Name of Provider: Institute of Contemporary Music Performance
UKPRN: 10035638

TEF Year Three Provider Submission

1. PROVIDER CONTEXT

1.1. About ICMP: Our history, vision, mission and values

Often described as being a 'new' or 'alternative' provider (AP), ICMP was in fact founded over 30 years ago in 1986. The founding principle was that formal, structured education should be available to students of popular music in the same way it was available to students of classical music and other artistic and creative disciplines. It is easy to forget, now that popular music courses are widely provided across the HE sector, that 30 years ago there was really no opportunity for young contemporary musicians to pursue their passion and develop their skills in a formal, supported way.

The original vision was that all elements of the music industry – the creators, the performers, the recording professionals, the business entrepreneurs – would study under the same roof, building on each others' talents and connections in an 'incubator' environment as they studied. That vision has now been achieved. Our provision has been articulated through a number of key principles - small class sizes; one-to-one tuition and support; extensive industry engagement; a high number of contact hours; a personalised approach to student engagement; and the dynamic use of technology in the classroom.[1] Because we remain relatively small in size there is a tangible sense of community thoughout our organisation, and student need can be addressed quickly and effectively. A good example of this is a recent decision to relocate the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and extend our opening hours across the facilities to enhance private study opportunity and access, based on student feedback.

ICMP's mission is to *inspire, encourage and equip our students to succeed by delivering a relevant and innovative educational experience of the highest quality.* This permeates our approach to the design and delivery of our programmes, the community we create, and the ongoing development and enhancement of the ICMP student experience. Our teaching faculty has developed over many years and is composed of a unique and inspirational mix of industry professionals, experienced academics and qualified teachers.[2] We continually invest in a number of key areas of our provision.[3] Our facilities encompass custom-designed performance, recording and teaching studios, learning and practice resources and production facilities, and our London location affords us wide-ranging connectivity with relevant industry bodies and employment opportunities. ICMP students can access our full range of resources for private practice and rehearsal outside of timetabled hours, for free; this is a significant resource that we make available to our student body, enabling them to gain practical experience, build their database of contacts and networks, and access real employment opportunities.

Our vision to *shape the future of music* goes beyond an attractive strapline. ICMP's defining feature, of which we are immensely proud, is our presence in the global commercial music industry. We know that within 6 months of graduating, over 90% of our graduates are in employment or further education; around two-thirds are engaged in music-related jobs or study; over 60% are in highly skilled employment or further study; and the average salary of ICMP graduates is almost 12% above that for arts graduates. This is significantly above the benchmark.[4] Our students, alumni and faculty are the people who make the music you hear, regularly gracing festival stages, playing in the West End, working in studios, teaching the next generation of musicians, and, increasingly, becoming the entrepreneurs behind emerging trends in music creation, production and dissemination. Examples of renowned ICMP alumni include Ed O'Brien, Radiohead guitarist; Sandy Beales, One Direction bassist; Fraser T. Smith, award winning songwriter, engineer and guitarist who has produced albums and songs from Adele,

[1] Detail on our class sizes and contact time included in the 'Teaching Quality' section.
[2] Detail of faculty and qualifications included in the 'Teaching Quality' section.
[3] For details of investments see 'Learning Environment' section.
[4] DLHE 2016 and 2017.

Sam Smith and Stormzy; Luke Patterson, founder member and drummer with immensely successful band Clean Bandit; and Arnie Arnason, bass player for The Vaccines.

Over the years, we have seen the passion and commitment of our staff at all levels in the development and delivery of a bespoke, music-oriented portfolio of programmes. In particular, we have committed to the continuous investment in the CPD of our staff[5] and are guided in our day-to-day operations and strategic direction by a clear set of institutional values:

- We place our students at the heart of everything we do
- We take pride in achieving the highest quality at all times
- We are ambitious, passionate and driven to succeed
- We act professionally in all situations
- We are creative, innovative and open minded
- We build open, trusting and honest relationships with good communication
- We are committed to building a positive team and a supportive environment.
- We believe in equal opportunities for all

1.2. ICMP today

ICMP is today proud to be recognised as a small and specialist provider and fully engaged as a member of the UK's HE community. We are widely engaged with political and other sector developments.[6] Although we do not yet award our own degrees, our long (more than 10 years) relationship with our primary validating partner, UEL, has bestowed on us great depth of experience and capability; we operate effectively as an independent and autonomous institution, with enhancement and continuous improvement deeply embedded in our operating philosophy.

"[ICMP has] further developed all 5 points of good practice and addressed the two recommendations from the previous review. Student evaluations show continuing satisfaction with most aspects of the learning environment. [ICMP] has further refined its good practice in auditions…and has provided more support for [CPD] for its staff…enhanced learning resources for students…and…broadened its engagement with the music industry. [ICMP] has further developed 'The Hub', both as good practice to enhance students' professional practice and career opportunities, and also to address the recommendation to maximise opportunities for industry engagement in quality assurance." QAA EO 2016

"…the team are continuously committed to reviewing and improving practice…while their understanding of how my observations might be best applied is more attuned than my own, conversations are frank and constructive." Professor Andrew West, External Examiner

Our existing portfolio has developed following the afore-mentioned principles to represent the full eco-system of the contemporary music world. We have a current cohort of approximately 860 FT HE students on under- and postgraduate programmes validated/accredited by the University of East London (UEL), the University of South Wales (USW) and Pearson/Edexcel.These courses are an HNC Music; BMus(Hons) Popular Music Performance; BA(Hons) Music Business; CertHE/BA(Hons) Creative Musicianship; CertHE/BA(Hons) Songwriting; CertHE/BA(Hons) Creative Music Production; MMus Popular Music Performance; and an MA Songwriting.

In addition to the formal course pathways, our students engage with a wide range of complementary activities and opportunities organised by us. These include masterclasses,

[5] Further detail and supporting evidence included in the 'Teaching Quality' section.

[6] For example, our Chief Executive is a director of both Guild HE and IHE; we provided evidence to Parliament on the new HE Bill; staff members are directly engaged with HESA/Data Futures and other sector initiatives; our approach to the Prevent legislation has been commended; and we have been invited by HEFCE to present our case study with regard to our approach to NSS and our development as an 'AP'.

clinics, workshops, careers fairs, gigs and live performances, international trips and associated events. Our internal industry and liaision service (the 'Hub') connects students to job and audition opportunities, and increasingly supports the embedding of employability skills into the curriculum.[7] Our student wellbeing team provides direct counselling and associated support, together with signposting to other support providers.[8] And we have this year initiated a significant investment (in excess of £2mns over 3 years, or in excess of 12% of total projected turnover in that period) in the redevelopment of our facilities at 1b Dyne Road, the first phase of which which will conclude in time for the 2018/19 academic year.

Our academic and corporate governance is well-developed and increasingly experienced in the provision of effective academic and corporate governance, and includes both a Corporate Board and an Academic Board, both with significant external representation, the appropriate sub-committees, and a carefully considered governance code of practice. Crucially, we have deeply embedded student representation in our governance structures and processes.

"[ICMP has] effective systematic processes for programme monitoring and review" QAA EO 2017

"[ICMP's] HE Quality Assurance Manual cogently sets out the terms of reference, reporting lines and student positions within the committee structure. It clearly articulates how students engage in…quality systems and how feedback…is considered at the programme and institutional levels and used to drive improvement". QAA EO 2017

1.3. Engaging with the regulatory environment

Our approach has always been to engage early and fully with the developing regulatory environment, taking every opportunity to evaluate and benchmark our provision and learn how to further improve our student outcomes. An example of this can be seen in our decision to become subscribers to the QAA in 2011 – one of the first APs to make such a commitment – and our consistent investment in QAE at all levels of the organisation. Our HER outcomes of 2015 demonstrate this. We made a decision to invest in a new student information system in 2013/14,[9] which now delivers increasingly focused and real-time information to our teams to enable early intervention where required. This significant investment also allowed us to engage with the NSS and DLHE[10] one year earlier than most APs, enabling us to make significant progress in understanding and enhancing student satisfaction and graduate outcomes.

This provision of improved, more timely data is used to directly influence staff behaviours – for example each programme Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) begins with a significant set of data focused on student feedback and outcomes; is now completed and reviewed within 2 months of the end of each academic year; which allows module and programme improvement plans to be agreed and implemented from the start of the subsequent academic year. Real time data such as attendance and VLE engagement also enables more timely intervention which is impacting on our improved retention rates. These developments also enable personal objectives (e.g. for Programme Leaders) to be set for start of the subsequent year based on programme feedback and outcomes which impacts directly on their performance appraisal and reward.

1.4. Our student community

A distinctive feature of ICMP's student population is its global reach, with a vibrant international element. Of approximately 860 students (academic year 2016-17), 66% are UK domiciled (TEF population 69%), compared with 84% average for undergraduate programmes at HEIs (HESA 2015/16). 41% of students are classified as local, 9% of students are non-EU and 21% of students are EU domiciled. We have historically recruited strongly from the EU where the

[7] For further detail and supporting evidence see 'Student Outcomes' section.
[8] For further detail and supporting evidence see 'Learning Environment' section.
[9] Quercus, now part of the Ellucian group.
[10] We had well-developed systems for analysing feedback and generating relevant data previously; just not in the context of a more formal NSS/DLHE.

specialist tuition we provide is not generally available. We acknowledge the contribution overseas students make to the rich cultural and musical diversity at ICMP. However, being an overseas student also brings with it some special challenges, and the ICMP team understand this, providing bespoke events and support and integrate international students, for example by providing additional English language skills, housing advice and a range of networking events.

'[The] strong sense of community between staff and students, including international students'. UEL Collaborative Review Report 2017

Our admissions policy and procedure has been recognised as an area of good practice by the QAA. In addition to checking academic qualifications, all applicants are offered an audition and/or interview to check their suitability for their chosen course. This ensures that students are clear about what their chosen course of study will provide them with; they have an opportunity to better prepare prior to starting their course; and they can talk with a tutor in a relaxed and supportive setting about what choices and possible career outcomes may lie ahead of them. A total of 1,349 applications were received for programmes starting in September 2017; 1,011 auditions were conducted (free of charge to the student[11]); and 509 students (37% of applicants) were successfully enrolled. This rigorous approach to admissions ensures only the most suitable students are admitted to courses ensuring they have the best possible opportunities to succeed.

QAA feature of good practice: 'The management of auditions which provides feedback to aid applicants' development. QAA HER 2015

We are proud of our achievements in terms of widening participation and ensuring equal access. As an AP, ICMP is not currently able to engage with OFFA and therefore not able to access higher fee loans for student support; our undergraduate course fees are set at only £6,300 p.a. and we do not raise them higher as this would present a barrier to entry to those from less well-off backgrounds. However in addition to the above mentioned international component of our student community, we can demonstrate the following[12]:

- In 2016/17 26% of UK domiciled students were BAME compared to a 24% average nationally (HESA 2015/16). Although the TEF metrics have a BAME population of only 21% where ethnicity is known our HESA data demonstrates an increase in BAME students in years 1 and 2 (with a positive flag in our TEF analysis for BAME students' highly skilled employment or further study)
- In terms of disability, 133 students (14%) declared a disability on entry in 2016/17 (TEF metrics 12%); a further 4% have subsequently made such a declaration. In practice therefore around 18% of students have declared a disability. This compares with 12% for UK undergraduate programmes in the UK (HESA 2015-16)
- The average age of our students is also slightly older at 22 years (TEF metrics 36% over 21). The publication of the first set of experimental data on non-completion rates at APs indicated that, while ICMP was within benchmarks for non-completion rates, our mature students had a significantly higher non-completion rate than younger students. This is a strong example of how improved access to data and increasing understanding of our student population is enabling us to identify specific areas where we could do better and we are now in the process of developing and implementing plans targeted directly at supporting our mature students.

With a tuition fee of just £6,300 p.a. on our undergraduate degrees, combined with our commitment to high contact hours and small group sizes, extensive industry links, specialist facilities and strong graduate outcomes, we are able to provide students with an educational experience which offers exceptional value for money.

[11] Charging in some way for auditions is relatively common practice across the sector.
[12] For detail of how we support our disadvantaged students see 'Student Outcomes' section.

2. TEACHING QUALITY

ICMP's approach to learning, teaching and assessment (LTA) is driven by our LTA strategy and the LTA Committee that owns it. This ambitious strategy was launched in 2016 as a vehicle for addressing weakness identified by our first year of NSS data. We recognise that we have more to do, especially in the areas of perceived challenge and intellectual stimulation for students. However following the launch and implementation of this strategy, significant positive progress is already being made with regard to our teaching quality, with +11% on question 1a; +22% on question 1b and +13% on question 1d of the NSS achieved between 2016 and 2017. Significant improvements are also apparent in the area of assessment and feedback with large positive changes over the same 2-year period. The reasons for these improvements include the following:

2.1. Teaching Faculty and Professional Development

Central to the quality of ICMP's teaching and learning is the constitution of our teaching faculty. A defining characteristic of the faculty is the 'dual professional' status of the majority of our tutors. We know that students value the experience of professional practitioners in the classroom[13]; of the 97 staff on our 2016-17 faculty 92% are in fractional or hourly paid posts,[14] allowing their work as educators to co-exist with their work in industry. It is also important, in the context of our mission statement, to have an inspirational presence in the classroom; so while all of our tutors are valued, we have a number of 'notable' individuals such as Jon Shone (bass player and Musical Director for One Direction), Bill Laurence (keyboardist for Grammy Award winning band, Snarky Puppy), Maurizio Malagnini (film and television music composer) and Audrey Riley (arranger, composer and cellist who has collaborated with Coldplay, Muse and Spandau Ballet).

"'The teachers are great. The fact they all have relevant industry experience means you are getting more than just music tuition, you're learning about the business; they're legends" (Elena Tonra, songwriting graduate and founder member of successful indie band 'Daughter')

The dual professional status of our tutors is attested by their credibility as educators. At the start of the academic year 2016-17, 22% of faculty were Fellows or Senior Fellow of the HEA. There is an ongoing programme of support for applications, prioritising those in substantive or programme leader roles (of whom 88% are now accredited by the HEA). 55% of the faculty have a teaching qualification, which compares well with the average of 45% for the performing arts across the HE sector.[15] 56% of the faculty also hold a post-graduate qualification. ICMP's investment in its teaching faculty was further demonstrated in 16-17 by funding a cohort of 14 tutors through UEL's Post-Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, with HEA accreditation built in. A similar cohort of HEA accreditation is in plan for academic year 17-18. ICMP also encourages tutors to engage in additional professional activity, including external examining and review of other institutions, attendance at conferences, seminars and engagement in professional practice, research and scholarly practice. This continued investment in teaching faculty CPD is embedded at the core of the new LTA strategy.

"Very strong team of staff [on the Music Business programme] with a very good balance of industrial experience and commitment to excellence in HE, including an emphasis on achieving FHEA accreditation…The course leadership provides an excellent support framework for staff and students with a very strong sense of the need to retain industrial relevance for today's music industry as well as high academic standards." Robert Burke, External Examiner

QAA good practice point: "the high levels of support for [CPD]". QAA HER 2015

[13] See HEPI Student Academic Experience Surveys 2016 and 2017.
[14] This does not impact on continuity; these contracts service the needs of the tutors well (they need flexibility in their careers); around 60% of hourly paid staff and over 90% of the core education team have been with us more than 2 years.
[15] HESA/HEA (2016) *Report to HEFCE on Research and Data Analysis on Academic Teaching Qualifications.* HEFCE.

2.2. Monitoring and reward of teaching quality

Embedded within the LTA Strategy are the 'Attributes of the ICMP Teacher',[16] an institutionally-agreed set of characteristics drawn up through consultation with students and faculty. These attributes are mapped to the HEA Professional Standards Framework and used as the key vehicle for the recruitment, induction, training and monitoring of teaching standards. Potential recruits are broadly assessed against the Attributes at the point of interview and selection, and this assessment informs the initial induction and support plan drawn up for the individual.

The attributes break down into a subset of performance indicators, and all tutors are required to demonstrate competence against these through the annual observation of teaching and learning (OTL) scheme. This scheme assesses the quality of teaching and learning against the performance indicators allowing us to simultaneously identify areas of strength and where a tutor may demonstrate a deficit in a particular area. Areas of strength are recorded on a central 'Experts Directory' of tutor skills and best practice. Any identified skills deficit triggers our parallel Peer Observation process. This process allows us to quickly match faculty expertise with tutor deficit and, through a personalised plan of peer observation and guidance, support tutors in developing competence against the performance indicators. Improvement against identified deficit then forms the focus of the next OTL, thus closing the loop or, in cases where improvement is not sufficiently apparent, informing performance management measures whereby a robust programme of targets and OTLs will be drawn up by the line manager.

This approach enables us to intervene early where there is negative student feedback on teaching quality. Comprehensive performance appraisal processes and regular reviews of salary and reward enable us to connect excellent teaching outcomes with personal reward across the team. We believe the improvements shown through recent NSS data is at least in part attributable to the piloting of the *Attributes* as a tool in faculty recruitment and as a frame for the OTL scheme, and the feedback tutors have received as a result. NSS analysis comparing 2015/16 with 2016/17 shows a 12-point year on year gain to 88% of students reporting that '*the tutors are good at explaining things'* and a 22-point year on year gain to 83% of students reporting that '*the tutors have made the subject interesting'.*

"The teachers are legends! They are motivating, challenging, supportive, and passionate in what they do and how they teach" (Pablo Tato, ICMP Student)

2.3. Class size and contact hours

It is our policy to maintain small class sizes and high contact hours, which underpin our ability to ensure a personalised experience for our students. 50% of total class time is delivered in groups of no more than 15 students; 28% in groups of 15-30; only 12% in large groups of up to 60; and 10% is delivered as one to one instrumental tuition and project supervision. Contact hours vary slightly between programmes and semesters, but students are typically timetabled for 16 hours per week at level 4, 14 hours at level 5, and 12 hours at level 6. This compares with an average for the sector of 13 hours per week.[17]

2.4. Course design

The design of ICMP courses is in based on essential principles of scaffolding the students' academic, knowledge and skills development. Many of our students do not naturally identify as 'academic' upon enrolment. This misconception is challenged from the start of their studies through a combination of the tutorial curriculum content and a progressive series of common modules embedded across our programmes.[18] These modules are in part built upon UEL's Skills

[16] Attributes include: Industry credibility, specialist knowledge/skills; commitment; scholarly approach; practice-based and research-informed teaching; sound pedagogic knowledge.
[17] See HEPI Student Academic Experience Surveys 2016 and 2017.
[18] The common modules apply only to those programme validated by UEL.

Curriculum,[19] and partly upon our own recognition of the knowledge, understanding and skills that aid students in achieving their full potential. The common modules form the heart of the UEL validated programmes, ensuring all students are subject to a core curriculum that provides the requisite academic rigour and stretch around which the programme-specific content is designed. We consider the outcomes in terms of degree classification (see section 4.2 below) and ultimately employability demonstrate the success in the application of these principles.

2.5. Masterclasses

ICMP has a long tradition of holding masterclasses, clinics and workshops with inspirational musicians, performers, artists and music entrepreneurs. During semester time these take place most weeks with up to 25 scheduled each academic year, providing opportunities to learn from those who have achieved success and forming an invaluable complement to the students' study. The masterclasses are carefully curated to ensure that that they are relevant to programmes of study and are well attended, with around 500 students per year accessing them. Recent masterclasses include Chad Smith (Red Hot Chilli Peppers), Luke Patterson (Clean Bandit), Howard Jones, Guthrie Govan, Paul Turner & Rob Harris (Jamiroquai). Masterclass tutors will occasionally, if appropriate, be incorporated in the regular teaching faculty or as 'visiting faculty'. Feedback from these events is gathered and analysed to monitor their impact. Data collated over the last 3 years shows 96% of attendees find them useful; 93% report that the content impacted on specific subject knowledge; and 98% report that they are relevant to their programme of study.

"Inspirational! The in-depth advice he gave opened my eyes to a different perspective on my instrument". (Student feedback following Guthrie Govan masterclass)

2.6. Assessment and feedback

The 2015-16 NSS data reported poor student satisfaction in relation to assessment and feedback. This triggered a review of the relevant protocols and processes, in consultation with students predominantly conducted through a series of programme specific student focus groups. The review resulted in the phased launch of a new common assessment framework across all programmes that includes greater guidance for students at the briefing stage of assessment; greater clarity in the assessment criteria and how they link to module outcomes; a newly designed 'grading grid' that helps students understand their performance against module outcomes; a newly designed feedback pro-forma that better guides tutors in providing scaffolding feedback that supports students' continuing improvement; and newly designed moderation processes that ensure high quality feedback is helping the students make progress.

The improvements made to assessment practice are evident in the 2016-17 NSS outcomes (as well as our internal module satisfaction data) with a 25 point increase of students reporting that marking and assessment has been fair.

"The assessment methods are varied and enable different students with different strengths to succeed … the formative assessments appeared to be helpful for students to understand how they can develop their thinking, and where formative mid-year assessments were mapped against the summative end-of-year assessments in the samples, they always led to a higher mark." (Dr Jennie Henley, External Examiner)

"ICMP carries out its assessment with rigour and integrity. It ensures students' understanding of the assessment process by placing assessment statements in module specifications and, as students confirmed, by publishing them on the virtual learning environment. Staff also engage in discussion with students early in module sessions to clarify students' understanding of specific module assessments. Students' academic writing practices are developed through software, including online tools for plagiarism detection." QAA EO 2016

[19] UEL's Skills Curriculum consists of learning outcomes for three skillsets: learning, professional, and research skills.

2.7. Student Engagement

The views, ideas and voice of our student community are highly valued at ICMP. Students are valued as members of the academic community on a par with faculty and are expected to make meaningful contributions to our institutional development and strategic direction.

"...there is a balance between tutor and student-led taught content that is a strength throughout the programme." Professor Andrew West, External Examiner

We have a well-developed system of student representation with an elected Student President and Vice-President, both of whom meet with a member of the senior management team (usually the Dean of Academic Studies or the Chief Executive) on a monthly basis. These meetings enable us to respond quickly to student feedback. For example we were recently able to:

- Revise our process for managing rare instances of last-minute tutor absence
- Lengthen sessions for a Creative Process module
- Ringfence a 'quiet study' space for Music Business students during assessment periods
- Invest in additional library stock, improve shelf-space and increase the number of computer workstations in the Learning Resource Centre
- Install bass amps in every live room and classroom
- Install additional water coolers in student areas
- Invest in various synth hardware, guitar pedals, profile amp, and microphones

The Student President chairs the Student Senate, comprising representatives from every year and every strand of every programme. Students also have representation on key committees including Programme Committees, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee, and the Academic Board. Feedback from students is also captured and managed through a recently revised and re-launched student voice mechanism branded as '*Your Voice, Your ICMP'.* This is an upgrade of our previous 'You Said We Did' campaign, which was extremely successful, delivering such improvements and guiding investment into the learning environment as detailed in the next section of this submission. Meaningful developments to programme design and content have also been instigated by student feedback. Recent examples include:

- Minor and major amendment to modules that have resulted in improving internal module satisfaction data, including the removal/modification of assessment elements that failed to sufficiently engage students and changes to module delivery hours to better reflect the mode and quantity of teaching students need to meet the desired outcomes
- Investment in additional 1:1 tutorials for modules requiring high levels of independent study
- Improvements made to the content and delivery of a level 6 Instrumental and Vocal Teaching module, which saw internal module satisfaction data jump from 34% to 89%, and led to the validation of a replacement level 6 Music in Education module which is maintaining the high levels of satisfaction.
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"The Institute places a high priority on the involvement of students in quality assurance and enhancement and supports this with a wide range of policies and practices. Its strategic plan 'places students at the heart of everything it does." QAA HER 2015

"Student involvement in quality assurance and enhancement is encouraged through student representation on Institute committees, feedback procedures and engagement with programme leaders and tutors. This commitment is supported by comprehensive handbooks, regular committee and programme meetings, the 'You Said, We Did' campaign and newsletters produced by the Student President." QAA HER 2015

3. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

3.1. Specialist facilities

The development of our facilities is a significant area of focus for us - over the last 4 years we have invested around £1.4mns in specialist music equipment and infrastructure, both physical and digital, which equates to around 7% of ICMP turnover during the period. While recognising that there is more we can achieve, particularly in the areas of advice, guidance and student contact, we are proud of the recent improvements seen with regard to the ICMP learning environment, which bears testimony to our feedback-driven approach to this crucial area of our provision. We have seen significant improvements in NSS scores in the area of academic support and ongoing improvements in continuation rates and attainment.

Our learning environment is designed to support and enhance students' learning, providing extensive opportunity for structured and independent development, research and experimentation. Our approach is as follows:

- Aligning with the needs of the teaching curriculum. ICMP provides an appropriate range of facilities encompassing performance studios, recording studios, production facilities, music technology suites, lecture and teaching rooms and specialist music equipment.
- Practical relevance to the 'real world' of the music industry. Throughout our facilities students are able to access equipment from industry-standard brands, such as Fender, Marshall, Yamaha and Roland, and leading music related software such as Pro Tools, Ableton and Logic Pro X. This means that students are learning and developing in an environment that mirrors, and prepares them for, the real world of the music industry
- Student need. Many do not have personal access to equipment and practice facilities.[20] For this reason we have in the last 2 years extended our opening hours, and made all rooms available to students free of charge 7 days per week for personal practice. Our LRC includes personal working spaces, each with an iMac and high speed internet access for private study, and we make available a wide range of learning resources online for independent research and study. We house all core texts on site as well as an extensive range of journals and industry magazines. Our UEL students also have access to our partner's library, both physically but also to the extensive digital and archival collections.

"Students appreciate the physical resources provided to support their studies….The review team concludes that the range of mechanisms which enable an effective response to enhancing learning resources for students is good practice." QAA HER 2015

Many of the investments made in our learning environment have been in direct response to student needs and feedback.[21] Some examples from the period 2015-2017 include:

- Installation of 5 rehearsal booths in one of our campus buildings
- Moving the location of the student Helpdesk to provide improved access and support
- Upgrading of VLE from 'Moodle' to 'Canvas' and addition of software to improve timetabling
- Development of an online room booking system for practice room booking
- Impovements in soundproofing and installation of digital sound meters
- Installation of 'Pro-Tools' and 'Logic X' software across IT suites
- Increase in general provision of computers available for student use
- Increased bandwidth and Wifi speeds from 200Mb to 1Gb
- Introduction of a barcode system to facilitate lending of equipment
- Introduction of 'healthy eating' vending machines options

[20] Student feedback consistently requests access to facilities for private practice.
[21] Feedback from a range of sources including student senate, NSS, module feedback forms, student President meetings etc.

The impact of our responses to student feedback on resources can be seen in the QAA's 2015 HER report and in the impressive improvements in NSS responses to questions 5b (IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well) and 5c (I have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g. equipment, facilities, software, collections) when I needed to) which rose between 2015/16 and 2016/17 from 66% to 72% and 59% to 79% respectively.

"The resources are extremely well arranged for synchronous learning purposes." Professor Andrew West, External Examiner

3.2. The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

In addition to the physical environment we have been developing our VLE to support learner needs, making improvements such as changing internet supplier and upgrading bandwidth into the buildings, and providing wifi throughout our buildings for student and staff usage. ICMP's original VLE was a Moodle system with Mahara used to manage portfolio work. Our e-learning team promoted and developed the use of this system, which resulted in significant increase in use over its life-cycle. Surveys conducted in 2016-17 indicated student views increased by 54% and logins by 50% against previous year.

However, module evaluations conducted in 2015-16 indicated student frustration with the complexity and general lack of 'user friendliness' of Moodle. In April 2017, we therefore conducted a trial using 'Canvas' as an alternative. Internal surveys indicated both staff and students significantly preferred this system so we migrated the VLE to Canvas for the start of the current academic year. This has been a popular change with 77% of students rating Canvas positively, and 75% stating that tutors effectively embed Canvas into their learning.

3.3. Learning Support

In recent years, it has become clear that students need additional support to ensure they reach their potential.

	AY 14-15	AY 15-16	AY 16-17
Students requesting counselling	6	20	27
Disability including mental health and SPLDs	104	91	133
Disability % of total student population	12%	11%	14%

To ensure that we continue to improve outcomes for all of our students, and especially those who are disadvantaged in some way, we have developed and invested significantly in a range of support mechanisms, resources and activities such as:

3.3.1. Wellbeing and disability support

We have committed ourselves to ensuring equality of access and a diverse student community[22] and providing support to ensure that all students reach their learning potential and achieve success on an appropriate course of study. Our 'Disability and Wellbeing' team provides information and guidance on such subjects as disability and dyslexia; assistance with the DSA application process; emotional and psychological difficulties; and short-term counselling sessions with a mental health professional which are now are available to students free of charge. Additionally, more general wellbeing awareness initiatives on how to stay healthy and maximise their potential and performance wellness, which provides guidance on managing stage fright and looking after their health as a musician, are now implemented throughout the year.

We have almost doubled the number of students who can access free counselling and are trialling sessions via Skype in order to provide more flexibility, increase accessibility and reduce waiting times. We have invested in 'Big White Wall', the digital mental health and

[22] For further details see section 1.4 'Our Student Community'.

wellbeing community offering 24/7 access to safe, anonymous online support mediated by counsellors 365 days a year. This service is free to all students and staff. 'Student resilience' sessions have been delivered to all level 4 students through the tutorial scheme. This work is clearly having an impact, with the percentage of disabled students withdrawing from study having declined from 17% to 13% between 2015/16 and 2016/17 and successful completion of a course as a percentage of final year disabled population increasing from 68% to 100% over the same period.[23]

3.3.2. A comprehensive group tutorial system for all students.

The 2015-16 NSS data flagged a number of areas for our attention in relation to the academic support students received, their management of assessment tasks and load, and their understanding of assessment practices and feedback. Additionally, a convened 'Withdrawals Working Group' identified patterns of student withdrawal that could potentially be reduced with earlier and more targeted intervention. A series of Student Focus Groups were conducted by the Dean with a representative sample of students across all years of all programmes in which the notion of regular 'non-programme' time with Programme Leaders and Tutors was a recurring theme. Furthermore, the focus groups allowed us to identify the specific challenges students face and, crucially, the specific timings of these challenges, and this intelligence has been used by the team to design a fit-for-purpose tutorial programme.

The tutorial curriculum has now been designed to help students navigate their way through their respective programme, with a package of academic support and guidance underpinned by the focus group analysis of the key transitions and challenges students face throughout the entirety of the student journey. These include induction and orientation, managing workload and assessment, preparing for assessment activity, understanding and exploiting feedback, accessing digital learning resources, academic writing and study skills, managing the transition between levels, final year assessment pressures, employability and careers, building resilience, and the subtler transitions between modes of learning and levels of criticality. More sophisticated attendance monitoring and reporting has been developed alongside the tutorial programme allowing tutors to make quicker interventions as necessary. It has also allowed us to better integrate the existing work of the Hub within timetabled activity, and to forge better links between academic, personal and professional development.

The first iteration of the programme, launched in 2017-18, with 603 of students taking part, is now entering its first cycle of evaluation. Early indicators show improvements in module evaluation data, with up to 15-point gains in those modules that previously caused students most concern in relation to assessment. Early data on withdrawal is also significantly reduced with a 50% drop in withdrawals at the same point in the previous year.

3.4. Research and scholarly practice

As an AP we do not currently have access to funding through the UK research councils. However, this has not prevented us from engaging in research and developing a research active culture and community, especially in areas of research that have a direct impact on teaching quality and the student experience at ICMP. This is evident in our publication record, which is focussed around popular music pedagogy[24], and in our recent financial sponsorship and contributions to the first issue of the Journal of Popular Music Education (Intellect).

A feature of ICMP's research strategy is the engagement of students in our research culture. 80% of our MA Songwriting students were in attendance and participating in papers and

[23] ICMP HESA AP student return, students who described themselves as disabled on entry.

[24] Recent affiliated publications include: Smith, G.D., Moir, Z., Brenan, M. Rambarrab, S. & Lirkman, P. (eds.) (2016) *The Routledge Research Companion to Popular Music Education*. Abingdon: Routledge. Froelich, H.C. & Smith, G.D. (2016) *Sociology of Music Teachers: Practical Applications*, 2nd edition. New York, NY: Routledge. Mantie, R. & Smith, G.D. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

discussion at our inaugural Songwriting Education Conference in 2017. The conference brought together the international songwriting education community to share ideas in and approaches to songwriting teaching and learning. Delegates included highly respected professionals from Belmont University in Nashville, Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts and Leeds College of Music, and Professor Pat Pattison of Berklee College as Keynote Speaker. Similarly, our MMus and MA students attended the three-day 10th International Symposium on the Sociology of Music Education, hosted by ICMP in 2017. This was an event with significant international reach, drawing together academics from around the world to discuss issues, practices and perspectives that focus around connecting music learning and other music-related experiences with the lives, values, identities and communities of those involved.

Following our 2017 conference season a special post-graduate symposium was convened specifically to create a space in which post-graduate students could dissect and reflect on the conference experiences and, crucially, make the important links with their own final projects and dissertations. Other recent research and scholarly activity includes hosting, in partnership with The Art of Management and Organisation, an international research conference entitled 'Creativities, Musicalities, Entrepreneurships'; the publication of research project findings in relation to music with children with special needs[25]; and securing funding from the Independent Venues Week & Music Venues Trust (using a grant from Arts Council England) to research the experiences of independent music venue owners.[26]

3.5. Personalised learning

A personalised approach to supporting students is one of our core principles. On the songwriting degree, for instance, students receive individual and personalised feedback on their developing portfolio of songs on a weekly basis. On the Music Business course students are required to make a pitch for their individual business plans, many of which are brought to fruition in the real world following graduation. Level 6 modules such as Dissertation, Professional Project, Performance Project and Recorded Project all require students to design a project based around their own aspirations, creative identity and professional development, and all utilise one-to-one supervision and guidance. At Master's level, students are able to choose the one-to-one instrumental tutor they believe is most appropriate to their specific development needs.

The tutorial programme gives students weekly access to tutors and it is common practice for the academic team to offer additional drop-in or sign-up tutorials. Programme Leaders allocate designated hours every week for students to book additional tutorial time. Internal module evaluation and data, including qualitative comments, are testament to the value students attach to our personalised approaches.[27] Alongside the academic portfolio, the Hub provides a generous offer of bespoke advice and support to every student, working closely with them to create personalised career development plans contextualised to their study. Employability sessions are embedded within all undergraduate programmes, complemented by all students being given the opportunity to engage individually with the Hub throughout the course of their study, and even after they graduate through one-to-one development meetings.

4. STUDENT OUTCOMES AND LEARNING GAIN

Ultimately, everything we do is about maximising student outcomes in terms of their employability or transition to further study. We have previously stated how our DLHE outcomes are demonstrating how we are succeeding in this regard, particularly in relation to highly skilled employment or further study. Though we are always focused on making further improvements, we reflect here on how these outcomes are being achieved.

[25] Harris, T. (ed.) (2016) *Valuing Music in Special Needs Settings.* Lincoln: soundLINCS.
[26] Music Venue Trust (2015) *Understanding Small Music Venues.* Music Venue Trust.
[27] Supporting evidence available on request.

4.1. Retention

Retention rates continue to improve, with 87% of students retained or having completed studies in year from the 2016/17 cohort. This tallies with the ICMP completion rate (students who started in 2015-16 and are still with us in subsequent year) at 86%, close to benchmark and within the levels of statistical significance in terms of TEF. Crucially, retention and success of particularly disadvantaged students, such as our large contingent of disabled, continues to improve.

We continue to focus on student retention and continuation, not least through monitoring real-time data on student engagement via the Quercus system which allows staff to intervene earlier. Programme-specific actions are agreed where there is evidence of abnormal levels of student non-completion. Additionally, reforms noted in sections 2 and 3, above, are intended to positively impact on retention and continuation rates. Overall, student withdrawals have reduced from 12% in 2015/16 to 8% in 2016/17, suggesting that ICMP's initiatives to improve retention and the student experience noted in this submission are achieving a significant impact.

"[ICMP] is making progress in addressing student retention issues, through careful monitoring of student data, the provision of pastoral support and extracurricular activities... The Institute also now monitors attendance rates weekly to identify disengagement, so that corrective action can be put in place before withdrawal." QAA EO 2017

4.2. Achievement and Success

Along with clear improvements in employability and student retention, all of the actions and activities detailed in this submission have demonstrable impact on academic achievement and success. For example, we have improved attainment in terms of 'good honours' results with 44% of graduates now achieving a first class honours degree in 2016/17 compared with 23% in 2014/15. We also see the numbers of lower second class honours and pass results reducing.[28]

Classification[29]	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
First class honours	23%	25%	44%
Upper second class honours	51%	50%	39%
Lower second class honours	25%	14%	11%
Third class honours	2%	2%	1%
Pass	n/a	9%	5%

4.3. Employability[30]

We have already commented on the career and employability benefits of ICMP's London location, extensive range of industry contacts and connectivity, our mix of teaching professionals and industry practitioners on our faculty and our industry-standard learning environment. And we know from our DLHE outcomes that our approach is working in what is a complex and highly competitive sector. This section provides detail on our the way we approach employability.

'…ICMP is a goldmine of talent. On every occasion I've been, I have left with ideas, brilliant songs and inspiration... ICMP is absolutely ready to facilitate and prepare students for bigger things and I truly believe it sets the bar for British Music Schools nationwide.' (Pete Simmons, A&R at Universal Music Publishing)

[28] HESA AP Return 2014-17.

[29] ICMP is not the awarding body; therefore ICMP has no control over the classification of awards.

[30] While the metric for employment and further study has no negative flags, it is in the bottom 10% of absolute performance. We have discussed this anomaly with HEFCE and they have agreed that this is an issue in the new TEF year 3 process which will affect many specialist providers in the creative arts sector. We have been informed that this flaw was discussed with the DfE however the decision was taken to progress with Year 3 TEF with the absolute 10% indicator. We would ask panel members to disregard the new absolute indicator when forming an initial hypothesis.

4.3.1. Our London location

London is at the heart of the global music industry, defining popular culture and offering unparalleled opportunities to make the right connections. In 2016, London was the third busiest city in the world for live music, with a total of 19,940 live music events, second only to New York and Los Angeles. And the city's live music scene generated over £1billion in 2016, demonstrating that London is truly where the opportunities exist for musicians, artists and music entrepreneurs. All of this is extremely inspirational to students, and we proactively take advantage of our location to facilitate direct access for students during their courses to a wide range of opportunities for performance, work experience and career development.

4.3.2. Industry contacts, connectivity and our careers service

Run by a team of music industry professionals and experienced careers counsellors, the ICMP 'Hub' supports students in taking their first steps towards a career in the music industry. Each year the Hub organises at least 4 interactive industry panels for students featuring industry professionals; a comprehensive Careers Day event featuring workshops and engagement with industry professionals and representatives such as Warner/Chappell Music, Kilimanjaro and Killing Moon Records; and a 'Speed Networking' event providing the opportunity for students to meet and get direct feedback from industry professionals (recent guests have included representatives of Polydor and Warner Chappell fo example); and facilitates a wide range of A&R sessions with representatives of major and 'indie' labels.

ICMP also hosts auditions for such industry names as Will Joseph Cook (Atlantic Records), The Voice and X Factor. Further recent invitees include the President of Island Records, the President of Sony Music, the Co-President of Columbia Records, and the President of Music at Virgin EMI to name but a few. A further example of our proactive approach to employability is the Hub's 'Job Directory and Performance Opportunities' listings which resource and promote several hundred job opportunities annually.

QAA good practice point: "The breadth of engagements with the music industry that improve the quality of student learning opportunities" QAA HER 2015

'Students confirmed the activities arranged and support provided through 'The Hub' complement and improve their learning and employment opportunities..The team considers the development of 'The Hub'…to be good practice.' QAA HER 2015

"The Hub and its success in enhancing employability opportunities for students as shown in the [DLHE] statistics available." UEL commendation, Collaborative Review 2017

4.3.3. Music Industry Advisory Panel

We ensure that the 'voice' of the music industry is more formally heard through our 'Music Industry Advisory Panel' (MIAP) which advises the Academic Board. This panel is composed of a wide-ranging mix of industry professionals, education professionals and careers specialists, including Mike Smith, Managing Director at Warner Chappell; James Endeacott, Managing Director at 1965 Records; and Ian Ramage, an experienced Music Business educator and industry professional. The MIAP advises ICMP on the ongoing relevance of our course portfolio, effectively providing an 'employer' input to ensure we are focused on providing the skills and knowledge that are likely to be appreciated by those who engage with our students and lead to their success in the real world of the music industry post-graduation.

The Institute makes excellent use of a range of external music industry professionals, sector best practice guidance, industry liaison, and the employment of tutors to enhance the student learning experience and ensure that the curriculum is current and valid. Music industry professionals are generous in their support of the Institute…" QAA HER 2015

4.3.4. Embedding employability skills in the curriculum

The Hub delivers a series of employability sessions to all degree-level and HNC students, embedded in the curriculum as part of the new tutorial scheme. These interactive sessions have been designed to complement course aims by helping students to contextualise their studies within their professional development through self-reflection and analysis of contemporary examples their own unique professional 'brand'. Employability skills have also been embedded in MMus classes on request. The Hub team has additionally been advising on 'A&R' content for for the Songwriting degree as well as attending classes to give professional A&R consultation and feedback on artists' work.

Another example of embedding employability and career development is the Music Business degree's partnership, launched 2016/17, with Nat West Bank's Business Accelerator, E Spark. This provides support (in the form of expertise, resources and finance) and is associated with the Level 6 'Major Business Project' module. Business students receive coaching at E Spark and will have opportunity to pitch their business initiatives to the bank at their headquarters in central London. This is a unique inside track opportunity to access backing for their business ideas. The Music Business degree also provides students with access in-class to industry 'names' and specialists from industry-relevant organisations such as Spotify, Rough Trade, Live Nation, PRS for Music and many more.

"...one of the strengths of [the BA (Hons) Music Business course] is its industry connectivity. Work-based learning in the shape of the Creative Event Management (FHEQ5) and Major Project (FHEQ6) require entrepreneurial skill and professional outputs, delivered high standards across a range of music related disciplines." Robert Burke, External Examiner

4.3.5. Tileyard Studios

Tileyard Studios is the largest professional music community in the UK, with more than 70 state of the art music studios and 100 businesses that provide a home to a wide spectrum of companies working in music, film, television, fashion and creative new tech sectors. Artists and companies at Tileyard include Mark Ronson, Tynchy Stryder, The Prodigy, and Lily Allen. ICMP's exclusive partnership with Tileyard provides our students with unique opportunities to study in and engage with an immersive industry environment, building their networks amongst some of the music industry's biggest names. It connects the real world of the music industry directly to our educational provision, providing a range of bespoke opportunities for the development of their careers. These opportunities include major project workshops with Tileyard Music A&R; student access to regular Tileyard events including networking and performance opportunities; professional e-mentoring schemes; bespoke end-of-year live showcase events held at Tileyard; and access to state of the art studios, technology, writing rooms and other learning facilities.

From 'Student Rep' 3rd year report: "Students really enjoying having Tileyard available to them – it provides brilliant networking opportunities and has had a positive effect on student engagement."