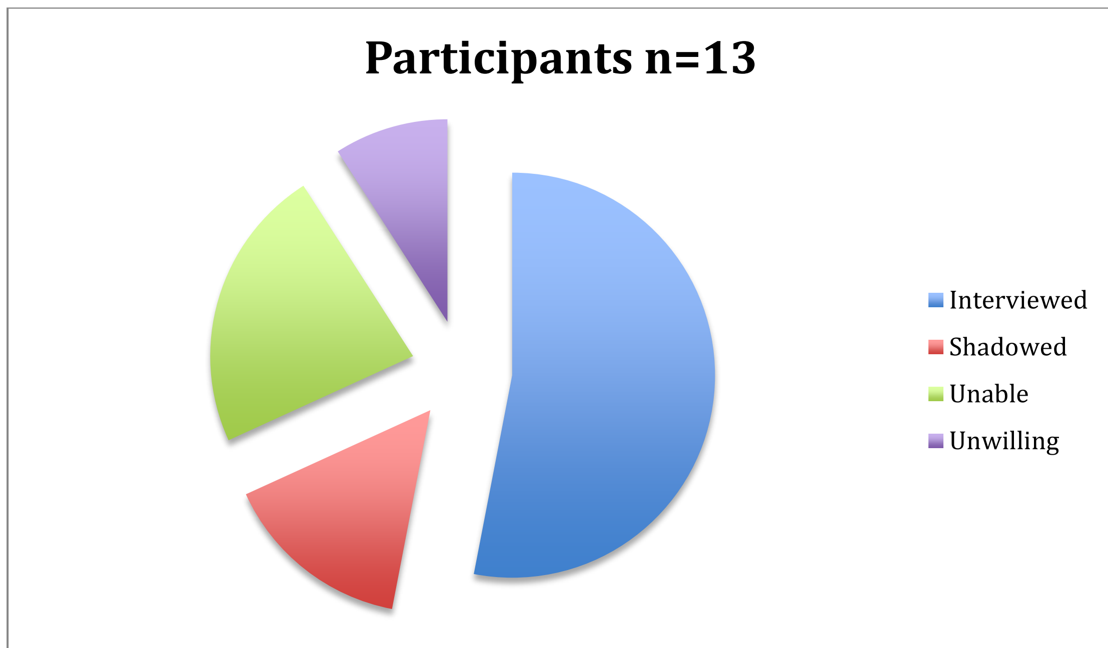
| | |
|---|---|
| *Physical Borders*: | The study was located in an HE music department and engages with providers of one-to-one instrumental and vocal lessons. |
| *Population:* | The study concentrated upon the instrumental music teachers who work within this HE music department. It |

| | did not, therefore, look into the more commonly researched matter of the student experience or into the perceptions of full-time academic staff. |
|---|---|
| *Range of Activities:* | The case examined the main interactions between the IMTs and the institution, including academic, social and administrative matters. |
| *Time span:* | The case explored the specific perspectives and experiences of IMTs as reported within the 2012-13 academic year, covering their engagement in October 2012 to the end of their contracts in May 2013 |

### 3.7.1 Participant profiles

The music department has on its books, a range of instrumental music teachers that can be called into action after students arrive in September. It is only at this stage that the requirement for the teaching of particular instruments is known to the department and so IMT contracts usually begin in October. Although there is always a demand for guitar, bass guitar, piano, singing, flute and clarinet teachers, and usually some work for brass and string teachers, only occasionally is a student enrolled who studies oboe, bassoon, french horn or double bass. In the academic year 2012-13, thirteen IMTs were employed to provide individual tuition to undergraduate and postgraduate students. Of these, seven took part in in-depth semi-structured interviews while two more engaged in shadowing and informal conversations. Of the remaining teachers, some were unable to find time, others attended

campus infrequently, while one taught a single student in their own home and did not wish to participate.




### 3.7.2. Gender and age.

The gender balance of the IMTs currently employed in the department is represented by seven male and six female teachers. The participants in the research reflected this only to a degree, with five male and two female teachers engaging in the interview process. I was, however, able to 'shadow' one male and one female teacher during two of their visits to the campus in order to observe their interaction with the institution and its processes.

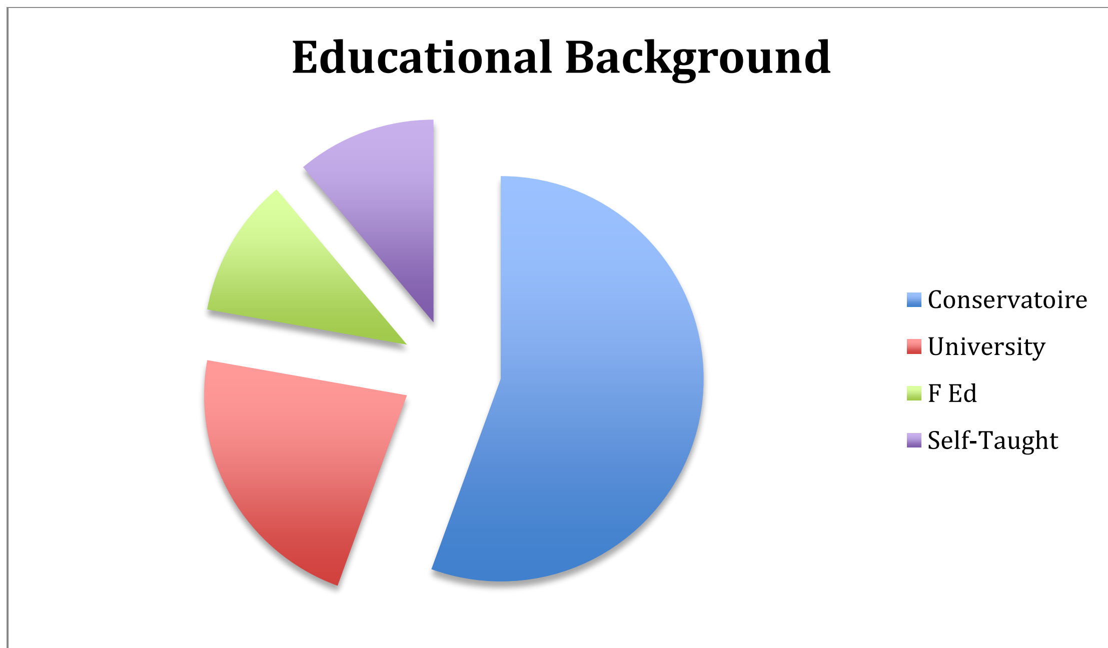
The age profile of the IMTs in the music department for 2012-13.

| Age | 20s | 30s | 40s | 50+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total IMTs | 2 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| Participants (Interviews and shadowing) | 2 | 5 | 0 | 2 |

The non-participation of teachers aged 40 – 50 years may have been coincidental, or reflect a busy stage of life where family and work commitments made it difficult to find time to engage. It may, however, reflect aspects of life-cycle studies that have suggested a dip in motivation and an unease about their careers that may affect teachers approaching what some have identified as the mid-career stage. (Baker, 2005; Sykes, 1985; Walsh, 1998)

### 3.7.3 Background and training.

The matter of the educational context and training that individual instrumental teachers experienced themselves needs to be stated since it is likely to have an impact upon their understanding of and approach to the teaching task, their evaluation of the work of the department and expectations of the organisation. Of the IMTs who participated in the research processes, five had attended a conservatoire for their own education while two had attended a post-1992 university, one studied music in Further Education and one was self-taught and gained experience as a performer and private teacher in the popular music industry.




### 3.7.4 Sampling theories

The notion of a sample is misleading here since the whole population of instrumental music teachers is quite small and I attempted to gain the participation of each one of them. However, I can claim to have had a particular concern to create a stratified sample (Thomas, 2009, p. 102) that represented the characteristics of the population to be studied and covered such variables as gender difference, length of service at the university, background training and qualifications and must admit to having pursued with particular vigour those teachers whose demographic profile was needed to provide this breadth. I am drawn, however, to Thomas' view that this is language that has been borrowed from experimentalist researchers and a survey method, and that rather than grappling with the notion of non-probabilistic samples, '…it would be easier if they were not called samples at all' (Thomas, 2009, p. 104). This is in no way to underplay the need to take into account the demographic profile of the participants, but to do so in recognition that these people are the current instrumental music teachers

engaged in a specific activity that is set in a specific geographical and temporal location, and that while outcomes may be relatable to other circumstances, (Denscombe, 2007) they are not to be regarded as a representative sample in any statistically significant manner.

### 3.8 Instrumentation

This case study involved the collection of data through three main sources: a review of documents relevant to IMTs engagements with the organisation, a research diary of events, engagements and reflections, and a series of semi-structured interviews.

The document review was intended to provide an appreciation of the way that the organisation presented itself to potential employees and indeed, to re-employees – since each IMT is effectively 'released' each summer and re-employed the following October. The administrative requirements, tone of language and method of implementation all form part of the experience of being employed and so were a part of the picture that I wished to explore.

The research diary was adopted in order to record the details of engagements when shadowing participants, holding informal conversations and undertaking observations as they occurred. It was also a tool that enabled me to capture theoretical insights, interpretations and reflections that arose as I considered the conversations and interviews and discussed ideas with critical friends. As Stake noted, 'analysis is a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations.' (1995, p. 71) and the research diary was a key aspect in facilitating and retaining these matters.

The use of semi-structured interviews was chosen for its flexibility and for the generation of rich, detailed answers (Bryman, 2008, p. 437), but also in part,

as it seemed most compatible with the nature of the participants who were all performing artists engaged in interactive pursuits and used to working with and conversing with people as part of their working lives. A more structured approach would have injected an unwelcome sense of formality and would not have given me the freedom inherent in the semi-structured approach, to explore the varied responses and follow lines of conversation as they emerged. I therefore devised a set of interview guidelines that would define specific areas to be discussed in each engagement, but that in practice would be covered in different sequences, depending upon the routes taken by conversations. They were selected as areas for discussion in order to explore the foci of my research questions on the routines and practices experienced while employed in the music department where this study was located and on the attitudes and interpretations that IMTs might place on the experiences of their employment. I tested the utility of these guidelines by undertaking a pilot interview with an instrumental teacher who was not currently engaged at the university, but who had been employed when required in the past, and was still on the list for engagement should the need arise in the future. The discussion that developed informed and developed these guidelines and led to a greater focus in the areas to be addressed. (See Appendix F)

The pilot interview also led me to decide that I would not discourage what appeared to be off-topic discussions during interviews, but instead, would guide the discussion when possible, back to the areas I had intended to cover. In so doing, this allowed for the discovery of matters I had not thought about in advance and gave an element of control to the interviewee. This aligned with my desire to break down the power imbalance inherent in the

relationship of interviewer-respondent and create a ‘third space’ (Cousin, 2009, p. 73) where we could work together to develop an understanding of the issues under discussion. I took pains, at the start of each interview, to try to minimize the power imbalance by discussing my own experience as a musician in the same sphere as my respondent – either classical concert performer or gigging pop trumpeter as appropriate, in order to build a rapport and establish a comfortable basis for conversation. I would also downplay or, alternatively, rehearse my own qualifications and discuss aspects of my background and performing experience in order to lessen the distance between myself and my interviewee, not in order to deceive, since there were no untruths in my exposure of myself, but in order to manage the perceptions of me in a way that I felt would be favourable to a meaningful exchange.

## 3.9 Procedures

### 3.9.1 Document review.

The collection of documents that IMTs encounter in their employment at the university was achieved through requests submitted to the administrative staff of the school. In order to obtain these items I was careful to state the purpose of my interest and of the commitment to anonymity in writing the research report in order to ‘do no harm’ to the organisation or its personnel. This allayed the suspicion that greeted my interest and I was able to collect the necessary paperwork. This consisted of the letter of introduction from the school administrator, a set of guidelines for visiting lecturers (a generic form employed across the university), claim forms for remuneration, a formal appointment form from the university Human Resources department and an induction checklist.

### 3.9.2 Interviews.

The series of interviews began in November 2012 and the final one was carried out in March 2013. Each was scheduled for one hour and most were carried out in a room on the university campus where interruptions could be avoided. The participants were informed of the subject of my inquiry in a manner that made it clear that the focus was on their view of their role, and of their practical experiences as a teacher in the music department. They were each asked to sign an informed consent form and were made aware of the confidential nature of the interview. They were promised that all names would be removed along with other identifying information such as instrument taught, age and gender and a transcript returned to them for checking. If they so desired, they were permitted to edit the text and return it to me as the only version to be retained in the study. In this way, each participant could feel relaxed during the conversation, knowing that there was the possibility of correcting errors or retracting statements. One participant took this opportunity to remove statements made during the interview that, on reflection (s)he wished had not been made.

The conversations were captured on a digital audio device for future review and transcription. The recordings were retained after transcription had taken place in order to allow for the revisiting of the conversation should it be considered useful to the analysis of the data, but participants were informed that these would be held in one location only and deleted at the end of the analysis process. Where a participant had edited the transcript, I used audio editing software in order to remove the unwanted passages.

### 3.9.3 Shadowing.

The shadowing of two IMTs took place by prior arrangement and began as they arrived at the campus to undertake their teaching role. It took into account issues of access to parking and other facilities and so I met the individual participants at the entrance to the university's grounds. I sought to observe at a distance so that I was not having undue influence on the engagements – or lack of engagements between the IMTs and people and processes but still be able to hear interactions as they occurred. This was not a difficult stance due to the busy environment with many other students and staff in the areas where this took place. Once the participant retired to the teaching room with the student the encounter ceased until the teaching appointments had ended, to be re-joined as they emerged to complete their visit and leave the premises. At this point I began conversations to discuss the visit in more detail, unpicking the normal or abnormal events of the day in comparison with former visits, and questioning them about matters of access, personnel and engagements. These questions followed a similar vein to the semi-structured interviews but were of a much more informal nature and focussed on the more immediate matters that had arisen during the observation This process aligns with Webb's category of a 'simple observation' in which '…the observer has no control over the behaviours in question and plays an unobtrusive, passive and nonintrusive role in the research situation.' (Webb et al., 1966, p. 112). I was able to make brief notes during these events on a notebook computer and compose longer reflections immediately afterwards in my research diary.

### 3.10 Data Analysis: Constant comparison method.

The approach to the analysis of the interview data collected during this study follows the advice of Cousin (2009, p. 39 et seq.) regarding the use of coding – proceeding at first wildly, after Delamont (2002), before refining and collating them into core categories. By continually studying the transcripts in an iterative process described as a Constant Comparison Method, (Cousin, 2009, p. 41; Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 339; Thomas, 2011, p. 171) key experiences or common themes emerged across different accounts. The approach adopted therefore owes something to the coding stages outlined in the approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1990), but differed in that I was not seeking to discover a theory by the application of a predetermined method or standardized procedure, but rather that, through on-going critical analysis that was sensitive to the context and its contradictions, (Wisker 2008 p. 233) I sought to develop insights from the data and from my involvement in the processes, interactions and the situation in which the study was located.

**Procedure for Interpretative Interaction with the interview data**:

| Processes | Outcomes |
|---|---|
| Collect Research Data | Transcripts |
| Initial or Open Coding | Categories and sub categories |
| Constant Comparison | Themes / Concepts |

| Explore relationships between concepts | Thinking tools/models for understanding. |
|---|---|

The process outlined above aimed to provide a framework or model for understanding or 'thinking tools' (Thomas, 2011, p. 126) from the interface between the data analysis, perspectives from the literature review and my thoughts and interpretation, or as Glaser and Strauss write, '…the sensitive insights of the observer himself.' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 251). The role of the research diary was key to the reflective process for it was a primary vehicle for capturing thoughts and perspectives during the period of the study, including the periods before, during and after my interview and shadowing interactions with IMTs. (See Appendix G)

### 3.11 Generalisation and Trustworthiness.

As stated earlier, this study adopts Stake's definition of an intrinsic case study, involving in-depth research into a single case in order to gain a rich insight into that case by examining aspects of it in detail and in relation to its particular situation. There was no intention of producing an account that could be generalised from this case to others. I would admit, however, to being drawn to Denscombe's definition of a 'relatable' outcome (Denscombe, 2007) to the study, and that the description of the setting should prove sufficient to provide '…an example that others can use to transfer / translate into their own context.' (Wisker, 2008, p. 217) but as Stake writes, the design of the study was with the intention '…to optimize understanding of the case rather than to generalize beyond it.' (Stake, p. 443 in Denzin and Lincoln, 2005)

The notion of the trustworthiness of a study is a concept that is paralleled in positivist research by the notion of validity. While validity is predicated upon adherence to scientific methods and the use of accurate testing instruments and regimes, in the context of this, interpretivist approach, the trustworthiness of the study is based upon the following procedures: (after Cousin, 2009, p. 8 and p. 136)

- Firstly, the use of diverse data sources, put into practice here through the use of both interview and shadowing data. The observations in early shadowing encounters fed into the interview process, and vice versa, as a means to check if I was understanding and interpreting matters in a credible manner.
- Secondly, this was backed up by the practice of checking accounts with subjects by submitting interview transcripts to them for checking and editing, and using this as an opportunity to engage in further conversations about the text.
- Thirdly, researcher reflexivity was facilitated as an on-going process through the use of a research diary that maximised the advantage of my insider position.
- Fourthly, I sought to collect sufficient data to enable me to present a plausible account of the case, not only by engaging with a high proportion of the total of the department's IMTs, but by actively seeking a stratified sample of participants.
- Finally, the trustworthiness of the account may be assessed through an evaluation of my attempt to present a rich descriptive and analytical

account of engagements in a tone that provides a critical and honest display of extracts from the data.

# CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS

This chapter will present the findings of this study, arranged to reflect the key themes that emerged from the analysis of the materials. These materials include university personnel documents, the transcripts of a series of individual interviews and entries made in a research diary that was maintained during the investigation. Quotations from the contributions of participants are labelled only with the letters AA to LL. This maintains anonymity while permitting the reader to track individual input.

## 4.1 Key Themes: Access

One of the codes that emerged as a key experience for participants concerned matters of access to the organisation, defined here as access to physical resources. This was further divided into those relating to access to the building, its parking spaces, entry barriers and teaching spaces, access to the teaching-related facilities of photocopying, printing and internet, and access to the staff facilities for personal storage, refreshments and social contacts. Issues of access to members of academic or administrative staff were not considered here as such matters are discussed under the heading of communication below.

Code Table 1.

| ACCESS | To the building | To Teaching Facilities | To Staff Facilities |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Car Parking | Library and Photocopying | Personal storage |
| | Entry barrier | Printing | Staff Kitchen |
| | Identity Card | Internet Access | Telephones |
| | Teaching rooms | musical equipment | Staffroom |

An early encounter that occurred during this research highlighted the issue of access and the difficulties faced by individual IMTs as they sought to engage in the teaching process. On this particular occasion I was in the staff room – a space shared by teachers in the music, dance and drama departments of the university, when an IMT knocked on the staffroom door since he had no access card to this space and declared that he had been unable to locate a technician to open the door to his teaching room. A dance lecturer, who did not know him, answered the door and he was being directed back to the technician's office when I overheard and intervened. Through our discussion it transpired that he did not have a staff identity card that would have provided access to the building and so had to 'sign in' each time as a visitor. He could not open rooms himself, each one being subject to an electronic locking system, but had to go up to the second floor to request to be let in to the ground floor teaching room to begin his teaching. On the occasion mentioned above, the technicians were in a meeting and no back- up system was in place. Moreover, if he had wished to leave his teaching room for any reason, he would be locked out and have to repeat the trip to floor two to find a technician in order to be let in once again. As he stated:

> …it is very silly, this business of letting me in, running upstairs and downstairs as I don't have a badge. (FF)

This state of affairs had been in operation from September until February and continued beyond this date, and was the normal experience of that particular IMT. I also noticed during our exchange, that he had purchased a coffee from the public vending machine and asked if this was his normal practice, given that there was a fully equipped staff kitchen within the staffroom facility where drinks were available free of charge. In later interviews, it became clear that

this was a common experience for IMTs, although experienced in isolation from each other, since they seldom met other IMTs within the department to discuss their working practices. When asked about access to staff facilities, all but one of them observed that they had no access to the staff room and so had nowhere to put coats or bags and could not make use of the staff kitchen. Indeed, one IMT, who had been particularly proactive and had managed to acquire a staff identity card, was asked if this gave her access to the staff facilities. She responded:

> I have never tried. I did not even know it was here. I just bought one [a drink] out of the machine – I did not know we had a staff room. When the building was opened last year it would have been nice if we had been invited to see it and been given a tour so we knew what was where and what was available to us…. I discovered the office on the third floor just because I teach on that floor. There are probably private staff dining rooms – there could be a private swimming pool that I don't know about. So I don't know half the facilities, I am slowly discovering them and finding boundaries…(KK)

The experiences of individual IMTs differed here since some had recently been furnished with staff identity cards – a sign, perhaps, of belonging to the organisation, while others, some of whom have taught at the university for many years, had not been supplied with one. These differences in provision are due to the intervention of the course leader for one of the programmes who took responsibility for the advancement of the cause of identity cards for his particular IMTs and to the individual persistence of other IMTs who have the confidence to press for their identity cards. As one such individual commented on achieving her staff identity card: …I am a pushy person, so I managed to get through the system. (KK)

During an appointment to shadow an IMT during a visit to the campus I witnessed one teacher arrive to be asked to sign in and issued with a visitor's

pass while another swiped through the entry barrier with a card and headed for the lifts. I was able to ascertain that, while these cards provide access to the building and operate the entrance barrier, they do not give access to teaching or staffroom facilities. These cards would provide access to university staff car parks, but none of the IMTs with such cards had attempted to use them because no one had indicated that such a facility was available. Instead, they all managed to park on the general car parks or walked in from on-street parking spaces.

IMTs were caught up in difficulties that were also being experienced by full-time staff and students in the newly opened facility for performing arts and had to negotiate evolving administrative processes and the technical support systems, simply in order to find a teaching space. The requirement for staff (as well as students) to provide a week's notice for a room booking proved unhelpful to IMTs who tend to operate a more flexible system. For example, one teacher explained:

> On Thursday I asked which student could come next Tuesday, so then I needed to book for Tuesday but it was a problem because it was only 2 days notice and LL said that the students need to give a week and so you should also give a week. (FF)

On the day in question, the IMT describes being 'slapped on the wrist' by the technician for failing in some way to adhere to the system for booking rooms. It should be noted that some of the experiences described by IMTs were, to a degree, a temporary function of the move of the department into a new space and of the particular management of that change. Over a period of time, systems were amended to provide more reasonable access for all, but IMTs were largely unaware of the bigger picture and the frustrations that were also being experienced by other IMTs, full time staff and students. This lack of a

shared perspective was due to the low level of contact between IMTs and music staff where such experiences could have been discussed.

Another aspect of the issue of access that arose was the matter of the use of printing and photocopying. While full time staff have identity cards that provide such facilities, IMTs do not. Their cards are not authorised for the photocopiers and they must prepare such materials at home and at their own expense or, as in the case of one teacher, make use of the facilities of other institutions where they teach and are allowed such privileges:

> I do a lot of that on my personal photocopier, a big expense actually, …but I never bring it up, as I am not one to make a fuss. (FF)

> …(a photocopier) would be very useful if it was linked to a music account so I did not have to feed the money machine. (II)

In order that IMTs could make use of the staff printing facilities they would need to have a university IT account that would provide them with internet access. None of the IMTs interviewed had been provided with such an account and so they could not make use of the Wi-Fi network that was available throughout the building to other staff and to students. As a consequence, they were also excluded from the University's on-line learning framework, through which staff and students communicated, and where relevant teaching materials and assessment information was located for the performance modules to which their teaching contributed. While some expressed the desire to have general access to a Wi-Fi connection for use during free time on campus, it was also noted that some had no idea that an on-line learning facility was available:

> I do not, however, have an ID to get on the Internet, which, when I was just free earlier, I thought, I know; I will go onto the internet. I will log on to the Wi-Fi… so I went to reception and they said I have to go to IT. I think all IMTs should get an IT account. (KK)

Access to the on-line learning facility? I do not know what is available. (GG)

## 4.2 Key Themes: Communication

Another major theme that emerged from the analysis of the data was the issue of communication. It is defined here as the information exchange that takes place between IMTs and academic, administrative, technical support staff and students. It does not incorporate the matter of the *relationship* between IMTs, staff and students since this is considered in a discussion of interpretations of the role of the IMT in the department.

Code Table 2

| COMMUNICATION | Contact with Academic Staff | Contact with students | Contact with Administrative staff |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Key Individuals | Absence policy | Room Booking System |
| | Knowledge of structures | Booking lessons and rooms | Registers |
| | Frequency of interaction | Email and Telephone | Employment contracts and claim forms |

During the interviews, IMTs were asked what they knew of the structure of the music department and the courses that were offered. I attempted to ascertain if the IMTs were familiar with individual academic and administrative staff and if they had key contacts that could be a source of information, advice and guidance. During the shadowing engagements I was able to observe the points of contact and communication between IMTs and other members of the university as the IMT went about the normal activities of the role. During one such appointment I was able to introduce the IMT to the head of the music

department since the processes in operation did not otherwise cause such contact to occur.

### 4.2.1 Communication with music staff

The head of the music department in this university delegated responsibility for the employment, induction, orientation and on-going support of IMTs to the relevant Course Leader. This Course Leader contacted the individual IMT in September of each year to discuss student numbers and teaching hours and then liaised with the administrative staff to raise the necessary contracts. The Course Leader is intended, therefore, to be the key contact for IMTs in all matters relating to their teaching, although once in post, anything to do with the system for payment for teaching was transacted directly by IMTs with the administrative staff. However, it became clear that there were no written documents relating to the lines of responsibility and my conversations with music academic staff revealed a lack of clarity about the role of Course Leaders and that of the module leaders in relation to the provision of information and on-going contact with IMTs. While other visiting lecturers were assigned to an internal, full-time member of staff as mentor and module leader, IMTs sat outside of these procedures and were supplied with no such formal connections.

When asked about the lines of contact and flow of information, all IMTs displayed uncertainty or inaccuracy over the departmental structure and the formal points of contact and also portrayed a sense of disappointment when discussing this aspect of operations.

> I do not officially know who my “line manager” is. AA has sent me stuff, BB has sent me stuff over email, CC occasionally gets in touch but if there are any issues with students then I go to BB with it. But I don’t know if I am going to the right person. (FF)

> I know CC is in charge, but even though this is my 6th year, it is all a bit ad hoc. Obviously I am only a little part of what you do. (KK)

> Last year it was DD and then there was nobody. (II)

> I think that there is a huge communication deficit. (JJ)

One teacher described an occasion when she attempted to discuss the involvement of instrumental teachers within the department.

> Last year I said to CC that it would be a great idea to have an annual meeting with instrumental teachers so we can say – you are doing this great, but what about this idea, or adding that to the assessment criteria and CC's instant thing was – great, but we are unable to pay you for it. But my suggestion of that wasn't to get more money, but to feel part of the department. At the moment, the only reason that I feel part of the department is because I am not backward in coming forward. If I have issues or points I want to raise then I will just get on the email or on the phone. (KK)

There seems to have been a slight misunderstanding in this last exchange since I have observed, during departmental meetings, the willingness of the Head of Department to hold such an event. The issue of paying for IMTs to attend was highlighted as a problem but not due to a lack of desire to pay, but rather to a sense of embarrassment that the department did not have the resources to do so and would be asking IMTs to attend without being paid. The IMT quoted above felt that she was misheard and was seen to be trying to extract more hours of paid work through her suggestion, while she wanted to be clear that her concern was to improve the communication deficit (at her own cost) and give more of her expertise to the department.

The situation regarding contacts between IMTs and music staff is not as consistently poor as might be surmised from the lack of clarity revealed above. There are IMTs who experience more frequent contact due to the day and time of their visits to campus that bring them into contact with full time

staff. Such connections are largely accidental but have been increased by the relocation of the department into a new building. As reported by one teacher:

> This year has been different. Everyone is on the same floor. Before, I would not see anyone – in the old building – the offices were at the other end of the university and if you wanted to ask a question, you would have to call or wait for an opportunity to pop across. Everyone is dotted around the same rooms so we see each other more. (HH)

There are also differences in the operation of the Course Leader role that has provided some IMTs with greater support and contact than those working with students on the other course. This is revealed through the presence of conflicting statements in the data such as:

> In all honesty, I have not had any contact with anyone really, only with the student. The last couple of years I have been told the name of the student and their email and told to get in touch with them. (II)

> EE [Course Leader] tends to know what is going on more than anyone else. I get on with him personally as well so I don't necessarily feel awkward about anything. If I ask about something I should speak to someone else he will tell me. To be honest, I don't need to have much contact with EE either really. (GG)

This also revealed a possible explanation for differences in the experiences of IMTs because some individuals had a prior connection with the department or a member of the academic staff. Other IMTs are recent graduates of the department and have a greater familiarity with the department and with the language of modules and assessments compared to those from other institutions or backgrounds. Several IMTs have performed in bands with members of the academic staff and had formed friendships that led to their recommendation for employment at the university. However, in spite of these, seemingly quite strong connections, once engaged in their contracts, the personal links do not seem to have led to significantly greater communication

and a detached formality and distance appears to have set in that aligns with historic routines and understandings of the scope of the IMT role.

### 4.2.2 Communication with students

This category of responses is focussed upon the consideration of contact between IMTs and students that occur around the teaching session, and not with the nature of the interactions that take place within them. This latter issue will be discussed in relation to interpretations of the role of the IMT and the different ways in which the relationship between teacher and student is envisioned.

Once the content of the interview sessions turned from matters of contact with staff and the institution to discuss contact with students, the demeanour of the IMTs changed from a plaintive and disappointed tone to a more confident, assertive vocabulary and body language. Such conversations were characterised by statements such as 'I like to be chummy…', 'I have a policy…', 'I am more myself….', while those relating to communication with the organisation often include 'I don't know…', '…I have no idea what is required.',

This reflects the fact that to some degree, the individual lesson is their domain, – the arena in which they feel comfortable and in control. The method by which IMTs and students communicate is mainly by text message or through email. The email addresses employed by IMTs are always private, such as Hotmail or Google Mail since none of them have a university IT account and so do not have a university email address. However, text messages were the preferred method and when asked if they were happy to

share their mobile telephone numbers, all were content to do so and found it to be a benefit to both parties:

> They all have my number. I ask students to text if they are unable to come. (GG)
>
> It was recommended [by course leader] when I started here – also, if I am unwell, late or away on tour, I can contact the students. It gives me some leeway to be free. (HH)
>
> if a student is away one week …if they don't text, I will send a text to ask. (KK)
>
> It is polite to phone somebody – they all have my mobile number – or just drop me a text to say 'I am running late but on my way.' (FF)

While the main subject for communication was reported to relate to attendance at lessons, one teacher had been happy to give advice to students outside the teaching appointment:

> Some of them do feel that they can contact me about things and are on and off the text all the time about repertoire or about – they can't do this right, how do I do it? (KK)

Most stop short of adding their students to their contact list on social media sites, one stating that she had 'added' music academic staff to her Facebook contacts, but preferred not to do the same with her current students. She did, however, see potential benefits in social media and quoted an example of a fellow IMT at another university who created a dedicated Facebook group for his students that proved to be a useful device for effective communication. Interestingly, the youngest IMT in this study has added his students to his social media profile and posted frequent updates of his own professional practice – mostly performances and recording sessions, for his students (among others) to be able to see. He did not, however, use this platform for sending and receiving messages, preferring the directness of the mobile telephone text message.

As noted above, the main subject of contact between IMTs and students relates to attendance. IMTs are engaged to provide 8 hours of lessons to each student, often, but not always, given as 16 half-hour sessions over the two semesters of the academic year. The schedule for these lessons is something that the individual teacher and the student can arrange, or if preferred, the IMT may work with the Course Leader to find a convenient timeslot for him/herself and the students. This is designed to encourage attendance since the slot will be chosen to coincide with times when students are already attending campus for other lessons. For IMTs with a large number of students, this is the approach that is usually taken and it makes coordination and communication relatively simple. Teachers are able to arrange their appointments in a continuous block of time which is then fixed for the same time and location each week. The approach to student absence at lessons of the IMTs who work in this manner is clear and appears easy to manage. When asked if a students who misses a lesson would get that lesson at a later time, the IMTs who teach in predetermined, fixed blocks all replied in a similar vein:

> No, not if they have not let me know. (II)

> I get here in more than enough time to start my lessons on time and once I am here – I am here. That is it. I am here because these people are scheduled for lessons and if they don't turn up that is their problem really. I don't think it is hard-nosed to have this approach – there are only five days in a week and I give two days to this place and three elsewhere together with gigs and recording sessions and whatever else you do with your life. (GG)

However, where an IMT has a small number of students, or even just one, the arrangement was conducted between the IMT and student directly. This provided maximum flexibility for both parties, who could arrange and

rearrange as necessary. Moreover, this was found to be open to abuse where one side or the other took this flexibility to the point where it proved inconvenient or appeared inconsiderate to the other. Students needed to have had lessons in a timely manner in order to prepare for assessments and teachers must be sensitive to this in scheduling the appointments. A more frequent issue, however, was the practice, by students, of cancelling appointments at very short notice – or none at all, and then expecting the session to be rearranged. An incident that highlighted this occurred when I made an appointment to shadow a teacher. This IMT had just one student and so the arrangement of lessons was made by text and tended to be for hour-long sessions. They were arranged at a mutually convenient time and took place on a fortnightly basis. On this occasion I met the IMT as she arrived at the entrance to the campus to discover that she had just received a text from the student to say she could not attend as she had to go to the post office. The teacher remarked that this was not the first time that this had happened and that she would now be expected to postpone the session and rearrange it for another day, despite having reserved the time for the lesson and travelled some distance to the campus. In our discussion, it emerged that the one-to-one relationship imposes certain pressures on IMTs who find it difficult to be assertive and take the step of cancelling the lesson from the allocated 8 hours – partly due to the frosty atmosphere this would create, but also because the teacher feels responsible for the student's progress and sees 8 hours as far too small an allocation of time. (This particular IMT's own experience as a student at university included the provision of 36 hours of individual lessons each year of a 4-year course.) The shouldering of this

responsibility and cost by IMTs is something that is reflected in other data, yet is not known to and so not acknowledged by the department.

#### 4.2.3 Communication with administrative staff.

I began my discussions with IMTs by asking them to recall their first formal contact with the organisation as represented by the administration required for them to receive a teaching contract. I felt that this may, to some degree, have framed their relationship with the organisation through the tone of address employed in these documents. The routines and processes established by the university for the recruitment and induction of visiting staff are generic in nature, in that they are designed to be used across the organisation and are standardized by the personnel office in order to comply with employment legislation. I obtained copies of all of the relevant documents for the recruitment and induction of new staff and discussed them with each IMT in order to stimulate thought and to gather their recollections and responses to the paperwork and the processes that they encountered. An introductory letter that was added by the employing school to these generic forms contained statements that outlined the steps necessary for IMTs to follow in order to claim payment for their contract. This had some passages that were in bold type and underlined and this was raised during discussions. Most had little recollection of any of the introductory paperwork and when shown a copy, were happy with the content, seeing it as part of every job and '…a necessary evil'. One IMT, however, did react strongly to what was regarded as a rude and 'shouty' presentation and pointed out the poor grammar contained in the sentences:

1. You should return the contract duly signed to myself without delay.
2. ..and must not deviate from it without advance approval from myself.

The use of bold and underlined text may have been a sign of the frustration felt by the administrator, arising from the experience of handling the process of pay claims for the varied contracts of the IMTs and other Visiting Lecturers, or from a desire to highlight frequent pitfalls in order to help staff complete the process successfully. Whatever the underlying motivation in its production, the different responses to the documents was a reflection of the varied expectations of individual IMTs and the different interpretations of their status and role.

The mechanisms for joining the university as an employee form a relatively small part of the experience and so the major part of the investigation looked at the practices that IMTs encounter when undertaking their role. This encompasses a wide range of aspects of every-day experience, including setting up teaching appointments and booking teaching spaces, understanding the curriculum requirements and engaging with the department staff and resources. These practices are by no means generic and vary across the different courses within the music department, are subject to change over time, and are experienced differently by individual IMTs. While the interviews examined this aspect in detail, the shadowing of IMTs visits to campus also provided a valuable source of evidence in relation to the everyday realities of interaction and my observations from this approach helped to inform the content of the interview engagements. It is important to note at this point that, while the details of the mechanics of routines and practices may be an interesting aspect of departmental operations, it is the way that these were experienced and interpreted by IMTs that was the focus of this study. A part of this ‘experiencing’ is a subjective response by the

individual IMT to, for example, a mode of communication that (s)he expects or prefers or, as in the instance above, to the tone of address and language employed in documents encountered. To some degree, this response is bound up in the sense of identity of the individual and their definition of the role and purpose of an instrumental teacher and so is directly connected to the second aim of the research that seeks to explore what meanings are constructed about their own role by the IMTs in this particular music department. The exploration of this aspect is based upon observations, conversations and interviews and my own considerations based on my insider knowledge and a review of the literature associated with instrumental music teaching.

It was not unusual for an IMT to visit the campus, give a lesson and leave the building without the knowledge of the music academic staff. The individual teacher communicated with their students to arrange a suitable time and then contacted the departmental administrator who assisted by creating an appropriate room booking. IMTs could not book rooms themselves, as they did not have an IT account and the associated access rights to the booking system. They did not necessarily meet the administrator on their visits either, since communication was often through electronic means:

> I have contact with the music secretary, yes – just to sort out the room you would like to book. I do this by email. (GG)

> LL knows I am in the building because I email her to book a room and this works well for me now. (JJ)

After making a room booking, the music administrator sent an email to the IMT with the details and requested that a temporary access card was

produced and made available for collection from the reception desk upon arrival.

Students were able to book rooms for their personal use and some teachers simply asked their students to make such an arrangement on the system. The IMT then arrived to meet the student and was allowed access to the room on the student's access card. As in other matters, there were differences in practice between an IMT who had a large number of students and required a block booking and the IMT with few students and who attended on various and frequently changing days and times. Those operating in lengthy blocks of time did not have to contact administrators over room bookings since the Course Leader arranged these and so they did not report the frustrations and difficulties of other IMTs.

Another difference in practice emerged when discussing contact with administrators because the Course Leader for the popular music course requires IMTs to complete a register. This list was provided by and returned upon completion to the administrative office and so there was always direct, personal contact with organisational staff members when each of these IMTs visited campus. This was not always reported as a positive experience:

> There is supposed to be a register – there is not a register arranged, but there is supposed to be. (HH)

> You never know what kind of approach or mood you will come up against in the admin office. (GG)

The teachers of students on the classical music course were not required to complete registers, due perhaps to the small number of students and large number of IMTs in this area or the different pattern of engagement of the relevant Course Leader. One such IMT noted:

> I have never been asked for a register – I just send in my claim form. I keep a record of how long a lesson was, what I did in that lesson, for when I fill in claim forms. (KK)

Although the experience of contact with administrative staff may be different and dependent upon the course that their students are studying, all IMTs shared the same system for submitting claim forms for payment. The main point raised in relation to this matter was the time taken to receive the formal contract at the start of the teaching engagement in October. The arrangement to take on teaching responsibilities is often by verbal agreement with the Course Leader but the official paperwork may follow some weeks after teaching begins. As an IMT with 6 years experience at the university observed:

> I get on great with LL (admin) – she does the contracts – which we have not got again. They never appear until late. (HH)

This is clearly seen as quite normal – or something that cannot be changed, since the only option open to IMTs would be to refuse to start teaching until the contract arrives. If an IMT taught only a few students then they often delayed claiming the payment until three or even four months have elapsed and so there was no financial disadvantage for them to the late appearance of contracts. For example, one such IMT that I shadowed in November, some 4 weeks into her teaching, did not intend to submit a claim until early January since she only taught one student. Her view was that as long as the contract has been issued when the times comes to submit a claim form then she did not consider it an important issue.

### 4.3 Key Themes: Role

The theme of the role of the IMTs emerged from an analysis of the codes applied to interviews and diary entries that focussed particularly upon the day-

to-day teaching activities. Although I was not studying the teaching interactions through lesson observations, I was keen to discuss the way that IMTs envisioned their role in the classroom and their relationships with students. In addition, I discussed the place of teaching at this university in the careers of these IMTs and the degrees of participation and involvement that they experienced within the department.

Code Table 3.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">R<br>O<br>L<br>E</td><th>Relationship with students</th><th>Role in Assessment</th><th>Role As Professional</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Envisioning the role:<br>- master-apprentice<br>- mentor, advisor, guide<br>- answer-filled expert</td><td>Selecting materials</td><td rowspan="2">Career</td></tr>
<tr><td>Attending assessments</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lesson evaluation</td><td>Assessment feedback</td><td>Status</td></tr>
</table>

### 4.3.1 Relationship with students.

Since this study sought to focus on the experiences of IMTs, I sought their views of their relationship with their students. I did not colour this perspective by canvassing the views of students on this issue. I asked each participant to characterise their relationships with their students as if drawn by a cartoonist. However, since the participants struggled in describing these relationships I found that a more fruitful approach was to provide examples of role definitions as a cue to discussions of this matter, and so asked whether such terminology as master/apprentice, mentor, advisor, guide or answer-filled expert, resonated with their view. A range of responses emerged:

Some adopted what they described as a ‘teacherly’ stance, with one indicating that she was usually ‘harsher’ with her university students, while one used the metaphor of a sergeant major:

> It is still very much – what I say goes – it is probably very sergeant-majorish – but an approachable sergeant major. (KK)
>
> You can be a bit more frank when teaching one-to-one instrumentally… If something is really poor you can address it in a particular way. (KK)
>
> You can have a bit more of a conversation when they are older and at Uni. you can tell them the way it is – if you haven’t practised – your responsibility. (KK)

Others adopted a less hierarchical approach and one specifically sought to shrug off the mantle of a teacher giving lessons:

> I feel like it puts me in a false superior position by saying I am teaching these people things. What I really think I am doing is opening up a box of tricks and saying - have you listened to this, have you tried this. (GG)

A clear preference emerged around the idea of the teacher as a friendly guide and mentor:

> I often try to be chummy with them, which usually works. (HH)
>
> It is a case of being nice to them in the first place and make them feel that they are not up against it on a personal level. (GG)
>
> A very friendly one. Obviously it is no pressure in the lessons, it is not like, if you don’t get it right I will be shouting and bawling – that would not work with 20-year olds. It is very relaxed and friendly, we have a laugh and joke. They understand the seriousness of the lesson- they do not come in dreading the lesson. If they want advice, they will ask me. (KK)
>
> I think I am more of a mentor to them…. my job is to guide them in what they need to be doing. (HH)
>
> It is more to do with guidance and help. (JJ)
>
> I think teaching is just leading people in the right direction. (FF)

> If someone is in your care you do take it personally if they haven't done well because you have been put there to help them. (II)

It became clear that the relationship with their student was the main motivation for IMTs and that this drove them to give more of their time and effort than required or acknowledged by the organisation. This included contact outside of lesson time for additional advice by text, telephone or social media, spending their own money to facilitate the students' access to materials and even the provision of additional lessons when an assessment was imminent:

> Over the last few years I have actually done more days than I have been contracted for every year. (FF)

> If I think people need a bit of extra help before an assessment I will come in just on my own bat to give extra time with them. (GG)

The richness of the relationship with university students was mentioned as a key motivator when compared with other forms of teaching in which IMTs were involved:

> I like teaching the higher-grade pupils. I am a very technical person in the way that I teach, so I like it when they get older and you can pick up more technical aspects quicker. (KK)

> You can have more of a conversation when they are older. (II)

The university has systems through which students are invited to provide an evaluation of their experience of undertaking each module of study. However, since IMTs operate across modules and years, their work does not figure in the Module Evaluation System. Occasionally, however, a student would provide some direct, positive feedback to the individual teacher about the instrumental lessons. As one reported, 'Sometimes they say it was a good lesson and that is nice.' (FF) Such comments, however, are rare and the teachers reported that they received no formal indication of their own

performance or of their students' thoughts about their learning experiences. The only exception to this was when a complaint was raised by one of the students with the music academic staff. On an occasion such as this, the IMT may be contacted and an informal discussion held. There are, however, no records in the music department of any formal interactions between academic staff and IMTs on any pedagogic or administrative matter. When asked about receiving feedback on their teaching, the responses included:

> Absolutely none. I have never had any of that. (JJ)
>
> I get monitored by other employees – I suppose students should feedback to you – good or bad… (FF)
>
> No-one ever comes and monitors me. I could be the worst teacher you have ever had here. (KK)

IMTs with contracts at other educational organisations clearly had an expectation of a degree of inspection or direct monitoring but that is not, at present, a feature of the HE environment. Instead, the university makes use of a student evaluation mechanism, which, due to the peculiarity of their organisational location, was not applied to instrumental teachers, and a staff observation scheme for full-time staff that was also not applied to IMTs.

### 4.3.2 Role in assessment – selecting materials.

As noted previously, the primary purpose for which IMTs are employed is to teach students as they work towards a solo performance assessment at the end of each semester. It would be reasonable to suppose, therefore, that the IMTs are thoroughly acquainted with the requirements of these assessments, may be involved in the actual performance event as assessor or audience, and would be in receipt of the grade decision and feedback forms after the assessment has been completed. Practice within the department varies in

regard to this matter and the three stages of assessment will be analysed separately here. Unanimity does emerge, however, over the lack of feedback to IMTs on the performance and grades of their students.

The assessment requirements that are laid out for students in the guides for each module have changed significantly over recent years. As one teacher stated:

> When I started, I had a free hand to do whatever I wanted time-wise and repertoire-wise and only had 4 students, but as I am doing more, it would be good to know what they [music academic staff] are actually asking for. (FF)

For the last two years, however, the academic staff have decided to stipulate that one piece of repertoire for solo performances should be selected from a list provided by external exam boards at grade VII for level 4 students and grade VIII for level 5 students. A second piece remained as a free choice between students and IMT but this was expected to be at a similar standard. News of this change was not communicated directly from academic staff to IMTs but instead, the students were told to take their module guide to their instrumental teacher to select a piece from the list. IMTs were not involved in a discussion about this change of operation and opinions differ about its efficacy. Some state that it would be better if choices were left to the IMTs:

> For me, you can play a Chopin piece at grade 1 or 8, it is not about the piece. The duration is too little – just 5 minutes at the end of the first year. It should be 15-20 minutes from a list of possible composers. Maybe more contemporary composers in later years, not grade 7 or 8. (FF)

Another IMT had been unhappy with the graded list as a method of selection, but happened to like the pieces in the recently updated lists for his particular instrument. He stated that:

> I don't mind having it picked for me if it is relevant and of a good standard. In the past. the songs have not been particularly good, but now they seem quite good. (GG)

He recounted an experience just prior to the use of the graded lists where a member of the academic staff had selected a piece of music that all students of that instrument were required to learn. The IMT for that instrument regarded this piece as '…a sub-standard piece of work.' and would have liked to have been involved in the decision-making process. A third IMT was aware of and largely content with the use of graded lists for level 4 and 5 but was unclear about the assessment requirements for the final year project performance, while a fourth saw the value for the university of setting grades for the chosen repertoire as it would bring all students to the same standard by the time they entered level 6. The lack of choice was presented in a positive light by this IMT for its parallel with job roles for performers in the industry:

> I think it is good – it is 50 / 50 – they have to meet the criteria by playing a grade piece and then the 2nd piece they can have their own input and I can give my input and we can work together where it is not so regimented. In the industry, sometimes you have to play what is given, and sometimes you might be asked to play what you think might feel nice on there. So doing these things in instrumental lessons, you have the discipline to do the sight reading and the freedom of the second piece so long as it is in the performance parameters. So it is all industry based. (HH)

### 4.3.3 Role in assessment – attending assessments.

IMTs are not routinely invited to attend the solo performance assessment for which they have been preparing students and they are not invited to participate in the grading decisions. However, when asked if they had attended, some responded that they had done so and would continue to do so

if it was convenient for them. The complexities break down into three response types:

Firstly, there are those who have never been invited and so have never attended. One such IMT has worked in the department for seven years and had never been invited to attend performance assessment events. She stated:

> I would like to be invited to everything and if I can attend, great. (KK)

Secondly, there are those who have attended assessments, but did not wish formally to be involved in the grading decisions:

> I love to go as well, but I am torn about that because I want them to feel that I am neutral and that I am not assessing them you see. By accident, I was there once or twice, but I don't want them to feel that I am assessing them, as they might not be comfortable with that. (FF)

> I have attended more than not over the years…I just turn up and watch. Occasionally I can point something out that might help the student to get what they deserve. (GG)

> I saw all of the solo performances last year, but was not obliged to be there. It was good to see them in an arena where there are other people – not just me. I see them getting nervous, which does not happen when there is only me. (HH)

Thirdly, there are those who feel that IMTs would benefit from attendance at performance assessments for students other than their own, but that the attendance by IMTs at the assessment performance of their own students was not something that the department should contemplate:

> I think we should not be in the assessment for our own students. If I was on the panel and one of my students came in I would deliberately say that I cannot be one of those people. … I would always be harsher on my own students. (KK)

> It would be great to be in on some of the assessments to see how they work and what criteria you are working on and to see what I thought of somebody's performance and how you are marking it – to give me an insight into how the university marks these – but I don't think that I

> should be in on my own pupils assessment – that would be more stressful for them as well. (JJ)

#### 4.3.4 Role in assessment – assessment feedback.

For each assessed activity that students undertook as part of their degree studies, the department provided criteria to guide students in the preparation of their work and to guide staff in arriving at a grade decision when assessing the final product. For the performance assessments, a set of grading criteria was made available to students through the on-line learning framework. As discussed above, IMTs did not have access to this framework and so needed to be given access to this document by other means. However, as one participant observed:

> I have always known that they would have assessment criteria. It was just that I don't have it, but because I have so little time with them, it is essential that I have the assessment criteria. I am employed by the university and you should be saying – this is your job description and part of your job description is for you to prepare students for their assessments and to help them understand the grading criteria…(KK)

It is clearly not the practice of academic staff in the department to communicate the grading criteria to IMTs. This document was in the hands of students through the module guide made available on-line, and academic staff have assumed that students will share it with their IMT during the lessons. Plainly, this did not happen and a collective blindness had set in over this matter. Neither Course Leaders nor module leaders have sent the document out nor discussed it with IMTs, students did not use the criteria in conversation with their IMT, and IMTs, if they knew of its existence, did not request a copy. A section from my research diary of a shadowing event and subsequent conversation revealed the lack of communication of key

documents and the limited interaction that took place between IMT and academic staff:

> JJ had little insight into the courses that the department run and that her student is studying. She had been asked to sign a form from the performance module that confirmed the piece that they would work on for assessment during the second semester. Apart from this goal, no other guide has been provided and so the tutor reverted to her own understanding of teaching and acted as seemed appropriate. (Research Diary extract of conversation with JJ)

Once the solo performance assessment has taken place, academic staff completed an assessment feedback form that commented on the performance with reference to the grading criteria and included the final grade decision. This was moderated by a second academic colleague and made available, along with a video recording of the event, to the external examiner for the course. A notable omission from this process was any contact between the academic staff and the IMT who had prepared the student for the assessment in question. This lack of contact in the departmental system was confirmed by the responses of participants in interviews:

> I don't get any feedback. All the feedback I get is that they do the end of year performance. If I am lucky I hear about it a few months later – I ask – how did that one do, and they say – I don't remember, so eh. (FF)

> The assessment feedback would not cost anything – just an email to let me know the written feedback about the assessment. (HH)

> I never see the feedback. I don't know if the students receive actual physical paper forms, but they never bring it to me. Sometimes they will say – so and so says I must work on my sound – something like that. (KK)

> I only see feedback if I ask – and this is verbal. I have never seen written feedback. It would be useful as I do not see them playing. (JJ)

There is a certain mechanistic quality to the departmental operations in regard to this assessment activity, as though the main point of it was to fulfil a

requirement of the university system for a grade to be entered. There is no evidence of the use of the activity as a means to go beyond the measurement of achievement and to attempt to feed forward into future improvements. Such a refinement would certainly require that IMTs be included in the assessment process, if only in the final stage by sending them the grading criteria and assessment feedback forms for them to employ in their future engagements with their students.

#### 4.3.5 Role as professional: Career.

A number of responses from participants in the shadowing activities and interview engagements pointed to issues relating to the professional role of the IMT and the way it fits in with the wider career of the individual. These showed varied views of the purpose and status of the university IMT and provided reflections about the place of instrumental skills in the lives of the students.

For each of the IMTs who participated in the study, teaching at the university was just a part of a pattern of work that included performance, recording, organising musical events, teaching at home and at other public and private educational organisations. For example, one IMT stated:

> I do many different things; I play for Ballet, I perform, I practise, I teach privately, I do master-classes, I have recorded a CD. I suppose it fits in well and I like doing many different things and this is one nice facet of all my activities. (FF)

Similar comments included the following:

> It is a small part, but the way I look at what I do, it is the bit I really like and would not want to give it up. (KK)

> I work at two colleges teaching theory to 18 year olds. (HH)

> I teach in junior schools and senior schools for two days a week. (II)

> I give two days to this place and three elsewhere together with gigs and recording sessions. (GG)

Another spoke of having contracts at three regional universities along with a number of private school teaching appointments and these statements indicated the range of experience and expertise that the IMTs bring to the department and the broad contacts that they had within the wider musical landscape in the region. In spite of the busy nature of the professional lives of these teacher-musicians, some IMTs spoke of a desire to become more involved in the life of this university's music department:

> Sometimes it seems that I go in and do my bit and then leave, but it would be nice to be more involved and maybe there are other things that I could get involved with. (FF)

> My suggestion [for an annual meeting] wasn't to get more money, but to feel part of the department. (KK)

#### 4.3.6 Role as professional: Status.

Whatever the potential advantages of developing a positive engagement between the department and its IMTs, the current treatment of these members of staff suggests that this had not been recognised. The organisational position or status of these employees is unique in the school for it has chosen to place them on a special visiting lecturer rate for IMTs that is paid at a significantly lower rate than other part-time teachers. While the normal rate of remuneration for part-time lecturing staff, whether delivering in partnership or as sole teacher of a module, was £33.50, IMTs were paid £25.10, a figure that was also inclusive of holiday entitlement. While this may seem to some to represent the reduced administrative load in comparison with other kinds of visiting lecturer contracts, it could be argued that the intensive nature of the one-to-one teaching makes particular demands, and

some of the IMTs themselves mentioned that the university was paying them significantly below the Musician's Union rate for this kind of teaching. As the email from the school administrator below reveals, this was a special, low rate, agreed between the School Executive and the Human Resources department of the university. The music department did not seem to have any input into this matter:

> The instrumental tutors rate of £25.10 per hour was agreed between HR and School Executive. The hourly rate includes annual leave entitlement, as does the demonstrator rate. I have no written document on this I could let you have. (LL)

One IMT remarked:

> I have sort of accepted that it is £25.10 per hour and has been forever. The MU rate is £30 per hour so I get £30 to teach four-year olds whereas here, where we are working at greater depth, it is the worst paid teaching that I do. That is why I do not come in weekly…(KK)

Evidence presented earlier in this chapter speaks of the extra time and additional contact that IMTs gave to their role and the care and mentoring approach that most of them portrayed. This was in stark contrast to the way that some felt that the organisation valued them, as expressed in their position in the university pay scales and in comparison to other university work that they undertook. Along with a perception of poor financial treatment, my observations, recorded in a research diary after an early shadowing encounter, painted a bleak picture of the conditions in which some of them experience their work. (See appendix E)

The issue of power in the relationship between teacher and student was raised by several IMTs who noted that the students seem to have undue control. In some instances, this related to the dictation of the pace of progress

by their degree of willingness to practise between lessons and the consequent sense of powerlessness and resignation from the IMT:

> They are completely off the lead at university, they are in charge, and it is down to them. (KK)
>
> The students have a lesson with me and my job is to guide them in what they need to be doing but they automatically boss the lesson because, if they come to the lesson and have not learnt the work from the week before, I cannot go to the next sections. So they dictate – if they do not want to learn it is hard to get them to progress. (HH)

In other instances it was evident that students had abused their position in arranging, rearranging and cancelling lessons with obvious disregard for the disruption to the schedule of their teacher. Absence without proper explanation was indicative of a rather dismissive attitude to lessons and suggested that some students undervalued the input made available to them by their IMT. My diary entry following an observation of an IMT's visit to the campus demonstrated this:

> The student was clearly not going to turn up for the lesson. I asked JJ about the procedure for non-attendance but she was not aware of a formal mechanism. I asked who would be notified but she had no point of contact in the department. I asked if the lesson would be rearranged or if the time now lost to the student. There was some uncertainty about how to act here. While noting the personal slight and annoyance caused by events, the personal nature of the relationship between student and tutor, and the lack of a formal oversight or guiding procedure left the tutor in a difficult situation - and the student in a position of power that seems to allow abuse.
> There appears to be no departmental involvement in this arrangement or guidance to either party - leaving it to be determined by the individuals. This again exposes the IMT to student misuse of the relationship, especially with a less secure or new teacher, uncertain of the staff/student culture at the university or with an amenable character wishing to be helpful and supportive .
>
> (Research diary extract reflections on shadowing engagement and subsequent conversation with JJ)

I was able to observe a conversation within the music department about a student complaint concerning an IMT. The course leader concerned

announced his intention to cease the employment of this IMT at the end of the contract in May. This decision was based solely upon the matters raised by the students: The IMT had not been consulted, had no voice in the discussion, and was unaware of the threat to her continued employment. I spoke to the IMT concerned about her relationship with her students and she, unprompted, revealed some knowledge of the issues that had been raised:

> When they could not be arsed to turn up a lot of the time, I had a rant at CC [course leader] and he said that they had had a rant about me, but he would not tell me what that was about. I know I had a pop at some of them about their timekeeping, about the number of times that they could not be bothered to turn up and it's like – I can only help you if you turn up. (KK)

This issue resonated with some of the comments that other IMTs had raised about the lack of communication between them and the academic staff. This deficiency left the IMT isolated and powerless and further degraded their status in the department. The same IMT went on to state:

> There are always two sides – if they were whinging that I had a go at them, I can say that I am perfectly entitled in that case because of that reason. Really, CC [the course leader] or BB [Head of Department] should have talked to me about it because we are all a team and we should be working together to make it better for ourselves, the department and the students. (KK)

As I next discuss, the sharp distinction between the way that IMTs are treated by the university and their strong sense of a mission or vocation to serve the musical development of their students is a striking feature that has emerged from my engagement in this study. While they speak of mentoring and guiding students, sharing their expertise and giving their time and resources freely, the organisation affords them the lowest status, some barely able to enter the building without signing in as visitors, forced to rely on students to book teaching spaces or given wholly unsuitable spaces in which to work. They are

excluded from involvement in decisions regarding curriculum and assessment matters and left largely in the dark about grading criteria and assessment feedback. All of them are paid at a specifically generated rate of pay, set below all other teachers in the school. In spite of all of this, the participants were still enthusiastic in their work and interested in greater involvement in the department, believing the development of instrumental skills to be central to the lives and careers of the students.

### 4.4 CODE TABLE (Combined)

| CODES and CATEGORIES | | | THEMES / CONCEPTS | THEORIES/ PATTERNS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Access to the building | Access to Teaching Facilities | Access to Staff Facilities | ACCESS | EXPECTATIONS AND ENTITLEMENTS |
| Car Parking | Library and Photocopying | Personal storage | | |
| Entry barrier | Printing | Staff Kitchen | | |
| Identity Card | Internet Access | Telephones | | |
| Teaching rooms | musical equipment | Staffroom | | |
| Contact with Academic Staff | Contact with students | Contact with Administrative staff | COMMUNICATION | |
| Key Individuals | Absence policy | Room Booking System | | CONNECTEDNESS |
| Knowledge of structures | Booking lessons and rooms | Registers | | |
| Frequency of interaction | Email and Telephone | Employment contracts and claim forms | | |
| Role in Assessment | Relationship with students | As Professional | ROLE | PARTICIPATION |
| Selecting materials | Envisioning the role -master apprentice, -mentor, advisor, guide, -answer-filled expert | Career | | |
| Attending assessments | | | | |
| Assessment Feedback | Lesson Evaluation | Status | | |

# CHAPTER FIVE ANALYSIS

## 5.0 Themes and Interpretations

The code tables presented in the previous chapter showed the first layer of analysis and indicated how the initial 'wild coding' (Delamont, 2002) of interview transcripts created a large number of categories that were then distilled into the main themes of access, communication and role. The ensuing discussion examines these three themes and interprets the responses in each area in order to provide an understanding of the personal and organisational matters raised.

## 5.1 Access

From the initial stages of this investigation it was clear that there were a number of categories of response that referred to matters of access. These included those that related to physical places such as car parks, the main building, specialist teaching rooms, staff rooms, but also included the availability of resources including internet, printing, photocopying, email and on-line learning facilities. What emerged from the discourse, however, was not a sense of frustration or even anger at the lack of access, but of resignation. A telling comment from an IMT stated that '…I am not one to make a fuss.', (FF) while there was a general concern that our conversations should be anonymised and thereby kept from other members of the organisation for fear of being seen to be demanding, or to hold negative attitudes towards the department. This did not imply a sense of contentment or satisfaction with the prevailing circumstances of their employment, but instead it betrayed a feeling of powerlessness to challenge or change things and reflected their marginalised position and the insecurity of their employment contracts. There was certainly no evidence of formal mechanisms through which the voices of IMTs might be heard. There

was, for example, no representation of this body of employees in departmental meetings or at wider organisational committees such as Teaching and Learning committee or the Positive Working Environment committee. Here the perspective provided by Lukes (1974), Veneklasen and Miller (2002) and Garenta (2006) reveal how the spaces for participation in decision-making can be closed by the exercise of the 'hidden dimension of power' that determines outcomes by '…controlling who gets to the decision-making table and what gets on the agenda.' (Veneklasen and Miller 2002, p.40)

What did emerge from a close analysis of different experiences was a two-tiered approach within the department, with one layer benefitting from a level of engagement and coordination from a course leader, the other layer being rather left to their own devices. The responses were correspondingly different for some individuals in relation to access to certain basic facilities. However, the custom and practice of the music department had not included the provision of access to wider facilities such as desk space, personal storage, internet access and IT accounts, and so neither group from these layers had been supplied with these. The low level of expectation evident among these IMTs is such that it would be highly unlikely that such a request would be made. As one remarked, 'I'm only a little part of what you do.' (KK)

Since this study had set out specifically to explore the processes and practices experienced by IMTs in their work, it was not surprising that parts of the conversations should have focused upon the minutia of organisational life or that they should have concentrated on those aspects that caused problems in their day to day operations. What had clearly passed unnoticed within the department was the low level of access afforded to IMTs by the university, and the impact of

this upon their work and their sense of belonging to the organisation. One such small-scale deprivation was observed where IMTs routinely purchased drinks from the public vending machine even though there was a fully equipped staff kitchen within the staffroom facility where drinks were available free of charge. As one interviewee stated 'I did not know we had a staff room.' (KK) It is possible to attribute this distance between the department and its IMTs to a benign neglect, based upon a view of these teachers as occupying a particular organisational space characterised by a level of professional autonomy. This certainly resonates with a view of IMTs as self-contained experts, employed to provide highly-specialised, discrete skills. It does not, however, account for the situation that emerged of employees denied access as members of staff to the buildings, teaching spaces and facilities. It is more plausible to identify this as a result of a lack of care and consideration on the part of the employer – represented by the music department and the particular school. This was certainly evident when IMTs attempted to obtain staff identity cards but were unable to do so due to a number of administrative obstacles that prevented them from being recognised as eligible employees. Where one of the course leaders had intervened to smooth this process, several IMTs were able to receive their organisational identity cards but the effort that this required highlighted their lack of inclusion in the day-to-day procedures of the organisation and the sense that they were an after-thought to the main processes of the department.

When subjected to analysis that sifted the data to reveal the main issues, the theme of access as outlined in this study pointed to a low sense of expectation and entitlement to proper recognition and status as a member of the university

teaching body and to a presence and a voice in the life and work of the music department. One IMT spoke of being prevailed upon by technical support staff for putting books on top of a piano and taking coffee into the teaching room and having his 'wrists slapped' for misunderstanding the booking system and sending the technician an email instead of contacting a secretary.

> There is usually no chair for me to sit on which is fine if it is an hour or two as it is good for me to stand, but I said to him today I am doing 7 hours so I said please can I have a chair so he opened the dressing room and I took a chair for there and that means I also have access to the bathroom 'cause occasionally I need that as well, because again if I go out and lock the door I cannot get back in. (FF)

It was unlikely that other academic staff would have allowed themselves to be subjected to quite the same manner of address by support staff and these kinds of exchanges that emerged and the passive responses of IMTs highlighted the low level of entitlement that they felt in their experience of working in this context. To some degree, this resignation and low level of entitlement derived from the pervading ethos in the department that originated in the changes in the treatment and remuneration of IMTs that were imposed by a former head of department. This action can be seen in the light of Lukes' (1974) framework as an example of the exercise of a visible, coercive form of power. Visible power or 'power over' (Vaneklasen and Miller 2002) is usually embodied in the formal organisational mechanisms through which decisions are taken and enforced. In the situation of this case study the visible power of the former head of department had been employed to impose a unique and lower pay scale for these tutors. This imposition was justified on the basis of a particular view of the IMT role as marginal to the department and divorced from planning, assessment, administration and other activities. As Dahl (1957) observed, 'he

who prevails has power' (p. 202-3) and clearly the IMTs working in the department at that time were subjected to this exercise of power and to the deterioration in their conditions of employment. There was no formal dialogue between academic staff in the department on this matter and IMTs themselves were not consulted. As a result, they were powerless to resist except by the choice that some exercised to turn down future offers of employment. Over time, newer members of staff accepted their contracts on the basis of the revised conditions of employment and were unaware of how their work had been delineated and marginalised through the exercise of power to impose a particular view of the IMT role. The use of coercive power continued to be evident during the period of this research in the struggle to arrange greater participation of IMTs by the current head of department. At each attempt to extend the range of activities to include attendance at planning meetings the head of department was specifically refused permission by the dean of school through the use of visible, organisational power.

The greater legacy of this change in the organisational circumstances of the IMTs role was the creation of an ethos that increased the isolation of these tutors. This can be seen as a form of invisible power that produced a 'pervasive regulated consciousness' (Lukes 1974) that altered the agenda and limited the actions of academic staff in their dealings with IMTs. Since the pay scale was significantly lower than other part-time employees, academic staff felt unable to make requests for reports or other administrative tasks from IMTs with the result that participation reduced and isolation increased. This approach to thinking about the connections between music academic staff and IMTs became reified in the processes and procedures of the department and prior to this research

engagement, was no longer debated as part of departmental discourses nor questioned in course committees or departmental meetings.

## 5.2 Communication

The second major theme that emerged from the analysis of data was the matter of communication. This concept draws together evidence relating to contacts between IMTs and the music academic staff, students and university administrators. It is employed here in relation to the information exchange that occurred between these constituents in recognition of the aim of this study to examine the experiences of organisational processes and procedures. (While communication is also an important aspect of the theme of the role of IMTs that follows, the terms of 'involvement' and 'participation' have been employed there since they incorporate wider aspects of the interactions between staff, students and IMTs.)

A key finding to emerge was the general sense of disappointment with communications and contacts between IMTs and the University.

> '…In all honesty, I have not had any contact with anyone really.' (II)
>
> 'I never see the feedback – I don't know if the students receive actual physical paper forms but they never bring it to me. (KK)
>
> '…they (another university) are even worse than you guys for communication.' (HH)
>
> 'I think there is a huge communication deficit. This is the first year that I have been sent a document saying what the student assessment criteria are.'(JJ)

Participants in this study displayed a surprisingly limited knowledge about the organisation in which they work: the structure and personnel of the school and even of the music department were largely unknown to IMTs, with some only able to identify a single, key academic contact, and none able to distinguish

between the different degree courses offered. All stated that they had some positive contact with administrative staff and there was general satisfaction expressed in relation to the way that contracts and pay claims were processed. Indeed, there was very little response to the nature of the documents encountered by IMTs and an acceptance of the tone and the manner of address employed. Even though one described the documents as ‘shouty’ and patronising, most, it seems, regarded such an approach from employers as quite normal.

The experiences of individual teachers differed as a result of accidental contacts or serendipitous timetabling and room locations, but even where stronger personal relationships between IMTs and academic staff were noted, some having performed together prior to their engagement, a detached formality existed in contacts around and in relation to their work as IMTs. Another point of difference emerged where the engagement of one Course Leader was significantly different to another and this had led to a more streamlined experience and a clearer line of communication where time had been taken to assist some IMTs with rooms and student timetables. It remains the case, however, that all participants reported

a) limited contact with administrators,

b) negligible contact with academic staff

and

c) no contact with fellow IMTs.

Individual IMTs frequently attended the campus without the knowledge of the academic or administrative staff of the music department and they often had no contact with any members of staff beyond the receptionists. The main

connections that existed in the practice of the work of the IMTs was with and through the students that they taught and their involvement in the department was limited to the exchange of basic information required to establish contracts, spaces and times. It became easier to discuss contacts and communication by identifying what was not in place, than by seeking to find systematised mechanisms for regular and consistent interactions. There was, for example, no complete email or telephone contact list available, no consistently employed and formally agreed register system, no absence policy outlined by the music department to IMTs and students, and no clear stipulation of lines of responsibility within the department and between academic staff and IMTs. It is interesting to note that within an organisational culture of accountability with an otherwise highly systematised approach to service provision, the world inhabited by IMTs should be largely devoid of such processes and operate in a disconnected, semi-detached environment.

## 5.3 Role

The third major theme identified in the analysis of data is the broadest. It incorporates the relationship between teacher and student, the part that IMTs play in assessment processes, and their understanding of their task, each of which could provide a field of study in their own right. However, it is the specific focus upon the definition, experience and interpretation of their work by this music department's IMTs themselves that, drawing from each of these areas, is indicated here by the use of the term 'role'.

The data presented in chapter four outlined the centrality of the relationship between IMTs and students, highlighting this as the main source of motivation and meaning for the teachers. The richness of the interactions at university was

noted as a key aspect of the experience and for some, the belief that instrumental skill is the central, most vital aspect of the students' learning, gave a sense of importance and mission to their work. While the organisation showed little sense that it valued the input of the IMTs, their own sense of vocation carried them over this barrier and the minutia of the various obstacles to participation failed to dim this view of their professional role.

The IMTs refused to accept the denigration of their role as a marginal activity and resisted such a portrayal at the local level through the discourse that they maintained with and about their work with their students.

> The local is the site where de-legitimacy is resisted, where …one is refusing to be seen as powerless or to be positioned without power. (Skeggs, 1997, p. 11)

This appropriation of the discourse shows the expression of power that Vaneklasen and Miller (2002) termed 'power within' that can operate collaboratively and in a positive manner to produce change in the prevailing discourse. It derives from the 'individual or collective sense of self-worth, value and dignity' (p. 46) that was readily evident in the descriptions of the importance of instrumental teaching that IMTs provided during interview exchanges.

> For me the xxxxx lesson was the most important. (GG)

> I find it very frustrating – why are you here? What is the purpose if you are not going to pursue your instrument. (KK)

It also echo's Foucault's view that 'power is everywhere' and 'comes from everywhere' (Foucault, 1998, p. 63) and that the discourse or 'regime of truth' can be developed and enacted irrespective of organisational position and formal structures. By prioritising and valorising instrumental technique above all other

curriculum content, IMTs had attempted to develop and shape what kind of knowledge counted in the attitudes of their students.

All of the IMTs who participated in this study expressed their commitment to the job and sense of pride in their work, seeing themselves, largely, as knowledgeable guides to their students, mentoring them in the field of instrumental expertise and providing access to the repertoire and to the world of the active performer. At the extremes, there was one who spoke of a need to be firm and 'sergeant-majorly', while another resisted the notion of giving a lesson – preferring less hierarchical language, but the aim of assisting students to improve their skills, and the provision of care and support to the individual was a clear and consistent message. It is notable that this approach is not reflected in the manner that the organisation treated the IMTs since, while they cared for, mentored and sought to develop their students, the university offered no such consideration to this body of its employees. This can be seen most directly in the lack of provision of funding to facilitate even a single, annual meeting between IMTs and music academic staff, but also in the absence of IMTs in the staff development programme of the university. During the period of this study, one IMT attempted to gain a place on a course leading to a postgraduate teaching qualification. He contacted the relevant university department and was informed that such a place would be available only if employees with a higher priority rating did not require them. In his role as an IMT he was unable to gain a place since the eligibility criteria gave a low rating to the temporary contract through which he was employed.

It would be misleading to claim too high a degree of homogeneity among the participants in relation to their interpretation of the role of the IMT. While there

was notable commonality in the willingness of all of the participants to attend and to observe assessment or other performance events without remuneration, views differed on the degree of formal involvement in such activities that they would find compatible with their teaching role. In spite of the specific instrumental knowledge that these teachers possess, there was a general unease at being involved in the assessment of the performances of their own students, and, in some cases, a definite refusal to do so.

> 'I think we should not be in the assessment for our own students. When I was a student … my old teacher … was on the panel and that made me feel a little uncomfortable.' (KK)

> 'I don't want them to feel that I am assessing them you see as they might not be comfortable with that.' (GG)

It was regarded by some IMTs as injurious to the student-teacher relationship and to the sense of working together towards the goal of performing to an outsider and may also reflect their wider experience of preparing and entering students for graded music examinations such as ABRSM and Trinity College exam boards where an external, visiting examiner undertakes the assessment and grading.

In spite of the actions of the university and the marginalised position, limited access and poor communications, IMTs did not view themselves as victims nor refer to themselves in such terms during interview engagements. All participants spoke positively of the opportunity to work in a Higher Education environment for the level of work, maturity of the student-teacher exchanges, and the value that this added to their personal curriculum vitae. They also spoke positively about the range of activities in which they were engaged outside of their university work. In broad terms, those teaching popular music instruments tended to see themselves primarily as performers who sustained their playing

careers by adding in part-time teaching contracts. This view seemed to be maintained even where the balance between performing and teaching made the latter the major activity and generator of regular income but can be seen as an example of the formation of identity as outlined by Wenger (1998) as ‘negotiated experience’ based on regular engagement in relevant activities and in the owning of an identifying label or labels. They spoke frequently about being ‘on tour’,(HH) ‘in the studio’ (GG) or ‘in the industry’(II) and in so doing they announced their alignment with an identity beyond the confines of their organisational position and based on a sense of belonging to a community of professional popular musicians. This community of musicians to which they referred is populated by self-employed musicians who participate in constantly changing bands and locations based on short-term tours and one-off shows or gigs. Most had also been members of one or more bands for many years (respondent II and GG particularly) although these groups only met briefly before performances at gigs, never met to rehearse and lived many miles apart. Contact tended to be undertaken by text message or telephone call rather than through more modern, web-based social media frameworks. Further study could examine the extent to which this limited, but regular form of engagement could be termed a community of practice in terms described by Lave and Wenger (1991) but the label of professional musician was employed by IMTs in this study as an important badge of identity and exemplifies Wenger’s notion of ‘identity as a community membership’ based on a sense of shared competence. Those with a classical music background tended to view their teaching careers as a central part of their own professional identity and saw themselves as

passing on a tradition of performance that they had imbibed during their own student experience.

> I know my ‘xxxxx’ tradition. It is very much French - X & Y, who were Paris Conservatoire and invented the way to play the modern xxxxx. It is passed down - they taught X, who taught Y, who taught Z who taught me and so on. (KK)

They were the most likely to express the view that the development of instrumental prowess was the central reason for students to undertake a degree course.

> One student said he had four hours of world music, which is so much and I don’t understand why so much time. They should be learning their instrument. (FF)
>
> I find it very frustrating – why are you here what is the purpose if you are not going to pursue your instrument. (KK)

For these teachers, the day-to-day obstacles to their practice and the lack of communication and professional participation were most keenly felt.

Alongside the matter of musical style and an IMT’s personal learning history, the number of students and consequent amount of time of an individual teacher’s employment influenced the way that the role was interpreted in the context of their wider career. Where an IMT was engaged by multiple organisations and fitted these around a range of other musical activities, the emotional energy committed to this particular organisation was necessarily less than those who were engaged for a much greater length of time.

For these teachers, visits to the campus were few and the lack of facilities, limited engagement and low status afforded by the university was something that had less impact upon their self-identity. As a result they felt justified in adopting a stricter approach to working to their contracted hours and here was

evidence, perhaps, of the only note of reciprocity in relation to the disconnected position, lack of care and low remuneration, with one IMT describing the way that the university work was squeezed in around other contracts. This was partly to mitigate the cost of separate journeys, but also showed how the lowly paid university work took a marginal space in the career of this teacher. IMTs describe this situation as 'regrettable', and as 'not the way things should be', but the financial imperative was a strong factor, and the lack of contact, care and involvement were contributory elements of a resigned, disappointed attitude to their university work.

> That is why I do not come in weekly – I just fit it in. I combine it in a loop with a private school. (KK)

> I have the opinion that once I have finished this teaching – that is when I have finished the job, it does not carry on with me any longer. (II)

The teachers of classical instruments in this case study also spoke of strong connections with other communities of musicians beyond the university although these differed from those of popular music tutors in that they also included those that formed around their specific instrument. For example, the teacher of piano organised and ran a series of master-classes that engaged other teachers and students of piano while the flute teacher took part in workshops designed solely for the community of flautists where ideas and expertise could be developed. These communities were sustained through on-line frameworks and connections since they drew their membership from the wider region and in the second example, from across Europe. Nevertheless, they revealed to some degree, the shared repertoire, mutual engagement and joint enterprise that Lave and Wenger (1991) identify in their outline of the features of communities of practice. The participation of these IMTs in the performance of classical music in

ensembles was often undertaken in contexts where they would not receive payment. Their participation in these groups was, however, very important to them since it cemented their place and profile within the community of regional classical musicians and developed and sustained contacts through which future employment might arise. The perceived quality of certain ensembles made participation in them a highly valued activity in relation to the self-identity of the individual.

Whether teaching at universities and schools, playing in large ensembles, running smaller groups or participating in workshops and master-classes, all IMTs in this study developed their sense of identity through the 'nexus of multi-membership' (Wenger, 1998, p. 163) in which the individual IMTs defined themselves by reconciling their various forms of membership into one main identity. (p.163) The frequency of references in the data to these external professional activities revealed how those in a marginalised position were able to exercise control of the discourse and so construct and position themselves in a more favourable and positive light. This aligns with Foucault's observation that organisational discourses can produce power relations that shape whose knowledge counts in a particular situation. In describing their role as visiting experts, opening doors for students into the world of the professional musician, IMTs were enacting a strategy for the use of power that had positive, productive effects for their sense of identity, or a Foucault states, it produced for them, a positive 'ritual of truth. (Foucault, 1975, p.194)

It should be noted that although the IMTs in this case study were employed to teach in an academic department populated by research-active members of staff, none of them were engaged in research activities themselves. The full-

time music staff have been actively involved in the introduction of innovations in teaching and learning and undertaken pedagogic research projects closely related to instrumental technique and performance practice. (Cooper et al, 2009, Bayley, 2011) They had not, however, taken steps to involve the department's IMTs in their work. As a result, IMTs had not been given the opportunity to employ their skills and knowledge in research activities and had not been encouraged to developed academic identities alongside their professional musician and teacher identities. It may be possible to interpret this as an outcome of the pervading consciousness (Lukes 1974, p. 23) or prevailing discourse (Foucault 1980, p. 98) that constructed IMTs as marginal to the work of the department and created boundaries that framed the possibilities of thought and prevented music staff from seeing the potential to invite IMTs to participate in research activities.

This detachment from research activities can be seen as another function of the isolation that IMTs experience and as part of the lack of pedagogic support and development that they receive. This has been seen in the grudging approach to the provision of formal staff development opportunities described above and in the limited involvement that they were permitted into the assessment activities of their students. Allied to this is another form of exclusion reported by IMTs in the omission of their work from the HE quality mechanisms that function in relation to all other teaching in the department and across the university. While most teaching arenas contain opportunities for tutors to receive feedback from their students in the middle and at the end of each semester, the instrumental lessons were not directly addressed in this manner. This omission may be due to ideas within the department that seek to respect the professional autonomy of

those engaged to provide instrumental teaching but it was experienced by IMTs as a form of neglect and a sign of a lack of importance given to their role.

> I get monitored by other employees – I suppose students should feedback to you – good or bad… (FF)
>
> No-one ever comes and monitors me. I could be the worst teacher you have ever had here. (KK)
>
> Feedback - Absolutely none. I have never had any of that. (JJ)

As Becher and Trowler (2001) note, the quality mechanisms of the QAA in the UK '…has brought some positive effects, generating a collective conception of educational quality.' and '…providing benefits in terms of equal opportunities for academic staff.' (p 19)

Engagement with quality systems of the university would provide information to all stakeholders about the 'fitness for purpose' of the instrumental teaching in the department, ensuring that a threshold, or minimum quality of provision was being achieved. It would also see the benefits of the 'quality as enhancement' approach that is embedded in the QAA ethos and approach (Harvey et al, 1992; QAA, 2014) since the increased visibility that inclusion in quality mechanisms would provide would make it more important to the employer to provide pedagogic support and staff development to its IMTs and see developments in the level of care that they experience and degrees of participation that are opened up to them.

# CHAPTER SIX THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

## 6.1 Degrees of Marginalisation.

The discussion now turns to the overriding concept that draws from the three main themes, that is, the degrees of marginalisation experienced by IMTs in their work at the university. This is discussed below in terms of the low expectations and sense of entitlement that was revealed, the limited opportunities for participation and the type and extent of connectedness between them and the organisation. These matters are set alongside the research literature discussed in chapter two in order to reveal facets of the case that resonate with earlier studies and to highlight areas that challenge existing knowledge and thought about the nature and experience of the instrumental teaching role in university music departments. In particular, the research of Purser (2005), Haddon (2005) and Burwell (2005) is re-examined in relation to the isolation of IMTs, reflecting on the data and the challenge that they make to the findings of these earlier investigations that label such teachers as secretive and hidden in their approach to their role.

The reinterpretation of the attitude and position of IMTs from inherently isolationist to that of an *involuntarily* isolated, marginalised body of employees is examined through the work of Weick (1976) and Orton and Weick (1990) and explored through their concept of differing degrees of organisational coupling. The positive aspects of the loose-coupled position that was evident are outlined, but are balanced by the frustrations of a low level of organisational connectedness, contact and communication.

The ways in which IMTs develop their understanding and execution of the role is considered in the light of Lave and Wenger's concept of legitimate peripheral

participation and the implications of their analysis is considered in view of the lack of opportunities for mutual engagement that emerged from this study. Finally, the interpretations that individual IMTs expressed about their work are explored through the concept of the individual self-world or Umwelt as outlined by Uexküll (1909a), Uexküll (1985), Deeley (2001) and Sharov (2001) in order to understand the varied perspectives and account for the heterogeneity of the data.

| Initial Codes | Degrees of Marginalisation | Theoretical Perspectives | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Access | Expectations and Entitlement | Isolation~~(ist)~~<br>Loose-coupling | Conclusions |
| Communication | Connectedness | Legitimate Peripheral Participation, | |
| Role | Participation | Umwelten | |

## 6.2 Expectation and entitlement in organisational practices.

The main themes of access and of communication have pointed to patterns of low expectations and a limited sense of entitlement among IMTs in this university, and this, in turn, set the tone for the interpretation of the role in the minds of the individuals. As noted most starkly in my research diary notes, (Appendix E) there was evidence of significant neglect and lack of provision for IMTs in relation to their day-to-day teaching activities. Consequently, it would be surprising if these teachers were interested in wider matters of organisational and professional engagement when they struggled simply to gain access to the building and to a suitable teaching space. Such practical obstacles filled the energy and time of these teachers and framed their experience. However, when

given the opportunity during interview engagements to reflect upon their work at the university, an appreciation of the way things might, or perhaps, ought to be, began to emerge. One individual went away from the interview to prepare a paper that outlined how he might become more involved and contribute to the development of what he saw as a more vocationally relevant curriculum for players of his particular instrument. The interview process and his involvement in this study sparked his interest and stirred up a desire to share his sense of how things could develop and he went on to outline these ideas with the head of the music department. This demonstrated the depth of thought, ideas, expertise and enthusiasms that would be available to the university if it were willing and able to explore, refine and direct them into curricula developments. However, Wenger (1998) has shown how organisational structures play a significant part in pre-forming experience, and there is evidence here of the way that IMTs had 'drawn in' the scope of their expectations and of their interpretation of their role in order to fit the organisational space predetermined by departmental custom and practice. The IMTs had adjusted to the level of deprivation that they encountered, lowered their expectations and accepted the treatment that they received. Since their individual experiences were isolated from each other, there was no chance of the development of a shared interpretation or of a collective voice that might raise expectations and develop a view regarding entitlement. Evidence of the sense of disappointment remained, but it was also clear that IMTs had adapted their expectations in order to make the best of the way that the organisation wished them to operate – which largely involved getting on with their teaching without making demands on the time or physical resources of the organisation – to remain on the margins without making a fuss.

> 'I might say hello (to Head of Department) in passing and have a conversation, but nothing about my role in this university at all.' (GG)

In the work of Purser (2005) and Haddon (2005), this isolation of IMTs was also a strong theme, but was attributed, in their analysis, to the desire of the teachers rather than the outcome of organisational structures and operations. The secret world that they were shown to occupy in those studies arose out of their own insecurity over pedagogic practices and the ambiguity of professional knowledge in relation to the technicalities of instrumental technique. Burwell (2005) however, highlighted the willingness of the participants of her study to talk about their work with others and their regret at the lack of opportunities to undertake such activities. This present study found a similar level of interest and willingness among IMTs to share their views and experiences and found nothing of the secretive or hidden nature of earlier research. Indeed, the lack of interest of the university in the content and quality of teaching was something that surprised participants in this study. The growth of OFSTED inspection processes in the period since the work of Purser (2005) and Haddon (2005) may account for this greater openness and an increased level of expectation of monitoring of the teaching engagements, since several IMTs also worked in environments where such processes apply. As stated previously, these teachers saw such lack of exposure to quality mechanisms as regrettable, and a sign of their less valued and more marginalised status, rather than as an expression of the confidence of the employer in the professional abilities of its IMTs.

In either case, the isolation experienced by participants in this study was not of their own choosing, nor the result of insecurities and lack of openness on their part, but was the outcome of the organisational space afforded them and the

predetermined view and expectations of their role within the department and school.

### 6.3 Connectedness and participation.

The interpretations of the role of the IMT have also, it seems, been influenced by the patterns of connectedness and involvement that comprise the habitual practices of the music department. The degree of participation of IMTs in the life of the department had been strongly influenced when a lower rate of pay was set up in line with what was decreed to be the scope of the role by a previous head of department. This decision was based on the observation that IMTs were not normally involved in module preparation, assessment activities and feedback to students, and this set in place the delineation of the role in this particular department from that point until the present day. It was, therefore, neither by individual choice of IMTs, nor by accidental neglect, that the location of IMTs was determined. Instead, their detachment was of a formal nature, determined by custom and practice and reified by managerial decision. In organisational terms this body of participants had been allotted a sphere of activity that was detached from the main core of the department's operations and assigned a specific, limited role. They were, of course, still connected to the department through contacts with the music students and with the administrative processes of the school, but not through any other formal mechanisms such as meetings, consultations, assessment feedback, lesson observations or evaluations. For this reason, the concept of loose coupling (Weick, 1976) provides a relevant means to understand the location of the IMTs in this study. This concept identifies differing degrees of connectedness between elements of an organisation, from tightly coupled, through loosely coupled, to de-coupled.

Whatever the degree of isolation and marginalisation experienced by IMTs in this study, they could not be regarded as de-coupled from the organisation for, howsoever they undertook their role – whether visiting the campus regularly, occasionally or sporadically, their work was affected by the decisions and operations of the music department. Examples include decisions about the timetable and about the timing of assessments and a recent practice by academic staff of specifying the material to be performed in assessments, all of which had a clear and direct impact upon the IMTs' work. In other ways, however, changes and developments in the work of the department had very little impact on IMTs. When there were changes in the academic staff membership as individuals left and were replaced, even of changes in the head of department position, the IMTs were unaffected, and did not become aware of the changes for some time. When a major curriculum change was implemented across the department (and indeed, the university), involving the reframing of the undergraduate degree programmes in both structure and content, again the IMTs were unaware and unaffected. Their organisational location can, therefore, be aligned with the loosely coupled concept since through times of particular turbulence in the university and departmental operations, the work of the IMTs had continued unaffected, and, to use Orton and Weick's (1990, pp. 213-4) terms, they persisted through these times and were buffered from any direct impact by their loose coupling to the organisation.

There are other traits that were observed in the analysis of this case that also showed a degree of alignment with this concept, for March (1987) outlined the opportunities provided by a loosely-coupled location for behavioural discretion, described as the capacity for autonomous action. As has been shown, the data

revealed a measure of freedom within the IMT role at this university to determine when individuals wish to teach their students, something that they reported as providing a valued flexibility to fit their teaching around other professional engagements. Similarly, the specific method of instruction or approach to pedagogy employed was left entirely to the discretion of the individual IMT. As noted, however, this freedom was not enshrined in formal processes and was significantly reduced when academic staff decided to impose a list of performance material to be studied in the instrumental lessons and this showed the capacity of the core of the department to have an impact on the IMTs work. Such examples highlight the separate, yet connected nature of the IMT role that is typical of a situation where loose coupling can be said to be a feature. To use Weick's summary, elements (in this case, the music department and the IMTs) are responsive but retain evidence of separateness and identity.

An important distinction must be drawn, however, between the classic loose coupling ideas of Weick and others, and the contemporary situation of this present study, for the patterns of interaction and contacts observed between academic staff and IMTs can be characterised as a one-way communication. The flow of impact and effect is evident in the way that decisions of the department eventually filter down to affect the work of the IMTs. There is little evidence, however, of a corresponding impact of the actions of IMTs upon the academic staff except that an occasional dispute between students and their IMT may require the involvement and arbitration of a course leader or head of department.

Before leaving the concept of loose coupling, two further aspects find a resonance in the data of this study: The first is the assertion that some investigators have made that loose coupling fosters self-determination and self-efficacy (Weick, 1976). The sense of empowerment that IMTs revealed when discussing the student-tutor relationship in the interview sessions was a marked contrast to their sense of resignation and powerlessness in relation to matters of access and communication with the organisation. This seemed to be the result of their ownership of the one-to-one engagement with students where they were able, within limits discussed, to exercise their profession unimpeded by the actions of the organisation. The change of tone and physical stature that I noted during the interview exchange when IMTs discussed this arena of operation demonstrated the level of self-efficacy that was noted in the loose coupling analysis. The second aspect identified where loose coupling is a feature is the reduced coordination costs to the organisation where time and money is not given to the establishment and upkeep of connecting mechanisms. This was certainly evident in this study where the department was unable to fund a single, annual meeting with its IMTs and no specific allocation of working hours were allotted to members of the academic staff to provide coordination between IMTs and the organisation. Here the loose-coupled location proved to be an advantage to those whose interest was in keeping costs under control but presented a limitation to the head of department who stated that he wanted such connections to be funded.

One of the underlying aspects of the loose coupling theory is that the field of analysis is characterised by distinct, readily identified organisational elements. In this present study, the IMTs have been identified as one such element within

the wider organisation, - as a sub-set of the music department. The location of these members of the organisation has been shown to be on the margins, detached and isolated from the core in terms of access, communications, connectedness (or coupling) and, through the limited space afforded to them, to opportunities for wider participation. The focus upon matters of access, procedures and communication processes is associated with an approach to organisational analysis that looks at the mastery of a job role as the acquisition of knowledge of such systems as are employed in a particular situation. Such a position has been questioned by Lave and Wenger’s approach that examined how newcomers to an organisation learned their role and became masters of their trade. They found that the degree of access for workers to legitimate spheres of participation with other, more experienced practitioners provided the strongest route through which to learn a particular job role. Their investigations led them to be so strongly convinced of the importance of social interaction to the process of learning a job role that they stated that without engagement, there is no such learning. Furthermore, they concluded that this participation cannot be internalised and private, but rather that it resides in the constant interaction between participants. (Lave and Wenger, 1991, pp. 50-52)

Given that the IMTs that are the focus of this study have been shown to work in just such a private, detached, isolated and marginalised sphere, with little evidence of social or other forms of interaction with co-workers, the implications of Lave and Wenger’s critique required consideration here. For example, this study found that the IMTs at this university do not know each other nor meet each other, either formally or informally, during the course of their employment. There is, to use Lave and Wenger’s term, no participatory framework and the

IMTs must interpret and undertake the job based upon their own perspective, unmediated by the perspectives of co-workers and unaided by interactions with more experienced practitioners. The data have shown that IMTs have limited contact with administrators, negligible contact with academic staff and no contact with fellow IMTs and that there exists, therefore, no community of practice comprised of this body of practitioners at this university. According to Lave and Wenger's study, therefore, these employees were in no position to develop their understanding of the role of an IMT and would be unlikely to increase their mastery of the role simply through longevity of service, or to move from their position on the margins of the organisation to a more central position towards the core of departmental operations. As noted in the data, IMTs who have worked in the university for some years were no more likely to be personally known or professionally involved, nor to be furnished with access cards or other facilities than were the newest IMTs in the organisation.
The potential consequence of a lack of access to opportunities for participation in a community of practice was highlighted by the report in Lave and Wenger (1991) of an earlier study by Marshall (1972) of apprentice butchers, and the failure of this group of workers to advance towards mastery of their job. The three main factors identified as responsible for this situation have been outlined in chapter two and are repeated here:

- They were physically separated from each other and were unable to observe more experienced operators.
- Economic factors dictated day-to-day interactions and so expensive interactions were seen as unnecessary and avoided.
- The notion of division of labour limited learning activities.

The relevance of these findings to the circumstances of the IMTs at this university is clear, for they provide a parallel to those of this study. The skills set

involved in this comparison is somewhat different, but it highlights the importance of an understanding of the processes that enable or inhibit the acquisition of relevant skills and facilitate the theoretical and experiential knowledge behind the execution of the role. The teachers in this study were found to be isolated from each other since the school would not fund processes through which they could meet and discuss their work and the presentation of the role by the organisation described a limited and narrowly defined sphere of activity. It would be reasonable to expect, therefore, that the findings of Marshall's study would be observable in the work of the IMTs in the context of the university music department, that is, that these factors will have limited the development of the participants and inhibited their progress towards mastery of their role. This study has not sought to examine the teaching methods or skills of IMTs and so the degree of mastery that individual IMTs exhibit in that aspect of their work is not, therefore, something that can be assessed through the data. What may be assumed from the work of Lave and Wenger and the subsequent outline of situated learning and communities of practice, however, is that the skills that the IMTs in this study possess are those that they must have developed themselves or brought with them to the role. Their employment at the university provided no opportunities for reflective practice or co-participation with experts through which to challenge their thinking, develop their resources or connect with innovations in teaching and learning. As earlier research has revealed, (Mills, 2002; Purser, 2006; Gaunt, 2009) IMTs tend to rely upon their own learning experiences to inform their practice, often employing the same teaching materials that they had themselves encountered as students and adopting the same pedagogic approaches. To some degree, this reflects the

notion of passing on the tradition of teaching that is a feature of instrumental music pedagogy and one IMT spoke of her knowledge of her 'flutey tradition', but it may also be a fall-back position in response to a lack of interaction, input and training offered by the institutions for which they work. In relation to on-going development, this same teacher provided evidence of the time and expense that IMTs invest into their own continuing professional development outside of their contact with the university, stating that she attended summer schools in Italy in order to study with well-known and respected practitioners. This was also revealed as the practice of another of the classical music teachers in this study while several of the popular music IMTs spoke of their regular performance work that, they felt, maintained and extended their skills and kept their teaching relevant to the needs of the students.

A distinction must be made between the participants in this study and the apprentices that were the focus of Lave and Wenger's work. The IMTs were employed at the university because they had already attained a certain professional standing, either as experienced performers or on the basis of their qualifications. The expectation of the department was that these members of staff brought with them the skills and knowledge acquired through lengthy study and practice as performers and, perhaps, as teachers. This would present a reasonable position were it not for the fact that the academic staff had very little knowledge of the teaching experience of the IMTs and since they did not interview them prior to engagement, or discuss how they might approach the teaching task, is seems that the department operated more in hope than in certainty in relation to the teaching skills of its IMTs. Once in post, as has been shown, they then operated in a marginalised location without supervision,

advice, guidance, input or the opportunity to share with co-participants in the role.

As stated in the outline of the methodology of this study, my own position is that of an organisational insider, working full time as a member of the music department. As such, I had a specific interest in the views of participants about the relationship between the IMTs and the academic staff of the department. However, the data show that, for IMTs, this was not a particular focus of concern. For example, while I was able to introduce an IMT to the Head of Music after she had been employed for sixteen months, she did not consider it unusual, or a negative aspect of her work, to have operated in such isolation from the central core of the department as represented by the team of academic staff. This perspective provides an insight into the way that the role is sometimes envisaged and the varied part that this employment plays in the wider career of these teachers. While I carried a personal concern for the greater integration of the IMTs into the department, and interpreted this to include stronger relationships and interactions of an interpersonal nature, the data speak, instead, of a need and a desire for greater information exchange, particularly around matters of assessment. There were moments when individual IMTs expressed a desire for greater participation and indicated that they could, if permitted, provide input into matters of learning materials and curriculum design, but these were the exceptions in the data. There was also an underlying notion expressed by participants that the circumstances under which IMTs work could be improved by greater involvement, but this was often expressed not in relational, but in procedural terms and referred to the practicalities of access and communication as matters that facilitated the current

activities that were seen as the nature and scope of the role. While it was tempting to point to the low expectations that IMTs have been shown to possess of the organisation in order to explain this limited need for relational contact, it may also be viewed as the result of the different priorities that IMTs placed on their university teaching. The umwelt theory outlined in chapter two provides a metaphor that facilitates a discussion of organisational behaviours that are not predicated upon structures or collective relationships and clustering, but recognises instead, an individual perspective within a common, but not necessarily shared environment. It notes that the experience of working in the university is not based simply upon what the IMT is aware of in sensation (the day-to-day practices) but on how these individual events are connected among themselves so as to constitute the wider notion of experience. The way that the experience is constructed will be dependent upon the particular nature or pre-disposition of the teacher (organism) doing the sensing for, as the ecological metaphor suggests, it is the interests of the organism, not the nature of the stimuli, that is the determining factor in the interpretative act. In other words, the IMT does not simply respond to what (s)he senses in the work environment but instead, actively structures these sensations into perceptions, woven from the network of expectations, interests, needs, philosophical positions, experience, training and cultural identities. The perceptions that emerge are highly individual in spite of the presence of a shared environment and the umwelt theory identifies this as the outcome of a species-specific world view in which, as Uexküll observed, (in Deeley, 2001 p. 3) a species operates inside an invisible bubble. The shared circumstances of working at the university provided common stimuli to the IMTs; the problems of access, the limited

communications, the general sense of not really knowing about, or being able to participate in the wider departmental operations, yet the data show that these stimuli are interpreted in ways that produce differing accounts of the experience of this employment and different interpretations of the role. For example, some consider that their teaching should develop vocational skills; others that they are part of the continuation of a tradition of instrumental technique while some are concerned with the development of an artistic voice. The degree to which they felt able to achieve these with their students was a factor in their interpretation of the experience of the job. In similar fashion, some viewed performance as central to a student experience and lamented the limited teaching time available while others spoke of the university work as a small part of their career and even revealed a ‘teach and go’ attitude. There were also those who, having experienced less well-paid positions, regarded the university as providing a good rate of pay, while the converse applied for other individuals. Each of these pre-dispositions interacted with the shared stimuli and the shared environment of the university music department but were interpreted, or woven into the concept of experience, constructed by each individual IMT in accordance with their self-world, or umwelt.

### 6.4 Summary

The discussion has focused upon the university experiences of IMTs in this study and the degrees of marginality that emerge from their responses. It considered the detached, isolated position of their work, but noted that there were distinct difference between the openness and willingness to participate of these individuals, in sharp contrast to the secretive, hidden nature of IMTs reported in earlier research literature. The examination of the position of these

IMTs alongside theories of differing degrees of organizational coupling pointed to aspects of professional autonomy from an era before Quality Assurance mechanisms and inspection regimes, but was also seen to have arisen as the accidental outcome of a lack of care, limited contact and a one-way mode of communication between the organisation and its IMTs.

Since the location of IMTs within the university was identified as detached and isolated, with no occasion for interaction with colleagues, the work of Lave and Wenger was examined for its implication that the organisation should expect a consequent lack of development in skills and job knowledge. Their perspective highlighted the dangers of a situation in which there was no participatory framework and no community of practice through which expertise could be developed and shared. The simple application of this theory was mediated, however, by the observation that the IMTs, far from being apprentices, were engaged for their existing expertise as successful professional musicians with strong links with the local community of professional musicians. However, developments in mastery of the role remained a matter of uncertainty since the university clearly relied upon the individual teacher's willingness to undertake their own development and training, which some had done, but at their own cost and in line with the areas that they themselves determined to be of value. This tended to relate to the development of their own playing technique rather than focusing on instrumental pedagogy or general teaching and learning strategies.

The turn to the concept of an individual environment or umwelt was useful to account both for commonalities and differences in the way that IMTs report their experiences. The varied backgrounds and circumstances of individual teachers produced different attitudes to the role of instrumental teaching as each

described the part that their university work played in their own career and professional practice. Consequently, the notion of individual umwelten provided a framework to consider the underlying attitudes and pre-dispositions that seemed to influence their interpretations of that experience while avoiding the temptation to over-simplify and to seek an homogenized account where one did not exist.

# CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION

This study was developed in order to explore the degree to which IMTs employed to provide individual lessons are integrated into the professional, social and cultural life of the department in which they are employed. It adopted an approach that sought the perspectives of the IMTs themselves in order to provide knowledge of the ways in which they understand and experience their work and interpret their role and contribution to the music department. While it is common practice for HE music departments to engage instrumental teachers for one to one lessons, previous research activities have tended to focus on the work of IMTs in the school sector and have, therefore provided limited insights into this area of activity. Furthermore, those studies that have been undertaken in an HE environment have focussed, in the main, upon the conservatoire-style settings (Mills, 2002; Purser, 2005; Hallam, 2005) in which the development of individual instrumental abilities is central to their curricula. This study focused instead upon the more typical HE environment in the UK in which music degrees include instrumental skills as but one of a range of musicological, historical and creative areas of study. It exploited my insider location and familiarity with the people and processes involved and progressed through a qualitative case study approach that engaged in individual conversations and job-shadowing engagements. These involved a majority of the IMTs employed in the department during the period of the study and provided a rich source of data from which to draw upon for information, experiences and theoretical insights. While this case highlights the specific social, interpersonal, operational and organisational factors that impacted upon the lives of IMTs in one particular institution, the outcomes may prove relatable to those institutions who recognise

in their own location, a similar context and ethos and they may also find a resonance in the experiences of IMTs and other members of HE music departments as they reflect upon their professional lives.

### 7.1 Stuck In the Margins, Alone. (Apologies to Stealers Wheels, 1972)

At an early stage in the investigation of the experiences of IMTs of the routines and practices of this university music department it became clear that these members of the university operated in a marginalised location, detached from each other and working in isolation from academic staff. They spoke of a lack of knowledge of, or access to facilities, processes and people and described the common experience of arriving on campus, teaching and then leaving without any formal or informal engagement with a member of staff. While some had a wider vision of what the experience of teaching at a university might be, most participants had accepted their restricted access to basic facilities and revealed in themselves a low level of entitlement to the resources of the university. The implications of the marginalised position that they occupied and the consequent lack of co-participation with colleagues showed the stasis in development that might have been anticipated from a reading of the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) and in particular, of the work of Becker who noted '…that structural constraints in work organisations may curtail … access to the full range of activities of the job, and hence to possibilities for learning what they need to know to master a trade.' (Becker, 1972, in Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 86). It is evident that the IMTs who participated in this study were occupying a stationary organisational position from which, given such a limited sphere of activity and low level of access to people and resources, there was no development of the

scope of the role and no evidence of movement towards participation in other aspects of institutional operations.

### 7.2 Role Definitions - an individual approach

This study echoed earlier research in relation to the language with which IMTs described the engagement between teacher and student. With one exception, the participants spoke of their role in terms of a supportive, mentoring engagement designed to encourage the students in developing their skills. The IMTs were care-givers to the students with whom they had contact and accepted this role while themselves experiencing a lack of care from the university. This was the result of the strong sense of vocation that these teachers portrayed and the value that they placed on this aspect of the music curriculum. In this respect, the findings of this study align with the work of Burwell (2005) and Gaunt (2007) whose participants also interpreted the role of the teacher as one who encouraged reflective learning practices in their students as a route towards their eventual independence. The exception is an interesting case of a tutor with a recent conservatoire background who used a more assertive tone and a sergeant-major analogy when describing the teaching engagement. This echoes the master-apprentice relationship discussed by Jørgensen (2000) and Haddon (2009) as a trait of instrumental music teaching, particularly in conservatoire settings. While such an approach was excoriated by Mills and Jeanneret (in Mills, 2007, p.35), there seems to be evidence that it is still a feature of such institutions and still seen as having value as an effective approach to the teaching of instrumental skills. That both approaches were employed within this same university department highlights the disconnected manner in which the IMTs experienced their work. Individual teachers did not

have the opportunity to engage in a discourse around approaches to teaching and learning and had no contact through this employment with research relating to innovations and developments in the theories and practises of instrumental pedagogy.

### 7.3 An Open Secret

Although there were echoes of previous research in this study, there were also significant findings that contradict earlier work, including that of both Purser (2005) and Burwell (2005) since there was a clearly expressed willingness from IMTs in this study to share ideas about teaching with their fellow IMTs should such an opportunity be presented. Indeed, there was no evidence in the data of the defensiveness, insecurity or secrecy that earlier research had encountered. The distinction is an important one here, between the isolation that participants experienced in their role at this university and those isolationist tendencies of the IMTs described in earlier research studies. Two possible explanations for this difference may be postulated here, the first a specific cultural matter related to the conservatoire location of the earlier studies and the second a more general development in the educational landscape since the earlier research was completed.

Purser (2005) and Burwell (2005) carried out their research in institutions that employed a number of IMTs to teach the same instrument. For example, they will have engaged several different teachers for piano, for flute, for violin, and a sense of competition or at least, comparison may have affected the responses of participants to the research and led to a more defensive stance. This present study was different in this respect since, during the period that it took place, each instrument was taught by a specialist IMT who was the sole teacher for

that instrument in the department. They still reported that they felt a responsibility to show progress in their students' abilities but they were not competing or likely to be compared with the results achieved by another teacher of that same instrument.

The second explanation is less bound up with the specific culture of music departments and concerns the widespread experience of teachers of the monitoring and inspection of their teaching. Many of the participants of this study were also employed in institutions where Ofsted processes were an ordinary part of their working lives and they were familiar with the presence of inspectors in their classes. What had formerly been a private world of one to one instrumental teaching in these locations had been opened up to public scrutiny and accountability and this change of culture may account for the move from the secretive, defensive stance of earlier research to the willingness to engage that was evident in this study. Indeed, the IMTs in this study regarded the lack of monitoring as a sign, not of trust in their professionalism, but of a lack of interest from academic staff and another signifier of the marginalised position that they felt that they occupied in the life of the music department.

### 7.4 Connections

While noting the disconnected, isolated way in which IMTs experience their work, certain connections were shown to be evident in relation to the role. There was a positive note struck in relation to connections with administrators regarding contracts and pay claims, an experience somewhat offset by negative experiences of connections with technical staff regarding room booking and usage. Connections with academic staff tended to focus upon the details of the assessment tasks for which they were preparing students and concerned the

length and degree of difficulty of the musical programmes to be developed. These interactions were considered in the light of Weick's (1976) loose coupling metaphor and were seen to possess many of the salient features of his framework. However, the communication between IMTs and department staff were reported to be in one direction only with little evidence of any corresponding impact of IMTs on the department's work beyond their preparation of students for assessments. Furthermore, the IMTs at this university should not be regarded as an element or a sub-unit as defined in the loose-coupling analogy since they reported no such shared identity and had no sense of sharing resources, discourse or communication networks or goals with a team of other IMTs. Likewise, they did not form a community of practice enjoying mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire of routines, tools and symbols. (Wenger, 1998, p. 73) Instead, they reported that they experienced their work from an individual perspective, framed by their own background, training, musical ethos and career position. They occupied a common, but not a shared environment with other IMTs and showed no common allegiance to their fellow tutors. It is possible to make a case that the profession of violin teacher is not seen as the same as that of a flute teacher or a saxophone teacher and that the situation therefore contained multiple perspectives, interpreted on the basis of the particular pre-disposition of the teacher. The teacher of piano saw piano playing as central to life as a music student; the teacher of flute interpreted the role as that of a representative of a long tradition of flute pedagogy; the teacher of guitar spoke of individual pathways that should be unconstrained by curricular demands.

Drawing upon the discussion of Umwelt theory by Uexküll (1985), Deely (2001) and Sharov (2001) each IMT in this study may be seen to have inhabited a subjective universe and brought a networks of expectations, philosophical positions, experiences and cultural identities to bear upon their interpretation of their environment. This theory allows that humans, as distinct from the insect world of its original application, have the advantage of a highly developed language communication system through which to share perspectives and develop a shared mind and interpretation of an environment. However, the evidence of this study reveals a minimal level of communication between IMTs and the employing department and a total lack of co-participation between IMTs that threw each one of them back upon their own perceptions as individually experienced and interpreted. To some degree, the insights of the umwelt theory account for the different interpretations that emerged from participants since each individual IMT encounters the environment of the university and makes sense of their role through their own particular perceptions, expectations and needs.

## 7.5 Summary and Recommendations

This study has examined aspects of the professional practices of the music department of this university that had previously received little attention. It used the findings to show how this university's IMTs experienced and interpreted their work and found significant areas for development in departmental operations. Changes to the details of such matters as access to facilities and channels of communication between IMTs and academic staff can be seen to require attention. Indeed, the inadequacy of the practises unearthed in this study has been discussed within the music department in the period since the interview

engagements took place and are a matter of some concern and a degree of embarrassment. Colleagues, aware of the nature of the investigation, have given more attention to the subject and instituted changes that provide greater care and address some of the deficits in operations. However, these matters should be seen as symptoms of the need to define the role of the IMT in the department and in the delivery of the curricula. Academic staff, IMTs, students, and parents of prospective students all speak of the value of instrumental lessons to the study of a degree in music but the role remains ill-defined and under-managed. There is clearly a need to create stronger structural links that enable regular contact and greater participation. Such contact should facilitate discussion and debate about teaching methods, student progress and the delivery of the current curricula and be regarded as essential engagements between academic staff and all IMTs. A more explicit recognition of the loose-coupled location of these members of the department should maintain the benefits of this arrangement, (economy, autonomy, stability) but also lead to improvements in the management of the patterns of interaction, and the timing, frequency and flow of demands. While the individual environments that IMTs inhabit in their professional lives precludes the development of a community of practice, policy modifications that address the neglect and marginalisation of IMTs would be welcomed by the participants in this study. A more nuanced development is required, therefore, that facilitates different levels of participation for IMTs in assessment activities and curriculum developments, but also into research networks and projects that explore instrumental pedagogy or engage with innovations in learning and teaching. The capacity of individual IMTs to participate in these aspects will vary over time and with changing circumstances

and so the challenge for the department is to create a permeable boundary that enables, but does not require, IMTs to engage more fully in these wider aspects of the life of the department.

It has been the case that the university has been unwilling to provide the financial resources to engage IMTs for meetings with academic staff to facilitate coordination and there are no specific allowances within the workload calculations for course leaders for the management of these members of staff. In these circumstances, therefore, the department must seek other ways to interrelate with individual teachers and to create opportunities and a sense of entitlement through which IMTs can be encouraged to exploit their insider position as a member of the university in ways that develop their own practice, contribute to their knowledge and qualifications and enrich their careers. For those who wish to pursue it, these may provide a way out of the stationary position that results from their lack of co-participation and the limited sphere of activity that their formal role has been ascribed.

In the process of examining the experiences of the working lives of the IMTs in a HE context, theoretical insights have been obtained that may relate to other employment arenas in which staff with specific expertise are employed within a common field of endeavour yet who operate in isolation from their fellow professionals. For example, the multiple professions that comprise the employees of the National Health Service may find synergies that assist in understanding their own organisational positions and the quite different perspectives that can coexist within their workplace. Others who operate in peripheral locations such as area sales representatives, IT engineers, language interpreters and others who are employed with highly developed, yet highly

specialised skills may see a similarity in the notion of individually-experienced loose-coupling and relate this to their own work. This may encourage them to take control of and invest in their own learning in order to avoid elements of stasis that may be a feature of their particular circumstances. Those charged with the management of a highly specialised, skilled workforce may resist the easy corralling of these employees into sub-units or groups, and recognise the value of individualised routes through permeable boundaries that facilitate participation and development beyond the narrow confines of a pre-determined role description.

### 7.6 Further Study

The debates about instrumental music teaching are multifaceted and relate to the profession as a whole, to individual instruments and to different stylistic traditions. This case study has been located in a department that has developed expertise in the development and delivery of curricula in the western classical tradition and also in popular music. While the individual perspectives of IMTs have been addressed to some extent, further investigation is needed into the way that interpretations of the role of an IMT may diverge according to these different traditions. A comparative case study would create an understanding of the nuances of pre-disposition and philosophy that may exist where the background of the teacher and the focus of teaching relates to one or other of these musical traditions. Another aspect of this arena that has been touched upon in this present study is the degree to which each instrumental teacher represented a separate species, identified by the particular instrument and its history and pedagogic tradition. A study that looked at the approaches to pedagogy within the main families of instruments (such as string, brass or

woodwind) as currently practised in the HE environment would explore the degree to which instrumental teaching has embraced innovations in teaching and learning. Finally, a cross-disciplinary approach to research may also consider the lessons that can be learnt from advances in sports science on the development of physical skill acquisition, performance health and endurance training.

This study provides increased understanding of the perspectives of IMTs towards their involvement in university teaching that will help to find acceptable and realistic ways of framing such debates that recognise the world that these professional inhabit. Such knowledge will enable those involved to take account of the specific environment of IMTs when seeking to develop a definition of the role and of its place in the delivery of the music curriculum.

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**APPENDIX A**
**Head of Brass Studies**
**Trinity Laban Conservatoire of music and Dance** - Wind, Brass and Percussion Department

Salary: Full-time equivalent £33,495 - £39,311 p.a. (incl' LWA) pro-rata

17.5 hrs per week (0.5 FTE post)

Applications are invited from suitably qualified and experienced candidates to take up this role from September 2012.

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of music and Dance, a leading UK conservatoire, is seeking to recruit a distinguished Brass musician to join the staff of the Faculty of music based at its prestigious World Heritage site in the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich. Trinity Laban is a small specialist higher education institution formed by the merger of Trinity College of music and Laban, the leading European Centre for contemporary dance.

The successful candidate needs to be recognised and respected as a performer within the music profession, ideally with experience in the conservatoire sector or higher education more widely. He/she will demonstrate leadership skills; provide direction and development to the Brass Department and be able to work as part of a team supporting senior management. The post holder needs to show enthusiasm for promoting the work of the Wind, Brass and Percussion Department both outside and within the Conservatoire through strong links and networks, and create a learning environment of excellence and contemporary relevance that offers students every opportunity to develop their artistic potential and professional confidence guided by the ethos of student-centered learning. He/she will also be expected to play a role in attracting high quality students to both undergraduate and postgraduate study.

For a job pack and an application form, please go to the Job Opportunities page of our website at http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk or contact: Pamela Thompson, HR Advisor, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of music and Dance, E-mail: staffrecruitment@trinitylaban.ac.uk or Telephone: 020 8305 4374

Closing date: Thursday 21 June 2012, 12 Noon (No Agencies)

Interviews will be held: Monday 2 July 2012.

## APPENDIX B
## Procedures for the ethical scrutiny of empirical work within the University

Introduction

The principle of open ethical consideration and scrutiny of research at the University has at its heart an active engagement and thereby understanding of the ethical issues and values of that research by both researchers and the supervisors of other's research. This engagement with the ethical debate surrounding research is essential due to the changing environment in which research is undertaken. Examples of such change as the impact of new technologies and the Internet and the development of more international working all present a changing landscape of ethical issues. For this reason the following policy is approved.

1. The ethical scrutiny of empirical work is the responsibility of the host School of which the staff and students are members. All ethical scrutiny will take place at that local level with reporting on an annual basis to the University Ethics Committee whose function is to review performance and develop and modify policy.
2. All research, including undergraduate research projects, is required to have undergone ethical scrutiny by all parties involved and where necessary passed for scrutiny to the appropriate Ethics Committee for approval. Please note this will now apply to any work that collects primary data from or about human participants and so may include some kinds of in-module research.
3. It is required that the research is in full compliance with the law including Health and Safety, IT and data policies and legislation.
4. All research carried out with human participants is done so with informed consent.
5. In collaborative work, all parties must be involved in the process of ethical consideration and all research must be approved by the ethical structures of each organisation. In addition, when dealing with projects requiring NHS ethical scrutiny through the LRECs, the project must have received prior ethical scrutiny at School level before being passed to the LREC.
6. No data should be collected before adequate ethical consideration and approval has been given from an appropriate authority.
7. In international research the ethical values and standards pertaining to the UK shall prevail.
8. The process of ethical filtering and scrutiny that will take place in the University will follow the procedures laid out in Annexe A.

Where research work is carried out within Research Institutes it is the responsibility of the researcher, in conjunction with the Director of the Research Institutes, to make sure that appropriate ethical scrutiny of all projects has taken place and that the School Ethics Committees have been informed of this.

## APPENDIX C

## University Policy Document on Ethical Procedures

This document provides guidance to the securing of ethical approval in relation to research projects that use human subjects. It relates to all research work carried out under the auspices of the School whether this is to be undertaken by undergraduate or postgraduate students or by members of staff.

Within XXX a sub-committee of the School's Research Committee considers ethical issues and reports to the Research Committee. The sub-committee has membership from several strands of the School's work. Attendance at an ethics sub-committee meeting wherein ethical approval for a proposal is to be considered will include the chair and at least one other member.

All researchers are advised to consider the ethical guidelines set out by the British Educational Research Association, which can be located through their website on www.bera.ac.uk/guidelines.html.

Working with human subjects will fall into one of two categories:

### Definition: Category A Proposals

In a category A proposal there will be no severe or significant interference with the subjects' physical or psychological wellbeing. The subjects are not considered vulnerable to the procedures or topic of the project proposed. Proposals may involve access to confidential records provided that the investigator's access to these is part of her/his normal professional duties.

### Definition: Category B Proposals

In category B proposals there is likely to be significant physical intervention between the researcher and the subjects. This includes the administering of questionnaires or interviews on sensitive issues that could cause psychological harm or suffering to the subjects. In such cases, the subjects' vulnerability is determined in relation to the methods and content of the research project rather than by an assumption of being 'at risk'.

Subjects (and/or their parents/carers in the case of young people under 18 years of age) must be informed of the nature of the research project and a means of consent must be obtained.

With the approval request form, copies of additional information are also required, namely:

- outline summary: rationale and expected benefits from the study;

- explanation of the methodology to be used;
- a copy of the consent form to be used with subjects;
- details of how information will be kept;
- details of how results will be fed back to participants;
- letter of consent from any collaborating institutions;
- letter of consent from the head of institution wherein any research activity will take place.

Undergraduates will not be permitted to undertake category B projects.

**Procedures**

**i) Research undertaken by students**

(REMOVED AS NOT RELEVANT)

**ii) Research undertaken by members of staff**

The following flow of activity applies:

1. For a category A proposal (see below), the member of staff applies to the chair of the ethics sub-committee for approval to carry out research involving human subjects by using the "Ethical Approval Request" form. Where there is uncertainty about the category to be granted, the ethics sub-committee will assist.

2. For category B proposals members of staff must gain approval from the ethics sub-committee and the request should be forwarded by the member of staff to the chair of the ethics sub-committee.

3. Where appropriate, a member of staff must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from the Criminal Records Bureau if human subjects are to be part of the research proposal. The member of staff must be prepared to permit the chair of the ethics sub-committee to see the original certificate (i.e. not a photocopy).

4. After ethical approval has been given, the researcher may begin working. Fieldwork must not be commenced prior to approval being given.

Human subjects

Care and consideration for those involved must always be at the forefront of any research activity. This is of particular importance when dealing with young people below the age of 18 years and vulnerable adults.

Definition: Vulnerable Adults

All of us are vulnerable at different times in our life. Bereavement, illness, social or work pressures may render us vulnerable. It is important whilst conducting research to proceed with respectful awareness and care in dealings with

participants. To run a robust, ethically principled research project the researcher will need to remain vigilant and will need to monitor participants' welfare, seeking relevant guidance and assistance when in need of support.

The regulations contained within the Police Act (UK 1997) give a three-part definition of a vulnerable adult (see A – C below). For the purposes of conducting research under the auspices of the School of Education, a fourth category has been added (D below). A vulnerable adult will be over the age of eighteen years and will fall into one or more categories.

A – Services:
a) accommodation and nursing or personal care in a care home;
b) personal care or support to live independently in their own home;
c) any services provided by an independent hospital, clinic, medical agency or NHS body;
d) social care services;
e) any services provided in an establishment catering for a person with learning difficulties.

B – Conditions:
a) a learning or physical disability;
b) a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, c) a reduction in physical or mental capacity.

C – Disabilities:
a) a dependency on others to assist with or perform basic physical functions;
b) severe impairment in the ability to communicate with others;
c) impairment in a person's ability to protect themselves from assault, abuse or neglect.

D – Experiences:
a) bereavement, illness, social or work-related stress;
b) post-traumatic stress relating to war or other catastrophic events;
c) physical or psychological abuse, bullying, victimisation or sustained harassment;
d) experiences based on caste, religion, ethnicity, gender or other socially, culturally or politically structural situations, which may place some groups in chronically disadvantaged or vulnerable contexts.

This list may guide thinking about vulnerability but makes no claim to being exhaustive; neither does it assume that everyone who has these experiences is vulnerable at all times. It suggests that vigilant researchers should try to understand and empathise with people's circumstances and conduct their research activities with appropriate regard and respect for participants' actual or potential vulnerability.

In addition it should be recognised that:
(a) research activities may awaken latent vulnerability in others;
(b) a researcher's own vulnerability may, as a consequence, increase; and

(c) strategies for managing research activities need to be designed and supported, in some cases with the guidance and assistance of colleagues or others with relevant experience and local knowledge.

## Proposals requiring ethical approval from more than one institution

(REMOVED AS NOT RELEVANT)

## Evidence of ethical approval

The signed form remains with the supervisor though students may keep a photocopy. If for any reason after ethical approval has been granted the research proposal changes significantly the student must immediately inform and seek advice from their supervisor.

**APPENDIX D**

**Request for Ethical Approval**

**<u>Section 1</u> – to be completed by the researcher**

| Full name | Steve Spencer |
|---|---|
| Module number and title (student researchers only) | ED5015 Thesis |
| Research Proposal title | A Case Study of the Role of Instrumental music teachers in an HE music Department |
| Brief outline of proposal | This study will focus upon the team of IMTs employed to provide tuition to undergraduate students of music performance in the music Department of the University. |
| Level of research, e.g. staff, undergraduate, postgraduate, master's (award related), MPhil, PhD | Doctor of Education |
| Please outline the methodology that would be implemented in the course of this research. | This research employs a case study approach that has three streams: A document review, a series of semi-structured interviews and an Appreciative Inquiry cycle. All full and part-time members of the music department will be invited to participate. |
| Please indicate the ethical issues that have been considered and how these will be addressed. | This research will adhere to a democratic stance that aspires towards an equitable relationship between researcher, - myself as full-time music lecturer and researched - the part-time Instrumental music tutors and others who work in the department. I will therefore employ a process of on-going, informed consent from participants and provide them with pre-publication access to data for the purposes of editing, expanding or clarifying the representation of their views in the text. The University will not be named in the final report and all participants will be anonymised in terms of their name, gender, age and ethnicity and the instrument they teach and course to which their work contributes. |
| Please indicate any issues that may arise relating to diversity and equality whilst | Although this project does not focus explicitly upon issues of equality and diversity it will be sensitive and alert to ways in which these matters may emerge as participants explore their experiences of work in the |

| undertaking this research and how you will manage these. | department. The research instruments will be discussed with supervisors and piloted before deployment. |
|---|---|

Please answer the following questions by deleting the inappropriate response:

1. Will your research project involve young people under the age of 18?

   No

If yes, do you have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from the Criminal Records Bureau?

N/A

2. Will your research project involve vulnerable adults?

   No

3. For which category of proposal are you applying for ethical approval?

   Category A

**Confirmation of ethical approval**

<u>Section 2</u> **– to be completed as indicated, by module leader, supervisor and/or chair of ethics sub-committee**

**For Category A proposals:**

I confirm that the proposal for research being made by the above student/member of staff is a category A proposal and that s/he may now continue with the proposed research activity:

| For a student's proposal – Name of module leader or supervisor giving approval | Dr XXXXXX XXXXX |
|---|---|
| For a member of staff's proposal – name of chair of ethics sub-committee giving approval | Dr XXXXX XXXXXX |
| Signed | XXXX XXXXX |
| Date | 18.04.12 |

| Feedback<br><br>The School ethics sub-committee has considered your proposal for a research project.<br><br>**This proposal is accepted.** |
|---|

**APPENDIX E**

RESEARCH DIARY NOTES

Participant AA teaches a relatively large number of students. yet has:

No Staff ID Card

No university email address

No access to On-line learning framework

No Salto Card for room access

No access to staff room

No access to staff refreshment facilities

No telephone or mailbox. Uses own email to contact students.

No access to printing or photocopying - uses own - at own expense.

Teaching Room has no desk.

Often no room access card, so cannot leave the room without having to seek a technician to get back in.

Has not been invited to attend assessments or department concerts.

Has not been given the grade or feedback on student assessments.

Can attend campus without meeting any music staff who will not know

the days and times of his visits.

Meetings with music staff are ad hoc and ‘accidental’ and occur only if he attempts to find someone - or knocks on the staff office door.

## APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW PROMPTS

The decision to undertake semi-structured interviews was based on the view that this would provide the most appropriate vehicle through which the voices of participants could be heard. Participants were given the freedom to develop the conversation in response to interviewer prompts and this helped to balance the power-relationship of the interviewer and the interviewed. This was consistent with the desire to provide 'rhetorical space' (Skeggs, 1997, p.38) to the marginalised and under-represented in the university. The interviews took place within an ethical framework that guaranteed anonymity to participants and adopted a process of informed consent that outlined the project, its approach to data collection, storage and reporting method. Participants were able to retract all or part of their contributions at any stage in the project and were invited to comment and edit interview transcripts.

How IMT role fits into your career (other teaching/performing, jobs, etc)

Contacts with uni staff.

Contacts with students.

Student Assessments & Feedback: (knowledge of, involvement in, content of)

Autonomy and choice in musical materials studied.

Scheduling of lessons & absence policies.

Teacher's role towards students: metaphors for the role?

(Mentor/guide/master?)

Access to facilities.

Key organisational experiences.

## APPENDIX G

RESEARCH DIARY

(Collated from entries on iPad)

**Early Investigations:**

Conversation with administrator.

Communication difficulties emerge between IMTs and department over processes such as getting into the rooms, picking up cards from reception -how do IMTs know the process? XX thinks it is YY's job who does not agree.

XX contacts IMTs through various mechanisms -telephone, email etc. while ZZ uses only electronic means.

A VL handbook is available in electronic form but who sees it? Amends it ? Circulates, etc.?

Questions arising from informal conversations with IMT

Their students often cancel during the night before a lesson. Presumably, they expect the hour to be offered again although this is not made clear one way or another (but comments in welcome week meeting suggested this was ok!!)

No register required from classical music teachers.

No log kept of hours against the project module teaching.

Illness - if lesson is rescheduled, who pays? Should the teacher give this free as seems to happen?

Timing: Students not willing to attend evenings up to 6pm -are they able to wiggle out and transfer to other teachers who teach during the day? E.g. RH email.

Teachers may be undermined by students going to see course leaders if communication does not occur between IMTs and staff. What 'authority' does the IMT have over attendance and penalties for non-cooperation, absence, etc.

**Initial Contacts with IMTs:**

Met IMT JJ on campus in level 3 corridor and asked for email address (she has not been given a Uni one) so I could describe my project and ask if she would participate. JJ seemed very open to this idea and I am confident that I will be able to arrange a shadowing event shortly.

I went to meet 2 IMTs who I knew were on campus with students and was able to get their agreement to arrange individual interviews to discuss their work. Both seemed very happy to take part.

With the confidence from my success in obtaining the participation of three IMTs I emailed all other IMTs to ask if they would like to be involved in my research. I received favourable responses from the main teachers (by hours/week) that are employed at present. Two who rarely attend did not want to – one not replying, the other stating her reasons for non-participation.

**Shadowing IMT – JJ**

Date: February 2012

Shadowing IMT on Campus: JJ

I met JJ as she arrived to conduct a bassoon lesson on Monday before Easter. I waited in the foyer of WH and observed as JJ arrived and -having no access card, signed in with reception. At the same time I observed another IMT arrive and enter with an access card.

The student for JJ had not arrived.

The student should have booked a room but no such booking could be found on the records at reception.

I accompanied JJ to the School Office to speak to LL about staff cards: we were informed that Access cards are available to VL staff but only after they have been paid and so have a payroll number. In the case of IMTs who teach only a few hours across a term, the claim form and consequent pay may not -as in the case of JJ, be enacted until well into the teaching year. This means that such VLs will not have an access card.

*It should be noted that JJ was not aware of the procedure for obtaining an access card and that, while some IMTs have one, others who teaches many hours, do not.*

Soon after arriving in the Music building JJ received a text from the student announcing that she would not be attending as she had to go to the Post Office. JJ had spent about 30 minutes travelling to campus, left an hour free for the lesson and must travel back. No other teaching could be arranged during those 2- 2.5

hours – an opportunity cost met by the IMT herself. The repeated session would therefore occupy 4 -5 hours of her time for £25.10.

I asked JJ about the procedure for non-attendance but she was not aware of **a formal mechanism**. I asked who would be notified but she had **no point of contact** in the department. I asked if the lesson would be rearranged or the time now lost to the student. There was some uncertainty about how to act here. As she only teaches one student this was always a major inconvenience. It is expected that she will rearrange the hour and stated that she finds it difficult to refuse because it might 'spark a mood' and ruin the atmosphere in the lesson.

While noting the personal slight and annoyance caused by events, the personal nature of the relationship between student and tutor, and the lack of a formal oversight or guiding procedure left the tutor in a difficult situation - and the student in a position of power that seems to allow abuse.

No guidance was given on recruitment and **no formal induction** took place.

JJ met the head of department by accident in the foyer today as he spoke to me while I was waiting for her. Neither knew the other by name nor face.

JJ had little insight into the courses that the department ran and that her student is studying.

JJ had been asked to sign a form from the performance module that confirmed the piece that they would work on for assessment during the second semester. Apart from this goal, no other guide has been provided and so the tutor reverted to her own understanding of bassoon teaching and acted as seemed appropriate.

JJ did express the view that her student may not regard her as "good enough" as a teacher. Not sure why....

JJ teaches at many different institutions in the region and so this University is only a small part of her working life. Perhaps the smallest? This has implications for the relationship between her and the department:

1. the amount of connectedness that University might expect should be limited and
2. the support offered needs to be tailored to the specific needs of the minimally contracted who have less time to commit and less incentive to seek to uncover the ways into a more meaningful relationship.
3. Communication needs to be both formalised and **personalised** within the department.

The loose organisation of times and rooms for these lessons can be critiqued: on the one hand, this allows for lessons to be scheduled according to the personal timetable of tutor and student. On the other hand, it is difficult to monitor attendance and support room bookings under these circumstances. There appears to be no departmental involvement in this arrangement nor guidance to either party - leaving it to be determined by the individuals. This again exposes the IMT to student misuse of the relationship, especially with a less secure or new IMT, uncertain of the staff/student culture at this University or with an amenable character wishing to be helpful and supportive. In this specific case, JJ reported several occasions like today where the student simply did not arrive or cancelled on the same day as the lesson. JJ indicated that she felt that If she had not set off for the University, then the lesson should be rescheduled, otherwise forfeited. It was not clear, however, that this had ever been enacted, and JJ was having to make this up herself.

**Shadowing IMT – KK** Date: March 2012

IMT arrived 15.20 for 15.30 lesson.

Room booked by secretary WH305

IMT has no access but technical support staff looked up room allocated and provided temporary access card.

Student arrived 15.26

IMT & student head off to room 305. I follow to observe.

Room 305 has no piano – a necessary resource for this singing lesson – in past weeks, other rooms have been allocated that had pianos – as most third floor rooms do.

IMT and student return to technical support office to seek an alternative room. On his return the technician searches for a free space. Meanwhile, the student has look into the nearby rooms and discovered on free (225)

Technician confirms that 225 is available and reprogrammes the entry access card.

Lesson begins late by 5 minutes.

IMT extends lesson to avoid penalty to the student for University system failure.

IMT is paid 15.30-16.00 (30 minutes) but arrives at 15.20 and leaves at 16.10. (50 minutes)

**Issues:**

No staff access key for building or rooms.

IMT is disempowered in this process.

IMT clearly looks to have lower status in the place than other staff and the Technicians.

Communication of the equipment needs of the session broke down and an inadequate room was booked. A minor mishap – but shows that the capacity of the

IMT to address the problem was limited. IMT had to implore the technician to provide a room (if available at all) so that the session could continue.

**Thought** – if no room had been available, the student would expect the lesson to be rearranged at no expense to her allocated lesson hours.

- The IMT would probably bear the cost of this and rearrange.
- The institution would not pay extra.

I will ask if any evidence exists of an IMT contract being extended as a result of institutional errors that voided the whole session. An IMT having to work extra time due to such inconveniences would be most unlikely to have occurred but again, I will raise it with administrators.

**Shadowing IMT – FF** Date: March 2012

IMT arrived early to campus. I met him and discussed the normal processes for arriving at University and beginning work.

IMT stated that no email address had been set up as promised and so communication channels were strained.

IMT had no staff card so always signed in as a visitor. The room access cards are issued on a per-visit basis so only provide access to the one room booked for the teaching engagement. Therefore – no access to staff room, staff kitchen, facilities for printing, internet access.

On entering the teaching space – before student arrived there was no desk so books were put on the floor. No chair for the teacher – just one for the student (the instrument requires a seated position)

IMT showed some photocopied materials prepared at own expense.

While waiting for student – discussed key contacts with University staff – HoD, CL, and the details of assessment tasks for different level students.

Surprised that assessment feedback never reached the tutor.

**Issues:** Lack of proper staff cards undercuts IMTs status – wearing a visitor's badge after working here for 6 years………Identity/disempowerment/low status, kept in a small zone of operation.

**Thoughts:** academic colleagues need to include IMTs in module communications as they seem to be shooting in the dark and forced to rely on their own ideas of what is required. This chimes with Haddon and Purser's articles about IMTs seeming to be secretive and relying on their own past experience – but they have little else to go on here! They do not know who to contact to obtain information about past & future assessments – but should not have to go chasing it anyway.

**INTERVIEWS**

My piloting of the interview prompts helped to refine and focus my approach. It is a concern, however, that in trying to avoid leading questions I may miss information about matters that have emerged in shadowing engagements. It is a bit of a balancing act – wanting to mention things that seem to be a problem, while not wanting to direct the conversation.

Interviews have (I hope) been relaxed and pleasant exchanges and conversations have been flowing freely. All agreed to be recorded which has made the conversations more natural and uninterrupted by note-taking.

**Issues that have emerged in interviews:**

*Working in a bubble – loosely connected?*

I was surprised by how little most of the IMTs know of the department. None of them could name all academic staff in music – and there are only six. They also do not know a great deal about the content of the degree courses that their students are studying. One did bemoan the amount of time spent studying history or world music when they could have been doing more performance which showed some wider appreciation of the student experience. Most though, work in a separate disconnected way, teaching their discrete subject in line with its own traditions rather than in relation to our degrees and their ethos. They also are unaware of the major shift to vocational degrees brought in by the cross-university 'learning works project' and this did not seem to have an impact their work in any way. (Weick's buffered location)

*Teacher-performer*

IMTs are keen to discuss the way that Uni. work fits in with other work they do. Pop IMTs mention their performance and recording work, Classical IMTs never mention any performance, only their other teaching. This is an interesting and marked difference in focus and perhaps, self-identity.

Only one mentioned their actions to maintain or develop their own skills.

*Communication*

The lack of proper contact and poor level of information given to IMTs is alarming. The students are used to channel vital information about assessment tasks etc.

*Neglect/disempowered*

Not so much 'secretive' in attitude, (as in Purser & Haddon's work) just not included in departmental processes and communication – they seem to have been neglected and excluded from operations and tagged-on as an afterthought. They cannot even get into rooms – staff rooms, or teaching spaces. They have no contact and would not recognise members of the music academic staff, although may have heard the names.

*Role descriptions*

The use of metaphor did not easily produce useful dialogue to describe the vision IMTs have of their role – at least in relation to their approach to teaching and relationship with students. I found that I needed to suggest a few terms to guide their thinking such as Master/apprentice, Mentor, guide, taken from the existing literature on music pedagogy. This put me in danger of 'leading the witness' but I attempted to provide these as examples and ask for their own formulation.

Most wished to distance themselves from the notion of hierarchical relationships although this is more pronounced among pop music IMTs. I guess that this reflects the more democratic working practises of the genre.

*Marked differences*

I need to reflect the lack of homogeneity in the responses to interview questions. While seeking key themes that might typify the experiences of IMTs, the differences are also part of the picture. The range is quite broad – from a 'teach and go' approach to one who wants a lot more involvement. Some value the flexibility to disappear for a fortnight on tour and pick up their teaching on their return. One even thinks the pay is good – although all of the others see it as low. The different needs of individual IMTs and their careers are reflected in the way that they react to and interpret these things. The relevance of the umwelt theory as a way of theorising about these responses is becoming clearer.

*My pre-conceptions: Autonomy or Neglect?*

I came to this study with a strong desire to value the autonomy and freedom to exercise professional skills and judgement that seemed a part of the IMT experience. However, I have been surprised that IMTs do not interpret their lack of direction and oversight as professional autonomy but as a sign of neglect and isolation. One said that she could be the worst teach we have ever had here and we would not know it. I know that my academic colleagues in music have a high regard for IMTs and value their input – but they (and I) never communicate this to the teachers themselves.

*QA Processes*

My study has highlighted a gap in the student feedback process since it does not reach the IMTs. We take feedback at module level and the IMT contribute to the

module, - but since the questions on QA forms are generic across the university they cannot address specific aspects of modules. This is probably true in many subjects across the arts faculty and even the university. It rather undermines the value of such feedback on the one hand, while highlighting an area we neglect in seeking to understand the student experience on the other. I have long suspected that such processes are more of a tick-box exercise than a real effort to address quality of teaching and learning.

*Effect of research on music colleagues' approach to IMTs*

This study did not set out to be action-research or emancipatory as such, rather seeking to examine the department's practises as a first step that would provide a basis for intelligent steps for improving our work. However, the interview engagements with IMTs made it clear that action was badly needed and that I had a share in the responsibility for the poor practice. An academic colleague and course leader with some awareness of the focus of my study has now put in place new processes for communicating with and organising IMTs that work on his course. I have tried to be discrete, even evasive about my work, but word has spread. Happily, I have done most of my interviews so the disturbance to the field of study will not be significant. This has – in part – addressed a concern: I have felt responsible as in insider in the department, because IMTs have now told me what they consider needs addressing. Their expectation that I immediately try to fix these matters for them is a concern I have had and so the fact that some practical things are being addressed is a positive outcome. It means that some of the daily neglect and minor inconveniences will be improved and these are actually quite powerful symbols of belonging and identity for IMTs.