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**Rehearsing popular music:
Exploring opportunities for supporting
learning in the pop/rock band**

RPM

Rehearsing
Popular Music

Project Report

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University of Huddersfield

Rehearsing popular music: Exploring opportunities for supporting learning in the pop/rock band

CONTENTS

Introduction

Little seems reported about group-based rehearsals of popular music and the peer learning opportunities that might arise from this activity. Although there are an increasing number of studies exploring approaches to the assessment of musical ensembles, they often focus on performance rather than rehearsing and, typically, do not specifically address popular music courses (Hunter, 2006). Indeed, Lebler (2008) describes popular music as being usually learned in the broader community as a self-directed activity, sometimes including interactions with peers and group activities, but rarely under the direction of an expert mentor/teacher. The role of the tutor, in facilitating learning opportunities that may be available for students working in popular music genres within a band rehearsal context, can be quite different to that required for rehearsing repertoire which might be described as being drawn from western art music traditions. If so, and given the apparent lack of literature on, and pedagogical resources for, band rehearsing of popular music (Lebler, 2007) within the HE curriculum, the aim of this project is to provide a contribution towards filling that gap.

One starting point might involve an exploration of the learning opportunities arising from the interaction between individual members of pop/rock bands as they participate in the complex 'life-world' of the rehearsal. Exley & Dennick (2004) propose that the 'optimum size' for small group teaching 'is between 5 and 8 per group' (p.2), which is also, happily, a typical size for a pop/rock band line up (vocalist, drummer, bass, keys, and two guitarists, for example). Bringing with it a variety of musical and rehearsal experiences, the pop/rock band-rehearsing context clearly suggests opportunities for supporting peer learning. Not only, for example, might band members learn from each other, but individuals, additionally, may also learn much about themselves from this participatory experience. Indeed, Bryan (2006) suggests that, within group work, students might develop and acquire important collaborative skills such as communication, negotiation, self-initiative, resourcefulness and conflict management – all highly relevant and useful qualities for working in bands. If so, how best might a tutor facilitate the support of these qualities in this peer learning popular music rehearsal context? This is a focus of the project.

The project is situated within social constructivist pedagogy (Vygotsky, 1976; Bruner, 1986; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Learning and acquiring knowledge is created in the participatory social activity of band rehearsing. The learning context arises from small group activities that are characterised by social and interpersonal communication. Individuals may develop an awareness and knowledge of themselves and of their band members (involving, for example, their attributes, skills, interpersonal communication, etc) through band rehearsing. In short, band members 'learn by doing' through their engagement in the social learning setting that characterises pop/rock group music making. Tutors similarly develop awareness and knowledge of themselves, as well as each band member, through their involvement and interaction in the rehearsal.

Literature Survey

The literature on group-based work in Higher Education is extensive, as student group work activities can be found in every subject discipline. The purpose of this section is to explore an appropriate and selective literature of group work that has a particular relevance for popular music group rehearsing activities.

Theoretical models of group work

Working effectively as a member of a group is integral to many curricular areas of HE as well as a part of lifelong learning. This is particularly so for popular music rehearsing where, in both real-world professional and undergraduate contexts, group work is a typical. Popular musicians, for example, usually work together as a team, combining their creative and musical abilities in, for example, rehearsing, performance, sound recordings and music production.

Group work difficulties arising from deteriorating interpersonal relationships, creative tensions, accusations of musical incompetence, or lack of commitment, are typical problems that are experienced at one time or another during band rehearsals. Undergraduates who rehearse in a band as a part of their course may experience tension within their group at key moments for a variety of reasons. Within the literature on group work, there exist a number of theoretical models that attempt to explain the developing tension and dynamics within groups over a period of time. The

literature on group work may have some relevance for studies of popular music bands and their rehearsing.

For example, popular music students would certainly recognise from experience, particular characteristics of their rehearsing in relation to the theoretical phases of group development described by Tuckman (1965) and Tuckman & Jensen (1977). Their work suggests that all groups pass through four sequential stages of development. These stages may be longer or shorter for each group, but all groups will need to experience them. They are *forming*, *storming*, *norming* and *performing*. Certainly for popular music students, where band tensions and disagreements between individual members do appear, these often occur during the intermediate part of the rehearsal period: the *storming* stage. During the outset of a group performance assignment, bands typically exhibit levels of motivation through being absorbed in planning the rehearsals: group membership, instrumental roles, deciding their set, and so forth. Similarly, during the closing stages of band rehearsals, the lever of a performance in public often has an effect of increased motivation to rehearse and perform well. For some bands, however, the *storming* stage becomes protracted, leaving little time for them to reconcile their conflicts necessary for proceeding to *norming*. If so, we might consider how, as tutors, we can help bands to proceed more speedily through the difficult *storming* stage.

The self-perception inventory of Belbin (1981) was developed as a means of giving group members a way of assessing their best team roles that, arguably, resonates with contemporary popular music group performance. Indeed, Bryan (2001) suggests that this inventory could be adapted towards developing effective group behaviour in performance activities and, in a more recent article, Bryan, in Bryan and Clegg (2006), explores the application of 'task' and 'group' maintenance ideas (Bales, 1970; Douglas, 1976; Jacques, 2000) in the context of problem based group work. She provides examples of possible group maintenance criteria including listening to others, enabling shy members to contribute, and techniques for dealing with disharmony within the group.

Hartley (1997) brings together three levels of analysis needed to comprehend group interaction: social and cultural background, tasks and procedures, interpersonal

underworld. Firstly, the activities implicit in band rehearsal and performance of popular music – preparing for a gig in front of an audience at a public venue – is one that is most definitely situated within social and cultural contexts. Secondly, Hartley defines the 'surface behaviour' level of groups in terms of 'task' and 'procedures' (not unlike, perhaps, the task and group maintenance functions described in the previous paragraph). Finally, and perhaps the most interesting of Hartley's levels, is that of the 'interpersonal underworld'. This refers to the 'pattern of likes, dislikes, admirations, resentments and all other emotional attachments which exist between the group members' (p.29). It is not difficult to equate this description with the popular portrayal of rock bands and tensions between individual musicians often portrayed in the media, using such metaphors as 'differing artistic and creative directions', 'irreconcilable professional differences', 'a clash of egos' and so forth.

Group work and team projects can be problematic in a Higher Education setting. Heywood (2000) believes that one reason why several curricula shy away from group based tasks is that many tutors believe that it is impossible to assess them: yet the ability to work effectively in a team is a quality that is highly sought by many employers.

Cooperative and collaborative learning in groups

Group work allows opportunities for collaboration and cooperative learning to develop. Cooperative and collaborative learning in groups is becoming an increasingly common approach in many curricula activities. The terms cooperative learning, collaborative learning and group learning are often interchangeably used to define a process by which students work jointly in small groups to accomplish an educational task (Boud *et al.,* 1999; Boehm & Gallavan, 2000; Gupta, 2004). The virtues and benefits of working cooperatively in groups are extolled by many and the perspective of the student who is an 'academic loner' in classrooms is very different from those working in cooperative learning academic teams (Stahl and Van Sickle, 1992). The Higher Education Academy subject centre for Dance, Drama and Music (PALATINE) contains a number of recent collaborative initiatives and associated research. Kleiman (2004) presents a number of benefits from small-group learning in a collaborative environment including celebration of diversity; acknowledgement of individual differences; interpersonal development; actively involving students in

learning; more opportunities for personal feedback. The relevance of this approach to learning and skill development for the activity of band rehearsing is sufficiently obvious as to hardly be in need of further comment here. However, 'celebration of diversity' in the context of a group of students brought together to form a band could equally be interpreted as celebrating different musical tastes across popular music genres.

Stahl (1994) suggests a number of essential requirements to be met in order for groups to succeed within a cooperative learning framework. One of these requirements involves providing a setting for enabling positive social interaction, in which students can develop interpersonal qualities such as leadership, trust building, conflict management, constructive criticism and compromise. These qualities, apart from sharing a certain likeness to Belbin's theories of team roles (Belbin, 1981), are also relevant to band rehearsal dynamics, particularly in the area of resolving difficulties.

Face-to-face interaction was an essential requirement of Stahl (1994) in which he advocates that students need to position themselves where they are able to face each other for direct eye-to-eye contact. Popular music students in their band rehearsals adopt such positioning naturally. Facing each other in a rehearsing room, often with the drummer or vocalist as a focus, facilitates musical interaction between each musician: vocalists, instrumentalists and drummer. It especially allows non-verbal communication during the music making (such as the nod of a head to indicate the start of a guitar solo, or the drummer indicating the song's structure using exaggerated movements). In fact, so accustomed are students to rehearsing through cooperative positioning that it can become problematic when transferring on to a stage. Student bands who have not rehearsed in the physical context of performing at a gig in front of an audience with, for example, the vocalist down stage centre, instrumentalists in a linear placement from centre left to centre right, with the drummer positioned upstaged and behind, rapidly discover that cooperative eye-to-eye contact becomes problematic.

Face-to-face interaction and collaborative skills are often a part of every day life in the real world. Race (1999) reminds us that many employers value cooperative and

collaborative skills highly and there should be a balance between collaborative and individual work in higher education.

In the context of the performing arts, cooperative and collaborative learning activities, although often present, are rarely a focus due to the emphasis on individual objectives and performance (Bryan, 2006). She suggests that, within group work, students might develop and acquire important collaborative skills such as communication, negotiation, self-initiative, resourcefulness and conflict management – all highly relevant and useful qualities for working in bands. Hunter (2006) suggests that musicians are probably at an advantage over other students from certain other disciplines in that from an early age they have usually been involved in collaborative music making activities, such as choirs and classroom instrument group work.

Band membership

An important decision is one that concerns the band line-up itself: determining, for example, the appropriate group size and deciding the basis for selecting band members. Biggs (2003) draws attention to the important pre-requisite that students should have sufficient background knowledge or skills in order to be able to contribute and, as Bryan (2006) also believes, capable to the dynamics of the group.

Undergraduate group work involving popular music performance is, perhaps, no different from many other areas of interpersonal cooperation in which individuals may exhibit differentiated levels of personal contribution. One, distinctively musical, difference, resides in the formation of groups for the purpose of rehearsing and performing music. This context implies the availability of appropriate instrumental sounds and timbres through which the creation of popular music can become meaningful and communicable. The core of a band, typically, might comprise drums, guitars, bass, keyboard and vocals although, of course, other instruments may also be present. Exley & Dennick (2004) propose that the 'optimum size' for small group teaching 'is between 5 and 8 per group' (p.2). Indeed, five-piece bands were, in fact, the most frequently occurring group size in this project. Being proficient in more than one instrument is typical among many pop musicians, which allows a band the option to decide on various instrumental permutations for the band, with its rhythm section (drums, bass, and rhythm guitar) at the core establishing the groove.

This musical consideration has implications for determining the membership of bands, for one based on a randomised selection of instrumentalists would be inappropriate. A more usual method would be one in which bands are formed on the basis of including individuals who provide the basic instrumental band line-up. Interestingly, for groups comprising more than five, Biggs (2003) suggests the increased likelihood for 'social loafing', to occur.

The employment of tutor-determined groups may partly be explained on matters of principle: many academics and students share a belief, for professional and ethical reasons, that tutors alone should determine group formations. Another factor in favour of tutor-determined groups is that selection can be informed by the tutor's knowledge of the students as a whole as well as individuals. If facilitating effective group dynamics is regarded as a key indicator in determining a group's potential achievement (Bryan, 2006), then the tutor armed with knowledge of the class is well placed to configure students groupings, as appropriate, in order to achieve optimum band rehearsing conditions.

Students allowed to form bands for themselves arise from a variety of criteria including, for example, friendship groupings, shared musical tastes, proximity of their living accommodation, ethnicity and similarities in performance abilities. Regarding the latter, whereby the more able students attract each other to form 'super-groups' in order to increase the likelihood of achieving a high grade, what might be the implications for those who remain, including the weaker and poorly motivated individuals? How do tutors accommodate unpopular students who, as a consequence of the self-selection process, fail to be chosen by any of the bands?

An important source in the literature is the *Assessing Group Practice Project*. This project led by Bryan (2004), involving several partner HE institutions, has resulted in a number of case studies that are of relevance, such as collaborative group work, group membership issues and assessment. The project culminated in a collection of papers published by the Staff and Educational Development Association entitled *Assessing Group Practice* edited by Cordelia Bryan (Bryan, 2004) and online at the Higher Education Academy subject network site for dance, drama and music:

PALATINE. There are some interesting descriptions to be found among the case studies. A jazz rehearsing and performance activity from Middlesex University, for example, illustrates the importance of a distinctive context through which musicians' personal qualities and attributes become significant. Students are placed in situations to which they must respond at that time and in collaborative circumstances. For their assessment, students take part in group performances that are partly improvised 'in the moment'. Because the music is composed as part of the performance, effective group collaboration is necessary to produce a successful performance product. Consequently there is a need to be adaptable and responsive to the ideas and contributions of others and to assume leadership and supportive performing roles. Those students who are able to 'pull others along' in the collaborative situation are assessed accordingly.

Group characters: shooting stars and free riders

One would expect to see a range of personalities, interpersonal characteristics and attributes of individuals in any group. For example, in the context of band rehearsing, there may be students who appear shy, domineering, relaxed, earnest, introverted or self-centred. Two types of musicians who may be considered as being demonstrably different from the majority, due to their appearance at the extremities of group work effort and achievement, are known in the literature as the 'shooting star' and the 'free-rider'.

The 'shooting star' describes a high achieving individual in group work, both in personal performance as well as in their interpersonal skills. The term 'free-riders' typifies lazy individuals who, through their lack of effort, poor attendance, or contentment with letting the others do all the work, handicap the group. Other terms used in the literature that have the same meaning include 'freeloaders' (Nicholson & Ellis, 2000) and 'freebooters' (Doran *et al.*, 2000). It is also possible, of course, that although effort was forthcoming, the student was demonstrably extremely poor in other areas. If so, then applying the label of free rider may be unfair to band members who, despite their best endeavours are simply weak. Tutor knowledge of individuals' effort and ability in rehearsing is a key consideration in deciding the appropriateness of using such labels.

Another characteristic of both shooting stars and free riders is one that is related to their self-assessment. Lejk & Wyvill (2001a), for example, suggest that shooting stars often under-estimate themselves in a self-assessment activity, compared with how their peers rate them. The reverse appears to be the case for free riders: they typically over-estimate their achievements compared with how their peers view them.

Peer assessment

Establishing criteria for students to use in the assessment of their peers in the rehearsal is an area that reveals a range of issues and opinions in the literature. Procedures for generating assessment criteria are proving to be more complex than appears at first sight, and a number of key questions are raised. For example, *who* should be responsible for devising the criteria - students, tutors, or student-tutor collaboration? How *many* assessment criteria should be employed and *why*? Should the criteria be founded upon a category-weighted basis is an holistic approach more appropriate?

For peer assessment of group work there is a body of opinion (Habeshaw *et al*., 1993; Brown & Knight, 1994, for example) in favour of criteria that are determined by the students themselves since it is they, of course, who will be using such criteria to make their judgements. Importantly, student generated peer assessment criteria are advocated by many on the basis of the desirability of involving students in the assessment process in order to promote greater transparency. In the study by Goldfinch and Raeside (1990) for example, they suggest that, on reflection, 'a discussion with the students could have helped to make them feel more involved and helped them to notice the skills as they were displayed in the group' (p.210).

There are arguments in favour of involving students in developing their own rehearsing assessment criteria. One of these, according to Prins *et al.* (2005), resides in the potential of peer assessment to 'thrive on interaction' and so provide a natural setting through which students can determine and negotiate assessment criteria. Importantly, Boud & Falchikov (2006) emphasise the wasting of learning opportunities that are available here, through omitting the involvement of students in establishing criteria in these key stages.

Rust *et al.* (2003) and Bloxham & West (2004) each investigated the problems associated with how students can become absorbed into the assessment culture of their disciplines, recognising that certain written criteria may not be enough to make clear their meaning and intentions to novice students. A problem is that criteria tend to be articulated in a written format only and this medium may not always be sufficient in conveying subtle meanings of a non-discursive type. Recognising this, Rust and his colleagues considered the problems of initiating students into assessment culture and the need to develop a sense of 'connoisseurship' that is dependent upon communication and experience in a wider sense 'involving observation, imitation, dialogue and practice' (p.152). Such acquired knowledge they describe as 'tacit', and the 'tacit' nature of assessment criteria is a real problem because of the difficulty of transferring such understanding to others. Socialisation, Rust suggests, is required to assist in a transfer of 'tacit' knowledge (p.161). This issue may perhaps, be likened to certain aspects of situated learning theory. Rømer (2002) for example, in his account of the situated learning theories of Lave & Wenger (1991) in relation to assessment, draws attention to the concept of 'the criteria of the assessors' being found in 'a community of knowers' (p.235).

Boud & Falchikov (2006) make the point that assessment criteria are rarely specified in an explicit real-world context. Norton (2004) develops a counter argument questioning the appropriateness of explicit criteria because of the danger of rigidity or inflexibility, which could limit students to focus on the purely visible. She suggests that we should come to replace the term 'assessment criteria' with 'learning criteria' in order that the focus is not on the purely visible, but includes wider demonstrations of learning that are more centred on the individual. Might there be peer assessment contexts where by the nature of the activity – group rehearsing situations extending over a sequence of rehearsals, for example – Norton's concept of assessment using learning criteria is more appropriate? If learning criteria should be so centred on the individual, then what are the applications and implications for individual members of a band who are working together in their rehearsals and performances?

Leijk and Wyvill (2001a; 2001b; 2002) compared two peer assessment approaches involving business students at the University of Sunderland. The first approach adopted an holistic criterion, where each student awarded just one grade to each of the

other group members, based on the word 'contribution'. The second approach employed a category-based assessment employing six tutor-imposed criteria comprising: *Motivation, responsibility/time management; Adaptability; Creativity/originality; Communication skills; General team skills; and Technical skills.* Tutor-imposed criteria were employed in order 'that all groups should use the same set of categories for the category-based approach' (p.63). An important finding of their research raises questions about the use of category-based assessment methods. They investigated measures of intra-group marking agreement, finding that although considerable agreement occurred in both approaches, the holistic method displayed the strongest agreements. In their research, holistic assessment criteria led to a much higher proportion of groups who awarded each other equal marks, and Leijk and Wyvill concluded that it led more directly to a measure of each member's contribution to the group effort.

Feedback

The provision of regular and ongoing feedback, maintains Bransford *et al.* (2000), is an important part of the process that enables students to improve. Topping *et al.* (2000) agree and refer to 'rich and detailed qualitative feedback information about strengths and weaknesses' (p.150).

If feedback from peers is intended primarily for the fellow band members, then this raises questions about tutors' involvement in such transactions. To what extent should tutors be privileged in accessing peer-to-peer feedback? The role of the tutor, the respect for students' privacy and the objectives in providing feedback about the rehearsals are all factors in deciding the appropriate feedback mechanism.
Peer assessment, can be used in order to determine marks based upon the contribution of individuals to a group project. The process by which individuals are allocated their marks requires tutors to decide on an appropriate marking method. Sharp (2006) and Gatfield (1999) provide a brief discussion on the development of various approaches to this. A widely employed method consists of inviting each group member to apportion 100% among the group members. The percentages allocated to each individual by their peers are totalled and a further calculation, involving the multiplication of the 'group mark', is performed. In practice, students' final mark is

obtained from the totalled intra-peer marks, dividing each by their mean, and multiplying them by the 'group mark'. It may be expressed thus:

$$\frac{\text{Totalled peer assessment mark of individual}}{\text{Mean totalled peer assessment mark of group}} \quad X \quad \text{Mark awarded to the group}$$

This process is sometimes described as the 'zero-sum' method (Sharp, 2006) because any student who is peer assessed as providing zero contribution receives zero marks.

In the *Peer Learning in Music* project published by University of Ulster in 2000 Kingston University found that music students appear to work harder during peer assessment conditions, as it 'seems to provide a much more effective spur to the production of high quality work than does assessment by staff' (p.377). The real benefit of peer assessment, they concluded, was in the development of students' critical analysis. It helped to make students 'much more critical and questioning in their approach to all their assessments, which in turn benefited both the students themselves and the course as a whole' (Searby & Ewers, 1997b, p.7). In the same project, Ulster University describe forming music groups on the basis of representing a range of abilities and a mix of personalities. Initially, students preferred tutor-determined groups, although there was scope for students themselves to decide on their own group formations, subject to tutor approval. Although group work involving knowledge-centred music history modules may not require groups to be formed on the basis of instrumental expertise, using a mix of personalities as a source for determining the groups, however, emphasises interpersonal qualities. In such settings, students may learn much about themselves and about their group members in terms of their personal attributes and how these are displayed.

Although inevitably a little dated, Bennett (1980) provides some valuable and still relevant insights into band rehearsing, from a sociological perspective, in his opening discussion entitled *Group Dynamics*. He provides an interesting theoretical model described as 'the levelling process of attributed musical skills in rock groups' arising from individual' and group skills. This is used to explain the stability of bands as they reach the beginning of steady gigs, to a transitional stage characterised by the end of

steady gigs and finally a disintegrative stage in which the band experiences a 'natural death' (p31). A number of rehearsal issues are visited also his *Playing* discussion.

An important contribution to the literature on popular music, bands, and how they learn is that of Green (2002). She presents a number of insights about band work, given by musicians at various stages of their musical experiences, through a number of interviews. These deserve to be extensively reported here and include, the following: that listening to music is 'part of enculturation that is intrinsic to the development of popular musicians' (p.23-24); also from watching; that playing (in rehearsal) can be regarded as 'inseparable from variety of activities including memorisation, copying, jamming, embellishing, improvising, arranging and composing' (p.41); the role of jamming, and that jamming can lead to formation of a band (p.43) and is an important part of group creativity in the rehearsal (p.79); the centrality of peer directed learning and peer learning in group popular music (p.76-77; 83); typical approaches to starting a rehearsal 'where everyone agrees to copy their part off a recording in preparation for the next rehearsal' (p.80); the dynamics of the rehearsal where there is tension between the discipline of (rehearsing) and enjoyment (p.100); the appearance of bad relationships, personality clashes and that the survival of a band may be based on shared musical tastes or a toleration of 'differences in taste within a looser broad consensus' (p.112-113); the high value placed on friendship, shared taste, tolerance, and ability to listen to others' ideas - although non-band members tend to be excluded from watching rehearsals(p.114); the development of musicianship 'being inseparable from the development of respect for personal qualities' (p.116); that something was not considered to have been learnt unless it had been formally taught: 'thus the potential value of informal learning practices is liable to be overlooked' and 'many popular musicians tend to adopt teaching methods quite similar to formal pedagogic conventions when they become teachers' (p.180); that the ability to play with feel or spirit was valued over and above technical prowess, as were friendship relations and commitment (p.115); that there was an explicit emphasis on valuing empathetic personal qualities, loyalty and commitment, self esteem, attitude (p.117), flexibility (p.41), and valuing working with others (p.112).

Methodology, data collection and reporting

Three methods were employed in collecting data:

(i) A survey (*Appendix 1*) involving the scope and practice of undergraduate popular music band-rehearsing activities distributed (email and post) to HE institutions offering courses that might be of relevance based on a literature search conducted during October 2009 (*Appendix 2*) resulted in seventeen responses [N=17]. These data are reported on the following pages.

(ii) Individual interviews with HE tutors/practitioners [N=10] selected from those who offered their involvement. The transcripts can be found in the *Resource Pack*.

(iii) Group interviews conducted with undergraduate bands [N=16] drawn from HE institutions. Five institutions were selected from those who offered their involvement: Bath Spa University; University of Westminster; University of Hull, University of Liverpool, Leeds Metropolitan University, University of Huddersfield. The transcripts can be found in the *Resource Pack*.

Reporting the survey data
The responses from the survey are illustrated in the following tables:

Table 1: Rehearsing context

Table 2: Extent of tutor involvement in rehearsals

Table 3a: Determining band membership

Table 3b: Responses to providing a rationale for determining band membership

Table 4: Feedback methods

Table 5: Assessment of rehearsals

Table 6: Who determines the rehearsal criteria?

Table 7: Chosen method of awarding marks

Table 8: Open-ended survey questions

Table 1: Rehearsing context [N=17]
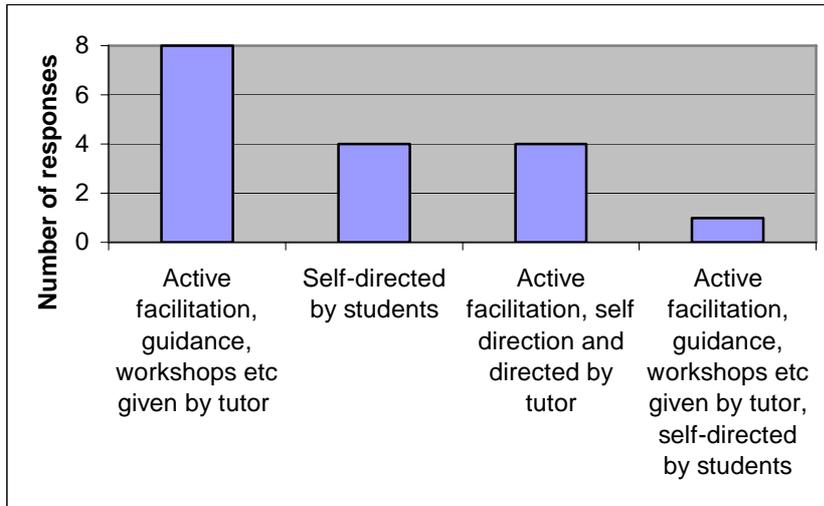
Table 2: Extent of tutor involvement in rehearsals [N=16]
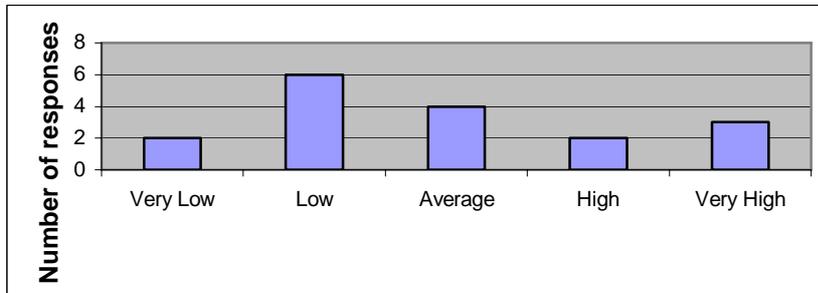
Table 3a: Determining band membership [many respondents indicated more than one method]
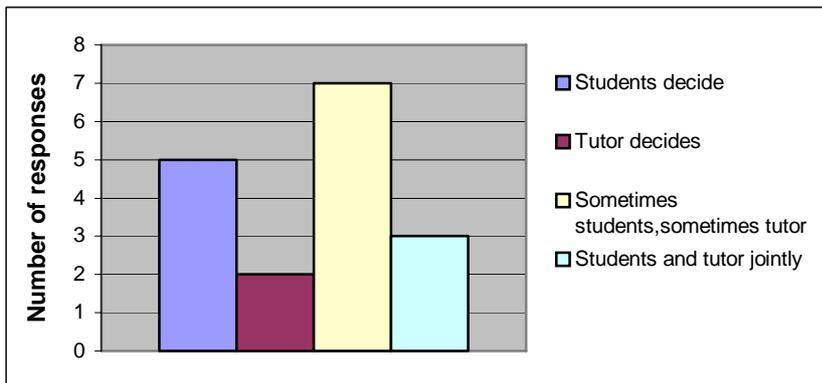
Table 3b: Responses to providing a rationale for determining band membership [N=8]
(* discussed further in interview transcript)

Institutions responding to survey question	Typical method of determining band membership	Comments on rationale
Bath Spa	Self-selected	Ownership of creative work; 'meet and greet' sessions*
Central Lancashire	Self-selected	Allows Y1 students work with all others in the cohort Allows Y2 students to form groups with positive relations
Chester	Tutor-selected	Students need experience of playing with different people
Leeds Met	Self- and Tutor-selected	Self selected bands allows developing group dynamics/friendship*
Westminster	Tutor- selected [sometimes self/ tutor jointly select]	Tutor selected bands facilitates instrumental balance of cohort and maintains diversity of gender & skills*
Leeds College of Music	Y1 Tutor selected Y2 Self selected; sometimes jointly selected	Frequently changed line-ups (mainly in year one) allow experience of different genres/tasks and of working with others*
Huddersfield	Y1 Tutor selected Y2/Y3 Self selected	Tutor directed in Y1 to enable students to work with all others Student-selected bands in Y2 and Y3 encourages stability, group bonding, trust, shared interests and positive rehearsing vibe
Hull	Y1 Tutor selected Y2/3 Self selected	Meet various people, who have interests in particular styles, and making friends better; based on a more natural way that bands would form, based on friendship and common interests; lets them see where their friends might be and what their interests are*

Table 4: Feedback methods [many respondents indicated more than one method]
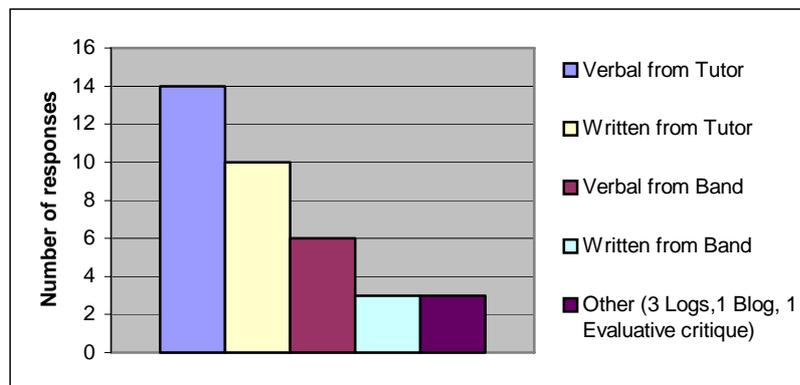
Table 5: Assessment of rehearsals [N=17]
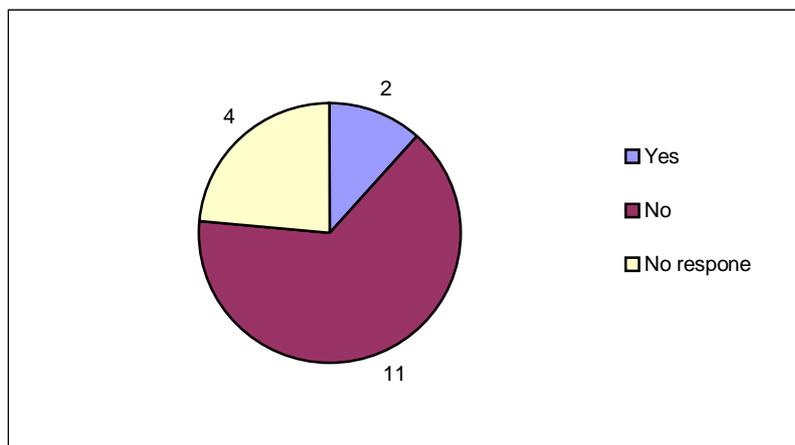
Table 6: Who determines the rehearsal criteria? [N=17]
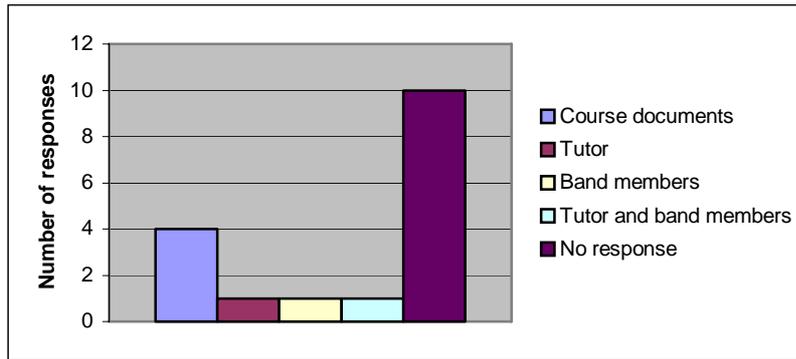
Table 7: Chosen method of awarding marks [N=17]
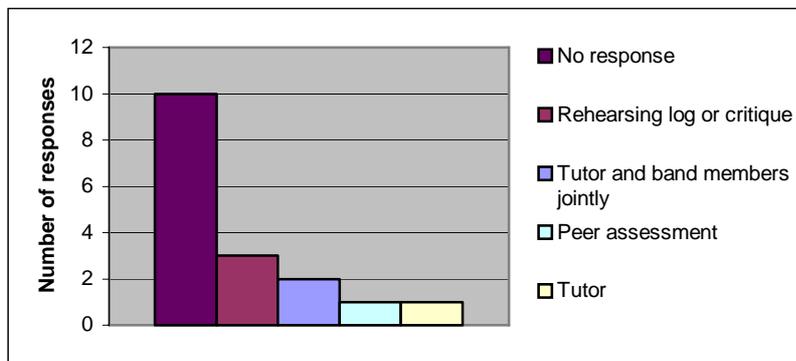
Table 8

The survey asked respondents two questions, each of which employed an open-ended format:

(1) Band rehearsals provide valuable opportunities for individuals to learn from each other. Can you suggest/recommend any techniques/strategies, etc., that you have found particularly helpful in further supporting peer learning in rehearsing…

(2) As a tutor facilitating band rehearsals, please describe any strategies/techniques that have you found particularly useful…

Table 8 below, lists the replies of those who responded.

Table 8: Open-ended survey questions [N=9] (*also discussed in interview transcript)

Institutions responding to survey question	*Band rehearsals provide valuable opportunities for individuals to learn from each other. Can you suggest/recommend any techniques/strategies, etc., that you have found particularly helpful in further supporting peer learning in rehearsing?*	*As a tutor facilitating band rehearsals, please describe any strategies/techniques that have you found particularly useful.*
Perth College	It is very often useful, where, possible to have every band perform to a group of peers every week. The group is then asked to comment constructively on every aspect of the performance. Constant reinforcement of the need for reflection by blogging/record of process – the module is integrated with one concerning research & management skills, and their management of themselves and others is examined and developed here.	It is worth having a number of targets rather than just one such as a gig. We often set the first task as a peer performance, the second as a recording (preferably in a studio) by which they can better criticise their own work, and the third as an external/internal formal gig. Making students entirely responsible for organising bands, rehearsals, gigs, and expecting them to communicate with and manage each other. This level of responsibility is especially high in the level 4 course (Scottish hons degrees are 4 years long), where students are expected to be acting 'as professionals' or in fact more professionally than professionals! The concept of the reflective practitioner and the cycle of reflection -action-reflection is a feature of the programme
Bath Spa	My personal view is that students need little tutor guidance to learn about rehearsing – it's an experiential process. We can accelerate their learning by encouraging efficient/professional rehearsal technique*	Encouraging each other to use chord sheets • rehearsing BVs before the main band session • ensuring the song is written before the rehearsal starts • finding the 1-in-12 perfect key for the singer (many guitarists dislike the 'harmonic maths' of transposition) • make it clear that tutors' musical suggestions are only optional – the student retains full creative control at all times *
Central Lancashire	Students seem to share instrumental skills and theoretical knowledge without the need for encouragement. This does not hold true for technological skills; student who have such skills are not motivated to share and students who lack those skills seem generally happy for others to service their technology needs.	▪ Encouraging students to re-examine their set-ups and the physical space they occupy. ▪ Video / audio recordings of rehearsals ▪ Shorter and more intensive rehearsal periods before assignments
Chester	Making sure they understand the symbiotic nature of the work.	Using 'real life' practices and important for students to understand the nature of the tasks.
Anonymous	Extensive peer feedback and group discussion in performance workshops has been very effective	Having very clear criteria when marking performances – students are aware of this and therefore rehearse and plan performances to ensure all essential elements are covered
Norwich	1) Master class sessions in which all students give feedback on individual performances 2) Peer feedback sessions involving pairs of students who alternate performer/critic roles	Workshop sessions in which tutor is both director and participant in performance/improvisation groups

Institutions responding to survey question	*Band rehearsals provide valuable opportunities for individuals to learn from each other. Can you suggest/recommend any techniques/strategies, etc., that you have found particularly helpful in further supporting peer learning in rehearsing?*	*As a tutor facilitating band rehearsals, please describe any strategies/techniques that have you found particularly useful.*
Westminster	More and more over the last few years students appear to know less and less repertoire. This should've been addressed by School, 6th Form and FE music courses and also by private teachers. But of course, I find it falls to us to instil, in a very short period of time, why repertoire is generally the cure for most vocalist/songwriter and instrumental woes. The best strategy is to employ, much like the Conservatoires, tutors who have extensive knowledge of Popular repertoire and key/milestone performances but to also have this informed by similarities of development from both Jazz and Classical musics. We also aim to teach creative thought processes eg how do you create a part, how to moderate your part given changing textures etc. I'm not sure there are really any strategies other than to attempt to facilitate their growth as musicians and not just mechanics. We do however favour smaller, more frequent assessments over the semester*	We try to provide our students with a variety of learning methods ie charts; head arrangements; self-maintained part notes; on the spot transcription from either audio or video performances; part creation, dynamics and group cohesion. Our rehearsal studios all have a computer connected to the net, which means that almost any performance visual or audio can be referenced instantly. As a tutor, I feel this complements our teaching and has a level of immediacy without having to discuss performance in the abstract*
Plymouth	Rotating roles and responsibilities	Taught and assessed rehearsals happen in year two
Newcastle College	Being clear about aims & objectives, assessment criteria, etc. Progressive series of challenges and issues over time	Establishing professional methodologies

Findings and discussion

Findings and discussion arising from the survey

Table 1: Rehearsing context
The majority of tutors reported that they are involved in the band-rehearsing timetable. 8 tutors see this as a normal timetable commitment; a further five are regularly involved in addition to there being tutor-less bands. Only 2 reported band rehearsal as being self-directed on the timetable.

Table 2: Extent of tutor involvement in rehearsals
Tutors involvement in the rehearsal, as indicated on the semantic-differential scale, tended towards a low-to-average rating. This can be interpreted their involvement is one of rehearsal facilitation rather than directly leading the bands.

Table 3: Determining band membership
Most responses involed students determinging their band line ups, but this related to the nature of the rehearsing assignment and also the year group. It was a frequent pattern that year one bands were selected by tutors, while year two and year three students, usually formed their own bands by themselves, subject to approval by the tutor. A purpose for tutor-determined bands in year one was that it enabled students to experience working with as many others from the cohort as possible. Reasons given for allowing student-selected bands included factors such as supporting students' creative choices, ownership, common interests and friendship groupings.

Table 4: Feedback methods
Feedback from the tutor (both in verbal and written form) was the preferred method; peer feedback arising from the bands (normally verbal but occasionally written also) was also reported. Less common methods included evaluative critiques, rehearsal logs and blogs.

Table 5: Are rehearsals assessed?
Only 2 of the 17 respondents indicated that rehearsing, in itself, contributed towards summative assessment.

Table 6: Who determines the rehearsal criteria?
Surpisingly 7 tutors responded to this, suggesting that some might have interpreted the question in a wider performance context; course documentation, nevertheless, was the main source. 2 tutors reported that the criteria arose from band members and the tutor.

Table 7: Method of awarding marks
6 of the 17 respondents replied to this; evalutive critiques/logs were used with peer assessment (sometimes involving a tutor assessment) less common.

Table 8: *Band rehearsals provide valuable opportunities for individuals to learn from each other. Can you suggest/recommend any techniques/strategies, etc., that you have found particularly helpful in further supporting peer learning in rehearsing?*

There were 10 responses to this open-ended question; common themes were:
Peer feedback: 'peer feedback and group discussion in performance workshops has been very effective'.
Professional practice: 'we can accelerate their learning by encouraging efficient/professional rehearsal technique'; 'rotating roles and responsibilities'; 'progressive series of challenges and issues over time'; **'**we also aim to teach creative thought processes, e.g. how do you create a part, how to moderate your part given changing textures etc'.
Repertoire: 'more and more over the last few years students appear to know less and less repertoire… the best strategy is to employ, much like the Conservatoires, tutors who have extensive knowledge of popular repertoire and key/milestone performances'.
Facilitation: 'I'm not sure there are really any strategies other than to attempt to facilitate their growth as musicians and not just mechanics'; 'it's an experiential process'.

Table 8 (continued): *As a tutor facilitating band rehearsals, please describe any strategies/techniques that have you found particularly useful.*

There were 10 responses to this open-ended question; common themes were:
Professional/real-world: 'making students entirely responsible for organising bands, rehearsals, gigs, and expecting them to communicate with and manage each other …as professionals'; 'establishing professional methodologies'.
Practice: 'use chord sheets • rehearsing backing vocals before the main band session, ensuring the song is written before the rehearsal starts, finding the 1-in-12 perfect key for the singer, make it clear that tutors' musical suggestions are only optional'; 're-examine their set-ups and the physical space they occupy'.
Reflection: 'the cycle of reflection -action-reflection is a feature of the programme'; 'video / audio recordings of rehearsals'.
Strategic: 'shorter and more intensive rehearsal periods before assignments'; 'workshop sessions in which tutor is both director and participant'; 'it is worth having a number of targets rather than just one such as a gig'.

Findings and discussion arising from the interviews

(a) A thematic analysis was conducted on the interviews with tutors. The substantive themes arising from the tutor interviews suggested the following categories: *processes; rehearsing activities; issues and concerns.*

Processes	Rehearsing activities	Issues/concerns
Assessment	Arranging	Alpha male
Contribution	Developing set/song choice	Loners
Course ethos	Feedback in studio	Group dynamics
Covers	- Language of feedback	- alchemy
Drummers	Suggestive feedback	- leader
Environment of the rehearsal	Learning	
Extra-curricular bands	Performing to each other	
Lecture support	Reflective logs	
MD	Year one tasks	
Originals		
Peer review		
Rehearsal qualities		
Pressure		
Self selection/creative choices		
Time management/wasting		
Trust		
Tutor selected bands		
Tutor contact		

(b) A thematic analysis was also conducted on the band interviews. The substantive themes arising suggested the following categories: *processes; rehearsing dynamics; issues/concerns.*

Processes	Rehearsal dynamics	Issues/concerns
Acoustic only first rehearsals	Attitude	Attendance
Arranging	Confidence	Fatigue
Bass and drums	Group dynamics	Free riders
Keyboard	Listening to others	Guitarists too loud
Ipod/ iTunes/YouTube usage	Modesty	Lack of drummers
MD	Open minded	Time management
Pre-rehearsing activities	Patience	- wasting time
- sub-group rehearsing	Peer feedback	Unnecessary repetition
Styles and genres	Personal criticism	
Set, deciding songs	Rehearsal comments	
Self selected bands	Strengths & weaknesses	

Bringing the data together and the resource pack

The aim of this project involves exploring the current scope and practice of pop/rock band rehearsing in HE through responses given by tutors and band members. It focuses on the operational mechanics and the pedagogical through the lens of expert practitioners and explores the rehearsing life-worlds on undergraduate bands and band members. Throughout the many themes that emerge in this project, it is possible to have a glimpse perhaps, of some of the more significant brush strokes that this picture of band rehearsing reveals.

One example is the frequent pattern that emerges, depending on the course ethos, involving the various pedagogies that might underpin students' progression during their undergraduate band rehearsals:

Year one – tutor-determined bands in order to facilitate students working with all others in the year, sharing experiences and learning from this variety.

Year two – student selected bands, allowing ownership of creative choices, shared interests and effective band cohesion/chemistry

Year three – individual focus, professional methodologies, developing real-world experiences, challenges.

Another example involves what appears to be an important concern for many: that of band members' feedback comments during the rehearsal. It is an important journey, for many, towards being able to receive or give constructive criticism, to develop a positive attitude, to offer feedback that is valued, and to demonstrate maturity as a team player within their band.

The accompanying resource pack brings together the interview data and presents their combined experiences, ideas, advice, issues, concerns, solutions, and practical tips. This is organised by topic or theme that emerged and are arranged in alphabetical order.

APPENDIX 1: The Survey

Rehearsing popular music: Exploring opportunities for supporting learning in the pop/rock band

A PALATINE funded project

Survey: YOUR suggestions, ideas, practice…..

Please tick the year group to which this survey applies:

BA1 ☐   BA2 ☐   BA3 ☐

If you teach other year groups, which are appropriate to this survey also, we strongly welcome this additional information. If so, please use a separate sheet.

Please tick any of the following that apply to THIS year group or module.

Rehearsing context – tutor involvement

☐ Rehearsing entirely self-directed by students

☐ Active facilitation/guidance/workshops etc given by tutor

☐ Directed by tutor

Please place an **X** in the space which best represents tutor involvement in student band rehearsals:

| High*:   :   :   :   : |

[*e.g.: each band rehearsed/led by tutor every week]
[**e.g. periodic monitoring of each band]

Band membership:

☐ Decided by the tutor   ☐ Decided by students

☐ Sometimes students; sometimes tutor

☐ Students and tutor jointly decide   ☐ Other:…………………………………

What is the rationale behind your method of forming bands?

………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Rehearsal feedback:

☐ Written feedback from tutor   ☐ Verbal feedback from tutor   ☐ Other ………………………

☐ Written feedback from band members   ☐ Verbal feedback from band members

☐ Other

☐ Written (with mark/without mark)   ☐ Verbal

27

☐ Individual written appraisal/rehearsal log, etc used for assessment purposes

Do you assess their rehearsing?

☐ Rehearsals are not assessed

Rehearsals are assessed: ☐ Formative assessment ☐ Summative assessment

☐ Both formative and summative assessment ☐ Other ………………………………………….

If so, are your assessment criteria for rehearsing:

☐ Provided by tutor/course documents, etc

☐ Set jointly by a tutor and students ☐ Decided by students

Do you award marks for rehearsing? YES/NO

☐ An overall mark is awarded to the band as a whole for their rehearsing by the tutor

☐ Individual marks are awarded to each band member for their contributions by the tutor

☐ Marks for rehearsing are awarded by the tutor

☐ The contribution to the rehearsals by each individual is peer marked by the band

☐ Rehearsing is assessed by a combination of tutor and peer marks

☐ Other …………………………………………………………………………………………

Band rehearsals provide valuable opportunities for individuals to learn from each other. Can you suggest/recommend any techniques/strategies, etc., that you have found particularly helpful in further supporting peer learning in rehearsing?
……
……
……

As a tutor facilitating band rehearsals, please describe any strategies/techniques that have you found particularly useful.
……
……
……

It is acknowledged that this survey cannot do proper justice to your insights and expertise. Would you be willing, as a part of this PALATINE funded project, to be visited at your institution in order to discuss further your ideas and opinions, etc?

☐ YES [Name/Institution………………………………………………………… ☐ No thanks

Would you also be willing, as part of this PALATINE funded project, to share ideas/suggestions/written and/or audiovisual materials, exemplars, etc, to the PALATINE resource bank that is being created?

☐ YES [Name/Institution………………………………………………………… ☐ No thanks

**APPENDIX 2: Website literature survey of HE institutions offering
courses that might include popular music band-rehearsing activities**
(*search conducted Oct 2009**)

University/College	Possible courses that might involve band-rehearsing
Aberdeen College	HND Music
Anglia Ruskin	BA Popular Music
Bangor	BA Music
Bath Spa	FdA /BA (Hons) Commercial Music
Birmingham, South College	HND Popular Music Studies
Bournemouth & Poole College	FdA Popular Music
Brunel	BA Musical Performance
Buckinghamshire	BA Commercial Music Performance and Production
Canterbury Christchurch	BA Commercial music
Central Lancashire	BA Music Practice
Chester	BA Popular Music Performance
Chichester	FdA Commercial Music [*Platform One College of Music*]
Colchester Institute	BA Popular Music
Coventry	BA Music and Professional practice
Derby	BA Popular Music with Music Technology
De Montford Leicester	BA Music, technology and performance
Doncaster College	BA Creative Music Technology
Devon, North Devon College	FdA Music Performance
East London	BA Popular Music Performance [*ICMP*]
Edinburgh, Napier	BA Popular Music
Falmouth, University College	BA Popular Music/Music Performance
Glamorgan	BA Popular Music
Gloucestershire	BA Popular Music
Goldsmiths London	BA Popular Music
Highlands, UHI Millennium Institute	BA Popular Music Performance HND Music; HNC [Lews Castle]; HNC [Thurso]
Hertfordshire	BA Music Performance and Performing Arts
Huddersfield	BA Popular Music/Music and Promotion/Popular Music and Music Technology
Hull	BA Popular Music (Scarborough) BA Jazz and Popular Music (Hull)
Kent, West College	FdA Popular Music Performance
Kingston, London	BA Music
Lancaster	BA Popular Music and Cultural Studies
Leeds Metropolitan	BA Music Performance
Leeds	BA Popular & World Musics
Leeds College of Music	BA Popular Music Studies
Liverpool	BA Music/Popular Music
Liverpool Community College	BA Popular Music
Liverpool Hope	BA Music
Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts	BA Music
Liverpool John Moores	BA Popular Music Studies
Loughborough College	BA Music Performance and Production

Manchester College	FdA Popular Music and Production
Manchester Metropolitan	BA Popular Music
Middlesex	BMus Popular Music
Neath, Port Talbot College	HND Popular Music
Newcastle	BA Popular and Contemporary Music
Newcastle College	BA Popular Music
New College Nottingham	FdA Music and Sonic Arts (Music Performance)
Northampton	BA Popular Music
Northbrook College Sussex	FdA Music Performance
Norwich City College	BA Popular Music Practice
Plymouth, UCP Marjon	BA Live Music
Salford	BA Popular Music and recording
Southampton	BA Music
South Downs College	HND Music Performance
South East Essex College	BA Music Performance and Practice
Suffolk, University Campus	BA Creative Music
Sunderland	BA Community Music
Surrey	BA Music
Thames Valley	BA Music Technology and Popular Music Performance
Truro and Penwith College	FdA Popular Music
Wakefield College	HND Music Performance
Walsall College	HND Music Performance
West Anglia, College of	BA Music Performance (Popular Music)
Westminster	BA Commercial Music Performance
Wolverhampton	BA Popular Music
University of Ulster	BMus

*Apologies for errors and omissions

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RPM

Rehearsing
Popular Music

**Rehearsing popular music:
Exploring opportunities for supporting
learning in the pop/rock band**
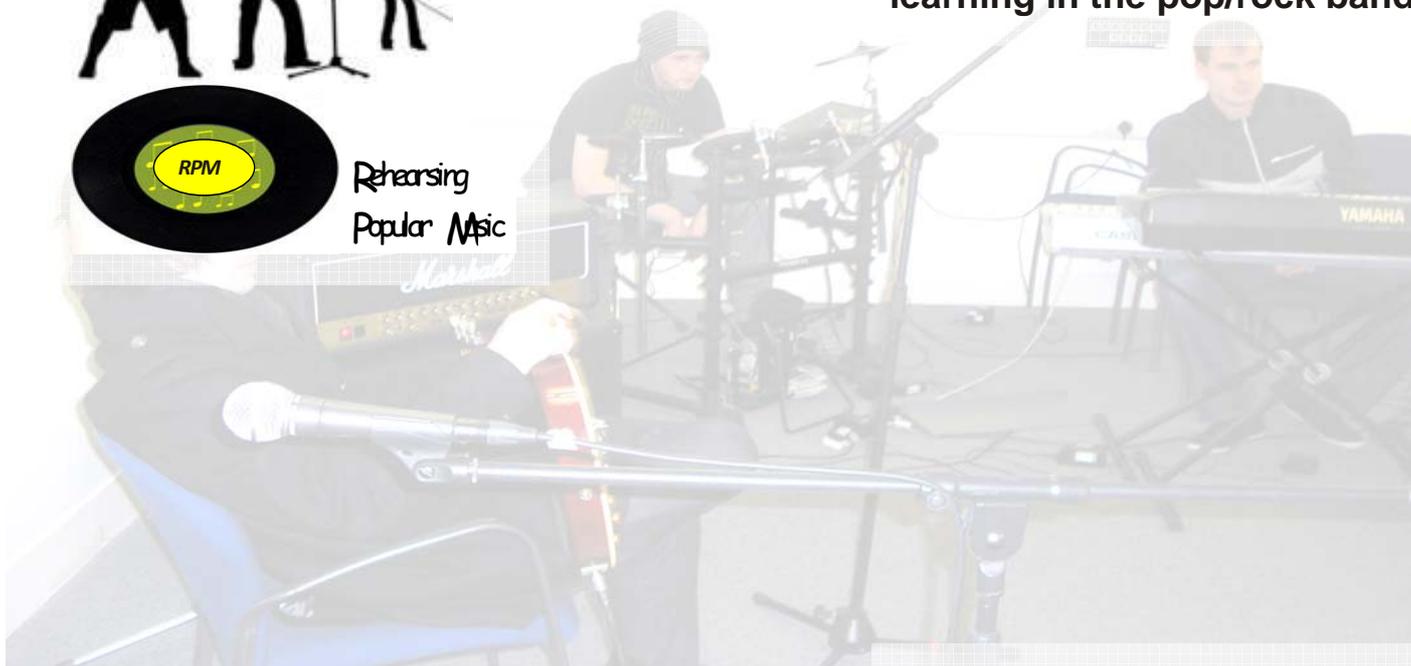
Resource Pack

Practice   Ideas   Advice   Solutions

Compiled by Mark Pulman
University of Huddersfield

Contents

Appendices

Interviews

Joe Bennett
Hussein Boon
Danny Cope with Charlotte Orba
Robert Davis
Davey Ray Moor
Rowan Oliver
Richard J Parfitt
Brian Rice
Andy Stott

Joe Bennett
Bath Spa University

M: Could we start with the feedback and assessment and the approaches taken on the course, please?
J: It's important to differentiate between the activities involving ensemble for composition and those involving ensemble for performance. A lot of students will work on their own material because of the premium that's based on it.
For covers, pre-production work needs to happen: chord sheets, lyrics, and documentation, for example. Many incoming students just do it from recordings so we give sessions on chord sheet strategy. It's not efficient for all to learn off a recording [in real time], with the drummer being bored while the guitar learns the chords in real time; it's not a good use of either the tutor or the rehearsal spaces. They can start off at what I call 'Oasis level' – everyone strumming all the chords, all the time – so they all know the basic harmonic outline, before starting rehearsing it together.

The first piece of feedback would be about students' rehearsal room practice: have you all got a chord sheet, or is the bass player trying to track the guitarist's chords in real time, because it doesn't seem very rock-n-roll to have a chord sheet? This is a mantra in the 1st year! It allows better rehearsal room interaction. If they are working on their own material, where they are all playing same chords at same time, can they get through the piece? This is the start of the process.

I would not be too interventionist at this stage but I would ask the students 'where does this lead - what have you got here'? This discussion can provide a good learning outcome to stimulate their musicological knowledge.

M: Do they all tend to chip in then, when rehearsing covers, and is there a mechanism, perhaps, for how all of it is assessed?
J: The course, fundamentally, is about developing the Intellectual Property of original material; we rarely assess cover versions. Year one students often are at a basic level of skill [in terms of their ability to perform cover versions]. It's very important for students to have prior musical literacy and a raft of skills. We can see whether they have that on audition. Students need to be harmonically literate to play on other's tracks, and it's reasonable to assume that a basic (Rockschool) grade 5 level of instrument literacy is already there. One benchmark of this is that individuals possess a competent musical vocabulary. They do a lot of learning in year one about arranging backing vocals. Fewer that 10% of our first year 'Indie' bands use backing vocals effectively. To do this well needs a lot of work and the use of music theory. It shouldn't happen in the music room, however – the drummer would soon get bored – so fragmentation of rehearsal pre-production is necessary. They rehearse out in small ensembles first, which allows the songwriter to bring their song to the singers who can work also on the backing vocals. This all takes place before full band rehearsals. Following this, band chemistry will hopefully develop more effectively, and they will then look at secondary hooks, riffs, and so on. It's important to compartmentalise the

rehearsal process, especially when running original material, as it can achieve more efficient use of rehearsal time as well as encouraging more coherent song writing; originals are normally written before the rehearsing begins.

In parallel with students' creation of original material, a set of 10 cover versions, each needing pre-production tasks, is also required. These provide lots of learning outcomes: transcriptions of covers involve aural, notation, teamwork and theory skills, etc.

One interesting task I occasionally use involves bringing in a bag of compilation CDs. We have a lucky dip: the students choose a song from the compilation they've drawn and are given one hour to learn it and perform it. It puts the pressure on them, on their time efficiency, transcription skills, delegating tasks, working as a team, and promotes the culture of using chord sheets, as they've only one hour. We try to do this in week 2 or 3. It's good fun - nobody minds - and it gets them to recognise and use their aural pop transcription skills, and chord sheets, etc. We expect anyone doing covers to have full set of charts, and singers having their lyric sheets too.

M: What is the rationale for putting the bands together?
J: We are very specific in that we don't engage with students' creative choices at all, even choosing whom to play with. We never tell the students what or with whom they should play, or style; the entire programme is style agnostic and this leads to a wide range of styles including techno, singer-songwriters, DJs, *a capella* groups, folk, and so on. None of our assignments have any style or genre implications, either. We are quite distinctive and expect students to knock off *Motown* styles and covers on entry. Also we want Popular Music to be respected in HE and to have equivalence to BMus. However it is not about 'Grade 8'; but an equivalent grade 8 song writing experience on application along with a certain level of instrumental or singing skills on entry. In the early days there was more music theory on the course, but now we expect all that on entry. The philosophy of the course is about developing Intellectual Property - i.e. original songs. As such, there is no mention of specific styles or genres on any course documentation.

M: Sometimes when forming bands, the particular mix of instrumentalists available in a particular year can cause problems in having appropriate line-ups –there might not be enough drummers or bass players for example. What happens in such a situation?
J: We adopt a free for all approach and there can be as many groupings as students like. Students will gravitate to music that is relatively contemporary. Guitar led music is popular, although students' musical preferences are not always reflected in the mainstream singles chart: there's not usually a live kit, for instance, and so chart analysis and awareness in the curriculum can challenge student assumptions about live music requiring guitar bass & drums. There are certain cultural assumptions surrounding the use of a live kit. Because we're style agnostic this allows any students who are left over to go off and do their own thing. Any interventions are

avoided: a classic reason for avoiding tutor-determined bands is to prevent learning contexts that, for example, might lead to comments such as 'my mark suffered because you gave me that dodgy bass player to work with'.

M: What happens to individuals who are groupless?
J: Ah - Billy NoMates! Typically we would attach him to a particular project. Cliques happen all the time and we think that's artistically desirable to create an individual identity; it's not a democracy but rather, a group of like-minded people. However each has a right to participation and fair assessment. We would not intervene, as it would damage their loyalty. Sometimes we might say that this act needs to add backing vocals, etc., and so he ('Billy NoMates') could join. A lot of bands will have folded at the end of year one, if their project doesn't work out. Of those projects that do survive, they need their creative journey of year one to support their year two work, involving touring, and their year three, which is focused on promotion, the music business, and marketing themselves. From our 1st year cohort of 35 maybe 12-14 bands will form. Lots of them will have projects and creative goals to achieve. Our first years learn the craft of songwriting, which they showcase. At the end or final performance perhaps 30% will walk away from the band, having stayed together only for the assignment. For those that have just enough time to create new material, do promos, etc, and gig it a little, for touring in May.

M: Could you explain a little about assessment at year one?
J: In the beginning we previously adopted a highly individualised approach; we would look at a bass player, for example, and compare their instrumental performance standard, perhaps, with performances in conservatoires. With the focus now on song writing in the course, we jettisoned most of that previous approach. Now we look at what's good on stage: sometimes we give group marks with global feedback and separate feedback for individuals. I resisted group-based assessment for a while, because of individual resentment about their marks being adversely affected. But now, we assess performances as a band because that is how the public sees them. Prior to this there might be terrible bands but with a fantastic bass player. How could you really give that bassist a mark of 70% yet, at the same time, seeing that the band overall was musically poor?

M: Do we need to know about the rehearsing process?
J: Reflective logs are a commonly used tool in HE and can be useful for finding out about individuals' contribution. I did used to champion this but as our curriculum has matured we have looked at shared and collective responsibility as a much more of an outcome of the product: the performance. So it's not used as much now, as students didn't seem to learn a lot by doing them. We still do use some evaluative logs, as it's useful for formative assessment, and finding out who wrote the lyrics, for example. Weaker students used it as means for blaming others. Given that the course is so practically based and that there is so much to do, we prioritised more relevant areas such as promotional writing, press releases, traditional research skills, e.g. in the 1st year' writing' module: journalistic writing/promotional writing. So the evaluative log, perhaps, was selfish in that it helped the assessor, but I'm not sure whether it helped

the student to learn to become a reflective learner. The logs were more like linear diarist accounts, as students did not contextualise it with other reading.

M: In collaborative work then, particularly if band members receive same mark, do you use any peer assessment in terms of their respective contribution to the group?
J: Yes, we use peer assess for formative work. It's well received if led and managed by an experienced teacher. Davey Ray Moor brought in 'The gig of a 1000 songs' in which students perform just one verse and a chorus only of their song for their peers to review it. It certainly provides immediacy and we can get through lots of songs! You could argue that this is what traditional A & R does anyway – perhaps one day all pop music will be like this! I also choose an old year group's songs at random, just the audio, and invite students to comment. Some make value judgements even before hearing the vocals enter. This invites questions that ask about why they are writing a 16 bar intro! There is also a wider learning outcome, however, to do with audience perception and of the audience out there. Students are required to think about this when making music for an audience, and developing an awareness of audience and understanding their music as an audience experiences it. Peer assessment is a brilliant tool for doing that, particularly if you can use previous cohorts' work to defuse the social aspect.

M: How are the gigs organised?
Year one bands have a number of gigs and although they have very few gigs on campus in the union bar, we have a relationship with venues and nightclubs in Bath and Bristol. We don't force them out, particularly as some may feel they are not ready and need an incubation period and time to get their song writing together. All of our formally assessed gigs are public or semi public; these are divided usually into acoustic unplugged and 'other'. Staff organise the year one gigs; students organise their own in year 2.

M: Anything more you would like to add?
I believe that any HE popular music programme that doesn't include song writing, a major income stream for professional artists, is being irresponsible in supporting students' employability![1] I also have strong views about imposing BMus curricular models on popular music because each has different kinds of musicians, different aspirations, and different industries! Important for popular musicians are the broad qualities of teamwork, negotiation, and creativity in HE; we hope these are provided on our courses.

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[1] Further information about the development of the Commercial Music degree programme can be found in Brennan, L. and Gosling, D. (2004) *Making Foundation Degrees Work.* London: SEEC

Hussein Boon
University of Westminster

M: Can you explain the 'music and narrative' rehearsing and performance assignment that year one students are working on at this moment, please?
H: We tell students that the narrative is carried not just through words but also through the use of various musical devices, writing techniques with the aim of developing thematically and musically coherent pieces. With guidance from the tutors, students decided on an overall theme and then each student is expected to write a piece focusing on one aspect of the theme to propel the narrative. This is contrasted with the repertoire based module in the first semester, which is generally material prior to 2000 with songs are assessed every two weeks.

M: As this is a band rehearsing and performance type module do the students choose the songs and their bands?
H: No one gets a choice in semester 1 – we choose for them – so they have a broader experience in various styles, writing techniques and performance. We put the groups together for the first three semesters – to avoid cliques and groups based on ethnicities or special interests emerging. By semester 3 they will have played with everybody in the cohort and, most students, begin to see that those whom they don't know well have, in fact, a lot to offer. In the past I found the course to be too cliquey and musical divisions were created so that the cohort lacked a sense of cohesion. Now we've been able to break that apart and this allows projects to be more diverse. This maximises the student experiences of being a commercial music performer. If you allow them to pick groups they play it safe; most musicians are conservative by nature; for example, BMus students tend to regard technique as one of the most important aspects of learning on the course. While technique is also important for Commercial Music, it's a much wider area than that and examples range from having a limited technique to being supremely crafted. The learning experience is important: for example, blues rock guitarists learning and valuing the 'indie' kids and vice versa. We always attempt to introduce material that they will not have heard recently, eg 10cc has a complexity of structure and is harmonically rich – but it's not like that today - so we push the boundaries a little, to find something new. For example it is interesting to introduce Karen Carpenter and her light floaty vocals; also Liz Fraser, of the Cocteau Twins. We introduce songs with different time signatures – all this stuff that has now disappeared! - and remote modulations. Students tend to say that's just to do with jazz; if that is so then I play them some Goldfrapp – which uses all these techniques. In short we use a variety of music!

M: So do you also have lectures and music analysis type sessions?
H: Yes, we often have a lecture for the first part, to introduce interesting material, and then rehearse. Students must take personal ownership of their own technique, however. An additional part of the job is to make them aware that their technique is their own responsibility. For some this is the first time since finishing A-Levels that they are being made aware of their self-responsibility in their development.

M: That's interesting – but how do you manage to increase their self-awareness and responsibility?
We use an appraisal form in order to help make clear to individuals that they already know where they are and where they should be going and how to develop. We find it is better than a SWOT analysis, which can be quite negative. The appraisal form takes the blame culture out; it enables individuals to provide a break down of current competencies and how, in discrete steps, they could and can progress.

M: Is there any opportunity for students to form their own bands, as well as their official Uni one?
H: Year on year, we are finding that there are more extra-curricular bands: extra-curricular bands are encouraged – jam nights, open mics, etc, - and these are advertised in London and on the Internet. Students also start up their own club nights especially if they're in a 'niche' type band. We also students to make use of the resources available from other courses based at Harrow including radio, tv, film, video, journalism and so on

M: How does that work with the Commercial Music Performance course?
We don't have a personal project module as such; those going on tour with big performing commitments, and who are missing classes, we find, obviously, that their coursework deteriorates; others who don't do this type of activity better, as they don't risk everything on their gigs. There's a dichotomy between those risking all on professional gigs and those playing safe. In our coming revalidation, we are creating modules for those going out gigging and allow an evidence-based portfolio to be developed, to demonstrate that we value their external work. They will now do their 2-week tour and not be disadvantaged; this will also be good for mature students. The knock on effect is that we are taking it further in to the real world and away from the cosseted environment of the University with its nice equipment, nice technicians and rehearsal studios! Tutors have got to like undergraduates to be able to tell them, effectively, to get organised! We tell them, you will have a portfolio - based career; if you are lucky then you'll be in a pro band. But it's not just one job for life – it will be varied - and you will be doing lots of things!

Danny Cope with Charlotte Orba
Leeds College of Music

M: Could you describe how the band rehearsals are organised and how are you involved in facilitating these, please?

D: All our first year bands are timetabled for 2 hours; additionally, we expect them to rehearse on their own for another 2 hours also. Ideally, with 4 bands having a two-hour time slot, two tutors are allocated. Some bands will go on further, others will not. We don't formally monitor their own two-hour slots. This pattern is repeated in the second and third year. In their second year, bands are also entitled to an additional 3-hour slot; the third years are entitled to an additional 4 hours – but this is unlikely to all be in one slot! They do have a permanent rehearsal slot, however, in the rehearsal space across the road, although staff don't go to that. When we started we had four staff and, for the four bands, they each rotated around.

C: We are considering that for second and third year bands there will be one member staff. Every 4/6 weeks we have a formal 'show and tell '- which follows the time where bands go off and rehearse on their own, - with tutor and peer feedback (it's a model similar to that of Birmingham Conservatoire). This should help the third years, in running up to their final showcase, where many might not get anything together for a long time! So every four weeks they've got to have something to show us – as a short-term goal. They have less molly coddling than in the first and second year; we give them ownership and more timely feedback, rather than a weekly 'looking-after' of them.

M: Can you explain how the bands are put together?

D: We put them together in the first year with 4-6 students in each band, depending on the intake line up. In their first semester we provide a list of ten different genres each containing different songs. We expect them to pick one a week, as they may only have had limited experience in say three genres, and expect stagecraft in their performances. After Christmas, we change the bands around and they have to do 4 covers and 2 originals (written within the band). For our second year we focus on shifting personnel with changes taking place every week. We set them specific assignments – for example they are given a CD recording of a song, which they are required to perform in an hour and a half in front of the other bands. This provides for a quick turnaround times and with different instrumentalists. If you have that in the first year it helps time management and attitude. Sometimes we provide tablature for them to learn, sometimes to write an original and perform in 90 mins, and so on. At the end a 'depping' assignment is provided – they are all given same song and must learn it inside out, because we'll pick any group/individuals to perform it – and in the key the singer chooses! It's useful for function band work and they also experience pressure and the importance of preparation.

M: So, is there a 'trade off' then, between working with and learning from different people, and being in established band, as there are advantages perhaps, to each approach?

D: Well, it's only for that one semester; in their 2nd semester they are in just one band, and in their third year they are in one band for the entire year, if they take major performance! We used to form third year bands ourselves, but there was pain and suffering! They now tell us their ideal line up, and we try our best to do that.

C: Next year, we might go further. It could be that if you pick this option (it's optional as a minor or major ensemble) you need to have a band to do it with and have some flexibility to work with anyone. Students could be in more than one band if they are aware of the commitment. Some pick ensemble, but have no idea of what they will do. It's important to set the tone: students need to think about their band during the second year option time.

D: And it also gives them more ownership.

M: Thinking about the ensembles, how do you deal with dysfunctional bands?
D: Sometimes it's difficult to resolve and can end up by breaking into two separate bands. For example there was one band where the Vocalists could not get on: one left, and formed an *a capella* 4-piece. Generally it is all about talking to them and getting them through it.

C: One individual, for example, was very unreliable and a loner with no one to work with but went on to form a band using students off different courses. That student was the only one assessed but it was the most pragmatic solution.

D: We all try and resolve things; it's part of the learning experience.

[Charlotte has to leave].

M: Can you tell me a little about rehearsing feedback?
D: It's done during the rehearsing sessions. There isn't any formal written feedback except for first years. For third year ensemble bands, the tutor sees them on a weekly basis and identifies issues, usually derived from what went on the week before. It's a rolling process of discussion with the tutor present every week. This happens through all three years. The third years, however, might be changing to a more formal feedback. At the moment there is a formal critique for 3rd year students only, rather than in their first or second years; we're considering whether this is the wrong way round. Major ensemble performance in the third year is a 40-credit module, of which 25% is a 4000 words critique. We're considering making the third year performance stand alone - performance only- on its own feet. For the evaluative critique they evaluate the whole process: strengths and weaknesses and a critical evaluation of the final performance. We used to have formal evaluation in the second and first year and we are hoping to re-instate this.

M: Could you explain the criteria for assessment that is used?
D: It's quite rigid and the outcomes, specified in the documentation, have quite generic descriptors. The little tasks that we set in the first and second year are not formally

assessed but are there for the experience of learning. Some are informed by the outcomes in the course documents: for example, to be able to learn by ear; to be able to memorise for a performance.

M: In the assessment of your bands – could you explain how you assess the performances?
D: We assess outside of College as much as possible. Students' principle instrument study involves a one-on-one lesson, which, primarily, looks at technical ability on the instrument. Ensemble band studies are completely separate and focuses on stagecraft, audience reaction and structuring the set, and in a real performance environment, where we hire pubs and clubs around Leeds. We mark to the outcomes from the course document and each band member is marked individually. We've tried it a couple of different ways: some outcomes apply to the whole band, where everyone gets the same mark: for example, structuring the set. Some are individual, in which students can get different marks for their performance; these are double, sometimes triple marked.

M: Could you suggest or recommend some strategies that you use to support Learning opportunities in rehearsal?
D: It's useful is to get them to play to each other at the end of the week. This forms a part of the first year and, where some of the bands are picking the same songs, it's useful for the bands to compare how other have gone about tackling the same song. Also it is useful to compare standards and choice of style and interpretation. Doing this engages their brains: Why does their sound better than ours? Why does ours sound better than theirs? It develops awareness of alternative approaches. We have on a few occasions played DVDs, in rehearsals, of professional performances to show how they had gone about doing the same song. It pushes forward the importance of stagecraft and audience engagement. First years come with instrumental technique, but are not necessarily equipped with the discipline of communicating the song; this, they rarely address. It's a process of engagement: how can they best communicate the song, regardless of technical issues, inversions, modes etc.? Our third years sometimes have an entire session looking at videos. For example, a third year band at the moment, a rock and roll band, we spent one and a half hours watching *Jools Holland Louder* DVD. We turned the sound down and looked at performance – what makes the performance interesting? This is an eye opener for what they should be doing on stage.

M: In the rehearsal room, what kinds of interventions are made to help move the band on?
D: It varies. Sometimes it's about technical and musical issues: how instruments lock to together; bass and drums, especially, for example, for first years, should be locking together; keyboard and guitar shouldn't be doing the same thing. Sometimes it's about pointing out inappropriate attitude: a guitarist widdling away while vocalist and keys are trying to sort things out. A lot of it is encouragement and pointing out the things they are doing well. One benefit of having two staff around is that they will have two

different perspectives. We might be saying the same things, we might occasionally be contradicting each other is not necessarily a bad thing. It is indicative of the fact that people have different tastes and different ideas and this important for students – especially those from FE if they are used a to a tick box approach. We are trying to get them to engage with how we can do this differently. Sometimes it's useful for staff to step back from being an MD, for example, and ask 'is that working?' rather than telling them 'you tell me where it is going wrong'.

M: So, do you have projects where individuals are told that they will lead the band?
D: We have just started to do this and we expect a different member of the band to lead the rehearsal each week. Personalities come into play – the alpha male emerges – but occasionally there's a gem from one of the quieter members who says something that's absolutely right. We would say to them 'you need to be saying more of that, because that's exactly what's needed to be said!' We try to encourage that, and to identify where they want to take the song, and identify whether that's an appropriate direction.

M: In your first year, for example, could you tell me a little about approaches to time management such as, objectives setting?
D: First years are expected to do 10 songs in 12 weeks, so we decide at the end of week which song they would do next week. As it's an experiential module, they very rarely get through all of them. For their first song, for example, they might spend up to 3 weeks; this is to be expected, as they don't know each other at that stage. Through the course there are very clear improvements to students' achievement of their rehearsal objectives and their focus is improving, also. In 1st year we all try to identify with them, for example, when they'll have the song wrapped up, or having the chorus tighter. Or, I might say that I'm going to go away for half an hour and when I return I expect you to have got it tighter, or whatever; we set them little brief deadlines like those. But we don't, with first years being set 10 songs in 12 weeks, expect them by the end of the week two to have the song done. A lot is about pointing out to them how to improve. At the start we would say 'learn a song a week' - but they don't have the skills set yet to achieve that. So we identify where they are going wrong and by their second year they are able to turn these round. Inherent within that feedback are arrangement skills; although it's not a formal outcome as yet, it might be when we revalidate, especially for a pop musician. There are areas when reading charts, playing the part that's destined for you is appropriate. But a lot of the time, especially if you're a guitarist, you're not expected to be always playing chords, and you have to come up with ideas: different chords or motifs that work, for instance. So they are expected to feed in ideas and to think compositionally also. To get them thinking about that, in their second semester, first years are expected them to write a couple of original songs. We usually get a couple of students who will kick against that, but the overwhelming response is that they understand it as an important part of being a pop musician. So, in listening to a record, which will have ten more musicians and an amazing production, which you haven't got, you need to come up with something different that will work and helping them go through that process. What, of that song, is

its core ingredient? What absolutely has to be there and what doesn't? They might say 'we need a brass section, but we can't do it'. We might reply 'but the song is still there without it, what's the best job you can do'?

Robert Davis
Leeds Metropolitan University

M: Could you tell me a little about your involvement in band rehearsing?
B: There are, maybe, 3 different ways that I am involved. In 1st year, it's important being around and giving occasional feedback. Our 2nd years are largely self-directed, especially those within a rock/heavy rock setting and I give encouragement. On other side, there are those things I am directly involved in rehearsing: the Funk Band and the Folk Band. I like to take a back seat, as they choose repertoire and do the arranging, as a 'guest' pianist. Students respond in different ways: some respond directly, others are more self-reliant and just needing encouragement. With the 1st years, it's important trying to get to know them. We don't have formal band rehearsal sessions; improvisation, workshops are provided instead. I can slot in easily and make an assessment about what they are doing. We get to know each other and there's a personal kind of relationship that develops. They work over the next weeks in self-contained groups. When we get to Easter I build in some formative assessment that helps to monitor that process.

M: Do they form their groups or do you select the band members?
B: To begin with, I sort them. At the interview stage they have to work as a group and last year I set a task of writing a song in an hour. This year I gave them a choice of two songs to rehearse and put together: *Moondance* and *Aint no sunshine while she's gone.* Because in September, they have two or three weeks only to do a busking project on a main stage in town, which attracts a lot of interest from passers by. 4/5 weeks after that they do their first gig: a covers project. Those that pass that process they were given at interview continue with that, with a little bit of readjustment where changes in band personnel are self-selected. To begin the year I put together the bands like a football team and with some self-selection; the summer assignment, however, is self selected.

M: What is your rationale for self-selection?
B: I think they have to sort out the group dynamics. Once past the Christmas break people have their social groups and relationships, which are hard to break through. In an ideal world, music is a business, and being in a band is a business and it doesn't matter whether you get on with; but I don't think they are ready for that. Also, in terms of group numbers, there is not a critical mass where we can move people around. So we find that a bass guitarist will be in nearly everybody's band, and in second year there's a guitarist similarly. It's not like an orchestra or a jazz band; the small group dynamics means that you're going to have interpersonal skills relationships and these get established.

M: How do you deal individuals who seem unpopular with their peers and, in the self-selection process, are not selected?
B: That's where I do become involved. There are a couple of performers who don't really slot in easily. For one of these, I needed to find suitable repertoire through a workshop, then formed a small ensemble - because that makes it happen. There's a

lot of training and experiential things that have to go off that the group themselves might not feel able to do. But interesting, and unexpected, relationships can shine through. There is an umbrella to try to catch people and give them time to do those sorts of things, and chaos theory that suggests that when you place people in a room, they will try to get the best out of that situation! One or two interesting performers have emerged because of that. A couple, which at the opposite end of things, have gone on to form a performance group outside of their core group. One has concluded that he needs something more specific to himself and he now rehearses regularly.

M: What is your mechanism for providing feedback?
B: The 2nd years do an evaluation of the performance activity how they rehearse and manage their time: a 20% reflection evaluation based on their final 20-minute performances. I'm slightly uncomfortable with that, because of the lack of facilities here for their practicing. Last year we did have some extra rehearsal studios, which was better, but the jury is still out. Those that rehearse do it in their own time, creating their own dynamics and their repertoire, and starting to do their own performances; this is exactly what I want them to do. The staging that we do for the 1st years allows it to happen; but the push is toward the final year where bands will do their own rehearsals, do their own promotion and do their own gigs. So there has to be a handholding session leading up to this. Bounded by the fact the final assessment is a summative performance assessment, and I haven't found an effective way of dealing with those rehearsals, given that the dynamics of different groups vary so much.

M: How are the criteria for the critical reflection decided?
B: It's in the handbook. The second years put together a proposal about what their bands formation is and about what they want to do. There are asked to do at least two performances: one, a university sponsored band, the other should be an independent one. So I'm trying to capture both camps if you like. That becomes the basis for an agreement.

M: Rehearsing can provide opportunities for learning off each other. Are there any particular strategies you adopt or ways in which you have seen students learn from each other?
B: We have had 1st and 2nd years working together and I can see there is a spin off that's been partially successful; it's like mentoring. When you work in a smaller collective – a jazz-rock or whatever else – you tend to work on those personalities and those kinds of people to make things happen. The mentoring is informal, but people will choose those with similar kinds of interests. Putting people together can sometimes be a false situation, which can easily fall apart. In saying that, I also have put some 1st and 2nd years into our MA in Music Production workshop so can they experience that hothouse; this has produced some very interesting performances. I am encouraging one couple, an MA and 2nd year student, to work together over the summer, but I don't think I can hold all the threads. What I do try, is to provide, opportunities for 1st and 2nd years to meet, so the 1st years can see the second years rehearse and vice versa. We've also made a timetable commitment where there is free

time for both to meet. It has not always worked out because of lack of availability of a large space; these meetings have to be in smaller places. In my previous institution that had HE and FE, 3rd years students would sometimes work with A-level students, where there was a talent, spark or energy that people relate to and move to those people. However it's not a dating agency but I facilitate it! Occasionally I have thrust people together and tell them to sort it out because they haven't quite engaged.

M: How do you deal with the bands that are not engaging properly; do you invite someone to lead the rehearsal perhaps?
B: We started with the idea that some of the 2nd years would lead some bands, to share out more responsibility, given that this course is quite new and does not, as yet, have a long tradition established. With the non-engaging people it is problematic, and usually the only way I can deal with that is by natural selection. They will leave or be sidelined; that can impact on others who end up in a group that's dysfunctional. It's endemic in group work: recording, music technology groups. There is a problem when people have let others down, and the band draft in new musicians, only for the absent people to then turn up at the next rehearsal! That leaves us with a problem. But I don't take an attitude that I have to resolve that problem. I think it's for the students to resolve and acknowledge that they were not there. They discuss it with me but it's tricky.

M: You mentioned earlier that working with certain blues material is a good starting point with 1st years. Can you explain a little about how songs and sets are chosen or selected?
B: In the 1st year they choose their own covers, when the groups are sorted out. From there, and what happened last year, is that one or two bands did form and wrote their own material, took their stuff out to perform at The Cockpit in Leeds and other venues, and did quite well. That band has now moved on, however, and is not working anymore. They got to the end and, because of the dynamics: they sucked each other dry of material. Once you put extra curricula bands in the curriculum students want to have credit for this and we haven't yet worked out a system for that!

Davey Ray Moor
Bath Spa University

M: Can you tell me a little about your professional experiences of rehearsing and compare these in terms of similarities and differences with the student rehearsing experiences?

D: The rehearsal studio can be a very efficient working environment for students. With a previous band I was with, the rehearsal studio environment, however, became a rather unproductive, because where aspects of arrangement and song writing were 'nuanced' into the situation. The band could get locked into habits of performance, which could alter the feel and atmosphere of the music because of the indelicate environment. It could be down to the character of the music and the character of the individuals. I came to prefer to writing music and having everybody become familiar with the songs in a loose demo kind of sense. People could be aware of the contour of the arrangement. Here's a point: sometimes when someone has an electric guitar strapped on them in a rehearsal studio they feel that they should be making a sound all the time. That maybe where the course setting creeps in, when, let's say the guitar will just slam away, rather than think about how parts might fit together and in the way different guitars might sound. So I came to regard the rehearsal studio as having the potential to dumb down the music in a band situation. I prefer getting CDs to people that contain a more delicate arrangement in order that we can bring the song to life rather than just starting with raw song material. However our undergraduate first year students really delight in their first rehearsals in a convivial environment, having decent equipment which reinforces their sound adequately and reflects more closely the sound they have imagined. Also developing that chemistry in how they rehearse which is a big part of the learning journey. Let me say that this experience I spoke of last was of a band I was in my mid-thirties, and I had been around the scene a fair bit and I never really looked forward to, or thrived in a rehearsal room environment. It can become over-rehearsed. There is a sense of edginess and spontaneity that comes playing slightly unfamiliar material. I think it is a fine line.

M: Yes, rehearsals and performance of songs can become stale when going over and over them or bits of song. I suppose that is one of the things that a tutor might be on the lookout: to pick this up, guide them and move them on?

D: Exactly. What I found valuable in the student-tutor relationship was coming in fresh and to come away perhaps with removing things, rather than adding things in a kind of way. It's that expectation that because you are stood with that instrument you must be playing something. I think though that music arranging and live music production should be about a sense of spaciousness; every not needs to have a real reason to be there. I was reminded of a producer I was working with in the 80s who came into the rehearsal room and I was playing piano and he asked me about it .I replied that it helps the strings and I was playing the right chords and it's all good. But he said 'that piano part is living in the track all right, but it's not paying any rent!' It's the same nature that you can just be shoving things in there but you are reducing the impact of

your instrument if you don't focus on how these things are going to sound in the context of the music.

M: So it's those live arranging skills that may be as important as any thing else going on in the rehearsal room, in putting the song together, whether it's a cover or whether its an original. I guess that acquiring those kind of arranging skills takes more time to develop than many other aspects of practice in the rehearsing room?
D: Yes…

M: What do you think about the particular approaches that student bands have in their approach to beginning rehearsing: does it work best if it's led by a student, acting as the MD for the song, or for the rehearsal, or do you think a collaborative kind of sharing among the band members works best?
D: It's a very good question; the most elemental of all questions in this regard. I think one has to consider that there are some bands in the world, some great bands, let's say U2 or REM come to mind, where songs come out of thin air from the people in the room and start messing around and something starts to form. And I think the music of U2 and REM - these are among the greatest bands that there has ever been - that the alchemy, that fusion of influences, can conjure up music out of nothing; if the longevity of REM is any indication, it brings a cohesive human dynamic into the creation process. I also know a band that have an alpha leader character, come with a fully formed song and has the band to work on that song; in fact that was the way, the relationship in my last band. That I think is still not so good for the other people in the band who, I suppose, are relegated to the role of sidemen. Some bands do generate a sense of chemistry and electricity in a rehearsal studio, they jam and improvise and work out, they bind shape and form over time.

M: Yes. I guess also that when walking around in and out of student rehearsals there is sometimes a leader there directing and quite often that band does get on more quickly. But at other times, and it's all part of the learning process, the student experience of having chances of that MD experience, of arranging the material, styling the sound, the music, getting some light and shade in the music. Those skills are not always natural or always come easily to every student…

D: No - that's quite right; exactly. I think that a band's personality combinations are key and I think some individuals happen upon a way of working that can be entirely manipulative. There are some bands in the world that wouldn't have it any other way. I think they make for the better bands, the Chili Peppers, for example, whereby each one of those musical elements has got so much character and vitality and in the sociological aspect of bands they create a very fertile environment in a rehearsal studio. Like in any family or in any human group, there are people who yield and there are people who advance; there are leaders, there are noisy people, there are reflective people. Sometimes that can be an absolutely toxic environment for perhaps bands like The Who, or The Libertines. Other bands like The Jam or The Smiths had a dominant

writer and the other members were perhaps followers in that guiding vision. You never know what will happen in that pressure corker of the rehearsal environment.

M: Yes, I agree, with all of that. Following on from this, for student bands that have formed and have been rehearsing for, say 5 or 6 weeks what would be your view, given what you have just been saying, about keeping the band members together, or splitting personnel who have different experiences and interests? There may be pros and cons for each method of forming student bands…

D: Based on my experience of bands, and also knowledge of bands that I admire, and my knowledge of student bands I think that the optimum conditions are those in which each individual component is both distinctive and reliant upon other elements to interlock with them. What I mean by saying that is the reverse is where one guy really fees that he could do it on his own – and probably will one day – like Paul Weller. I think that sets up an asymmetrical power dynamic power dynamic. I think when choosing bands the dominant member can often exist or be on the cuffs of wanting to be the lead. The best band in the current year two at Bath Spa just gel as a unit and they work really well because no one is the real star; they have inter-reliant chemistry. I think we are talking about chemistry here. A football team full of stars doesn't necessarily gel –like the England football team!

M: That's a good analogy!

D: You do find those teams of people where no one person is individually spectacular. It is one of those coincidences of their destiny that they are all pretty good, but in combination there is that synergy.

M: The whole is more than the sum of the parts…

D: Exactly. That's what I was thinking of earlier, when I was trying to describe U2 for example. A Bono solo album might be boring, and perhaps that's why he's never made one. Same with the other guys, but they are great in combination.

M: I'm just thinking again of what you described in the professional world about arranging skills, band chemistry, and so on. Both in the pro world and in the undergraduate world bands can become fall apart and become dysfunctional. Do you have any advice for students or their tutors about this problem? Are there any easy answers?

D: I have several theories about that. At the very bald economic model, if everybody is a stakeholder in the material there will be a background to the band's creativity. What I mean by that is we all knew that John and Paul got most of the monies from the Beatles songs and that Ringo doesn't get very much. Similarly U2 Manic Street Preachers, REM all members of the band get an equal cut of the song writing royalties and such. It sounds trivial, and more than obvious, vulgar, cynical monetary considerations, but I think it is a very serious one. It can break up many bands; a lone songwriter can earn a fortune while the other band members, in the eyes of the public, and the eyes of the bank manager, can be considered to be support staff for an

aspiring songwriter. Oasis, for example, Noel Gallagher got very rich and the other guys did OK, but not to the same degree. I think that builds in and encourages people to want to write songs for reasons other than the quality of the writing. So I think that is one factor that comes into it. What I did with my last band *Cousteau,* I split my song writing royalties, even though I wrote it 100%, equally amongst the band, because in earlier bands I worked for, I witnessed the song writer getting very rich and the other members being on the dole when they were not touring. That was an elegant device even though I kind of regret it now because I didn't get to make as much money as I might have done.

M: You'll get your reward in Heaven, perhaps – you're very righteous!
D: I look forward to that!

M: It's very morally and ethically principled, Davey! Your interesting concept, stake holders, the word you used, is interesting, not only in matters financial but also as though they are stakeholders in the enterprise, in the rehearsing and the performing: on the level of their own original material they have an artistic, creative and aesthetic stake in that. On a student level, I suppose, if they are being assessed on particular songs and performances, there is also that shared stake. Is it fair to draw that kind of parallel?
D: Yes. Actually I think that parallel works, but it's also flawed. It could be seen as analogous for bands, for their success. The bands do their performance, it is assessed, and the assessment is a formal process mimicking the reaction of the general public in an educational sense, obviously with formative advice, feedback and so on. I think it's different because in a band in the real world, putting out records, and doing well, it goes on the radio and, if you like, the public assessment of the band can be first grade and that album might do very well. The stakeholder idea gets detached at that point because a band may have done very well but one person has made it financially exponentially better than all the others. That doesn't happen in the educational context. I think that's what makes it different.

M: Yes, That's right. The context is artificial – that's the flaw?
D: Exactly. And while we are training students to function in the real world, a part of their training, I think, is to consider the economic aspects of this thing that they make. Ultimately everything is untenable unless everybody can 'pay their rent, get a mortgage, get health insurance; basic human rights. People have been denied this because they have been acting as a sideman musician. It has led to an immense amount of bitterness down the years and I think there are hundreds of successful musicians who have not taken the lion's share of the money generated from their music. Back to chemistry, if everybody is a stakeholder, you are more likely to encourage synergy. Obviously everyone isn't a stakeholder in education, so the measure only comes into play where there is money in the equation. Like everything, things change once cheques start to be signed.

M: Yes, it is necessary to have a pragmatic outlook and a practical context. I'm still interested in the stakeholder idea in terms of the band's creativity and also, perhaps, how does the tutor invade the stakeholder situation by his suggesting and asking the bands to think about changing certain things and so on. What would your view be of the tutor, assuming a stakeholder context?

D: The stakeholder, within an educational context, might connect with the artistic, I was going to use the word the ego, although that perhaps that's a pejorative spin. What I mean is a more artistic side. I think if people can feel that an audience or a sort of peer group identified musical output as something which they can feel proud of, and feel a sense of ownership, I think that this synergy that we talk about means that everyone feels that 'yes, that was our band, our performance, our gang'. But it gets eroded, and it becomes instead, 'Johnny's band' and 'Johnny is the star' and 'aren't they lucky to be in Johnny's band?' I think that holds for some people. I think it holds for a band like The Doors. There were certain individuals that were magnificent in their reach and their potential that could defer their tries in a group organism and instead appreciate the fact that the reach of their project is exponentially more powerful than one powerful individual.

M: Thinking of Jim Morrison….

D: Exactly – it all couldn't have happened without him. And they were all great musicians of course

M: Are you also perhaps talking about valuing their rehearsals, that creative experience: the value that is placed on the song that is being rehearsed and performed. Would it be fair to say that students value that experience of rehearsing, and to be proud of that?

D: I think it would be churlish not to admit that ego is a good thing and that is not necessarily a pejorative term, because people, I think, get into this game because they want to make something valuable and be seen to have made something valuable. If people can access a sense of ownership, then you will have a healthier working environment. One thing I think, when inside a rock band when they are rehearsing is they often fail to recognise the nature of the front of house PA and how much detail they are capable of projecting. What I mean by this is whether at Wembley Stadium or the 'Dog and Duck' down the road, when a band is playing, often you can only really hear the drums and the singe. There may be some bass and guitars in there if you are lucky. It is an aspect of the sound reproduction system that's very crude. The nuances within the recorded arrangement can become totally lost or distracting because live music often has to be thinned out and containing essential elements only; inner parts and delicate textures can often go unheard because of that dominance of the drums and the vocals. That's part of the rehearsal studio paradox is that much of what you do there may never be hear, if you are a keyboard player or a guitarist.

M: Yes, and learning about the levels in the rehearsing studio is important if it helps to foreground some of that detailing that would otherwise be lost…

D: You're exactly right. I think that the compliment to the rehearsal process needs to be going out and listening to bands and hearing the kinds of things that cut through or can be attempted with any confidence.

M: …and coming back, I suppose, to the first aspect that you were describing, Davey, in order for that fine detailing to be heard then the arrangement, thinning out the texture, instruments dropping out, and so on, to help that is all part of that learning process. I'm thinking about what you said earlier and about the tutor's role. How the tutor could facilitate some of those things; talking about the sense of pride, value, ego and ownership of what takes place in the rehearsal studio and the subsequent performances. It would be silly to think that we could teach ego…
D That's right…

M: But is it about providing the wherewithal, the kind of conditions, for that process to take place?
D: I think so. First of all I think there are three conditions. The first, I think, is trust: the tutor is only trying to help. There's no other agenda, ego or antagonism or anything. If it's clear, and I hope it becomes self-evident, when the tutor makes his suggestions and the band tries it, that I becomes very clear when things instantly improves. That's the kind of experience I have had with undergraduates last year and it was generally leaving stuff out that led to the improvement. For example, not playing any snare drum in the first verse. This might not be the most counter-intuitive for a drummer naturally, but when they try it the next time they can feel the snare drum begins in the chorus, it can be held back as a secret weapon…

M: And it has much greater impact when it is heard there, for the first time…
D: Exactly. Those kind of rather, if you like, easy win for a tutor that I think has undergraduates' confidence that this guy, you know, might actually be able to help and 'why didn't we think of that?' One of the reasons why thy didn't think of that was, that I was talking about earlier, the danger that in the rehearsal studio, people are just dashing away at all six guitar strings and hitting every drum, because it's there! Dynamics, there's a topic, often are under threat in a rehearsal situation, because we have to remember that there is a threat of fatiguing in a rehearsal studio. An hour in a rehearsal studio is like four hours in any other kind of work. It's loud and you have to be alert, you have emotions, you are getting compromised, people being late, people needing a cigarette; all those sort of things can make for a pressured environment.

M: Yes, it can add to the pressure of the rehearsal and affect the productivity. As you say it is quality time, they are there just for an hour or so together and maximising that time is certainly important. You mentioned trust, and I think that trust is an important word. Coming back to your professional experience there may be band members who don't get on, or have a personal dislike, but is it possible that they can still have trust and faith in them as musicians?
D: Right. I think that trust and team spirit are ideal and are great ideals when they happen. I think that often there is a sense of jostling and subtle power dynamics going

on. Many rocks bands are young men, and young men are notoriously in the process of conditioning themselves …

M: the Alpha Male…
D: That's right. Like I say jostling for position. You see it in politics; you see it in any organisation that idea is almost like a 'gain' theory: enemies and friends, and a kind of matrix of temporary alliances. There is a flip side to this: the ideal of trust. I think what's good about a tutor's relationship is that a tutor in general has only one motivation and that the work gets better and the students get better at doing it. Unless there is a dodgy tutor out there who wants to tread his own path. I think, for the most part, students do value somebody who has nothing to gain out of the situation other for seeing it flourish on their watch. Within your average rock band there is a lot of dissonance with inherent power imbalances. For example, the singer in a band is inherently always the most powerful character. He is the one that the journalist wants to talk to. He is the one that is the star of the video; he is the one at the front of the photos. He may not be even the songwriter or even the guy that puts the project together. But nevertheless, the singer is the most powerful character in the band

M: And, perhaps, represents the entire band?
D: That's right; he's the leader. Some singers deal with that very well, and graciously, and are very aware to un-tack that wherever possible and, of course, to embrace it and be a leader when it's his job to be a showman or the person on the radio and do it well. But nevertheless, that's just one aspect of the asymmetrical dynamic within the band. Usually it ends in tears! And it is, let's face it, the most probable thing that in one, three or five years they break up. You probably find that the reason they break up can be tracked back to the characteristics that were there in the first rehearsal session.

M: And the band often breaks up as a consequence of the singer…
D: That's right, and other things come into play: girlfriends, money, drugs, the pressures of touring, of course, which is like being in a submarine and can be so unpleasant. These can all wind up the tension. I think that band years are like dog years: five years in a band is like thirty-five years! It is that intense. On the other hand being in a band is like a love relationship, having a girlfriend. There are, for example, twelve relationships in a band. Each of those twelve relationships has to be healthy. What I mean by that is in a band of four, you know…

M: One will have three other relationships, and likewise for each of the other band members? It's interesting to think of it that way.
D: That's right, exactly. The sociology is incredibly intense and pressurised; everyone will always tell you it was the months in the wilderness, the bit before we got signed, when we were up against the world. But as soon as money and riches and different opportunities came into play that things became fractious. So all that stuff finds its focus within the airless environment of a rehearsal studio.

M: What I think that comes out of what you are saying, for myself, is that it is a kind of journey; and this journey for undergraduates can also be about their maturity. Thinking about those twelve relationships developing among those in their rehearsal, how do we, as tutors develop that kind of maturity?

D: Yes. I don't know whether there are any answers to that other than try to set up a set of processes that recognise the fact that these are asset of lessons looming into adulthood. There is an aspect of being nineteen that is kind of unique. You know the 19 year old who has been in the army, for example, there is neurology, the brain not yet having been fully formed and the 19-year-old male is the craziest and bravest soldier. Whereas the 19-year-old female is at the height of her sexual powers and, as you know, there is a whole bunch of dynamics going on that are completely unrelated to music.

M: Yes, that's right. I also asked that question because of seeing year one bands moving into year two bands and moving into year three as cohorts. Things happen, they become more mature players, have more authority in their playing, more productive in their rehearsing and as people, their interpersonal skills in the rehearsal become more developed and mature in the second year and considerably so in their third year.

D: Yes, you're right.

M: So I was wondering what was causing that; at least it's going in the right direction?

D: I think it is part of the transition of being 18 to 21. It's a maturation process going on, I know that's an obvious thing. You know I think an 18 year old is subject to Donald Rumsfeld's Unknown-Unknowns: they don't know what they don't know, yet! Part of what we do as educators is to reveal the extent of people's unknown. One thing that comes to mind is that there is an incredible arrogance to be found in bands we know, and there is also an incredible arrogance in young rock musicians. Part of that arrogance is a necessary driving for without that up against the world stuff generational out with the old in with the new guys in town. That wraps together with being young and being a musician. At that point, I think, students can be in a destructive phase. I think that's paradoxical in education because it's a healthy thing that they think you're a boring old fart and you've got nothing to say: that's their job!

M: Quite right they say that: culturally and historically popular music has, traditionally, always belonged to the young…

D: That's right. And throwing down those generational markers has been part of the process. So what I have noticed in my experience is that the third years, the very same third years who thought about you as being an embarrassing bit of a joke when in year one, by the third they often value you; it's that maturational experience. By the way we have an accelerator on the *Commercial Music* degree at Bath Spa, a maturational accelerator. We send our year two students out on tour. So it's the best of times, the worst of times. They think it's going to be great and it often is great, but it is like a camping trip: you look forward to it so much but can't wait to get home at the end of it and have a hot bath. That really helps our bands, because they go away and come back and realise that it's tougher out there than they thought. Young musicians

slightly do suffer from this rather unhelpful idea that they are on the verge of being discovered; that there is a talent scout in the next town who is going to say 'Yes'. As we know, the process of becoming a viable, sign-able, professional music outfit is a rather vast kind of process of developing an audience and their conspirators of helpers

M: That's right, and they have every right to have this dream, this hope, and it comes full circle to what we said earlier; the belief and valuing of in their music making that drives them forward.
D: Yes. When they come back, by the way some of them have had some rather lucrative record deals from the tour, though it is rare. But for the most part they come home with their tails between their legs, and are more respectful in their third year because they weren't bullet-proof; there's a rationalising and moderating process where they re-assess the probability of being able to have struck gold – which they so enjoyed in year one!

M: Could you describe your involvement or role in rehearsing as a tutor, facilitating, managing, organising the bands and their rehearsing and so on, please?

R: It's all of those things. I come from a background of being a performing, and of being a touring, session musician effectively. When I was appointed I was given responsibility for the whole performance pathway, at that stage just for levels 4 and 5 and they are long thin modules going right through the year culminating in a large performance, which is the 70% assessment element of the whole module. It was kind of working OK but it felt as though aspects of the module were not totally relevant to what my experience had been of the kind of equivalent situations in the real world. So I have made a few changes and the modules running in their current state reflect the changes that I have made. In the first year we are not selecting applicant based on instrumental ability. So it's interesting in that first week of the first semester of the first year to see what we have got to work with in terms of bans. There is always that risk that every single person will be a flautist! This is my fourth year now and what has been interesting is that the electric guitar always dominated. We would have so many guitarists that we had to create artificial bands whereby there were opportunities for all of these guitarists to play. This year for the first time we have a fairly even split: in a year where we have 16 bands we have 8 drummers, 8 bass players, admittedly they have to play every week but they all seem keen to have that experience and that contact time, and 2 guitarists per band. We have quite a few who have put down keyboard or piano as their first study and that is evident in their ability; they are 'proper' piano players – using both hands and the sustaining pedal –rather than one note wonders! We are not selecting on abilities so we have very different abilities across the bands and that is interesting when choosing appropriate repertoire and so on, to allow everyone to get something from it without holding back some of the good instrumentalists. During the first semester, up until Christmas, I re-jig the band line-ups every week so that all the musicians get to play with as wide a range of musicians as possible. The idea being when we get to December they should have met various people, which is good, who have interests in particular styles, and making friends better. It used to be arbitrary: they were put into groups just on the instrument they played, some of which worked brilliantly, but others that didn't. I was an artificial system. Although mine is to an extent, it is at least based on the more natural way that bands would form hopefully, based on friendship and common interests. So it is an artificial way to let them see where their friends might be and what their interests are.

M: How did you get over a problem that often happens when there are not enough drummers or bass players?

R: Because it is a long thin module - a musician only has a workshop every other week for an hour and a half- what happens is that I ask the bass players and drummers to come every week.

M: I see…

R: So we have 6 bands one week 7 another, but I sort that out so it is not always the same bass player and the same drummer. I also tell them what I would like them to work on so we don't spend half the session discussing who knows what and what they would like to play. So it's a bit dictatorial at first but good in the long run. We usually spend the first sessions working getting as faithful a cover as possible. If they then want to go off and take it in their own direction, that's fine. So there is a thin veneer of freedom on top of this slightly more tracked route! The bass players and drummers have to play the same song two weeks in a row and they have enjoyed doing that. So far they like the songs; if not, there is always a risk of them choosing not turning up for the 'second' week. But it has worked well. They can see the point of why it is running the way it is, and it is made clear and they understand why. They know that they are going to have more choice over material and whom they are going to work with in the second semester. Towards the second half of the first semester I specify more than one song and when they come into the session they discuss which one they would like to work on. It is starting to bring in a bit of how to negotiate material in a band, but still within tightly controlled parameters, rather than throwing it totally wide open as that rarely seems to work.

M: You are with them for an hour and a half; do they have any other time additionally?
R: These are parallel sessions: there are two bands in parallel for the first session, and the two bands have a 15 minute staggered start. I set them going - we'll give them ten minutes to try out the first idea – and I alternate between the two rooms. So there are times when I am not always there directing the proceedings. In terms of time to work on the material, that is less relevant in the first semester. In the second semester they select their bands and work towards what they will be assessed on at the end on the year. The idea is that for the hour and a half that I see them each fortnight; is a chance for them to show me what they have been doing in their meetings of at least once or twice a week. I can see what is working and what is not and hopefully keep the momentum going and steer things a little towards the assessment. It seems to be working!

M: In the second semester then, you generally let them self select, apart from where they are missing a drummer, and so on, and you arrange for someone to help out l drumming for two bands?
R: Yes. It's inevitable, just because of the numbers of students; bass players and drummers are probably still going to have to do two bands in the second semester.

M: Do you have any restriction on the number of members allowed in a band?
R: I have a lower limit because I don't want to end up with thirty duos! The bands start at three or four. If there are special cases, or an unusual amount of players left over, it might be that we have a guitar trio working on certain songs. We keep seeing the same faces more often in different guises, and its good really that they are involved in varied repertoire. We give them more freedom in the second year.

M: It sounds quite intensive from your point of view, two bands per session, with seven or eight bands each weekly afternoon I bet it makes for a long day!
R: Tuesday is quite hard work: I go from 9am – 3pm, 6 hours non-stop of bands. So that's another reason why I choose the material!

M: It sounds as though the students get a good deal in terms of access to you.
R: I hope so. In previous years it was one hour, but if you add in the setting up I was getting the feeling they were a little short changed. And also they were not always being able to cover what I would have like to cover in any of the sessions: an hour and a half makes a big difference. And they get that breathing space while I am in the other room, but I can still hear what they are doing! There are those that thrive on being told what to do and but they need to find their own way a bit.

M: After Christmas, then, they form the band and choose the material. What is the assessment they are working towards?
R: They choose a set of between 10-15 minutes, usually about 3 or so songs, and they have to think about structuring that set. They can do covers or originals or a mixture: there is no particular merit attached to any of those approaches. It's just about getting them playing together. For the criteria, each player receives a mark for their own contribution and the band receives a mark, which is 50%, and it is an average of those two marks. So somebody who is not in the foreground, but is contributing, still has a chance to have a good mark. Equally if the band is doing OK, despite someone not turning up, it can still work out OK. Obviously we can adjust that in rare cases, but the mark scheme reflects the contribution quite well.

M: So in that second semester they rehearse fortnightly over the ten-week period, with perhaps some additional practices for that assessment?
R: Yes - the first assessment, worth 30% - is at the end of the first semester. Because they have not up until then been working in regular bands, and also to reflect professional skills, another change I made to the module is that they have a 10 minute mock recording session as an individual. This has grown out of my professional experience prior to academia. A week before the assessments I send them an mp3 of a 90 second track of some deliberately bland nasty music, designed to fall into a no particularly stylistic identity - like bad 'holiday' TV programme music! They have a week to decide how they are going to add a part to it on whatever instrument they choose.

M: When you said earlier that they received a contribution mark, would this be for their rehearsals or for the live performance; could you explain this a little more, please?
R: It's a contribution to the performance, rather than the rehearsing, but that's an interesting idea. With the work I was doing previously on assessing popular music performance and looking at that previous Palatine project, the idea of peer marking is something I have been thinking about. They do quite a lot of peer critiquing in their song writing classes, although that's not in the formal mark scheme. But they are used to discussing each other's work.

M: So it's peer review, rather than a summative assessment?
R: Exactly! Hopefully whatever has happened in the rehearsal will lead to the performance. In an extreme example of that not being the case, then we reserve the right of what we have seen over the course of the semester. Obviously that is double marked and we have intensive discussions about every single band immediately after every performance. The EE also has an opportunity to see these things.

M: How do you deal with the tricky problem - for which there is usually no easy solution - of dysfunctional bands, with particular band members not turning up? Maybe there is a guy who is a fabulous player but is poor at attending and contributing to the rehearsal, and has messed the rest of the band about?
R: I have the overview of what is happening, so any attendance issues will have been picked up during the year. That would give me the opportunity to talk to the individual, talk to the band. If it goes on being a problem then my suggestion would be that the band consider working without that individual and we find him an alternative. There's almost always more than one person like that, so we would suggest that they work together. The advantage however, of the whole year working as it does in the first semester, is that those likely not to be attending won't really have met the others in quite the same way – so the self-selection process pre-empts those issues anyway.

M: Good point!
R: In the module handbook, it says that when the bands are chosen, people who have attended the most get first choice. So that is like a 'stick and carrot' approach to encourage attendance across that first semester. So if you have only attended half of those you are not going to get first chance at selecting whom you will work with. Last year I didn't have to enforce that – it acted as a sort of motivation or deterrent to overcome that problem. What I have found is that, even for people who are serial non-attendees across the course generally, performance is one module that they do like to turn up at. Because if it's the academic side that is putting them off, the practical side is probably one of their strengths and they enjoy it.

M: Can we talk a little about feedback – from you and from the students themselves? As well as giving feedback in your weekly or fortnightly sessions, do you also give the bands written feedback?
R: Written feedback follows on from the formal assessments. They will have comments that relate to the individual mark, and also for the band mark. So they should be able to see exactly how we arrive at the mark they have received. We have had to make the point that, in practical modules, the conversations we have had in workshops is feedback, too! It's an issue that comes up in things like the NSS. Students sometimes seem to think that feedback is only something that appears written on piece of paper. We need to broaden their concept of feedback to include the formative feedback given during the year.

M: The ongoing feedback from rehearsal to rehearsal…
R: Yes, regarding the band-rehearsing workshop, everyone is getting some of my time. Inevitably if there are people that are having a harder time, they get more of my time and attention, but I have to be careful that everyone is getting something.

M: Could we go onto the second year, please?
R: In the second year they need to have achieved a mark of 60 in order to go onto Performance 2. Most people who want to carry on are already playing at that level. In the second year they play with the same band throughout the year. They already know each other from last year. Bands that have worked well in the first year tend to continue. But it is a chance, if they want, to reformulate the line-ups a bit. As I replied in response to an earlier question, we do allow them to be freer with how the line-ups work so they do keep appearing in different guises. We got to a stage where that was becoming too unwieldy for assessment. One evening we had four bands on but were only assessing five students! So that needed addressing. This year we have a particularly large group of about 60 students so in terms of resources it is important.

M: As you say you might have a core band, but with one or two joining or leaving to play on tracks moving on to work with other, it can make the organisation problematic…
R: Yes, it's treading that line between allowing enough freedom for them to grow creatively and develop and to follow their hearts, but allowing it also, not just to become so vague that there is no structure to the year and to their work.

M: Do they have a similar amount of tutor contact?
R: Yes - exactly the same they have an hour and a half, each fortnight, as with first years. There's a fortnightly lecture as well. The first year lectures are about performance craft: using and abusing your gear creatively! Professional aspects of being a session musician and performance careers also come in to it. We look at, and listen to, lots of examples. For the second year more music theory starts to come into it. Having that so clearly delineated in the second is not always working, and I think we shall have some in the first year also, rather than just hitting them with it all in the second year; that's an adjustment we are thinking about. We get students with a broad and varied knowledge about music theory.

M: Do you have less students choosing performance in the second year?
R: Not really. We also have about 16 bands in the second year, and that surprising. It's perhaps because there is more freedom in the second year. There are alternate weeks as before and the tutor has to devote substantial time to that.

M: With the line-ups more settled in the second year do you find they prefer to do more original stiff than before?

R: They are allowed to do originals stuff in the first year, also. They are totally free to do that. The fact that the bands are, for year one, settled after the first semester, from a practical point of view they tend to play more covers. But like you would expect, there are a few in the first year who coalesce as they go on. The stuff that they are writing for their song-writing module can filter in to their performances. It's not always writing from scratch. We start to get that integration between the different modules. In the second year we don't specify whether they should practice originals or covers, it's totally open to them. The set time is longer 20-25 minutes, usually 5-6 songs.

M: Is there also an assessment at the end of semester one, as in the first year?
R: Yes. It's a 30% assessment, which takes place in the last week. It's sight-reading task, as the theory is more embedded in their second year. We present them with a choice that's appropriate for their interests and their instrument. Although we do not provide them with fully structured one to one lessons, individuals do have tutorial support, for those who need it. Sight-reading fills them with most dread! Guitarists can read of chord charts but I'm anti-tab, because of the misinformation that exists with online tab; they should be developing their aural skills and listening enough to the track. The final performance is also the same format as the first year, but with one exception. One week before the final performance and designed for them to see the point of the theory and the sight-reading in the year, we provide them with four cover versions to choose from. We provide them with the notation of the song, the lyrics and chords and so on. They can choose to do their own version of the chosen song. So every one of those 20-25 minutes sets will include that band's interpretation of that song. They have just got one week for this, as we are expecting that the rest of their set will be really well polished by that time. It seems to work well!

M: What sort of songs?
We try to go back a little before their time to level the playing fields a bit! Last year we did a few Motown songs, older Michael Jackson, Elton John, mainstream, straightforward. It's not designed to catch them out.

M: And there's enough detail in the parts in them?
R: Yes, and it's mainstream pop, but they are allowed to do a cover in their preferred genre. It doesn't have to be the sore thumb that sticks out in their set. When it gets announced through the microphone, they tend to say 'this is one we've got to play…!'. But we have had some fun interpretations! There are those that see that it can be quite interesting.

M: And you have prepared them to some extent in the activities of the first semester of their first year…
R: That's the idea and getting the continuity between the years is why I have made those changes for them to see it as an ongoing process.

M: That's interesting - and the third years?

R: This is running for the first time in the third year and only on the popular music degree; this is one of the differences between the courses.

M: So you have a smaller third year class?
R: Much smaller; it's a short fat module that runs for one semester and we meet weekly. It is entirely workshop session based – there is no lecture element. That gives me greater time to distribute the content in a meaningful way that focuses on what they are doing in their bands. It's the same length as in 'Performance 2', which is 20-25 minutes, but crucially, in a given band, only one person is being assessed.

M: So that person is responsible for the band, as the MD, or as an MD for a particular song?
R: Yes - For that band, that performance. I can see that might cause problems as the cohort grows from year to year. This year we have six students.

M: And at the moment it is manageable?
R: Yes. It's going to be double that next year, and triple that the following year. I think, since this is the first year it's running, it's a kind of test, to see which aspects work.

M: With six students is it, in effect, the same one band and band members?
R: Well no, because each one is being assessed, they can bring in other people from other courses. It happens that four of the bands have quite similar line-ups and there is some sharing that goes on. What has been interesting, and one of the aims of doing it this way, is that inevitably there are usually one or two dominant voices that emerge that dictate the stylistic direction. What's been interesting about giving each individual the chance to be the MD is that people who haven't really come forward in previous years with their ideas, have now been handed the opportunity to do that. So, within these six bands we have got much more diversity that we have seen in the previous years, in terms of style and genre; even though we have got largely the same musicians. Giving them that MD responsibility, just thinking ahead to the kinds of scenarios that they might encounter if they are going into these areas professionally, was the thinking behind it and it has been interesting.

M: Similarly then, when they are assessed, they are onstage and you are listening to the sound of the band, which is their responsibility…
R: Yes…

M: …and they themselves receive an individual mark, based on similar criteria as before?
R: Yes, but the context is slightly different. The 1st and 2nd years are assessed as a part of *SoundFest*, a weeklong festival that we put together in a gig type of environment: the bar is open; the lights are on, big PA, and so on. So there is that opportunity to hide behind that kind of bluster and showmanship that is appropriate to the context. For these 3rd year assessment performances I am doing in a different space, which has raked seating and the PA is going to be minimal. Not exactly as a

recital, but I am expecting the audience to sit and, listening and focus in on some of the detail. There should be less for the musicians to hide behind in terms of just strutting around. They are going to encounter situations where they are more under a focus or the scrutiny of the audience, I suppose. This is again designed to ratchet up the intensity a bit more and to make it a progression from what they have done in the previous years.

M: So in the 1st year, and to some extent in the 2nd year, the bands are putting on an entertainment and in moving to the third year you have got a different sort of audience and context for performance; the entertainment is more 'musical' than everything else that is happening…
R: Yes, so I am calling it a recital just to distinguish it from the gig context. So far, the response to that is what I have hoped in their choice of material.

M: I was going to ask about whether you were expecting them to choose material of a real challenge…
R: Yes. For example there is one guy who is doing some Zappa. They feel able to do that and they feel it wouldn't have been appropriate in previous years. It has been a positive thing.

M: So that is one of the assessment criteria of an honours level module, performing challenging material….
R: Exactly, absolutely. And I am encouraging them within that half an hour to maybe include one piece or a five minute place where it is just them- more intimate - and they provide a more soloistic section.

M: And so they choose songs that showcase themselves for that…with the arranging skills to put in solos, breaks, and so on, whatever is appropriate to the song?
R: Absolutely. I am asking them to show off, or to really demonstrate the range of their ability and to see as an opportunity to do that, in the environment.

M: That's really interesting, I'm sure it will go well, because they have had all the preparation in the first two years to be able to do that.
R: Yes, I can see the benefit of the weekly sessions. I would love to run the others on a weekly basis but in terms of time and resources it's impossible. But I can see how it's strong. If we did the first and second year modules for half the year we would not that sense of continuity. They would be performing for half the year and have half a year off. So I think it has to be first year, second year all the way through.

M: And in any case there are more students in each of those cohorts. You were just touching on developing certain roles of the 3rd year band members. You will have seen perhaps in previous years some musicians, who do not seem, to contribute so much, shoe gazing in the rehearsals, lacking creative input, or they don't help out much with arranging the material. Yet in the third year they have got to do all of those things. In Performance, and with those students, do you have any advice to give, for those

students, who have the potential but are maybe shy, to be a little more involved?
R: Yes. When we were discussing feedback, I try and make sure that my time is divided between everybody in the band but that subdivision is not always equal; I will always have time to chat with the quiet ones. And it's just one of those classroom techniques, whereby, and I think it is great within a band context, you can always find ways to draw those people in. Sometimes it's just a question of getting them to turn their amp up a bit! Their contribution may be quiet musically as well as quiet verbally. I'm just starting to hear what they are doing and to get the rest of the band to hear, that just sometimes brings them more into the dialogue of the boisterous members. Sometimes it's just letting them know I am a kind of ally, just giving them enough confidence. Asking to them to give their opinion on a particular point doesn't always help there.

M: Sometimes would it be bedroom guitarists with their laptops, who are less comfortable, or shy even, in a band context…?
R: Yes. At other times, they're maybe two of them going and having a chat about something, which gives me to have a word with the quieter one. If they have got a good idea about something then just me putting that idea forward on their behalf may be just enough…

M: I raise that question because if they are choosing this option in the third year they are going to have to be the leader, the MD, and some may not be natural leaders?
R: We make it a formal requirement of that module. It's one of the things they know they are going to have to do and people choose the module knowing that. And the rest of the bands know what I am expecting. There been a couple of times this term, with the 3rd year bands, that I have had to say 'the MD is talking –shut up and listen!' And that's fine; I don't have a problem with being slightly disciplinarian in that situation. It's usually a question of reminding people and getting them to listen. A good thing about the bands is that they are equally aware, when they are the MD, that they are going to want people to listen to them; that kind of mutual respect is built into the set up.

M: Thank you ever so much Rowan. Is there anything we have missed, anything else you would like to say?
R: There is also a 30% element in the third year module, at the halfway point of the assessment year. I thought back to my professional experience and what might be one of the most pressurised situations that they are likely to encounter. I always found that doing live radio broadcasts was quite intense because you would be in that studio environment, often without an audience present but broadcasting live, and you had to be performing as thought there was an audience - and get it right first time! So this is backtracking, in a way, to what they did in the first year: that session musician test. So they return to being tested on their studio performance but unlike the first year, they don't get a second take! They are allowed to perform some of the material that they are preparing for the end of the module, so they only have to choose one of their

songs for this. It was designed to increase the pressure – and they are all definitely feeling it!

M: Is it individually performed and assessed as in the second year?
R: Because each band has only got one individual being assessed at the end of the semester, the whole band, or a stripped down version, maybe unplugged, will play but only the individual member will be assessed.

M: It's a different sort of pressure to the live gig then: different environment, no audience to bounce off, getting it right in one take…
R: We may even broadcast it live on the student radio station!

M: It's good that the students are benefiting from you being able to feed in your experiences and professional background in this way…
R: The courses are still developing and there are also practicalities such as gear being available in the rehearsing rooms, not having to chase around trying to get the stuff to work. I'd be interested if you find a similar thing happening!

M: Absolutely; amps being moved around from one rehearsing studio to the next…
R: We've found ways of being able to attach everything to the walls now! Except the cymbals! But even those can now be fixed with a type of hex-nut!

M: Can you tell me a little about the student band rehearsals and the input you have, please?
R: There is a real difference between the 1st, 2nd and 3rd years. With the first years I start by observing the group dynamics and to see if there is a leader. There's usually a leader; if there's no leader they can easily fall apart. Hopefully the leader has a vision or clue of where he can take his men, if you like. So I start by observing; in some cases I can just let them get on with it, or I might come up with some arrangement ideas and helping them with obvious things. Sometimes it may be that they just need to rehearse with drums and nothing else, or maybe it needs just a vocal rehearsal. Playing is a band is all about complimenting each other and compromise really. Personally, from my point of view, if it's popular music it should be about supporting the song, the singer and the sound. It is not about being a vehicle for a guitarist or drummer to showcase their talent.

M: How does that work for assessment? Are they assessed as a band or as individuals? I should imagine that if individuals were assessed, the guitarist would want to insert a flashy 16-bar Steve Vai type of solo?
R: Exactly! Some guitar players never play with anyone else; they may be brilliant musicians, but they never get any gigs, never get paid work, and never play in bands. They stay in their bedrooms and practise fast scales. What they haven't learned yet, is that being in a band and rehearsing is not about being a virtuoso musician; it's about having authority in your playing, about being committed to the band and understanding what your part is within that group. So, if someone plays crazy and brilliant but it's not suitable for the track, he will be marked down. It's all about empathy with the group. In some cases we mark students collectively – in threes or fours. It's possible for an unsophisticated as a musician to achieve a higher grade than others who excel with their playing skills - if they are more aware of what's going on around them and understand the context of the performance.

M: Can you explain how you organise the groups?
R: They self-select, it's very organic and it evolves. For example, a bass player may be in 3 groups, drummers are often in 2 or 3 groups and it's rare for someone not to be in more than one group. Sometimes a few shy guys need some help and you have to put them together.

M: How do you deal with people not turning up, those who are not committed, or shoe gazers in a band, who don't contribute ideas?
R: It's difficult! With those students I find myself with tutorials and I try to get to the bottom of what the problem is and why they are resisting. An initial response is to think that they have an ego problem, but it's usually shyness and lack of confidence about themselves. There should be room on the course for a loner who is good; not everyone can play with anyone else. He's just got his laptop and he does his stuff and it's good.

M: What sort of feedback do you provide?
R: In performance classes there are usually about three groups using three rehearsal rooms for three hours. I walk around and find out what's going on, working on new material or with rehearsing it. Depending on the level and competence of the group, some may need more help than others. If they may need help with the arrangement I'll throw ideas in - I never give an opinion - but give them ideas. In written assessments I provide a few hundred words maybe but with performance and rehearsal feedback you are literally 'in the moment'. I'm writing as I watch, or I make strong notes. You can't really go back to it, like a record or a CD, and a performance can be up and down the scale.

M: Individuals usually learn from each other in bands, as well as from tutors or from other influences. If so, could you tell me a little about how individuals, in this way, may be supported in their rehearsing?
R: They learn from swapping around! The best learning curve there is is to work with as many talented people as possible that can pull you up. There is the concept of 'morphing' and 'evolution' taking place in the performance classes. There is a real difference between 1st and 3rd years, so it must be that learning curve which is fast. Trust is a good word - there is a need for trust between the people in your group. There is also a lot of body language – drummers giving cues – even about how hard he's hitting something! A lot of language can be conveyed and it's not just through the music – there are all sorts of dynamics going on within the group!

M: Can you tell me your thoughts about the student band rehearsals on the course and your involvement?

B: We look at performance craft, and look at how they react within the ensemble. Even up to the 3rd year some are still grappling with working in ensembles and what their function is; some still don't know. Is it something about the culture of popular music and the way they practice, bedroom guitarists, for example? But in ensemble performance, the player has got to lock into the bass, and the piano, and listen to the chords. That's usually where problem comes; maybe the drums are too loud, the guitars too loud. It's blindingly obvious, but not always to them, particularly when they're turning their back to audience! One problem we had, for example, was in a metal band where the drums and bass had no eye contact through 7 songs. We discussed that afterwards and when they played next time there was lots of eye contact, listening and locking together was much better. Those are the kinds of things for the 'Platform' classes we run. The chops are with instrumental tutor in room; the finished product comes to us!

M: OK, do you find differences in how individual performers adjust to band work during the three-year course?

B: Here's an example – there was a jazz- influenced performance by a 2nd year band; they thought they had done brilliant. However the guitarist was playing like a solo guitarist, yet it was the sax playing the melody!   Better if the guitarist had turned off the effects and turned down and just played off beats. He seemed uncomfortable and felt that 'no one was hearing me!' or 'I need to be playing loud so people can hear me!' He didn't appreciate the supportive role of guitar in the piece. Also with drummers: I asked them to produce a song in a jazz style yet they played a jazz standard but in rock style, without changing the style or genre. So we have to break it down: the kick drum is too loud, you've got to lead with cymbal - and who influenced you? Often it's nobody - just out of a book on groove!

M: So some, maybe, don't have much previous experience about this? Do you think that listening to others, and being able to 'play for others', comes with experience and maturity perhaps?

B: Yes, it's about honing in on those skills. We perhaps shouldn't always say 'what you are doing is wrong' - as there might be a better place for saying that. Another example involved a guitarist who was using two amps, which were often too loud. He also sang but at the sound check he couldn't hear himself as the engineer was only controlling the vocals. Many external venues we play at have their own engineer and students need to work with someone else's ears. They have to compensate and deal with the situation and develop an attitude for working with it; they need to be thinking musicians!

M: How much time are you able to give to their rehearsal sessions?

B: We have 3 rehearsal rooms and bands are allocated times, or also sign in at other arranged times and we are usually wanting to see what they are working on. It's more

of a concern with first years; with 2nd and 3rd it's a case of honing in on the specifics skills of the ensemble and their creativity if working on their own material. For 1st years, it's helping them to get it together and watching their time management in rehearsing perhaps 3 songs over two weeks. It involves moving in and out of classes with them taking about an hour for each one. With the 2nd and 3rd years I listen to them and give suggestions and feedback; there's not as much time available for those years.

M: Can I ask about how bands are formed?
B: When I arrived the bands were tutor-formed for first year students. In allocating drummers there were 5 bands but only 4 drummers. Sometimes we use a 'dep' drummer – but instead I asked that band to do a semi-acoustic set. This was to help their learning about working without a drummer, about rhythm and timing, and about how does their ensemble work without drummer. Going on to the 2nd and 3rd year bands, they form own relationships: in the second year our students work with others across the school of music. When in the third year they can also be involved in bands out of Uni. There are 12 bands in the 3rd year. Perhaps two would be only from within school; the remainder might consist of one student plus others from outside. This can become a problem because of other commitments and that concerns me; will they be ready? For one or two student singers, as a fall back, they are asked, at least, to get together with a pianist or MD.

M: What sort of feedback do you give for rehearsing?
B: It's suggestive feedback; I do not want to mould them particularly. Encouraging them to think, rather than to copying anything, when I demonstrate. For the *Platform sessions*, we emphasize to students that they are there in order to provide them with supportive feedback; but they are often reluctant to say anything. Maybe because they are friends it's difficult, or think that 'if I criticise, they'll do the same to me when I'm up there in two weeks time'; or, possibly, inexperience. However the third years are starting to get some really good discussion – for example, the heavy rock band the other week, about the sound of the guitars. But they do have to learn about taking criticism appropriately. Also, I think with me being there however, when receiving the criticism, maybe they are not reacting so much to the feedback?

M: Do you assess rehearsing as a component towards their final grade?
B: No - but maybe there should be! Everything is built towards the final performance only. Maybe they should research a key player, or instrument, or genre, and give a presentation on their influences? Perhaps something in the middle of the year is needed such as a project during rehearsals to give them focus? We have an on line blog which they must fill in however, and we do check it occasionally. They discuss feedback from the performance classes, band rehearsals and lessons with their tutor. In the end they must turn out a 1500 word reflection, showing their development, where they started and where are they now. The critique is handed in the day after their performance exam. We consider whether they have developed and does that fit

in with how they performed. It is worth 15% and has to support also the performance in order to give the bigger picture.

M: Do you have any thoughts about opportunities for students learning from each other, maybe by changing band line-ups?
B: Bands don't change in the first year and many might continue with the same line-up into the second year. Maybe it would be good to move singers around and get used to working with different bands. But often in real life you work with a variety of ensembles. Some bands maybe reluctant; they've built the band but now will they be thinking that you want to destroy it! Maybe we have to move key personnel, for example, drummers. Some students are already in a couple of bands; usually the better players, as there are a demand for them. I see it more in the 3rd year, and they will move around, for example pianists, and they are usually confident enough to be able to deal with that.

M: How do you deal with problems if you have dysfunctional bands?
B: There's just usually one or two individuals where there is the need to mould the band without that person. Maybe it's necessary to change the sound of the band or maybe split up into separate smaller ensembles. But that's often the worst scenario; it's best to try and remould. This is what sometimes happens when a professional band loses a member who decides to go solo – they have to remould. There can be lots of time wasted in bickering and arguing and who makes the decision. Preparation is so important and maybe nominating a MD who can have the final say is necessary; the MD role can also change around each month. One example involved a drummer was very domineering as he was a better player than anyone else and they all looked up to him. But he knocked down their comments and needed to learn about being ready to take on suggestions from the band. In a recording session people need to be focused, and not waste time; an MD would rein everything in and achieve the goal!

Andy Stott
Royal Northern College of Music

M: How do you think that we, as tutors, can best support students in rehearsing?
A: What we do in each aspect of the programme is to try to simulate the real life-working environment; the work place attitude and students' professionalism are what we try to foster. We use Blueprint studios for rehearsals, rather than the RNCM, as these professional studios are a real world environment; *Elbow* is resident there, and there are pro musicians all around. The rehearsal spaces are set up and run by a professional company, so students step into that environment and expectations that they are here to work. It's not a college environment but a Pro-working environment; it alters the mindset. We deliberately place them into various bands and let them perform for half a semester then change around for the rest of the semester. The same happens in each subsequent semester in the entire programme, so that each student will play in a total of eight different bands over the two years. The thinking behind that is that it simulates the real world: you walk into a rehearsal with a bunch of guys who have never played with each other before. Their personal qualities are something we focus on; technique is one thing and having your chops is a kind of a given. To be able to function in the dynamic, with personal qualities other musicians, to get on, organise, negotiate, be organised and be professional are qualities that are fostered.

M: So those professional musician skills of working with fellow musicians and being able to work in that context, as a session musician, hit the ground running- fitting in with the band – is an important ethos of the course…?
A: Absolutely! It is. The environment is quite controlled –because they are given repertoire to work on – not original material that they have to devise.

M: How varied is the repertoire?
A: It is wide. Over the two-year journey we try to provide as wide variety of repertoire/style as we can. As session musicians we don't want to be a one-trick pony, but to be able to play in various styles and genres. We give them repertoire in different formats e.g. in rehearsals they are just given the charts, some rehearsals they are just given a CD recording, some rehearsals the dots, or in others we give them nothing: we all know the song - work it out, do a job on it! So we try to give them all the stimuli that they might get in a real working environment. They may come across a producer who wants it as it is, as a cover copy, or they may come across a producer who doesn't want anything other than your own input/ideas, inspiration. We try to make them aware that of those situations that they may encounter.

M: So it's very context driven, with a range of contexts through which you develop their versatility in different genres, styles, artists, sounds, feel and also variety of source material, CD, chord charts, and so on, or given a bit of time to work it out from a track or from memory and try and fit their part to it….
A: We always work towards a structured target. In the first semester students work with pro recording engineers and they are given a two and a half hour time slot to

record within controlled studio environment; they are on the clock and will ideally nail it first time, for time is money! Mid-semester, they do the studio recording work. Then the 2nd half is dedicated towards a live showcase of 30-40 minutes length. We invite industry professionals into that public audience event.

M: Thinking about all those professional aspects that are being developed is there a particular kind of feedback or assessment mechanism that supports and feeds into it?
A: Both! Rehearsals monitored by staff who are in role of the MD and will work up the material with the bands; that develops throughout the course. By the 2nd year, the tutor becomes facilitator and students themselves encouraged to undertake the MD role. We assess them in the studio, using assessment criteria that not only takes into account their technical expertise, but also how they perform as a unit, and how they conduct themselves within the rehearsal sessions. There's a part of the brief that describes studio etiquette, mental preparation, how many takes, and so on. The assessment is not all about technique, but also about how you perform in the environment. For the live event students are assessed on the rehearsal period and process. There is feedback on that process and also on the performance itself including stagecraft, dynamic with the band, energy, focus, and communication with audience; all those things that are quite different from being in studio environment. We are looking for different things but all that has to be generated within the rehearsal process. Also, we use peer assessment – playing tracks in front of other bands - with feedback from them.

M: Does that take place with peers who are in the same year or does it involve the senior students?
A: It's mix of 1st and 2nd years. The feedback is informal and discussion based, led by the tutor. We use assessment rubrics and explain what tutors are looking for. It provides more focus for discussion with students using the same criteria assess. The discussion is more objective.

M: Peer assessment can certainly be a maturing experience through the wearing of an assessor's hat. Developing students' maturity might be an important part of that professional real world ethos of your course. Are there any other kinds of ways that this is done – for example in their second year?
A: It's a spiral curriculum and we revisit core elements, but raise the bar. Support is given from other units from programme, such as individual lessons and the musicianship unit, which all feed into the rehearsals, and bands improve as a consequence. In terms of their own professional and emotional intelligence, we have a 'Professional Practice' module which is about them functioning as a professional self-employed session musician – how they market and promote themselves, how they conduct themselves, interpersonal skills, employment skills, with a business head on. It's not just about being a great player as there are a lot of great players out there who don't get work because they lack the entrepreneurial skills or are difficult to work with. Pop music playing is about doing the simple things well as a player and being easy to

work with, likeable, a nice guy. When that penny drops and they stop showing off it's a relief!

M: Just finishing, do you have some musicians who are less motivated, not turning up and so on? If so, how do you deal with that?
A: It's tricky. We have had debates with the staff team and as we are trying to be more HE and less FE we would like them to have ownership of their own programme. There is a problem inherent with bands because students have to rely on each other – any absence has a large impact; some peer pressure helps, however. We do intervene quite forcibly. We have a disciplinary system – although it's not really an HE ethos - but when it impacts on others, we have to do it. We tell them that it impacts on others, as well as jeopardising their own studies. It works, and we are hot on that. You can see already which ones are going to be all right, and which ones are going to struggle – and it's not because they can't play!

Rehearsing
Popular Music

Interviews with undergraduate bands

Bath Spa University
Leeds Metropolitan University
University of Huddersfield
University of Hull
University of Liverpool
University of Westminster

(1) Quick interview with a four-piece Year One Band

M: Can you tell me a little about your band and how it was formed?
We've been rehearsing for a good time, now. It was our own choice to put the band together. We previously had to use programmable drums, but now have a drummer. The band has gradually evolved and XX has good ideas in writing his own stuff. It was originally for solo, but now it's been rearranged for our band.

M: OK, so have there been any problems in arranging the material in the rehearsals?
If there's a conflict of interest, it's a case of negotiating and compromising. We spend a lot of time, initially, talking about what we are wanting to do; this was good for subsequent rehearsals. From our previous experiences, we must be ready to drop any previous pre-conceptions. We try to be open and deliberately 'say it'!

M: So what is important for you when rehearsing?
We must listen to what could be better in rehearsing. Creative input is important. The first times we rehearsed we just had the question 'what do you think?' and just the reply 'it's alright'! We should be achieving some goal, having a balance of interests and trying to accommodate everyone. We have important deadlines at Uni, but free riders don't understand the deadline.

M: What advice would you give about rehearsing to next year's first year band and can we go around each of you, please?
- Network quickly to get into a band.
- Don't spread yourself too thin, like being in 5 bands.
- It's your own responsibility to put the band together, be likeminded, avoid pre-conceptions, and don't plan too far ahead.
- Be open-minded, you need that quality. If you are set in your own ways, you won't do well on the course.

M: As your tutor what advice would you give me?
Be forthright, be ruthless, have a hands-on approach and be open minded as a tutor. It's nice to feel that other genres are appreciated. The assessments help to make us more prolific.

M: Thanks for that! Could I ask individually, which personal qualities in rehearsal that you think you have improved in the most, for each of you, please?
- Patience;
- Confidence and also being vocal!
- My time management improved;
- Being more involved in shaping the song – not just doing the bass line…

(2) Quick interview with a five-piece Year One Band

M: Could you tell me a little about your band and how it was formed, please?
It was a frustrating process of having to find a drummer! We have been together now for the year and we get to choose who we play with; we all share similar musical tastes.

M: OK, What did you do in your early rehearsals?
We used simple stuff from *Spotify,* and also go through every idea that people bring in. The rehearsing environment is good it's better than at home, because everyone's motivated. There can be a problem if there is one dominant songwriter, but we do it collaboratively.

M: So what have you found important for each of you when rehearsing collaboratively; can we go round each of you, please?
- being able to take others' ideas and being flexible;
- if you've got an idea be open and say it!
- best to begin acoustic first then electric later;
- motivation;
- not taking things/comments personally; a comment is not an insult. Have a
  good laugh and go over the top to lessen it! It takes a while to develop that;
  people can go quiet….

M: Can I ask what suggestions would you have for me if I were your tutor?
You must command knowledge and respect from the industry, if you have achieved it you have earned respect; have definite ideas and chord suggestions. It's good to have feedback from an outside perspective.

M: Would you be able to suggest one quality, which you think you have developed within yourself this year during your rehearsing, and could we go round one at a time, please?
- learning how to do something that will work in the arrangement because of
  being able to
  know everyone well;
- the ability to learn from everybody, and have more understanding;
- listening to everyone; before, it was just 'listen to me'.
- developing ideas -being stuck in my own room was not good!
- the confidence to 'go for it!'

(3) Quick interview with 3 students conducted during their rehearsal

M: Can you tell me about how you organise your rehearsing?
We have a weekly rehearsal and we rehearse on other days. If some don't turn up then you do what you can.

M: Which personal qualities do you think are important for your rehearsing with your band?
Not looking like bored… attitude is such a big issue!

M: Can you think back to what have been tough decisions in your rehearsing?
There are a lot of vocalists on the band and there are squabbles over who does what.

M: …so who leads the rehearsing?
They are directed by everyone; everyone adds their own bits; the tutors add their advice.

M: Can you tell me about how is it assessed?
Each is assessed on their own song, and an element of how the whole thing fits together.

M: How did you negotiate each song?
I wasn't there so I was given the toughest song!

M: Finally, because you need to go back to your rehearsal, what advice could you give to a new band starting their rehearsing?
Be flexible; learn from sitting back; be reliable; be open to others' ideas and styles and you've got to adapt; try to get a good rehearsal vibe!

(4) Quick interview with 2 students conducted during their rehearsal

M: Can you tell me what have you found important from your rehearsal experiences?
Communicating ideas to each other; it's a bit harder communication from a guitarist to vocalist. Each of us had to lead, and it is necessary to crack the whip.

M: So what personal qualities do you think are important in rehearsing?
Timekeeping; being organised; and smiling!

M: That's good! So what do you think have been the biggest problems?
We are all friends – that makes a big difference. Criticising in a constructive way is important, and people have got to be open about things.

M: Does all this depend on people's maturity?

Yes, but experience counts as well. Getting from 90% to 100% is the hardest in the rehearsing room. A good friendship bond is important.

M: Can you tell me about any feedback for your rehearsing?
We had a mock 'exam' without staging, about three weeks ago – just the songs, and feedback on the strengths.

M: And how does the band arrange the material?
Technically the songwriter has the veto- but all are willing to help to contribute.

M: Finally, as you need to get back to your rehearsal, what advice do you have for new bands on the course?
Gig as often as you can; do open mic nights; although you can be the best band in the rehearsal room, but until you get out, you'll never know! Just rehearse the section and identify the parts not working; rather than wasting much time repeating everything. Be reliable - be on time. Don't waste time: no noodling! And no fiddling with amps!! Be nice to people!!!

(5) Quick interview with a 9-piece band conducted during their rehearsal

M: Can you tell me how it all started?
Someone begins with a skeletal structure of a song and we all contribute.
We have faith in everyone, so we start with a concept and decide on the genres.

M: How did you all manage to negotiate this?
We are all open to ideas, and decided between us. It's refreshing when everyone puts new things in to improve initial ideas.

M: That's good; so what has been the biggest difficulty?
Getting everyone on time in rehearsal, and punctuality. Everyone is so busy and there's usually two people regularly missing but we kept on going!

M: Do you receive feedback about your rehearsing?
There's in an initial small exam of all 10 songs that we are doing and we received a sheet with tutor feedback

M: Finally, because I know you need to get on with your rehearsal, what advice would you give to next years first years in their rehearsing – can we go around one at a time, please?
-be open minded
-patient
-punctual
-work on focus/concentration
-get on with everyone in the group
-have a certain modesty about own work and be open to others' ideas
-open to others adding ideas to your song
-being open-minded is one of the biggest things

(6) Quick interview with 4 students conducted during their rehearsal

M: Can you tell me a little about how you rehearse?
We're in a 10-piece band, which is hard; it can often degenerate into squabbles, but it comes good in the end. Patience is needed, and give-and-take with constructive feedback. It helped for some, by going home and bringing in the song they wanted to do, rather than writing it during rehearsals. The singer-songwriters are the starting points although there can be a lot of clashes about who was doing what. And singers can't always write the chords. Although we all contribute, we are only marked on our own song, which is problematic. The lack of guitar and bass players is a problem in the group.

M: Can you tell me what sorts of qualities do you think are needed to make effective rehearsals?
Listening is important – people often want to stick with their sound, but it's important to fit in and choose a sound that fits. It's important to identify our strengths and weaknesses; it's also important to get to hear everyone and improvise together

M: Is there an opportunity, perhaps at the end of the rehearsal, for feedback to be given?
It works well to give feedback to bands performing outside Uni; but, in Uni, band members can be sensitive to personal criticism. There's nothing wrong in being sensitive: I am at times, and I can be quite direct so have to be careful!
It's difficult in a 'public' context; we try to tell each other after rehearsals what's good or bad. Personal qualities are needed: to be humble and sensing when to sit back For example, as there are 5 singers in the band, some will need to do backing/vocals which they might not want to do. It is best if the person, who's written the song, becomes the bandleader for that song, but some don't step up to it.
Some think that they can lead the band but are also not very good at arranging the music and they can be exposed as such. A problem happens when advice is given and accepted but, in the next week, they do the same thing, unchanged. They say 'yeah, yeah' to avoid criticism but do the same thing again, and it's awkward to keep telling them.

M: Can you tell me a bit about the feedback you receive?
We always thought we got strong songs; some of us could be 'less precious' about their feedback, perhaps. We take it on board, even if we don't agree, though. Sometimes the sound of someone's voice doesn't go with the song; it's not being personal, but when that happens we need to move on, so as not to embarrass anyone. Being able to acknowledge a problem is important, for instance you can't do the riff, and don't want to spoil it for others.

M: Is there anything else you would like to add? Can we go around one at a time, please?

- Attitude: people who have never been outside in the real music business need to learn this.
- There's always something that you can improve on.
- Being in groups should be exciting.
- Try to make it the best that can be.

M: Before you continue with your rehearsal what advice might you give to next year's first years in rehearsing?
-It can be difficult to be a guitarist on the course, and, you need to turn down!
-Learn to take a back seat.
-Don't be self-indulgent – and see the picture outside the Uni birdcage.
-There is always room for improvement; criticism is the best way. Think about the criticism; if you don't agree, then say so. But take it on board – try it – and if it doesn't work, they'll hear for themselves. Finally, terminology is important in communicating with band members, so you don't have to explain things laboriously.

(7) Interview with members of a 4/5-piece Year 2 band

M: I want to ask you about how you approach your rehearsing …
With this band, it's my main band. I get these to play with me, I write the songs, record them and get them to practice. Even though they give ideas, it's a lot of me saying what to do. We tend either to practice just with us two, *XX* plays bass, I sing, and then we bring in the drummer, and a violinist as well. I tell and show them what to play. Then in the rehearsing room we try to get it tight. So there's not too much input from the others.

M: Is it just you that gets assessed?
No it's the whole band that gets assessed. We've been playing together for a while; we get assessed on how well we play as a group. Even though they are more like session musicians, we work out bits together because I've got the basis of the song, and then they include what they want on it.

M: Do you choose band members yourself or does your tutor do this, or is it a joint decision.
The drummer we've got is very heavy handed, and you try to tell him to play quietly - he doesn't – but then we've done some other stuff with another one from the course and we allocated that for ourselves. It's comfortable at the minute.

M: In your band, is all the material original?
Mostly but we do some covers.

M: So, how does the arrangement of your material or collaboration happen in the group work?
For me, XX will give me the chords, I've got the ability to look at the chords and come up with a riff or work around them to be a bit more interesting than playing root notes. Then hopefully that'll work out different. If I'm needed to play less, then I will, or more, I'll play more. We'll then show the structure to everyone – it may or may not work – someone may think it's a bit too short or something like that. And we'll find another way to do the chorus, or something like that. *ZZ* always asks our opinion, and then we'll agree from there.

M: How long roughly does it take to learn your song, how long in rehearsing did it take you.
We meet up before hand, me and the violinist, and practice it. Then we'll come together and it'll take 2 or 3 sessions; like an hour's worth of practicing to bring it together. Generally speaking *Z* has got it all formulated herself; it's just adding the parts for the rest of the band. It's not that difficult as it would be all writing the song together; she's already got it in place.

M: What do you think of the strengths of each of the band members – what do you bring to the band to help make it work and operate?

Bass playing wise, keeping the rhythm, adding to the rhythm, just making it a little more interesting, and put some more melody in to it. *ZZ* could have picked a bass player that would just play roots.

M: What do you think your strength is in the rehearsal situation, XX?
It's in the general direction of it. Everyone can put in an input, but I kind of decide what's best. It's my job to decide what works better.

M: And the drummer?
He'll just play a rhythm that he feels will suit the song. If it doesn't, we'll tell him, but he's not good at being told, and he thinks he knows what to play. We sometimes have a guitarist, *YY*, when we rehearse. I rehearse just with him, and take him through all the songs and I allowed him to put what he wanted to it, basically, as long as it was within the genre sort of thing. He went along with it, just adding melody lines and things.

M: If you think back to your rehearsing, and where you had a bit of a problem, how did you resolve that problem?
Sometimes it's to do with the speed of the songs. Usually I start the song, but he does it differently when he's playing live. So we have to practice it quite a few times to be able to get the speed and everything into our heads. That's been a problem. It's down to having more rehearsals. We don't rehearse as much as we could do, because we kind of know it.

M: What do you think, working together in a band, could have worked better, trying not to be negative here; not necessarily you ability as a musician, but interpersonal working in rehearsals?
Communication – people listening to each other's ideas. I've always been taught that 'less is more'. The drummer – he'll play too much or he'll play too loudly. We say the song doesn't require that, but he will say I can't play any quieter. His previous bands required him to thrash around. If he can find a place top do a fill, he'll do a fill. When we say we don't want it there, he'll say: are you a drummer – then don't tell me what to do. It's one of those situations; it's about communication.

M: Is there anything that a tutor can help you with moving you on, or progressing in your rehearsing?
Perhaps more opinions on what we're doing. When we're on stage it comes together fine. But sometimes it could move forward a bit more than it does, than we let it. I think that is down to us as a band, making sure we've got everyone on board properly, because everyone is doing different things. For me, it's my thing, but that's not the same for others if it's not their priority.

(8) Interview with members of a 4-piece Year 2 band

M: If you think back to your last rehearsal, were there any issues that you can remember and if so how you managed to resolve them?
Our last rehearsal was actually our first rehearsal. We got together one night before and threw around some ideas for cover songs and played through a few, acoustically. Next morning we came in to Uni and literally played them straight away. It helped because we're all competent musicians and know each other well. It's at a level now where we can get together and play to a 'good-to-OK' straight away. When you first start, that's not what happens at the beginning when people can't play as well. But for me, I always knew that it would now go well. We all 'gell' together anyway.

M: Were you allowed to select your own band then?
Yes, from the start we've been able to do that. But at first, at the start people don't know each other and what their musical tastes are. Some bands worked, others didn't. So now we have had time to find the people that have the same sort of influences as you and same ideas as you. We were doing it as an acoustic thing – acoustic guitar drums and vocals over the year and developed it into a fuller band.

M: Do you have a free choice of song material?
Yes, but what we wanted to do before we got into writing, was to play together first, it's one of the reasons we chose to do covers first, just to get that first play through out of the way – to get used to playing with each other. With doing the covers as well, we always learn the song. So we don't waste time learning bits on the day or 'faffing' about with things. We like to it out the night before or at another time before. We like to know what we are doing before, so we can literally play it first time. It won't be amazing but at least we can build on it. Planning is important. I have learnt over time that you've got to plan before. You can't just go into a rehearsal situation. You've got to have an idea of what you want to do…

M: Or it wastes everybody's time…
Yes. It gets frustrating. You get fatigued over time and you lose focus. You have to have that element of planning.

M: So it sounds that an important quality for your band is being able to plan? Thinking back to your Friday rehearsal did you consciously or subconsciously knew where you ought to have got to by the end of the rehearsal, and did you get that far?
Yes. We had five songs we wanted to play. I think subconsciously you know when you play them what kind of level you are at when you are playing them and where they are going. I think we were all pleased. Obviously there are bits that always need improving. I've been in situations in rehearsals where we've been hours going over songs and it gets to a point that you do it so much, nothing changes, and it's so

monotonous. Me personally over time, you know in yourself what's enough. You can be in there too long. After a while it's enough. Because we've got such good musicians that at the end it sounds good. The way we interact with each other is such a benefit.

M: I'm interested it that, but the music still needs arranging. Talking about that interaction, and the unique qualities, attributes and experiences that you each have, with this 4-piece band did you all contribute to the arranging, or did you not get that far into detail?
It's quite natural. We all know what sound we are going far. Everybody seems to know what each other is thinking in practices and where it's going to go. We didn't do a lot of talking about how we are going to arrange it. It kind of all comes together. We go far more of a rocky edge to our music. There are covers that are 'poppy' and stuff, but on one occasion last week when we just had a quick jam together and played through one of the songs and it naturally came together and it sounded great. We were all it was brilliant. It's strange how it can sometimes happen; sometimes you have to spend time arranging and sometimes it will just come, and that will be it!

M: Using your current band or previous bands as examples, and thinking about yourself individually, what do you consider are the kinds of strengths that you bring to the rehearsal; I'm not just talking about how fantastic you are on guitar, but perhaps something about what you said earlier about the importance of interaction.
For me, as a drummer it's good to have leadership behind the kit. For a whole band it's good to let people have their ideas and say because it's not very good when it's dominated by just one person and people get frustrated. People have their own ideas in the room and thinking and it's good to let them have their own say. It's kind of like a democracy or debate. You can debate ideas - some might not work – but it is polite to go through it and try them. That's the way I've always done it. I'm never going to say an idea's wrong, because it might turn out right, you don't know.

M: You have a mature outlook, and can give and take, accept criticism and give comments as well…
…Yes you have got to accept criticism

M: …It's not personal…!
No, but you have to take it, it's like a relationship. You've got to work together and be able to give and take, it's exactly like that.

M: So Z, what are the kinds of strengths or qualities do you think you might bring to rehearsals?
Can I just say what you said before about the leadership sort of thing? The other day, in rehearsing, when anyone digressed, messing around on guitar solos or whatever, we would all say, 'right, shall we do the song now?'

M: It's a good example!
Thinking about what do I bring? I think for me, I like the rehearsal, but we don't know each other too well, and I think the more comfortable you are at the start, the harder it is to get started because we've not spent 24/7 together in the past year and a half, we

are not complacent about each other. Because I have had experiences before where I have tried to do things with people who are best, best, friends and stuff…

M: That's so interesting…
…and it doesn't work, because the friendship, you are so close you haven't got the same motivation and you're thinking perhaps you know it's going to be all right in the end….? And you end up talking about what we did last night. You have got to have a good balance about the friendship but also the professionalism as well. You can't have too much of one, it has to be right in the middle. You've got to get on, but you've got a job to do as well. That's especially important at the beginning, in my opinion, anyway. As time goes on, you get a lot closer and friendlier but that won't make a difference later on because got started, you already have had the motivation and the friendship's the thing that's going to encourage you to carry on with it.

M: Carry on being motivated?
Yes, carry on being motivated. At first when you're not completely familiar with each other, I see it as though you want to impress them. But when you get more familiar with each other, you've got to keep up that level of impressiveness!

Not being negative, but what has been some of the most awkward or difficult moments in rehearsing?
It was trying to get it started, because our friend *W* has been having a lot of problems at home, W is a quite closed-off person, and difficult to get to open up. Even before we started rehearsing we have had discussions with W and I've noticed, it's been difficult to have W's input and W's just been agreeing with what me and *X* have been saying, that's because W's mind has been elsewhere. At the time I wanted W to have W's say, because Ws as much a part of this as we are; I don't want W doing something that W's not happy with.

M: So, he may not have held the band back, but on the other hand is he missing some of the opportunities in being in a band, of learning from each other?
Putting all the band stuff aside, you have to be a friend first. People can easily say to us, get another guitarist, but it's got beyond that, because we are really good friends, a really good guitarist and on the same wavelength. And that is a hard thing to find because there are so many musicians out there that want to do different things – to find somebody who has the same goal and mindset as you is a very rare to find.

M: Just moving onto the kind of feedback – how do you get the feedback on what you are doing, or do you give to each other, or from a tutor?
A good thing here is that are always people about popping in, listening and tell you what they think. But in the band we are always quite open. We'll run through something and then straight after we'll say what needs changing and we'll say what

didn't work. We all have the same mindset and we all pick up on the same things.

M: That's great, because I'm sure you've been in bands where that doesn't always happen…
We're really lucky, but we're not afraid to say when something isn't right.

M: So you also get your mates in to have a listen?
With that it's all well and good, but it's sometimes better to have an impartial opinion, than your friends because they are not always going to be directly honest. That's what we like about our tutor. It's 100% better. There are always things you can improve on.

M: Regarding a tutor's role, how do you think a tutor might help further?
Maybe it's worth getting an extra tutor in to listen?

M: If I was to ask one tip that you could pass on to younger bands in rehearsing, what might that be?
Don't just do songs that you enjoy doing, do songs that other people will enjoy listening to, and that will stretch your abilities to learn different ways of playing, different styles, because I think a lot of younger bands when they get into their rock phases just want to play slash/death metal, They don't just get together and play a pop song. Be diverse; I mean play whatever music you want to play, but play other music as well. Be mature about it. Listen to each other. That's the main thing – listen. Don't be selfish. I've been like that in the past. When you are young you are like that. But try not to be, because you need to create a good environment for making music. Listen to people: it'll never fail. Listen to each other!

(9) Quick interview with two members of a year two band

M: *Could you explain your take on rehearsing, please?*
Z: The first thing we do is the structure: make sure everyone knows their parts and that we're clear what we are doing and what goes where in the song.
X: At the beginning we normally decide on the song at the practice before, and ask has anyone got any ideas for the next song? Everyone has got everyone's email, we find a *YouTube* link in case they don't have the song on their computer or whatever, and then come in. If anyone is still having trouble we help. Like today we had to change the key of two songs, and the other guitarists was a bit iffy on it, so we helped him out.

M: *When you are deciding the song, the vocalist being a key guide talking about keys, what kind of input does your singer have?*
X: He's actually put forward a couple of songs, quite a few, and ones we played very well. There's not many we've turned down, a few we have scrapped but mainly because it just didn't sound right, rather than the singer's capabilities.

M: *So you are working toward a gig or assessment and do you start off with a long list then gradually hone it down to what you need and can do?*
Z: Last year we worked on five songs, but this year were hoping to get a bigger repertoire, and take it out of the assessment and do pubs and clubs. The idea was to get all of those songs then strip out the ones for the assessment

M: *Are they covers, or originals or both?*
Z: They're covers at the moment but would like to put originals together as well.

M: *Can you tell me a little bit about how you help with the arranging of songs – you are doing a cover you will obviously have to arrange the material it in some way?*
Z: Usually the one person who has brought the song to a band and that person will be the most clear about the song and will guide the band. Today, there was a song, which I didn't choose, but I already knew the structure. So we divided it up into alphabetical letters and I just scream out, say Section B, Section C, to people who didn't now it. Last year with did a song, which we changed completely. It was like an R n B song but we made it into a bit more generic rock, with distorted guitars. Even the chords were a little different, and we changed the key.

M: *Taking that example why did you do that for that song?*
X: It suited the sound of our band better; we are not really a soul type band, but a rock band. But we liked the idea of the song and had seen other people do different interpretations of that song as well. And it went from there.

M: *What do you think you yourself, your qualities that you bring to the band?*
Z: I think I am confident in my playing, quick to feel the music, little rhythmic gestures that the drummer is doing, and pick up on that. Somebody will just change something

slightly and I hear that am able to respond to that. Also I like to jam a lot and improvise. I can hear a song and change it to how it suits me…

M: So you are an 'ideas' person with that…?
X: I have been in countless bands, some lasting a few weeks, others a lot longer; I seem to take charge of the band. If we're not sure of what to do, I can just help to get it sorted out. I'm a quick learner, good on original chord sequences, pick up on drummers hitting the snare ion beat three, or something, I can work around things like that.

M: If you are a leader, it's often a good thing for some band members who like to feel organised and have productive rehearsals, and so on.
X: This is the first time, that I have not been the front man and lead singer. I have stepped back, it's a bit weird, and wasn't really sure of my role at the beginning, just doing what I did on my own. Our lead singer seems quite laid back and easy.

M: Can you think about a problem that you may have had with a song, and it's not working, how did you manage to solve it, and what qualities were needed?
Z: Sometimes there are guitarists who don't read much, have little theory, and learn everything aurally, learns the solo exactly and in the original key. But then has great difficulty having to relearn it in another key that is more suited to the singer.
X: We couldn't do anything about it, because the singer couldn't sing it as the key was too high for him. There is no other way; he had to learn the guitar solo again in that new key. The guitarist can always do it in another key – the singer can't find an extra octave!

M: Can you think about the kind of ideal qualities that a band member ought to be striving to develop?
Z: For me, its developing enthusiasm and expressing your own life – to be very convinced about what they want in their own life, and to express that through their music, rather than just simply 'playing the song'. I always strive to express something at all times.
X: I always had problems with people in older bands starting new bands. But if you are that committed you have to be friendly; you've got to get on with people. If you are not a nice guy, but with grade 8 distinction, and having a bad attitude, Id get rid of him, he might be good but he would be bringing the rest of the band down; things like that. I usually take charge of things but I would like lot if people said no – I'm not always right! If I were I would be on Wembley stage! I like criticism; because that is the only way you can get better.

M: And you take that criticism in a mature way, not throwing a wobbly.., storming out!
X: Exactly! The thing is if they can define it, have a reason for it, when saying 'that is terrible'. I'd say 'how can I get better?'

M: Just finishing off – pretend I am your new tutor. What kind of things would you expect from me as your tutor? How can I help?

X: Sitting in when you can – get your opinion, come in and listen. I would hate it if you simply said it's good, that's fine'. Because then perhaps we've got nothing to do an, nothing more to practice! I'd like it if you said ' try this…that is a bit out…just play that on your own… are you sure that chord works with that solo things like that – like another member of the band

M: And so you are looking for a little more detail in the feedback about the bits of the songs…

X: Yes. Even for the good bits, you might say 'make that a bit more obvious' make it more distinct'.

M: If I was directing to the extent of telling you to do that drum groove slightly differently, change this here, not do that extra chorus, and so on, to what extent would I be intruding on your artistic and creative work?

X: As long as you don't say 'I want'! Better would be 'try this… think about that…' How you are saying it completely changes what you are trying to get across. We might say 'our band are thinking of trying this' and if you should have no problem saying 'that's fine', just accepting it, because in the end it's not the tutor's band!

Z: If you come in as a tutor and want me to do something very exactly, that would be hard for me to accept. But if you said the song really needs that, just find the musical way of doing it' I'd be more happy to accept that. There may be only one way to make the song work, but musically there may be many ways to attain that. I like tutors to be able to justify what they say, but also be strict.

M: Thanks for that; is there anything else you would like to add before I disappear?

X: For band practice in general if people can't make it for whatever reason, I think it's good just to carry on even if they are not there, even if it's an important player or the singer. What we try to do, we know it's not going to be like that on the night, it makes me play my part better, because when it's all stripped down I can hear what I am like with the other guitarist and I thought I was playing something good there, but it turns out I was playing something a bit dodgy. It helps.

(10) Quick interview with a year two four-piece band

M: Can you tell me about this song you are in the middle of rehearsing and about how it all started, please?
-We've been friends since the beginning of last year and we started jamming together and learning some songs. It's a cover, and it was XX idea.
-We were a few weeks into our friendship and we realised we all liked the same music. We booked a room, got together and then go - and played it. I think we are all capable, if anyone doesn't know the track, the chords, it's pretty easy to get it across.

M: You have had to do some arranging of it perhaps, even though it's a cover. Can you tell me about where you are with that, and how you decided?
We did have to change who it was playing guitar. We also changed the key as it was too high, I couldn't handle the vocals where they were.

M: Whereabouts during your rehearsals did you decide that you couldn't hit the high notes?
The time when our tutor came in and said that it was way too high. It was funny to watch though!

M: How far down then, a tone?
Yes, we're just rehearsed it acoustically for the vocals. Which proved to be a very good idea. Learning it acoustically so you can get the vocals right. I'm sure we'll make more changes to it to make it our own, but we're not sure yet. The *SoundFest* gig is a long way away.

M: When you start to rehearse a song then, you have a really good listen to it and then work out the structure first and try to get through it, play along to the track first, or do you not have to do that?
-At home, yes. The good thing about this band is that we figure it out at home. Didn't use the tab, just played along and figured it out. And I hadn't played in the song before I came to the practice either.
-If we think we can play it we come together. I always bring my iPod to listen to it, just in case.

M: In a rehearsal - and I get a feeling that there is a good vibe here – each of you are individuals and have different experiences and slightly different musical interests I guess as well, but you all bring different thing to the rehearsal. Could I go around each of you in turn and think about what you consider the one or two things that you bring to the band from your experience. The kind of qualities that you can help make your band as good as it is?
- Knowledge of backing vocals and how to harmonise and to make harmonies with other people sound better than just one person.
-I've done a lot of live shows and things like that so I have got more experience on the stage, plus I have got some different tastes as well so I can always bring something that will look a bit different to it.

-I'm the drummer who I suppose; I don't really practice before the rehearsal, but listen to it and then put down how I interpret the song. Sometimes it'll come out a bit weird, but other times it can be interesting and bring nice aspects to the arrangements, by me improvising. I am probably an improviser and that's my strong point.

M: So you are not just a timekeeper on kit, you have that creative input?
-Yes, I think I do.

M: If we go clockwise this time, you've all been in and out of bands. What do you think are the kinds of ideal qualities in your band members you would look for. Could you suggest one or two things?
-Timeliness and cleanliness!
-How practiced you are, because a band who haven't practiced just make a noise
- Creativity and insanity!
- I guess bringing ideas to the group. If something doesn't sound right to them make it aware to the band. See if everyone else agrees and if some do, then change it. Like we did earlier!

M: OK. Pretend I am your tutor –what kinds of things would you want from me? Can you explain or suggest how I can help you in rehearsing?
-Just give it as it is on what sounds better because you'll be a lot more knowledgeable about how it sounds.
-We need a tutor who gets to know your band and after getting to know your band will bring music that suits them and their personalities and that's what all our performance tutors seem to do.
-Don't be prejudicial about styles. Tell us if it's bad but don't tell us to play it just one way only.

M: So I would have to find a careful balance between suggesting ideas, not being dictatorial…or too intrusive…
Yes, and if it needs changing we'd want change it but the way we think best!

(11) Quick interview with a year two five-piece band

M: The song you've just been doing, can you just tell me a little bit about your first rehearsal with that song and why you decided to do it, please?
-We've been together about seven months. I wrote it because I wanted a song for the band and it was our first!
-QQ came over one day with the song written without a chorus, together with JJ we sat down to learn it and we threw together this chorus, almost a bridge. It really just finished off the song. By the time we polished that up we all really like learned the song and then we took it to the rest of the band.

M: How did you all get to know, given that there wasn't as recording to listen from?

-I just played it acoustically, sang it, then, the three of us went though it for the others. We were then just everyone putting pieces together to it.
-It starts out really simple then once everyone gets comfortable then some of us put in a few extra fills somewhere, a few extra notes, and we said really like that.
We really put the meat on it because we busk pretty much every week. So we just drill it into the ground and play it so often busking, we can play it in our sleep!
-The good thing about that is that it is a real audience, with everyone walking past you, so if you have this few seconds to do something that strikes them; you learn pretty quickly what those parts of the songs are. So when we do come those parts in the song that's where we kick it up and do something because the audience is there and responding to you. I think that, if anything, is a good way of practicing.. It helps to highlight the songs.
-And it's part of the pressure of practicing it, by busking.
-We just realise we have to do completely different rehearsals for gigs. Because when we are busking we are all trying to be as loud as possible. Now we are just trying to put dynamics in.

M: For this particular song how much time do you think you have spent learning it?
-We're still learning it! From start to finish maybe a couple of hours –then everyone else is slowly learning it, getting the harmonies in.

M: So the arrangement is developing as you go along, adding bits as you say. Do you all contribute to the arranging of it?
-Yes. No matter who brings the song along we all contribute our own little parts. Although the chords are all there and the lyrics are there, it comes down to the guy behind the instrument and that's when he adds that unique sound to it. You get behind a drum kit and start to add your own part and as a signature thing.

M: In your rehearsals generally is there anyone who is a natural leader or someone who acts as an MD, or do you all chip in to lead the rehearsal forward?
-Perhaps JJ is…
-But I'm not a natural leader.
-The thing is when we are actually completely open and honest with each other you don't need one person, who does that, to say 'hey that's completely wrong!' But if we all listen to each other and understand that is for the better of the music then we can just tell each other.

M: You know each other well enough that you can give advice and receive criticism appropriately and I'm sure that takes a bit of maturity. Although you each play different part in that song, perhaps also, you each play different roles in the rehearsal? You have differing experiences through your musical life and your wealth of experience you bring that to the band. The qualities that you have, in rehearsing, and I don't just mean your playing of guitar, of kit, and so on, but other kinds of rehearsing qualities – the ideas, being able to help with the arrangement, being able to lead a

rehearsal being able to contribute in whatever way. If we go around each of you in turn, could you think of perhaps one or two things that are unique to you that you bring to the band- don't hold back!

- My 'vest wearing' capabilities I'd say! Energy - a lot of people say that I an animal when I get behind the kit. I love playing. When I get here all I just is to want to play and I don't want a cigarette break; I just want to keep playing music.

-I'm the only one who can play violin!

M: So versatility then…!

-Maybe! I also know more about musical theory than the others, probably.

M: So that probably helps with arranging…

-Yes I like arranging, so let's just say arranging!

-I'd agree with that!

-Lyrics. I love writing the lyrics.

-You're great at that!

-Getting things done, but coming from a different background, of folk music, I add a different flavour. And we do things that I can get away with that others wouldn't.

M: Can I just finish off because I know you're desperate to get back to playing? Imagine that I have taken over as your new tutor. How can I help you best in your rehearsing, as a tutor?

-With the song now, the stuff we would like to receive is about building dynamics. This is something that our tutor has been a great help with. We would continue to want to help in that area.

-Another thing would be to get some gigs around Scarborough!

(12) Quick interview with a year one band

M: Can you all tell me a little about any problems you faced in rehearsing?
There was a lack of time and obviously a lack of a drummer! We got the chords separately we work it out from there, and then rehearsed together. The track was in D, which was a struggle for the singer; maybe we should have dropped in down to C. Doing it rehearsal wasn't too bad, but it's one of those things that maybe that only comes out of performing it. When we were sitting around in rehearsing I always seemed to think it ok, but that was an artificial situation.

M: What works best for you in rehearsing?
We've been together, since October, for 5 months. We start off with a discussion and some weeks some people are more in charge than others. It starts off with a song someone wants to try and we discuss it. We try it out and if it isn't working and we discuss what to do. One of us comes in with another suggestion of a song. This one usually ends up as the song we're doing. It's been difficult without a drummer. Last time we had to have 3 songs but we originally did 5, scrapped three and added another.

M: What do you think are the most important qualities/attributes that you bring to the rehearsal?
Good time keeping is most important. Before we start the rehearsal, we make sure everything is written down first. It makes it so much easier if we know what we are doing. So we pre-plan, but don't really plan after that.

M: Does anyone contribute more creative ideas to the rehearsal than the rest?
All equal, really - we all play off each other. I think that is how it should be as well. You work better if everyone contributes rather than any one person deserving any more credit. It helps as we all get along with each other.

(13) Quick interview with a year two band

M: Can you tell me about how you rehearsed those songs?
Quite random! But keyboard player led it for the *Queen* song. For *Paparazzi* we had about three practises, plus some individual practice, getting the chords tight.

M: So is there someone that is the creative force behind your band?
We're quite equal. No one knew each other before - we had a laugh and joke at the start – and got on from there – having fun is important! We sit down and listen to it and go from there. We don't take ourselves too seriously!

M: How does leading the rehearsals happen?
XX, on piano, usually starts, but we try to cater to the singers and their choice of key. We changed key several times and then worked by changing the chorus of *Paparazzi*, which worked for everything.

M: How did the various bits of these songs come together in your rehearing?
The rhythm section worked on the groove, style and structure, and the girls gave us feedback on what worked. At the end of day we've got to support them; if they're not comfortable with it there's no point. For the *Queen* song - listening to our Ipods – we wanted to do a 12 bar blues – and we decided to arrange it in that style.

(14) Quick interview with a year two band

M: How did you develop the ideas and your contributions in the rehearsals?
We sung along to the track, then with drums, and it seemed to work.
The band was put together last year and it worked well together. Now the focus is on the three singers, as they are the only ones being marked here, as we are being marked elsewhere. We - piano, bass and drums - essentially provide a backing.

M: So how does it all come together in rehearsing?
We, the singers, have had a few practices on our own, to work out harmonies, because when we're in there all together it gets in the way. Everyone's had an input and we all have different ways of doing things.

M: Can you elaborate?
In *Falling*, after the first chorus, we were going to have me bring in the band. Yesterday we changed it, and it was messy. Today we tried it on the beat and it was better.

M: Do you have a creative ideas person, or someone who did a lot of arranging for you?
YY had the ideas about the stops and the timing, but the vocalists are the driving force as they are being marked on it.

M: What do you think are the important qualities in your band?
It's very easy to let your creativity run away with you – and say 'let's do this… let's try that…' but all that happens really is that you have all this hypothetical stuff flying around, and you don't actually try anything! So I like to know what are we playing - let's do it now, and stop wasting time just talking endlessly about it!

M: What would you have done differently in your rehearsing?
Some people not there on time – we're sometimes waiting around for half an hour – not using time efficiently. It needs to be equal commitment from every single person.

M: Where do you get feedback from in rehearsing?
We have some comments from our tutor but no one else. It never feels 100% when we perform; I would just like to come on and nail it but we were not as tight as we should

be. I've a problem about being heard – I have ideas and not confident is saying it though – don't know how to put it across. Our tutor put the band together last year but we decided the group this year. Confidence is just simply about going for it: the more you rehearse more confidence you get!

(15) Quick interview with a year three band

M: Can you tell me a bit about how you rehearsed your Spanish Song and So What?
It started with the original Spanish melody –and I notated it all as we're very capable musicians. We always try to be aware of levels – especially drum kit- and we're not shy at telling each other about levels. We've been together a few months. For *So What?* we needed to do a song with saxes. It has an easy chord sequence - but we had to devised solos between two saxes. I should think we did up to 40 hours rehearsing on *So What*.

M: What do you think are important personal qualities for working together, and strengths to bring to the band?
Ideas – instigating them and moving on. As a drummer – I am feeding off people – and having bass and drums to lock. We are all equal in giving feedback – none of us will be offended if anyone suggests anything - and we would always try it, even if we didn't think it would work. There's never been an ego battle in our band – no one is going out to be noticed more than any other.

M: So how has this mutual respect developed?
For me, as a rock guitarist for 5 years, automatically I thought I should be louder than everyone else. I learned to tone it down, especially in this genre (jazz fusion). I've developed respect for the other soloists during rehearsing the track.

(16) Quick interview with a five-piece year three band

M: Can you tell me about how you set about starting to rehearse?
We go and learn the parts first, then arrange them, adding and making it our own. We try it and see; after two rehearsals it's obvious if it doesn't work. We have a lot of trust, which comes with time and we've been together for two years. We don't see many of the others (on the course). Our tutor comes in and gives us advice on changing bits. We have similar interests of genres and styles.

M: What advice would you give to new bands studying here?
Not to be blinkered. Many start off in one genre, but they need to broaden and work in different genres. It was good when we were given a list of songs that forced you to learn other genres. Also when we did the schools road show we forced to choose 'pop' songs.

M: Can we go around each of you and ask what works for you?
-I start by taking it away, learn it in my own time, we put the finishing touches when we are all together, helping others to do things.
-I learn lyrics at home; I need to be motivated and it to be fun, I work quicker when having fun. There's chemistry between all of us.
- I research on YouTube or iTunes. I like to do interesting arrangements, not just a carbon copy, and there's a need to gel as a band.
-Get the main chords, and play along at home. You've got to be a good team player and take others into consideration.
-I try to learn song as it is at home, then in rehearsal. Decide how to change it, if it is not working in a live situation. In the practice room: we work on sections, verse, chorus and how we are going to start. Working in sections on a new song is always good. Try to get a certain start and end. I try to get on with the band outside the rehearsal too.

M: How do you deal with free-riders in rehearsals
-Suggest songs that the band can still do with or without the free-rider. It can be unfair as it can drag others' marks down. Or arrange a stand-in, but that's harder for him.

M: How do you think bands should be formed here at Uni?
For the first years, put them together; it gets people to broaden their horizons. Second year should self-select, unless their band isn't working out.

M: Should rehearsing be assessed?
It was good to peer-assess others in their rehearsals. It should count for say 20% or less. It was good that some marks were related to the effort, and not all depending on the performance.

APPENDICES

(i) Appraisal form (The University of Westminster)

CURRENT COMPETENCIES	DESIRED GOALS
This is where you are now List all aspects of your current - Skill set - Opportunities (external and intrinsic)	*This is where you would like to be* List all - Achievements - Requirements - Outcomes - Opportunities you would like to create
ACTION POINTS	**PROJECT PLAN**
This is what you need to do to get there List all Steps and tasks required to move forward towards these goals	*This is who does what, and when* List all - People / tasks - Timelines involved in making it happen

(ii) Platform sessions and workshops (The University of Liverpool)

Popular Music Performance
Semester 2

Week 1 (5th Feb)   'Mind your Balance' (Lecture)

Week 2 (12th Feb)   Platform

Week 3 (19th Feb)   Analysis (Bop, Jazz and Big Band)

Week 4 (26th Feb)   Performance recordings

Week 5 (5th Mar)   Platform

Week 6 (12th Mar)   Platform

Week 7 (19th Mar)   Historical Musical Influence
                                    (Group Presentation)

Week 8 (26th Mar)   'Time is Not A Magazine!'
                                     (Rhythm workshop)

(iii) Examples of peer assessment materials used for assessing band rehearsing (The University of Huddersfield)

(1) Peer feedback form

<div style="border: 1px solid black;">

Peer feedback

Please complete the form, which will provide valuable feedback to your previous band members.
Your peer feedback will be combined with the other band members and will be given anonymously.
Which two personal qualities/attributes in rehearsals do you think you could develop/improve on?

(i)--

(ii)---
Which personal quality/attribute do you think was your strength in the rehearsals?

Name of band member …………………………………………………………………………………………..
Which two personal qualities/attributes in rehearsals do you think they could develop/improve on?

(i)--

(ii)---
Which personal quality/attribute do you think was their strength in the rehearsals?

Name of band member …………………………………………………………………………………………
Which two personal qualities/attributes in rehearsals do you think they could develop/improve on?

(i)--

(ii)---
Which personal quality/attribute do you think was their strength in the rehearsals?

Name of band member ………………………………………………………………………………………….
Which two personal qualities/attributes in rehearsals do you think they could develop/improve on?

(i)--

(ii)---
Which personal quality/attribute do you think was their strength in the rehearsals?

Name of band member ………………………………………………………………………………………………
Which two personal qualities/attributes in rehearsals do you think they could develop/improve on?

(i)--

(ii)---
Which personal quality/attribute do you think was their strength in the rehearsals?

Report completed by_____   **Date**_____

<u>Confidential report – feedback will be received anonymously!</u>

</div>

(2) Individual qualities/personal attributes during rehearsing form

---

Name of Student _____

Please list three qualities/ attributes or 'personal weaknesses' that you believe you should try to develop/improve in your rehearsing.

1…………………………………………………………………

2…………………………………………………………………..

3……………………………………………………………………

What is the opposite/negative of each of these three?

1………………………………….

2…………………………………..

3……………………………………

I agree to these 'personal weaknesses' to be used as assessment criteria for rehearsing with my next band.

Signed……………………………………………….. **Date**……………………

---

(3) Band rehearsing form: group rehearsing qualities and individual personal attributes

Band Members:

Please describe three group qualities/attributes that you as a band agree are important to you and on which you will try to improve/develop in rehearsing and be used as peer assessment criteria:

1…………………………………………………………………

2…………………………………………………………………..

3…………………………………………………………………

Describe the opposite/negative of each of these:

1………………………………….

2…………………………………..

3…………………………………

Please describe three personal qualities/ attributes that you will try to improve in rehearsing and to be used as peer assessment criteria:

4…………………………………………………………………

5…………………………………………………………………..

6…………………………………………………………………

Describe the opposite/negative of each of these:

4…………………………………………………………………

5…………………………………………………………………..

6…………………………………………………………………

I agree to these six personal attributes being used as peer assessment criteria:

Name ………………………………………………………………….. **Date**………

(4) Peer review form by an individual's previous band

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">

Band members:

</div>

On the basis of your previous rehearsals, please list three qualities/ attributes that you all agree that _____ should try to develop or improve while rehearsing:

1…………………………………………………………………………….

2…………………………………………………………………………….

3…………………………………………………………………………..

Describe the opposite/negative of each of these three?

1……………………………..………………………………………….

2…………………………………………………………………………

3…………………………………………………………………………

Student consent form:

I agree to these personal attributes to be used as assessment criteria for rehearsing with my next band.

Signed……………………………………………….................   **Date……………………**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Joe Bennett

Aside from being Head of School of Music and Performing Arts at Bath Spa University, Joe teaches on the Commercial Music degree programmes, and is also the organiser of the annual UK Songwriting Festival. After studying music at the University of Northumbria he worked as a guitar player for four years. He moved to Bath in 1994 to become Music Editor of Total Guitar magazine and later became Head of Music at City of Bath College. Joe has written over 40 popular books relating to guitar playing, guitar teaching or music theory published since 1999 and is currently the UK's most prolific author of guitar-based teaching books. He also contributed 5 original set works for the guitar/bass grade 1-7 Rockschool syllabi and was producer, co-writer and guitarist for 'Rockschool companion' CD. Joe has written over 300 articles and reviews for Total Guitar, Classic CD, Roland UK, Music Tech and Future Music and was the Associate Editor of Music Tech magazine during its 2003 launch. He co-wrote and co-produced the album Crows Rooks and Ravens (2009) with Scottish singer-songwriter Andi Neate Joe was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship in 2004 in recognition of his work as a teacher of popular music and is investigating collaborative songwriting for his PhD.

Hussein Boon

Hussein is Programme Director for the BMus Commercial Music Performance at the University of Westminster. Hussein's experience includes over 25+ years of professional work including the BBC, C4, BFI, Universal, Island, EMI, WEA, Charles and Eddie, De La Soul, Billy Ocean, Freak Power, Beats Intenational, Karen Ramirez, Fame Academy, Alex Parkes, Alistair Griffin, MicroGroove, Ephraim Lewis, Eusebe, Bond and Elisha La'Verne to name but a few. He has also managed his own Music Education Business delivering popular music education for a variety of organisations including the London Boroughs of Harrow, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, The Princes' Trust, Domex, Rockschool, Somerset House, Community Music and 4Kids. Hussein's debut album, **Life Changes**, released in 2008, has received excellent reviews.

Danny Cope

Danny Cope is Course Leader at Leeds College of Music for the BA (Hons) Popular Music Studies programme and also teaches on the BA (Hons) Music Production course. His teaching specialism is song writing, and he teaches modules in Ensemble Studies, Song writing, Song Production, Popular Music Composition and Music Production Project. Danny Cope played Bass guitar in the Dave Bilbrough Band for seven years, during which time the band released four live albums, made several TV appearances, and toured extensively around the UK. He also plays regular weekly gigs as the bass player for 'Pastiche' function band in and around London. Danny has released three independent CDs as a solo artist, one of which, *Month of Sundays*, was album of the week on Premier Radio in July 2006. He also released the DVD, *Everything You Need To Know About... Setting Up A Bedroom Studio*. As a songwriter he has a publishing contract with *DayBreak Music Ltd*.

Robert Davis

Bob teaches popular music and music technology at Leeds Metropolitan University, where he is course leader for the BA (Hons) Music Performance programme, and the Open University where he is also an Associate Teaching Fellow. He has promoted technology in schools and colleges since the mid 1980s. In 2003 he was awarded a Creative Partnerships Action Research Award and a further award in 2006 to research the ways music technology can impact on the creative process. Bob Davis initially studied music at Bretton Hall College and on completing his PGCE taught in secondary schools, further education colleges and higher education. He completed his MA with the Institute of Popular Music at Liverpool University and his PhD at the Université de Montréal studying with Professor Philip Tagg.

Davey Ray Moor

Davey Ray Moor teaches songwriting, contemporary music production and performance at Bath Spa University. Having sold over 300,000 albums, each of which received consistent critical praise his song writing, production and performance career informs and grounds his teaching practice with healthy measures of tangible industrial experience. Building on an established career as a film and TV composer, he brings this to his teaching an ability to focus both musical and visual semiotics. After recording four singles and one album with Australian band *The Crystal Set*, Davey later established a recording studio near Glastonbury where, he composes soundtracks for television, film and documentaries. His clients include Nintendo, Pepsi, Bacardi, Budweiser, Sony, Nissan, Remington, Siemens, BBC1, BBC2, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5, MTV, VH1, Sky, Sky Movies, Playboy, History Channel, Weather Channel, Cartoon Network and Bravo.Toward the end of the nineties, Davey recruited *Cousteau* and the band recorded a collection of his songs. His international album releases (as songwriter, producer or performer) include *Cousteau*, (Cousteau, Palm Pictures), *Cristina Dona*, (Cristina Dona, Rykodisc), *Carl Barat* (Carl Barat, Arcady Recordings) and *Mambassa* (Mambassa, Mescal Records). In 2004, Davey released his first true solo endeavour "*Telepathy*" on NuN/Edel in Europe. 5 star reviews across publications such as *Rolling Stone Magazine* and *All Music* followed, and *Telepathy* was included in Musica's Critics Top 100 in 2004. His festival appearances include: Glastonbury, Reading, Leeds, Edinburgh Fringe, and live tour supports include Bob Dylan, Tom Petty and The Heartbreakers, Nico, The Damned, David Gray, Goldfrapp, Nick Cave, Del Amitri, The Go-Betweens and Red Hot Chilli Peppers. His live broadcast performances include: Later with Jools Holland, MTV, VH1, The World Café (NYC), Rai 1, NPR Network Radio, KCRW LA, Jonathan Ross (BBC2), Janice Long (BBC2), Richard Allison (BBC2), XFM, GLR, London Live, KMTT Seattle and WYEP Pittsburgh.

Rowan Oliver

Rowan Oliver is Programme Leader for the Popular Music degree at The University of Hull and teaches across all the performance modules in the course. Alongside his academic career Rowan continues to record and perform internationally as a multi-instrumentalist session musician, and also composes for film. Prior to joining the staff at the University of Hull he spent several years touring the world as the drummer with *Goldfrapp* (amongst various musical exploits). When asked whether he misses his old life Rowan tends to point out that although both jobs combine creativity, excitement

and hard work, his new role involves wearing far less lycra, which he says is a relief to both himself and the students! His musicological research deals primarily with rhythm, groove and the performer's relationship with time, focusing particularly on African diasporic popular music styles. Other research interests include composing for film and the use of technology in performance. Several extra-curricular projects also inform his work, such as 'Folkwood', a student-led record label which he founded in 2008.

Charlotte Orba

Charlotte Orba is Head of Popular Music and Music Production at Leeds College of Music. She also studied at Leeds College of Music, gaining a Graduate Diploma in Jazz and Contemporary Music and winning the Fox's Prize for Music Technology and later studied for a MA in Popular Culture with the Open University. Charlotte sustained a professional career as a freelance musician/musical director for over ten years before going on to combine this with teaching at Leeds College of Music. This work covered a wide variety of artists and genres but was primarily within pop music. Currently she combines her work at the College with freelance musical work as well as an active role as part owner of one of the UK's largest online and 'bricks and mortar' drum shops: *rockemmusic.*

Richard J Parfitt

Richard J. Parfitt is a Senior Lecturer in Commercial Music at Bath Spa University. He was signed to Zomba Music Publishing as a house writer from 1986 to 1989 writing mainly for TV and film. In 1995 he signed a major publishing deal with Sony Music where he wrote and delivered three top 40 singles and one top 40 album. In 1996 he signed to Geffen Records as an artist, and is at present, signed to Kobalt Music Publishers. As a songwriter Richard has sold over a million records, with recent song writing and production credits that include Duffy (A&M 2008) and Universal Films (2009). As a session musician he has worked with: Dido, Bernard Butler, Urge Overkill, John Squire and Lene Marlin. Past employers include the University of Wales and the British Institute of Modern Music. Richard is presently working on a production for Rough Trade Records due for release 2011. Worldwide live and touring experience includes the USA, Japan and Europe. Festival appearances include Glastonbury, T In The Park, V and Reading. Tour supports with: The Jam, Ash, Oasis, Sex Pistols, Ian Brown, The Lemonheads and McAlmont & Butler.

Mark Pulman

Dr Mark Pulman was the project leader for this PALATINE funded *Reheasing Popular Music*. He has extensive music industry, business and promotion experience in the UK and overseas working for Warner Music, Novello & Co, International Music Publications, EMI Music Publishing Ltd, Hal Leonard Music Corporation and Spartan Press Music Publishers. He was appointed Lecturer in Popular Music for the BA Popular Music Studies (University of Sheffield), at Barnsley College of Higher Education, becoming Head of School. Mark is an experienced MD, pop performer, composer and arranger. He is course leader for the BA (Hons) Music and Promotion at Huddersfield University and teaches band rehearsing and popular music performance.

Brian Rice

Brian Rice has been playing drums for 28 years having played his first professional gig at 18. He has toured all over Ireland and the UK playing in over 40 shows such as West Side Story, Witches of Eastwick, Grease, A Chorus Line, 42nd Street, Rocky Horror Show, Guys and Dolls and with the Showstoppers big band and the Eamon Keene Quartet. His work has included performing at many festivals including The Rose of Tralee Festival, Holywood Jazz Festival, Belfast Festival at Queen's, Monaghan Jazz and Blues Festival and the Derry Jazz and Blues Festival. In 1989 Brian returned to Belfast and began working as a freelance musician. Aside from working in musical theatre he has also performed with a wide variety of internationally-acclaimed artists in both pop and jazz including Johnny Mathis, Howard Keel, Van Morrison, Don Felder, Rick Wakeman, Peter Corry, Gary Wilmot, Darren Day, Marti Webb, Jacqui Dankworth, Norma Winstone, Tina May, Bob Wilber, George Masso and Bruce Adams. Brain obtained a PhD in music performance after completing four years of research on "Drumming in Contemporary Musical Theatre" at the University of Ulster and taught popular music performance at the University of Liverpool.

Andy Stott

Andy Stott is a graduate of the University of Leeds, where he was awarded the Lord Snowden Prize for outstanding achievement in Music. In 2005 he graduated from Liverpool JMU with a Masters Degree in Education Management. He has enjoyed a high profile career as a music educator and is now the Head of Higher Education and Professional Development at Access to Music, the UK's leading designer and provider of popular music education, training and consultancy. Andy is also the Director for Access to Music's Foundation Degree for Session Musicians at the Royal Northern College of Music. Alongside his teaching career, Andy has worked extensively in the world of Musical Theatre as a Producer, Director and Musical Director with his own production company, Purple Patch Productions. In 2001 Andy worked as a Producer and Musical Supervisor on the first UK tour and West End run of the award winning Broadway musical RENT.

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