

**University of Glasgow**

**Academic Standards Committee - Friday 16 November 2012**

**Periodic Subject Review: Updated Responses to Recommendations  
Arising from the Report of the Review of Music held on 14 February  
2011**

**Mrs C Omand, Senate Office**

At its meeting on 25 May 2012, Academic Standards Committee received an update on progress made during the last 12 months in respect of the recommendations arising from the review of Music held in February 2011. It was noted that the Panel Convener considered that appropriate consideration had been given to the recommendations and that in some areas actions were proposed but had not yet been implemented.

ASC agreed that in light of the Convener's comments on recommendations 4, 5 and 8 as detailed below, a follow-up report was required on these three recommendations, and this should be submitted to ASC in November 2012:

**Recommendations**

*Recommendation 4*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the variability in the clarity of advice to MA entrants regarding the flexibility of the MA programme is drawn to the attention of the Chief Adviser for the College of Arts so that it can be addressed in the training delivered to Advisers of Studies. (*Paragraph 3.6.7*)

For the attention of: **Chief Adviser for the College of Arts**

***Response:***

We will make sure that the range of options in Music are explained to students at Level 2 in our training, and we will make sure that all current advisers are aware of them in our regular bulletins and refresher training for them. I have responsibility for generic course lists of Arts courses in mycampus and the full range of Music modules is available there and in Music specific plan requirements.

However, it is important to note that we must also make sure our students are aware of the following and that this may well have some impact on their choice of courses:

1. The university's minimum requirements for honours entry are 80 credits of Level 2 study in at least two subjects. A student must therefore take at least one Level 2 module outside of Music.
2. A normal Level 2 curriculum is 120 credits. Most subjects offer 40 credits of courses at Levels 1 and 2, and most students elect to take all credits offered by a subject during a year. Students take one of two routes in year 2. Either they take 80 credits of courses at Level 2 and 40 credits at Level 1 in a new subject, or they take 120 credits of Level 2 study. Very occasionally, a student will follow a 100 Level 2, 20 Level 1 model. We feel we should always advise students that if they choose to take the 120/100 Level 2 option,

then they do so through choice and recognise the potential academic and workload implications of studying their free 40 credits at Level 2 rather than Level 1.

3. One of the great values of the Glasgow Arts degree is its flexibility, and the option to change direction of study in years 1 and 2. We have also always considered it important that a student keeps as many options open to them as possible in case he or she changes their mind about their subject direction, or fails to achieve the required grades for honours entry in their first choice of subject. Both are not uncommon. Most subjects offer 40 credits of courses at Level 2 and require those 40 credits for Honours entry. We have therefore always recommended to our students that they maintain at least two subjects at level 2 in year 2, so that they are qualified for honours entry in both. In terms of Music Level 2, if a student chose to take more than the minimum required Level 2 options in Music Level 2 and only 1 module in another subject at level 2, then that student would have no alternate route to honours study other than Music. I do not think I would be prepared to change this recommendation, but it is only a recommendation, and students are free to choose courses as they wish within the constraints of the regulations.

While we will certainly make sure that students are aware of all the potential options available to them, then, unless I am directed otherwise, I think it is important that we do so within the contexts I have laid out here.

#### ***Updated Response October 2012***

The Convener noted that whilst he did not disagree with the approach proposed for Recommendation 4 relating to advice to MA entrants on the flexibility programme, he was not convinced that it fully addressed the need for training of Advisers' of Studies, to ensure clarity of advice to MA entrants;

I asked for further clarification of this comment and the convener's response was that he was concerned about the variability of advice offered by Advisers' of Studies to students.

I can understand how this may have been an issue in the past, experienced advisers have often taken their own line and have not necessarily taken on board new or changing advice from the college (ex faculty). I cannot guarantee that this will not happen in the future, the nature of advising does not allow us to control everything each adviser thinks or suggests, whether with regard to Music or to any other subject. I am confident though that in the future this will be less of a problem for two reasons:

1. One of the aims of mycampus is to help students choose their courses themselves and to help advisers help those students. If this works effectively, and the university has assured us it will, it means the 'my requirements' process now has a very important role to play in course choice, and in how advisers in the future will advise. The Music options will be very clear in mycampus, not just in the academic plans relating to Music but also in the optional course lists for students taking other degree titles.
2. Recent changes to the advising system; retirements of advisers; and the introduction of Mycampus have necessitated extensive development of adviser training and the need for advisers to take such training into account much more than has been the case in the past, and has meant that they come to rely on 1 above to a greater extent. As the new advising system continues to roll through and new advisers come to take over the majority of advising tasks this will only develop further. Our new advisers this year have

taken to advising in an entirely new way compared to those with extensive experience, using mycampus much more extensively. Our own training for advisers and material given to them includes all the relevant information, and they have come to rely on this too in a way more experienced advisers might not have done in the past.

#### *Recommendation 5*

The Review Panel **recommends** that the University clarifies the line management for *Music in the University* and where responsibility rests for resourcing the regular maintenance of the University-owned musical equipment in the Concert Hall. (*Paragraph 3.8.5*)

For the attention of: **Vice Principal and Head of the College of Arts**

#### **Response**

The issues addressed under Recommendation 5 are the subject of ongoing discussions involving colleagues in Music with colleagues elsewhere in the University. The Head of School updates the College as required. The College does not have responsibility for Concert Hall equipment.

#### **Updated Response from Vice Principal and Head of College of Arts: October 2012**

The College understands that dialogue over the maintenance and use of the Concert Hall and its equipment continues, and the Head of School has not flagged any issues currently. The College is content to support any discussions with the Secretary of Court when requested by the School.

#### *Recommendation 8*

The Review Panel recognised that Music might be trying to accomplish too much within its limited resources and **recommends** that, in the course of the next year, both the School and the Subject give serious consideration as to how they might deploy Music's shrinking resources to best advantage to maintain and enhance the quality of the student learning experience whilst also safeguarding staff wellbeing through a balanced and achievable workload. (*Paragraph 3.8.13*)

For the attention of: **Head of School of Culture and Creative Arts and Head of Music**

#### **Response Head of School of Culture and Creative Arts:**

The School is aware of the present limitations placed on Music which compromise both its ambitions and its ability to maintain the quality of the student learning experience. Music has benefitted from greater administrative support under the new structure and has recently been successful in obtaining a Kelvin-Smith Fellowship. In addition, Music has been worked into the School and College development plans in terms of fundraising for scholarships and infrastructure, which should help with the longer-term objectives of the subject.

#### **Response: Head of Music**

This has been discussed but remains somewhat intractable. Since the Review, budgets have not been substantially cut, contrary to expectation. However, workload issues in Music remain. These arise mainly from pressure of delivering a wider range of provision at level 1 and 2 than other subjects within School and College. This results from the supply of 240 credits at levels 1 & 2 for the BMus programme, plus 80 L1/2 credits tailored to meet the needs of the BEng programme (other subjects deliver 80 credits across levels 1 & 2). Given this situation it is hard

to see where reductions in the UG teaching load could be made without either cutting degree programmes or investing in additional music staff.

***Response: Vice Principal and Head of College of Arts, October 2012***

The College has a policy of moving towards greater SSR equalization. A new Fellowship post has been allocated to Music in 2012.