

Institution: Guildhall School of Music & Drama/GSMD
1. Context and mission

Size, context, structure and mission

GSMD originated as a municipal music school in 1880, a fact that still has profound implications for its constitution and ethos. Today it provides professional training in music, acting and production arts not only at HE level but also across a junior Saturday school, a Music Education Hub delivered in partnership with the London Borough of Islington, and Centres for Young Musicians around the country. By virtue of this wide network GSMD is now the largest single provider of under-18 music education in the UK, as well as an internationally renowned conservatoire ('world-leading', in the terminology of the 2015/16 Review of Institution-Specific Targeted Allocations or RISTA). Nevertheless it is owned by City of London Corporation/CoLC, and operated as a department of local government.

The mission of CoLC (Corporate Plan 2018-23) as it pertains to research at GSMD is to ensure that the Square Mile is 'a global hub for innovation in commerce and culture' and that it can 'inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration'. The School's own Business Plan positions it as a 'conservatoire for the 21st century' with a mission to 'empower artists to realise their full potential' by developing 'distinctive artistic citizens who enrich the lives of others and lead cultural change'. It does so in the context of not only the CoLC plan but also those of the other cultural institutions owned and operated by CoLC, especially the neighbouring Barbican Centre (see below).

GSMD was designated an HEI in 2006, and since then its training has been funded by a unique partnership between CoLC and what is now the Office for Students. It is a 'small specialist institution', despite its large network and proportionally very large staff body (almost 500 teaching staff, most on small, highly specialist contracts, plus numerous freelancers, for a total of only around 1,000 students).

	Music	Drama	Production Arts
Undergraduates	468	76	125
Master's	299	13	6
Staff (of which hourly paid)	431 (364)	32 (20)	30 (0)
Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strings, Harp, Guitar • Wind, Brass, Percussion • Keyboard • Vocal Studies • Opera Studies • Historical Performance • Chamber Music • Composition • Electronic Music • Jazz • Music therapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting • Movement • Voice • Performance and Creative Enterprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage management • Costume, Lighting, Sound and Video Design • Set Design and Construction • Theatre Technology • Collaborative Theatre Production

GSMD made its first submission to the national research assessment as soon as it was eligible (RAE2008), and since then its research culture has grown steadily. Contexts for that growth are numerous and overlapping: the development of the relationship with the CoLC cultural institutions and a progressively wider network of HE and industry partners, the evolution of practice-based research methodologies and practical pedagogical research internationally, and an institutional predisposition towards interdisciplinary work.

Strategic responsibility for research lies with the Head of the Research Department, which is a cross-School team (including the administrative staff of the Research Office) overseen by the Research & Knowledge Exchange sub-committee/RKEC of the main decision-making body, Academic Board. The Head of Research reports to the Vice-Principal and Director of Innovation

Institutional level environment template (REF5a)

and Engagement (the other VP/Director roles are Music, Drama, and Production Arts) and is a member of the Senior Management Team. Academic Board reports on research to the Board of Governors, a Committee of CoLC's Court of Common Council. The Governors are mainly elected Members of the Corporation, but 6 are independent (2 of them co-opted from HE backgrounds) and 3 staff and student representatives.

2. Strategy

Strategy for research and impact

GSMD's Business Plan 2018-23 is structured around 5 main strategic objectives:

- distinctive higher education programmes
- partnerships across CoLC and beyond
- developing under-18 teaching
- leading positive cultural change
- business sustainability.

In addition, there are 3 cross-cutting objectives:

- innovative use of new technology
- international engagement
- equality, diversity and inclusion/EDI.

Although they contribute to achieving all of these, Research and its sister department, Innovation, are held to account primarily under no 4: 'We will lead positive cultural change which impacts our society, our industry and the wider world through professional development, research and knowledge exchange, and public engagement'. Research is also especially integrated into strategies GSMD has formulated with the Barbican.

The relationship between the two institutions (shared physical and human resources and a shared department, Creative Learning) was radically overhauled during the cycle to become a 'Creative Alliance', developed through an existing Joint Directorate and overseen by specially convened joint meetings of the Boards of Governors of the two institutions. Research led the substantive early projects of the Alliance: the joint studentship and joint post-doctoral researcher/PDR posts mentioned below, and a conference (June 2018) hosted jointly by GSMD and Barbican cinemas. The formation of the Creative Alliance in turn helped facilitate the Culture Mile project (see below).

But it was the most established activity of the Creative Alliance, the arts outreach projects that GSMD and the Barbican had been running in East London for more than 30 years, that formed the basis of the most salient development in research strategy over the cycle: the growth of work on social impact. This has provided a focus consistent with GSMD's progressive ethos and its mission to form artist-citizens, and a banner under which all members of the community (teaching, research, administration) can actively come together, in a sense of common purpose with the Barbican. In the shape of the 'Music for social impact' project (2020-23), it has a flagship piece of research and, in the establishment of the Institute for Social Impact Research in the Performing Arts (2020), a solid structure around which to build. Plans for 2021-26 are focused on the integration of GSMD social impact research objectives with the Creative Alliance civic strategy (due to be published later in 2021) and KE activity overseen by the Innovation Department (already active in this space, e.g. with its Creative Entrepreneurs programme 2013-, run in partnership with Cause4).

The unique social and topographical phenomenon of the Barbican Estate is at the centre of this emphasis on civic presence (it has itself been the object of GSMD research activity in the form of a multi-stage, multi-disciplinary research project developing around the Guildhall-Barbican archives

Institutional level environment template (REF5a)

2016-). It also informs GSMD's approach to accountability: lay members of its ethics/research integrity committee are recruited from the Estate's residential community.

Integration of research ethics and governance processes is in theory more complex for GSMD than for most conservatoires because of its Music Therapy provision. But in fact such integration is of a piece with the institutional commitment to interdisciplinarity that informs everything from student productions (theatre, music theatre, opera) and funded internal cross-arts projects to academic programmes (e.g. the Opera Making and Writing MA, new in 2014, for which GSMD appointed its first Professor of Dramatic Writing; see also REF3).

Research and impact strategy 2014-20 is continuous with CoLC general strategy particularly around place-making; work with the Barbican and on an emerging joint civic strategy; new social impact research; and the progressive interdisciplinary ethos of GSMD's highly regarded professional training. In respect of the last of these areas, particular account has been taken of the observation in the REF2014 feedback that there needed to be more distinction between research and curriculum initiatives. This is now exercised in the selection of external research funding bids for development, and in particular of outputs for internal support. In order to retain the vitality of this historically strong area of activity, RKEC plans to integrate funded curriculum initiatives explicitly into programme revalidation processes, thus further embedding continuity between research and teaching.

Large-scale institution-level strategic plans for 2021-26 include an overhaul of research funding mechanisms to ensure equality of opportunity across the many different kinds of contract (beginning with an all-staff consultation; see under 'EDI' below) and an application for Research Degree Awarding Powers/RDAP.

3. People

Staffing strategy

GSMD's status as a department of CoLC carries significant advantages: a powerful lender of last resort, the physical infrastructure and intense economic activity of the Square Mile, and a civic ambition to be a major cultural destination. Operating within non-HE structures brings with it challenges, and staffing strategy is one area in which GSMD has devised ways of adapting those structures. Strategy for the development of the research culture during the last cycle has been structurally bottom-up: first the doctoral programme was substantially expanded and then a new cadre of PDRs established. Routes for ECR progression (i.e. in addition to the everyday package of resources available to staff at any stage in their personal research trajectory) have been opened up. At more senior levels, CoLC payscale/grading diverges considerably from UK HE norms, so in order to fulfil GSMD's obligations under the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (hereafter 'the Concordat'), the Research Department, working with HR, has developed a model for mapping CoLC salaries onto the National Framework Agreement common pay spine.

Staff benefit from access to a rich suite of CoLC learning, professional training and personal development opportunities, as well as from being managed and developed in line with a number of robust CoLC policies and procedures (including, but not limited to, an Equal Opportunities Policy, Learning & Organisational Development Policy, Performance Development Framework and Recruitment & Selection Policy). Over and above this, staff can also engage with GSMD's own Professional Development Framework, first established late in the previous cycle, which features a range of research-related means to development and progression. One such is the School's Staff Development Committee, which supports all colleagues, academic and otherwise, to complete training and other professional development beyond that freely available to individuals via CoLC or routinely requested and approved via the probation and appraisal system. In the case of research, the Committee typically contributes to the cost of attending conferences where members of staff are not themselves presenting work; the Research Department liaises closely to ensure that this

Institutional level environment template (REF5a)

benefit is joined up with its own internal funding schemes (described in REF5b). Another means of staff development has contributed even more to the cementing of the research community: following the first iteration in 2013 of the process for conferment of the title of Professor (applications for which can be on the basis of exceptional achievements in research or teaching/academic leadership), 16 of the 19 successful applicants have been research-active.

As set out in the REF2021 Code of Practice/CoP, the staffing strategy as it pertains to research explicitly recognises that GSMD has historically focused primarily on professional training. The vast majority of colleagues are not contractually required to engage with research, and some will not want to; it is a firm principle that non-engagement will not have a detrimental effect on an individual's career trajectory within the institution. Moreover, the Department recognises that research-active status in this environment is not necessarily once-and-for-all, but rather something that might be part of an individual's artistic and/or pedagogical practice for a defined period. It is worth underlining that this distinguishes GSMD and institutions like it from the vast majority of HEIs participating in REF2021.

Support and training of research students

The strategy of building up from the research community's foundations has resulted in a doctoral programme that is now the largest in the sector, and increasingly visible within GSMD's more established activity. Its origins lie in Doctor of Musical Arts provision in Performance shared with City, University of London. As part of its more decisive repositioning as an independent institution operating in the mainstream of UK HE, and of its move into research, the School founded its own doctoral programme in 2008 (the DMA was discontinued in 2010, with the last students graduating in 2016). Since then, the disciplinary range has broadened rapidly to include DMus supervision in composition and in performance, and PhD supervision in a range of fields where research strengths have been established or consolidated (e.g. artistic pedagogy, musicology, music therapy). The programme is still validated by City University, but see above re RDAP.

Staff participation in the doctoral programme, as professional development and also as a way of feeding supervisory capacity back in, is a key investment in sustainable growth of research capacity. That investment has been made in a way that recognises that take-up is dependent on the different models of training in different subjects: Drama and Production Arts have proportionally many more full-time staff, and a much fuller timetable. Accordingly, in 2018 the Principal introduced a scheme for central funding of teaching back-fill, to enable key staff with relatively large contracted FTE to participate, particularly in subject-areas under-represented on the programme. Benefits to the wider institution have included increased dialogue between Research and other departments, associated synergy with research-led teaching, and the development, in turn, of those staff called upon to take over positions of responsibility while post-holders engage in research activity.

In the meantime, extensive use of external doctoral supervisors continues, reflecting among other things the institution's commitment to building partnerships. Some supervisory relationships are part of studentship arrangements (for example with the Royal Opera House, the V&A and the Barbican), others were established to mentor internal members of supervisory teams and, in general, to bring in outside expertise. One of the most exciting developments in this area was the agreement brokered in 2017-18 to bring the Culture Mile partnership (GSMD, Barbican, London Symphony Orchestra, Museum of London) into the Techne Doctoral Training Partnership en bloc; from 2019, Barbican staff too have been eligible for a full fee-waiver on GSMD's doctoral programme.

EDI

CoLC aims to provide an inclusive, respectful and discrimination-free work environment for staff. It undertakes to use best practice in employment in accordance with legislation to ensure that employees feel respected and able to give their best. It seeks to manage its workforce to be broadly representative of all sections of society, and takes seriously its Public Sector Equality Duty. GSMD's CoP sets out its own approach to EDI, including measures taken to ensure the

Institutional level environment template (REF5a)

representativeness of its REF sub-committee. In keeping with the Concordat, Progression and Conferment panels reflect diversity and a range of experience and expertise, including external peers for Conferment.

GSMD policy has always committed both to fostering an environment for students and staff free from discrimination, prejudice and harassment, and to the pursuit of equality of opportunity, and it remains responsive and progressive. Notably, the Equality and Diversity Scheme and Action Plan (which cover both workforce and students) have been considerably supplemented by extra measures in response to the Black Lives Matter global movement. After holding a series of 'Listen and learn' sessions with staff and students from across GSMD, and consultation with external experts, an anti-racism taskforce was assembled to agree 5 key Equality Objectives, and an EDI Committee formed to drive them forward. In addition, advisory panels in each subject area were established, targeted mental health provision increased, and staff training reviewed and supplemented. Clearer guidance about how to make a complaint under EDI policies was published and a micro-aggressions portal launched.

Later in 2021 a new senior appointment will be made to lead on EDI issues throughout the School. Generally, EDI in research over the next five years will depend on the equitable sharing of necessarily limited resources among a proportionally large workforce that is distributed and contracted according to subject-specific needs but subject to the same comprehensive management systems and institutional priorities. GSMD has been energetic in successive rounds of contract reform to keep pace with the changing HE landscape over the past 10 years, and since 2019 has implemented an ambitious and progressive CoP; a wider institutional conversation than ever before is emerging around flexible, equitable and transparent means of developing excellent research in a mostly part-time workforce. As a consequence, a preliminary all-staff consultation exercise was announced in late 2020, due for completion later in 2021.

4. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

The most significant new institution-level income in the last cycle was 2016's RISTA funding. Although allocated to support high-cost teaching, it allowed GSMD to use all its extra QR income for investment in expansion of research activity. Otherwise, the main progress since 2014 has been the increase in ambition and capacity to make successful peer-reviewed bids to a relatively wide range of respected external sources. As in other areas of strategy, the approach has been to work in partnership wherever possible, and links with fellow CoLC institutions, in particular the Creative Alliance with the Barbican, have been important. For example, following the 2012/13 grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Trust to establish an East London and City Culture Partnership 2013-16, GSMD partnered with the Barbican through the Creative Learning Department to match-fund a PDR role for a project supported by a further grant from the Trust. Similarly, in order to support the archives project mentioned above, Barbican investment in PDR posts recruited by GSMD led to a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Barbican was also a partner in a bid for Horizon2020 European Training Network funding that included partners in Ireland, Greece, Germany and Denmark.

Infrastructure

The relatively recent Milton Court building, GSMD's main infrastructure development in the last cycle (noted in REF2014 feedback), has provided a newly central location for the Research Department, facilitating interaction with other departments and visiting artists. Because Milton Court is, day to day, predominantly used by Drama and Production Arts (while the Silk Street building across the road is now mainly for Music), the research culture in Drama and Production Arts has matured as a result of the greater proximity and fortuitous interaction. Benefiting from state-of-the-art rehearsal and workshop spaces, the first Drama student to join the doctoral programme did so in 2013, and there has been steady growth since then.

Institutional level environment template (REF5a)

This improvement in physical infrastructure was complemented by further investment in Research Office capacity. Equally important were developments in the interaction between Research and what is now the Innovation Department; it has been a tenet of strategy to keep the two in close synergy, reflected in the fact that the main forum for research, RKEC, is also for discussion and progression of knowledge exchange projects. In addition RKEC acts as a programme board for the doctorate, which means that the foundation of the research community; its relationship with activity at all stages of seniority, development and impact; and the management of that impact in non-academic and commercial areas are all overseen by a single cohesive body.

This synergy, and the productive relationship with the Barbican, is reflected in the positioning (from 2019) of Research and Innovation in the portfolio of the VP and Director of Innovation and Engagement for both GSMD and the Barbican. This was enabled by investment in (and rapid development of) infrastructure: in 2017/18, Research and Innovation became the two halves of Guildhall Innovation, for the first time with a dedicated Director reporting directly to the Principal. Creative enterprise, with new staff based in Enterprise but with a brief to interact closely with Research, consequently became a larger part of both teams' work. Then, in order to grow distinct areas of activity across Research, Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise while retaining the close ties between them (also in preparation for the Knowledge Exchange Framework), the Manager post in the Research team became Head of Knowledge Exchange and Senior Research Manager, with a co-ordinator post beneath it. Finally, the recently formed Culture Mile Partnerships team (tasked with fostering links with business and third-sector bodies) joined the office in 2018, with the management of the three teams consolidated the following year.

Facilities

Major institutional developments fall into two categories: the establishment of the Guildhall-Barbican archives project, and improvements made by the Recording & Audio-visual Department 2017-19 (and again in 2020, in response to Covid-19). In terms of supporting research, both represent long-term investments that will bear fruit in the next cycle and beyond.

Following earlier scoping, the archives project began in earnest in 2016 with the establishment of two new PDR posts, using investment from the Barbican and research assistance and mentoring from GSMD. Further investment has come in the shape of £20k for shelving rolling stock in the basement of the Barbican library, and a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. With support from staff at the London Metropolitan Archives (also a CoLC institution), it is intended that the archive will eventually be a research resource of international significance, attracting scholars not only of the performing arts but also architecture, social and labour history, and urban regeneration.

GSMD has invested in a revolutionary media network which has dramatically increased the quantity and quality of recorded content and real-time connectivity within and beyond the institution, a significant development given the School's emphasis on practice-based research and research collaboration. Recording & Audio-visual now has five full-time engineers with extensive industry experience, research staff and students have access to a professional recording studio and event recording services as a matter of course, and an equipment loan scheme gives access to portable recording equipment. All performance spaces and an increasing number of rehearsal spaces now have upgraded audio and video capture systems which allow connection to multiple rooms for simultaneous real-time performance using IP audio and video links with minimal latency, facilitating performance research collaborations around the world. Control rooms have been upgraded to facilitate simultaneous live production of events including opera and drama broadcasts.

In Drama and Production Arts, additional equipment has been acquired to allow for film-making, streaming, documentation of practice-led research, and experimental virtual production; digital performance is a priority research area for 2021-26. In 2019-20 GSMD began conducting preliminary research projects with its spin-out company Guildhall Live Events using this new capacity for the creation of Virtual Reality experiences and Extended or Augmented Reality productions. The School television studio has recently been fitted with a large green-screen

Institutional level environment template (REF5a)

environment for experimentation with visual effects, animation, gaming, and future research applications of body motion-capture in theatre, Electronic Music/gaming, and other interdisciplinary areas.

Over the summer of 2020, in response to Covid-19, AV carried out extensive work to install low-latency connectivity between performance and rehearsal spaces across the two main buildings. As well as facilitating research collaboration with similarly equipped institutions around the world, it allows full orchestras to rehearse and perform simultaneously from separate rooms in the School with social distancing in place. This was demonstrated to wide acclaim in the broadcast of the 2020 Gold Medal concerto final, seen by half a million people around the world. During the successive lockdowns of 2020-21, the improvements listed here allowed GSMD to put out more digital content than the rest of the UK conservatoire sector combined.