Evidencing Transferable Skills in Undergraduate Music Education

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The notion of transferable skills in Higher Education has been well documented and continues to be an important feature in a student's development during an undergraduate course. Certain subject areas have conducted their own research into the notion of transferable skills within their courses, in addition to more general approaches to transferable skills across subject areas, such as that of Assiter[1].

1.2 The issue of transferable skills and music degrees *per se*, has been but briefly addressed. It is, however, discussed in terms of employability, or under the umbrella term of 'performing arts'. Articles from Brown[2] and Pearce[3] cover some aspects of both music and non-subject-specific skills, but whilst the focus of these articles is on the range of music skills, there is a growing need to highlight the non-subject-specific skills or, more specifically, the *transferable* skills that are acquired in a music degree and are necessary for post-university employment.

1.3 Transferable skills are widely recognised as a vital component of any degree and necessary for future employment. Music students leave university with a broad range of transferable skills, many of which may not be obvious to future employers. By presenting Higher Education music courses in terms of their ability to offer potential employability, partly through the acquisition of transferable skills, music academics help to validate music's place within the academy, alongside other discipline areas. Acknowledging the importance of the transferable skills developed through music degree courses is one initiative that can be employed to ensure that the value and applicability of such programmes is fully recognised by students, government and funding bodies.

2. THE PROJECT

2.1 In late 2007, we ran a three-month project on behalf of the National Association for Music in Higher Education, and are grateful to PALATINE, the Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Dance, Drama and Music, for providing the necessary funding. This project had three initial aims:
  - to ascertain which transferable skills are currently being developed through music undergraduate programmes;
  - to identify which transferable skills academic staff regard as being important for music graduates in their post-university careers;
  - to determine the available, and collectable, evidence that such skills were being acquired.

2.2 We collected information through four specific sources:

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[1] Assiter, A. *Transferable Skills in Higher Education* (London: Kogan Place, 1995).
[2] Brown, R. 'Enhancing Student Employability?: Current practice and student experiences in HE performing arts', *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 6, 28 (2007), 28-49.
[3] Pearce, A. 'Preparing Music Undergraduates for Work: Embedding Opportunities for the Development of Transferable Skills in the Music Curriculum', in Jennifer Barnes and Georgina Holt (eds) *Making Music Work* (London: Royal College of Music, 2000) pp. 57–72.

- responses to an online questionnaire made available to NAMHE departmental representatives;
- a full literature search on the issue of transferable skills;
- material made available on HE Music Department websites;
- informal discussion with a small number of interested academics.

2.3 On the positive side, there is literature available from which we were able to draw various conclusions. In addition, the questionnaire responses provided an indication of certain perceptions, and also highlighted particular concerns with the very concept of transferable skills. On the negative side, a fairly poor response rate for the questionnaire (under 10%), and the reluctance we encountered, in approaching some academics, to discuss and demonstrate the acquisition of transferable skills, has meant that the project aims have not been entirely met.

3. DEFINING TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

3.1 How should transferable skills be defined? Transferable skills have been subject to a variety of definitions, terms and range of lists and models. The *Transferable Skills Project*, for instance, defined transferable skills to be "skills developed in one situation which can be transferred to another situation".[4] Manchester University's website defines transferable skills as "skills developed through experience, which can be used in the workplace".[5] While the specific skills are often individually listed or grouped into key areas, the very notion of transferability is key in terms of suggesting the link between undergraduate study and post-university employment.

3.2 The lack of standardisation of the term has resulted in the use of alternative labels such as 'core skills' 'personal skills', 'generic skills', 'soft skills' and 'key skills' equally to refer to the notion of non-subject-specific skills. Similarly, lists of specific transferable skills that are deemed important vary immensely. An important starting-point is represented by the Dearing Committee's identification of four skills that they considered to be important to students post-university:
- communication skills;
- numeracy;
- the use of information technology;
- learning how to learn.[6]

This short list has since been expanded to cover a wide range of skills considered to be transferable.

3.3 With pressure to promote transferable skills in HE courses, employers, careers agencies, government bodies and individual HE institutions provide their own individual lists of transferable skills. These lists vary across the board and can overlap. For example, graduate recruiters[7] list these transferable skills as important:
- communication;
- teamwork;
- leadership;

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[4] Curry, P., Sherry, R. and Tunney, O. 'What Transferable Skills do Employers Look for in Third-Level Graduates?' (2003) accessed at www.skillsproject.tcd.ie/reports.htm on 03/05/2007.
[5] StudentNet 'Transferable Skills', http://www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk/careers/improveyourjobprospects/transferableskills/ on 29/10/2007.
[6] Dearing, R. *Higher Education in the Learning Society - Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education* (London: NCIHE, 1997).
[7] According to www.prospects.ac.uk accessed on 12/5/2007.

- initiative;
- problem solving;
- flexibility/adaptability;
- self-awareness;
- commitment/motivation;
- interpersonal skills;
- numeracy.

3.4 The issue of employability and the pressure to equip students with the necessary skills for future employment highlight the requirement to make students aware of transferable skills developed during their course. Mantz Yorke comments: "the curricular process may *facilitate* the development of prerequisites appropriate to employment, but does not guarantee it."[8] While transferable skills are linked to potential employability, the skills developed are not exclusive to employment and are important in other aspects of work and life. However, for the purposes of this project, the main focus was on the challenge faced in specifying transferable skills within a music degree and the wider challenge of creating employable graduates.

4. IDENTIFYING TRANSFERABLE SKILLS IN MUSIC

4.1 The project questionnaire was devised with the aim of providing a potential list of the various transferable skills acquired during a music degree and to collate evidence that demonstrated these skills. The first section of the questionnaire was used to determine a list of which transferable skills are developed during a degree course and to rate, using a Likert scale, the importance of 18 individual transferable skills to a student's career post university. The respondents were then asked what evidence could be provided for the acquisition of these various skills in their department. There were also a small number of open-ended questions relating to transferable skills and the employability of music graduates. The questionnaire was distributed via e-mail to all NAMHE representatives of music departments in Higher Education institutions.

4.2 The majority of reports on transferable skills (such reports do not address music *per se*) focus on constructions of lists of specific skills that are acquired through courses. Although our approach may be considered as creating yet another list of transferable skills, the value of compiling such a list offers future employers the opportunity to observe the potential of music students as employees, particularly in careers outside music, widening the employability potential of the graduate. The results of the questionnaire responses highlighted the disparity of the list of skills, varying from course to course. This indeed reflects the variety of music degrees, which encompass and comprise modules such as performance-based, composition, music technology, music management.

4.3 Table 1 below lists the range of transferable skills that were identified by the respondents as being developed during a music degree. The list encompasses more skills than previously identified by recruiters or government agencies, or indeed the transferable skills listed on music department websites as forming part of programme outcomes.

Table 1: list of transferable skills developed during music degree

Analytical skills
Application of existing knowledge

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[8] Yorke, M. 'Employability in higher education: what it is – what it is not', *Learning and Employability Series 1* (York: LTSN, 2004), p. 6.

Articulate expression
Awareness of cultural differences
Career Planning
Confidence
Communication: Written and Oral
Creativity
Critical thinking
Decision making
Design and visual awareness
Engagement with the unfamiliar
Entrepreneurism
Etiquette and conventions
Evaluation skills
Independent learning
IT skills
Lateral thinking
Leadership
Listening skills
Negotiation
Numeracy
Organisation and planning
Problem solving
Professional ethics
Research skills
Reviewing progress
Self-awareness
Self-expression
Self-management
Self-motivation
Study skills
Team work
Time management and prioritisation

This demonstrates that academic staff are not only aware of the range of skills developed during the music degree but also have considered what skills are desirable to employers. The BMus Music Technology degree course at the University of Edinburgh highlights ways in which a range of transferable skills can be developed through various aspects of the degree course. This is made clear through the programme specification on the university website.

> 'Interaction with musical material demands the ability to assimilate and synthesise extremely complex information. It also encourages the ability to plan, implement, evaluate and reflect critically on work in progress, to synthesise inputs from a variety of sources (books, scores, recordings) and to examine assumptions critically in the light of evidence.[9]

Team work and leadership skills, which featured frequently in the responses, were also mentioned in the programme specification.

> Students are customarily divided into small groups and asked to work together to produce compositional materials, scores, performances, presentations on musical works and ideas. This builds team work and leadership qualities'.[10]

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[9] www.hss.ed.ac.uk/Admin/documents/Musictech0205.pdf accessed 12/09/2007.
[10] Ibid.

4.4 Pearce identifies the skills important for music students as coming under the headings of personality attributes, skills of self-reliance, self-management and communication.[11] These skills were also identified in the responses and are considered important qualities by employers and recruiters. One skill that rarely features in other transferable skills lists but was considered to be a skill developed during a music degree is creativity. According to Kimberley Seltzer and Tom Bentley, "creativity is not a skill. It is not simply a technique that one can perform well on command".[12] However, to accept their definition that "creativity is the application of knowledge and skills in new ways to achieve a valued goal", then 'creativity' is surely beneficial to students' employability potential. It is therefore important to highlight creativity as a transferable 'outcome' of a music degree, beneficial to employers and recruiters. More importantly, music students can recognise themselves as creative learners with the ability to meet challenges successfully and make an impact, supporting the need for music degrees in this highly competitive environment. Again, this raises the issue of the definition of transferable skills (para 3.2). While it may seem straightforward to produce a list to the various transferable skills acquirable during a music degree, this does not sufficiently cover other issues such as skills proficiency and types of evidence.

5. EVIDENCE OF TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

5.1 Table 2 lists our respondents' examples of ways to provide evidence for certain of the skills identified in Table 1. Many tasks, such as rehearsing for music performances, encompass a wide range of skills, such as decision making, interpersonal communication, leadership, motivation, oral communication, teamwork and time management. The eclectic approach needed to be taken by students to succeed throughout their degree course again emphasises the value of music graduates to employers and recruiters.

Table 2: Examples of transferable skills and evidence

Transferable Skills	Evidence
Analysis skills	Analysis of music, scores
Basic IT skills	Music technology (Sibelius, notation software) word processing
Critical thinking	Musicology modules, essays, class discussion
Decision making	Preparation of performances, composition
Interpersonal communication	Groups work, presentations, ensembles rehearsals
Initiative skills	Completion of coursework, performance
Leadership	Group work, ensembles
Motivation of self/others	Group work, rehearsals
Numeracy	Composition
Oral communication	Communication in lectures, seminars, public

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[11] Pearce, pp. 57-72.
[12] Seltzer, K. and Bentley, T. *The Creative Age: Knowledge and Skills for the New Economy* (London: Demos, 1999), p. 26.

	speaking, group work, rehearsals
Presentation skills	Composition, written work,
Problem solving	'everything' essays, rehearsals
Project management	Projects, multiple assignments, concerts, rehearsals
Research skills	Writing essays, locating sources
Synthesis of information	Study skills, assignments
Team work	Creating compositions, rehearsals
Time management	Meeting deadlines for coursework, rehearsals, concerts
Written communication	Study skills, coursework feedback

5.2 One main aim of this project was secure evidence of transferable skills in music degrees. The literature raises some doubts as to what sort of evidence should be provided, and the ways in which this might be acquired, particularly when considering the embedded nature of the skills within the degree course. How should skills be extracted from within the course to produce the necessary evidence? One respondent noted that time management "can not be taught or monitored". Similarly, whilst the completion of coursework shows initiative skills, these are not normally acknowledged in any way, except perhaps on reflection in contexts such as personal development programmes (PDP), an area which will be discussed below. It could indeed be argued that the majority of transferable skills are not specifically dealt with and most are not subject to assessment or identification. The extent to which this happens, and the particular skills on which emphasis is placed, obviously vary from programme to programme. Because transferable skills are still rarely explicitly taught or assessed, they tend to appear as more embedded learning outcomes of undergraduate programmes. If they are to be made more visible not only to students, to clarify this link between studies and career, but also to prospective employers, it is necessary to find ways to document them. HE institutions feel required to promote transferable skills, and music department websites provide lists of individual transferable skills and examples of evidence (some general, some specific) that appear to demonstrate the use of the skills. Course and module descriptors tend to incorporate a list of intended course outcomes that include transferable skills. For example, the University of Cambridge exemplifies an HE institution which highlights the importance of transferable skills in music by producing a webpage that lists seven transferable skills, and identifies way in which the skills can be acquired both during the course and through extra-curricular activities. This list of skills comprises:

- intellectual skills;
- communication skills (written and oral);
- organisational skills
- interpersonal skills
- research skills
- computer literacy;
- foreign language skills.

Computer literacy, for example, is regarded as being evidenced through "word processing and music processing (dissertation); use of computers for music

composition and sound recording (seminars); use of computers for experimental and statistical purposes (lectures and seminars)".[13]

5.3 Whilst websites and course handbooks may list specific transferable skills as part of the intended outcomes of a course, these are by no means definitive lists. While certain skills can be measured or observed, such as the presentation of oral skills and the production of a written assignment, there are numerous skills which are problematic in terms of assessment or observation. As a result, it is assumed that the student is in possession of the skill. There are numerous transferable skills that are acquired through a music degree, which are dependent, amongst other things, on the opportunities for students to acquire and develop the skills, and on the issue of learner autonomy. There are, however, problems with simply listing plausible evidence. Alistair Pearce highlights certain implications for course designers when implementing explicit acknowledgments of what he describes as 'personal attributes' and 'transferable skills'. One is to ensure the "overt recognition of personal attributes and transferable skills"[14], and he suggests both implicit and explicit assessment. An example of the latter is essay writing, where the essay's content is marked, but where implicit skills, such as research skills, may also be flagged. There may be cases of additional skills being acquired and utilised, for example time management which, while integral to the music degree course, is a key skill that needs to be highlighted and made explicit to students. Although Pearce is among several who argue the need to embed transferable skills within the course, it seems the key problem lies with the extraction of the skills or, more specifically, the extent to which those skills are made explicit to the students. Indeed, much has been written regarding the problems of embedding transferable skills into established courses. However, it seems that academics are aware of particular skills required by recruiters, and the challenge lies in providing the specific evidence, for both students and their prospective employers. For those skills that are explicit and assessed, then evidence is less of a problem. For certain skills (which may or may not be embedded) which are not subject to assessment, evidence for its acquisition is more difficult to produce.

5.4 Yorke and Mantz highlight the importance of evidence, commenting that "students need evidence of achievement, particularly in respect of those outcomes of learning that the HEI does not warrant. This means that they need to do tasks that support development in those areas and that provide feedback, both on performance and improvement".[15] There are important issues in this statement that need further consideration. As to the necessity of evidence, what form or type should it encompass? The issue of skill development is surely dependent on factors such as delivery, acquisition and opportunities to facilitate development. Does the measurement of achievement translate into forms of assessment and if so, who is responsible if the outcome of learning is not pre-defined? Moreover, how are skills that are not subject to assessment to be measured? Among these issues, the ambiguity of 'evidence' as a means of skill substantiation, and some fundamental flaws in the notion of transferable skills, will be considered here.

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[13] http://www.mus.cam.ac.uk/external/coursesapplications/transferableskills.html accessed on 29/10/2007.
[14] Pearce, p. 68.
[15] Knight, P. and Yorke, M. 'Employability: judging and communicating achievements', *Learning and Employability Series 2* (York: LTSN, 2004), p. 12.

6. MODES OF EVIDENCE

6.1 The types or forms of evidence are clearly a product of the way in which employers and graduate recruiters rely on non-subject-specific skills, or transferable skills, gained during HE courses in general. While it is useful on the one hand to promote the skills acquired during music courses, which increase students' employability potential, the means of generating evidence and extracting the necessary evidence remains ambiguous and undefined. What is the best way to substantiate these skills; in what format should evidence exist? Are lists of skills with examples, as per the previously cited website, examples of the provision of such evidence? How were these lists and evidence compiled? Is it enough to assume and suggest the ways in which students use and demonstrate a skill to compile a list? While such a list may be speculative and assumed in many instances, without any standardised and specified means of providing evidence, then perhaps lists are what will result.

6.2 This presents problems in terms of methodological approaches to gaining evidence. More specifically, this project has faced several problems in terms of securing evidence of specific transferable skills colleagues claim students acquire through music degrees. One relates to the questionnaire and the question which asked for evidence that supports the acquisition of specific skills in music degrees. The respondents offered evidence such as 'written essays' for communication skills, and 'rehearsals' for teamwork. Although the response rate was not great, respondents all offered similar answers, suggesting that it may be felt that such evidence was adequate. Moreover, actual responses highlight an important problem and flaw in the concept of transferable skills which directly affect the way in which evidence is sought and presented.

6.3 Most of the respondents did not complete the section where evidence was requested, and the difficulty in gaining evidence from respondents may be due to the following factors:
- academics may be unsure of the way in which to present such evidence;
- if transferable skills are to be considered in terms of Holmes' view, that the notion of transferable skills is often immeasurable in terms of both qualitative and quantitative means, then collating 'specific' evidence proves to be an impossible task;
- the delivery, acquisition and development of skills, in many cases, are not observable therefore using this method to produce evidence poses problems.

This final point relates to a further aspect of the project's initial design, namely to visit representative departments in order to observe the delivery and acquisition of transferable skills and thus to gather some necessary evidence, in whatever form proved accessible. And yet the issue of transferable skills is clearly still met with caution, since we encountered a reluctance to allow us to observe classes in action, in order to reveal the skills. We suspect (partly from some questionnaire responses) that the reasons for this unwillingness mostly derived from colleagues' reluctance to show their teaching methods and form of delivery, either because it was viewed as a personal intrusion, or because it meant sharing a particular practice.

6.4 However, it could also be argued that this form of methodology would be unsuitable, if we acknowledge Holmes' point that transferable skills might be argued to be a "theoretical construct and should not be taken necessarily to refer to some

empirically real objects".[16] Such skills should then be considered unobservable, and not subject to the provision of evidence.

6.5 If we do not make such an acknowledgement, then in returning to the notion of embedded skills in the music curriculum, and the problem of extraction to demonstrate their existence and acquisition, we need to consider just how they are acquired and made explicit.

7. DELIVERY, ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

7.1 Most of the questionnaire respondents commented on the fact that most transferable skills are intentionally developed during the course, whilst a number of skills are acquired as by-products of the music degree. If transferable skills are to be developed throughout the course, then we need to consider the ways in which students become aware of the transferable skills during the music course; more specifically, how they are delivered, how they are acquired, and how they are further developed. Normally, the delivery of transferable skills does not, as such, occur. In other words, transferable skills are not normally specifically taught as part of a music course. The opportunity to use and demonstrate specific skills is however, provided within such a course. This renders the delivery of transferable skills unobservable, but it highlights the need to make explicit to the students the range of possible skills that can be considered as intended course, or individual module, outcomes.

7.2 The integrated or embedded opportunities to show and develop skills can be made explicit through intended course outcomes. Forms of assessment, for example, provide an opportunity to present skills and demonstrate the acquisition of particular skills. The acquisition and development of skills is also enabled by students attending lectures, seminars and completing modules and assessments. An important point to consider is that in instances such as student presentations (which may be or may not be assessed), it is usually the content that is assessed, as opposed to the delivery. It is therefore important to highlight the transferable skills, and make the student aware that oral skills are being developed in addition to the understanding of particular key and subject-specific aspects of the music course. Making transferable skills explicit to the students, such as highlighting the various opportunities for their acquisition and development, is a key aim in the overall notion of transferable skills.

7.3 The development of such skills is problematic and raises several issues. As Drummond et al. state, "effective skills development is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve in a system of teaching which is fundamentally based on lectures".[17] Transferable skills development is therefore reliant upon various contexts, both development opportunities within the music course and development outside the music course. Many universities are incorporating personal development programmes (PDP) to ensure that there are opportunities in place for transferable skills development. The University of Gloucester operates a module called *Transferable skills in media and music,* which is dedicated to building the specific

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[16] Holmes, L. 'One more time, transferable skills don't exist…(and what we should do about it)', 'Embedding Key Skills Across the Curriculum', Higher Education for Capability Conference (1998) accessed at http://www.re-skill.org.uk/grads/transkil.htm accessed on 4/12/2007.
[17] Drummond, I., Nixon, I., and Wiltshire, J. 'Personal transferable skills in higher education: the problems of implementing good practice', *Quality Assurance in Education,* (1998) 6, 1, 19-27 (p. 20.).

skills covered in PDP. Similarly, the University of Surrey operates a personal development programme to allow music students to undertake self-study courses to develop transferable skills. Monks et al. highlight that "one of the benefits attributed to the PDP process is increased employability with the identification of explicit transferable skills".[18] Providing evidence of transferable skills seems to be a difficult task and there is no standardised method, in terms of student development and in terms of providing the necessary evidence for future employers. Our questionnaire also highlighted this problem and the difficulties that lecturers had in determining what constituted sufficient evidence. Various current ways of producing evidence of the transferable skills acquired include transferable skills diaries that may be developed as part of the PDP, the development of a portfolio, and auditing tools for module coordinators and students. Their satisfactoriness, however, remains undecided.

7.4 While music degree courses offer opportunities to acquire and develop transferable skills within the overall programme, "'transferability' depends to a large extent on practising skills in a wide range of different contexts".[19] Moreover, "if learning is to be transferable, assessment must be multiple in mode and context and relate to life outside college".[20] Skills highlighted within music degree courses can be further developed through activities such as voluntary study, extra-curricular activities, and work experience. In these instances, the student is exercising the transferability of skills by using them in different contexts. Specific music courses highlight various opportunities during which students can develop these skills on faculty and college-wide levels such as the University of Cambridge music faculty website.[21]

7.5 Music courses that require a year of work placement provide an ideal opportunity to acquire and develop transferable skills. Work placements that are an integrated part of music courses offer an intrinsic link between the development of music skills and transferable skills. Presenting work placements as evidence of developing certain transferable skills is seen as highly desirable by employers, many of whom regard work placements as "the best way to develop students' employment-related skills".[22]

8. SKILL PROFICIENCY LEVELS

8.1 Assessments during a music degree have pre-defined aims, which grade certain aspects, for example, the content in written assignments. There are, however, indirect skills that are flagged up during assessment, which may or may not be directly assessed or commented on. Skills such as research skills and creativity are not necessarily directly assessed but are nevertheless integral, in certain cases, to the achievement of a higher grade. How can some of these skills be measured? At what point can a student refer to possessing a skill, and at what level, and what sort of evidence is required? Knight and Yorke emphasise the assessment implications in the drive for transferable skills in HE as pursuing "reliable and valid ways of certifying

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[18] Monks et al., 'Integrating personal Development and Career Planning', *Active Learning in Higher Education*, (2006), 7, 1, 73-86, (p. 75).
[19] Drummond et al., p. 21.
[20] O'Brien, K. 'Ability based education', in *Integrating key skills in higher education: Employability, transferable skills and learning for life*, Christine Stevens and Stephen J. Fallows (eds) (London: Kogan Page, 2000), p. 40.
[21] www.mus.cam.ac.uk/external/coursesapplications/transferableskills.html accessed on 29/10/2007.
[22] Drummond et al., p. 21.

things such as communication, numeracy and problem solving. Measurement theory demands repeated high-quality judgements before achievement is warranted. Arguably, such achievements are too complex for affordable and reliable measurement".[23] There is of course a matter of differentiation: differentiation of students' level of skills proficiency throughout the various stages during the music degree; differentiation of level between individual students, and; differentiation on a meta-scale, across disciplines. Holmes poses the questions "can someone have a zero-level of a skill? Is there some finite top level?" Furthermore, possessing a skill in one context does not assume proficiency in another. This brings us back to the issue of transferability and how to show it.

8.2 There are courses that provide learning and development, parallel to the music degree. These courses offer an opportunity for students to develop skills already identified and possibly acquired during the music degree. The advantage of such additional development courses is that they allow learner autonomy, and also often provide accredited courses (such as IT courses), which provide evidence of skill acquisition in the form of certification. In addition, levels may be also awarded for skills, which provide a form of proficiency level for future employers.

8.3 Tariq et al. discuss ways of providing level descriptors in order to audit transferable skills, "to use a set of descriptors to determine the standard of proficiency for each skill identified" and "to use the auditing pro forma to indicate:
 • if there are opportunities to practise each skill;
 • if any explicit support is provided to learners;
 • if the skill is formally and explicitly assessed;
 • the standard or proficiency aimed at for each skill identified".[24]
The amount of work involved in producing and maintaining audit pro-formas has the potential to steer the lecturer away from the main task of teaching music, unless it can be incorporated into specific modules such as PDP.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 There is no denying the growing responsibility HE institutions have to ensure that students are prepared for post-university careers. Incorporating transferable skills into music courses has both positive and negative implications. Whilst the emphasis is on teaching the core subject skills, it is important to make sure that a sufficient amount of attention is paid to transferable skills. Nevertheless, it is also important that transferable skills do not dominate the course and programme agenda as a result of transferable skills and issues of employability being forced onto HE institutions.

9.2 To retain music's existence alongside other degrees, it is vital that subject-specific, and non-subject-specific skills, such as transferable skills, are identified and used in the promotion of courses. It is also crucial to point out that while many music graduates will not become full-time musicians, the additional skills developed during the course equip the music graduate with the potential to enter a wide variety of post-university careers. Music degrees provide opportunities to develop skills most highlighted amongst a range of others. If transferable skills are to continue to form an important part of music degrees and higher education courses in general, then suitable ways to map secure evidence of these skills need to be developed.

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[23] Knight and Yorke, 'Judging and Communicating', p. 4.
[24] Tariq, V. N., Scott, E. M., Cochrane, A. C., Lee, M. and Ryles, L. 'Auditing and Mapping Key Skills within University Curricula', *Quality Assurance in Education*, 12, 2 (2004), 70-81 (p. 73).

9.3 This project, small-scale as it was, has provoked as many questions as it has provided answers. Clearly, individual departments and institutions will continue to address (or not) the issue of transferable skills in ways that best suit them, and it is hoped that some of the information provided here will enable them to be better placed to do so. However, it is also surely possible that without an agreed, discipline-based, view, of how to demonstrate the unambiguous acquisition of these skills, at particular levels, then as a community we shall be denying ourselves the use of an important tool in demonstrating the necessity of the position of music within Higher Education, to the general benefit of the wider community.

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