

Institution: SOAS University of London
Unit of Assessment: Music
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>1.1 Context/Overview</p> <p>The Department of Music at SOAS has a unique profile as the leading centre in Europe for research in Ethnomusicology, and the only Music department in Europe dedicated to teaching and research in the traditional and contemporary musics of Asia and Africa and their diasporas. We hold that the study of sounded forms of expression is as important for understanding the historical and contemporary worlds as languages, history or economics. We combine immersive field experience of specific cultures and genres with a variety of established and innovative interpretive strategies, from historical to analytical methods, cultural studies to composition, sound studies to creative industries. Based in the centre of a global city, we act as a connector between the developed north and the creative economies of the global south. With expertise in deep-rooted musical traditions as well as digital cultures, we are well placed to serve as a nucleus for innovative research and knowledge exchange.</p> <p>Each member of the UoA specialises in specific regions or cultural traditions. Prof. Lucy Durán works on West Africa and Afro-Latinx cultures of Cuba and Mexico; Dr Angela Impey on Southern and Eastern Africa; Dr Ilana Webster-Kogen on the Middle East especially Israel/Palestine, and Ethiopia; Dr Richard Williams and Prof. Richard Widdess on South Asia; Prof. Rachel Harris on China and Central Asia; Dr Nick Gray on South-east Asia especially Indonesia; Dr Caspar Melville on African diasporas of the UK and Black Atlantic. All staff are full-time except Widdess (0.2).</p> <p>Our aims reflect our institutional context within SOAS, with our specialist focus on the study of Asia and Africa. We share institutional aims of advancing knowledge of and mutual understanding with these regions and their diasporas; decolonising knowledge and exchange; building equitable international partnerships; and fostering new generations of researchers equipped to engage with the wider world. We further these aims in our own research, and through our flagship publication series, <i>SOAS Studies in Music</i> (4.3.1).</p> <p>In line with these goals, much of our research is motivated by ethical concerns of social justice and sustainability, focusing on music as a way to better understand and benefit marginalised societies. It is planned that future staff and PhD research (supported by our unique MA Music pathway in Development) will increasingly focus on this area (see 1.3. In an address to the Society for Ethnomusicology (2016), Impey articulated this objective:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">As scholars and activists, we have what most public agencies seldom have, the privilege of protracted exposure and the purpose to listen. Through the intimacies afforded by ethnography ... we can contribute toward the humanization of the often highly technocratic humanitarian landscape by sharing people's stories, songs and aspirations. We can draw on interviews, recordings and field notes as evidence to lobby for more equitable policies and practices.</p> <p>Our research is motivated by a passion for music and its power to transform people's lives. We take particular pride in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing expertise in the major music areas of Africa, Asia, and diasporas; • offering a distinctive theoretical voice, within and beyond the discipline of ethnomusicology, in highly rated research outputs (see 1.5, 4.1, 4.3.1); • achieving social relevance and significant impact on musicians, audiences and communities around the world (1.4, 1.5), bringing global musics to a mainstream UK audience (4.2.1), giving a voice through music to marginalised communities (1.5), and responding to global challenges (4.2.2);

- maintaining a high level of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in departmental staffing and students, and in research subjects and methodology (2.3);
- providing tailored training and supervision for high-quality Doctoral Researchers leading to successful outcomes and career benefits (2.2, 2.3);
- attracting substantial external funding for staff and PhD research (3.1);
- our commitment to open research, repatriation, and sharing of resources, especially through collaboration with the British Library Sound Archive (1.5.1, 3.2.4);
- playing leadership roles within the School of Arts (SOAS) and subject associations (3.2.1, 4.3.2);
- leading and participating in collaborative and inter-disciplinary projects with national and international, academic and non-academic partners (4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.2.1);
- contributing to sustainability of the discipline through a world-leading publication series, conferences and seminars (4.3);
- international recognition in the form of awards, prizes, honours and invitations to present our research in diverse fora (4.4);
- maintaining a high level of research vitality and sustainability in challenging circumstances for the HE sector (4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

1.2 Structure

As a very small unit we take advantage of institutional structures and policies to support our research. Within SOAS the Department of Music is a component of the School of Arts (SoA), which also includes History of Art and Archaeology, Media and Film, Global Creative Industries, and English Studies. The Music UoA comprises 7.2 FTE research staff who teach on degree programmes in Music and across the SoA. One member of the UoA (Melville) resides in Global Creative Industries, the remainder in Music.

The purposes of the SoA since its inception in 2012 were to generate interdisciplinary programmes of teaching and research, and to sustain research in small units by sharing resources. This strengthened research in Music by opening new opportunities and directions for interdisciplinary research, new modes of public engagement and impact (3.2.3), and new forms of support for research and training (2.2) under the SoA Research Strategy (1.3).

Music took a leading role in the SoA's development. Since 2018, when the School of Arts assumed overall responsibility for the management of research within its UoAs, Harris served as Director of Research, and Williams co-ordinated a monthly seminar where staff from across the SoA discussed a common research theme. Beyond the SoA, the interdisciplinary character and regional affiliations of our research benefitted from the unique scholarly environment afforded by SOAS's wide range of discipline-based departments and research centres. Staff were members of: the Centre of African Studies (Durán and Impey); SOAS China Institute and Centre for Contemporary Central Asia and Caucasus (Harris); SOAS South Asia Institute (Widdess, Williams); Centre for Creative Industries, Media and Screen Studies (Melville, co-chair). It is hard to conceive of a more fertile environment in which to develop the cultural study of music; this context thus shapes our distinctive character (see 3.2).

1.3 Research Strategy

In the current REF period we built on our existing research strategy, while introducing new priorities that we will continue to develop in the next cycle. The research strategy outlined in the 2014 REF submission entailed fieldwork-based research across a wide regional and disciplinary spectrum, contributing to theoretical paradigms; co-operation in interdisciplinary and international projects; and development of funding applications for particular thematic areas.

Feedback from the REF panel noted that our researchers have “a strong track record of producing world-leading and internationally-excellent research” but sought more “clear evidence of the mechanisms which have maintained and will maintain the vitality of the research culture”. In this report we provide such evidence with reference to the School of Arts (1.1, 1.3, 3.2, 4.4) and the recently created *Research Group in Engaged Ethnomusicology* (below).

1.3.1 The current cycle

Our research strategy was consolidated and developed in the current REF cycle in line with departmental and institutional strategic aims (see 1.1). We continued to support the study of regional music cultures of Africa, Asia and diasporas as the ground upon which broader perspectives could be built, and we contributed to new directions in ethnomusicology, especially through interdisciplinary and intercultural collaborations (4.1). Mechanisms to support our strategy included regular meetings between REF Co-ordinator, Research Tutor and staff members to review outputs, funding applications and impact plans, and progress reports to department meetings, SoA Research Committee and SOAS REF Co-ordinators' Panel.

The retirement of Wright (2014), Howard (2017) and Widdess (August 2020) reduced our involvement with Middle Eastern texts, Korean music traditions, and music analysis/cognition respectively, but Williams's appointment in 2017 ensured the continued study of South Asian music, and new interests in South Asian religion and aesthetics that fit well with the SoA's interdisciplinary remit. In line with the ongoing strategy, individual researchers were encouraged to apply their regional expertise to diverse interpretive strategies and collaborations, as illustrated by Gray's and Durán's promotion of creative dialogues between Balinese, Malian and Western musicians; Widdess's collaborative studies of cognitive dynamics in South Asian music; or Harris's, Webster-Kogen's and Impey's applications of sound studies methodologies in Central Asia, Israel and Namibia. Strategic planning and support for individual research was supported through the Staff Development and Review process, where staff review their goals and achievements annually with the Head of the SoA.

A new strategic priority was to strengthen the relevance of our research to global society. We paid particular attention to music of marginalised communities—related to religious persecution in China (Harris), Afro-Mexican youth identity in Oaxaca (Durán), Jamaicans in the UK (Melville) and Ethiopians in Israel (Webster-Kogen)—and cultural de-territorialisation and environmental justice in Africa (Impey). A Leverhulme Visiting Professorship in 2019 enabled us to invite Professor Linda Barwick (University of Sydney) to lead a programme of events focussing on songs in endangered languages.

Our strategy to raise external funding for staff and PhD research generated a **total income of £908k** (see 3.1). To support skills development and new initiatives in the use of digital technology, SOAS created a new Media Studio (see 3.2.3).

In view of changes in the market for Music degrees, and post-Coronavirus economic uncertainty, we are currently streamlining our BA programmes in order to concentrate ethnomusicology teaching primarily at MA and PhD levels. This is intended to provide greater financial stability, free staff time for research, and attract more high-quality doctoral researchers. We thus face a challenging future for HE with a robust strategic response that aims to sustain our ongoing research.

1.3.2 Future strategic plans

Support for interdisciplinary research has developed within the SoA, embedded in a Research Strategy (2019) that supports a shift in emphasis from individual to collaborative research projects, building interdisciplinary relationships through Research Clusters, and participation in interdisciplinary conferences and networks. This strategy has been supported by the creation of an interdisciplinary SoA Peer Review College for funding applications.

Over the next assessment period we aim to build on our current strategy, specifically:

- making our research more collaborative and more interdisciplinary, working especially with scholars in the global south;
- engaging with global challenges in such areas as marginalised communities, migration, post-conflict social integration, post-Coronavirus social and economic recovery, etc.;
- promoting cultural awareness and transformation of social attitudes through music by acknowledging indigenous voices, supporting decolonising and anti-racist initiatives, etc.

To help implement these aims, the UoA has established a **Research Group in Engaged Ethnomusicology** led by Harris. By “engaged” ethnomusicology we mean that from a basis in ethnomusicology and in the musical cultures of Asia and Africa, we reach out to other disciplines and to global issues where our knowledge, skills and perspectives can make a difference. This group will initiate and co-ordinate innovative, ethical and effective collaborative research projects and grant applications in line with our research strategy.

1.4 Interdisciplinarity

Crossing disciplinary boundaries—between music and anthropology (Harris, Impey, Webster-Kogen), art history (Williams), religions (Williams, Widdess, Harris), languages (Williams), cultural history (Williams, Widdess), performance (Duran, Gray), composition (Gray), cultural studies (Melville), music analysis and cognition (Widdess)—is fundamental to our research activity. In addition to their single-authored outputs, staff produced a significant number of co-authored articles and collaborative edited volumes.

During the cycle we organized interdisciplinary conferences and workshops in collaboration with local partner organizations, e.g., *Performing Arts in The Islamic World* (Harris, Chinese University Hong Kong); *Analysis, Cognition and Ethnomusicology* (Widdess, University of London). See 4.1.1.

Three PhD students have benefitted from the Bloomsbury Studentship scheme, which supports interdisciplinary research supervised jointly in two institutions: this has enabled research in world music education in collaboration with UCL Institute of Education (2 students), and mathematics and Indian music, with Birkbeck College.

1.5 Impact Strategy

1.5.1 Strategy in the current REF Period

In the previous REF submission, we undertook “to develop impact more broadly through the conscious formulation of research projects, whether individual or collaborative”. **REF panel feedback** commended “evidence of very considerable to outstanding impact across a range of activity”, but also noted that “the template did not fully articulate the unit’s strategy to build on current strengths in the future.”

We therefore updated our Impact and Engagement Strategy in 2014, implemented it in the current REF period, and plan to continue it in the next. The strategy comprises **four areas of impact-generating activity**, linking closely with the strategic research objectives outlined above; it was regularly discussed and monitored with individual researchers, and additionally with Impact Case Study authors.

1.5.1.1 Promoting public awareness and understanding of the music of Asia, Africa and diasporas

We aimed to interest and inform the public about our research, (a) locally, through lectures linked to concerts and exhibitions in SOAS’s Brunei Gallery (“Celebrating Art and Music” 2017; “Stolen Moments: Namibian Music History Untold”, Impey 2019) and the think-tank Asia House (“The genders of Indian music” 2017, “Music of the three worlds” 2018, with Asian Music Circuit); and (b) internationally, through contributions to general and reference literature (collaborative publication *Pieces of the Musical World*, Harris and Pease eds. 2015 (4.3.1)), and dissemination through far-reaching media including radio broadcast, podcast, CD and film (Impey, Durán), YouTube videos (Gray, Durán), social media (Harris, Melville) etc. See 4.2.1.

1.5.1.2 Repatriation of recordings and other documentation to communities of origin and diasporas

We regard this as a fundamental ethical responsibility, contributing to Open Research, and benefiting performers, communities and researchers. Where possible we return copies of recordings to the performers, and where appropriate, audio/video material is placed online (e.g., Durán’s *Growing into Music* series; Harris’s *Sounding Islam* and *Uyghur Meshrep* project

websites). Since many partner regions do not possess viable or accessible archives, we also collaborate with the British Library Sound Archive, by depositing recordings and assisting with cataloguing. The BLSA itself has a strong repatriation mission and works with us to put materials online and copy to local archives where available. See 3.2.4.

1.5.1.3 Fostering creativity in performance, composition etc. involving or reflecting music of Asian and African origin

This aim is reflected in our sponsorship of the SOAS World Music Summer School and Concert Series, outreach projects managed by a co-ordinator appointed by the Department; and in our support for performances of creative work by staff, research associates and doctoral researchers, notably Gray's gamelan-inspired compositions, and Harris's engagement with cross-cultural maqam performance (4.1.2) leading to research articles and planned funding applications. Performance and composition have been central to Durán's work with the Kronos Quartet and Afro-Mexican communities, in both cases involving musicians from Mali in creative collaborations, drawing directly on her long-term research and engagement.

1.5.1.4 Promoting use of (Asian/Middle Eastern/African) music in social, educational, and cultural development projects

Reflecting our mission to increase the social relevance of our research, staff have worked with marginalised communities in Mexico, southern Africa, and Central Asia, to promote music-making as a means of transforming social attitudes and educational systems. This mission is also increasingly addressed by PhD researchers, especially those trained in our MA pathway in Development. To showcase our socially engaged research, Durán, Harris, Webster-Kogen and Impey presented their work with marginalised communities at the Consortium for Asian and African Studies 2018 conference, and in the 2019 departmental public seminar.

We also worked to increase research impact and public engagement through new forms of communication and partnership. Harris's work with Muslim communities in Xinjiang placed her in the front line of international concerns about cultural erasure, and she actively responded through media articles, interviews and Parliamentary briefings.

Our **future strategic plan for impact** will pursue the four-point plan detailed above under the aegis of the newly established *Engaged Ethnomusicology Research Group* (see 1.3), which will co-ordinate and integrate impact into collaborative research projects, in line with the institution's impact strategy (see Institutional Statement, §2), supported within the School of Arts (1.5.3).

1.5.2 Approach to impact and 2021 case studies

As the foregoing strategy makes clear, the UoA pursues and achieves impact beyond two case studies; and we pursue diverse forms of impact beyond the definition that the case studies embody.

Our first Impact Case Study is closely related to Aim 3 described above and focuses on Durán's collaboration with Malian musicians and the Kronos Quartet, including production of award-winning CD albums *Ladilikan*, and *Toumani and Sidiki*. Durán's award-winning film *Voice of Tradition*, resulting from her AHRC-funded project *Growing into music*, and her new film *TEGERE TULON – girls' hand clapping songs in Mali*, also arising from her collaboration with the Kronos Quartet, are both freely available online. This body of work has created significant benefits for Malian musicians, developing new audiences and understandings, and new opportunities worldwide.

Our second case study "Using music to benefit marginalised communities" combines work by Durán and Impey, and pursues Aim 4 of our Impact Strategy. Durán collaborated with Dr Sergio Navarrete Pellicer, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Sociales en Antropología Social, Mexico, on *Afro-Mexican musical youth in Oaxaca* (Newton Advanced Fellowship 2015), leading to the CD album *Forontó Afroaxaca* (2019). The project used CD and radio to raise awareness of African-origin communities in Mexico, and to educate the communities in their musical

heritage, with the collaboration of African musicians. Impey was co-investigator on an AHRC-funded research project in west Namibia entitled *Future Pasts in an Apocalyptic Moment: A Hybrid Analysis of 'Green' Performativities and Eco-cultural Ethics in a Globalised African Landscape* (2013–2018). This project explored tensions between local and indigenous conceptions of human/nature relationships as encoded in songs, oral narratives and healing rituals. Impey used film to help re-ignite cultural awareness and memory of musical repertoire in Namibia associated with ways of life eroded by industrialisation.

These case studies are strong examples of verifiable impact in line with our Impact Strategy. Our mechanism of regular review led to the formulation of the second joint case study. Although facilitated by our strategic framework, such examples of impact also rely on opportunities that arise in the course of individual research, often unpredictably, but as a result of the reputation and track record of the researcher; it is a strength of our approach to impact that it allows the flexibility to take advantage of such opportunities.

1.5.3 Facilitating impact, vitality and sustainability

SOAS's impact strategy places high value on this kind of international collaboration and engaged research. The central impact team support us through regular feedback on plans and achievements, advice on how to achieve impact, and funding to help promote or gather evidence of impact. Impey and Durán were awarded a total of £13,360 to support work on their case studies. SOAS rewards impact achievement in its promotion policy, and Durán's promotion to Professor in 2018 explicitly recognised her outstanding impact and public engagement record over several decades. More generally, SOAS provides space and funding for the Concert Series, World Music Summer School, exhibitions, and their respective administrators.

1.6 Open Research and Research Integrity

Our strategy embodies a strong commitment to openness and integrity in research practice. This includes:

- involving performers and community representatives in designing and carrying out research;
- crediting performers and research partners in publications;
- making research material, especially recordings, available to communities of origin and other researchers, through local archives and/or through the British Library Sound Archive (see 1.5.1.2, 3.2.4)
- making research accessible through the institutional online repository *SOAS Research Online*, Academia, ResearchGate etc.;
- publishing in, editing, and reviewing for online Open Access journals (e.g., *Analytical Approaches to World Music*).

In line with SOAS policy, all staff completed the Epigeum Research Integrity online course. All external funding applications are channelled through the institution's Research Office, and internal ethical approval is mandatory, as it is also for PhD upgrade. We also engage with research ethics protocols such as the Society for Ethnomusicology ethical guidelines.

2. People

2.1 Staffing strategy

Our **staffing policy** is to maintain the highest standards of research excellence, a range of disciplinary methods and specialities, and a diversity of expertise in the cultural regions of Asia and Africa, their diasporas, and global popular music; and within these objectives to ensure EDI compliance by implementing institutional recruitment procedures. We achieved (2019) a gender balance of F:M = 4:3.2, and a balance of seniority including 3 Early Career Researchers (F:M = 1:2) and 2.2 professors (F:M = 2:0.2).

ECRs were accorded the same financial and other support for research as more senior staff (see Institutional Statement, §3.1, para. 3). They were allocated a 66% teaching load while on

Probation (3 years), and two terms post-probation research leave. They were integrated into departmental research by participating in Departmental and SoA research seminars and research policy discussions. One ECR took two periods of maternity leave, in respect of which a reduction in departmental outputs was granted.

Staff support: New staff were allocated a mentor during probation. All staff on at least 0.4 contracts had an annual Staff Development Review meeting to agree objectives and discuss training and other development needs. Staff benefitted from training courses provided by the Research Office and Learning and Development, for example on grant writing and impact generation. This training helped us achieve high levels of external research funding (see Section 3).

The SOAS **research leave** policy, which allows applications for 1 term of sabbatical leave after every eight terms of normal duties, has enabled all Music staff to take sabbatical and/or funded leave in the REF period; the associated teaching replacement scheme, open to all PhD students and PhD graduates, gives opportunities for experience as Graduate Teaching Assistants or Senior Teaching Fellows. The SoA encourages staff to apply to the SOAS Engagement and Impact Fund (3.2.2), and facilitates short periods of leave for impact-related activities. SOAS also supports research through **infrastructure and internal funding** (see 3.2.2). Research and impact achievement are both **rewarded** through the promotion system. In the assessment period two staff were promoted to Professor, one to Reader and one to Senior Lecturer.

Postdoctoral researchers, both employed on larger research projects and on independent fellowships, worked closely with individual staff, and enriched the life of the department, participating in SOAS seminars, and representing SOAS at international conferences. In the current REF period, we had three postdoctoral researchers funded by major external grants secured in the previous REF cycle. All three contributed to the development of departmental research themes: Catherine Ingram (Newton) worked on music and language in southern China (collaborating with Howard); William Tallotte (EU Marie Curie) worked on ritual and improvisation in South Indian temple music (collaborating with Widdess); Ha Guangtian was a core team-member of the *Sounding Islam in China* project (Harris). All three generated research publications and went on to secure permanent academic positions.

2.2 Research students

Doctoral Researchers are **supported** by two supervisors; the SoA Director of Doctoral Studies; the Doctoral School and Academic Development Directorate (see Institutional Statement, §3.2).

Research **training** is provided in year 1 by the Doctoral School (research methods and ethics across disciplines), the SoA (methods relevant to arts subjects), and the Music department (music-specific training). It prepares students for a career beyond the PhD as well as writing the thesis, and includes a range of practical skills (academic writing, qualitative research methods, audio/video recording, fieldwork methods, transcription and analysis, etc). Doctoral Researchers complete an annual Training Needs Analysis. They may attend relevant taught courses, including language courses. While many relevant languages are taught in SOAS (e.g., Burmese, Persian), funding for training in other languages (e.g., Dutch, Chagatay) is provided by the Doctoral School.

Progress in training is assessed through an Annual Report, signed by supervisor and student, and shared with the Doctoral School.

Each student's progress is **monitored** by their Supervisory Committee; through our online system (*PhD Manager*) maintained by student and supervisor; through the Annual Report; and a sequence of assessment points:

- term 3, year 1, upgrade: 12,000-word written submission and 20-minute presentation;
- term 1, year 3: 3,000-word fieldwork report and presentation;
- September year 3: draft thesis.

Doctoral Researchers are **integrated** into the research culture of the department and School of Arts by attendance (required) at the Departmental Research Seminar, and the Research Training programme.

With the support of external and internal scholarships, we **recruit outstanding doctoral researchers**, on average 5–6 annually. Four doctoral researchers held AHRC studentships during the period, but the withdrawal of AHRC Block Grant funding 2014–19 forced us to look elsewhere for PhD funding. We addressed this by attracting scholarships from internal funds (SOAS 8, Bloomsbury Consortium 2), charitable trusts (Djam Foundation 1, Felix Trust 2, Jewish Music Institute 4), AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships Scheme (1, with the British Library), and the governments of Germany, Taiwan and Canada (3). The Leverhulme project *Sounding Islam in China* (Harris) funded another studentship. In 2016, in recognition of Durán's work on the remake of ROOTS (4.2.1), the production company donated scholarships for studying West African music, including support for doctoral fieldwork. With the return of AHRC block funding through the CHASE Consortium, we gained one of the first tranche of scholarships in 2019.

The **quality of our PhD students** is demonstrated by the distinctions they win and their career achievements. Recent winners of the annual British Forum for Ethnomusicology Student Prize included SOAS PhD students in 2015 (2 joint winners) and 2019 (1 winner and 2 highly commended). In 2019, Saeid Kordmafi won the Rob Schultz Junior Scholar Award for world music analysis, Robert Campbell was nominated Student of the Month (May) by the Society for Ethnomusicology, and Georgette Nummelin was awarded a £10K Sasakawa studentship for her work on Ainu language and music revitalisation. Recent SOAS PhD graduates were appointed to lectureships in Ethnomusicology at Istanbul Technical, Manchester, Salzburg, Xi'an, and Wesleyan Universities, and to post-doctoral fellowships at Copenhagen and SOAS (British Academy).

In the assessment period, 33 PhD students within the UoA completed successfully, an average of 4.5 per staff.

2.3 Diversity and Equality

A profound commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion underpins our research and teaching mission, which is dedicated to the music of communities and regions often excluded from other Music research programmes. Our increasing focus on marginalised communities and the role of music in promoting their own self-understanding and their recognition by dominant societies, our support for research on music and disability/health issues, and our inclusion of culture-representatives in the design and implementation of research as performers and research partners, demonstrate our commitment to inclusion at all levels.

We welcomed PhD researchers of **diverse identities**, including four with physical or learning differences. SOAS PhD scholarships now prioritise BAME applicants, and this has enabled an outstanding Music graduate of Nigerian origin, who also has a physical disability, to undertake a PhD. Nurtured by our MA pathway in Development, the study of music, disabilities and health is a growing subject of research, accounting for 4 current projects, including a study of music and dyslexia in Africa by a researcher who himself has dyslexia.

This commitment is supported by institutional procedures and policies. SOAS holds an Athena SWAN (AS) Bronze award. The EDI strategy of SOAS is set out in the Code of Practice, §1.10 – 27; EDI training for all new staff, and unconscious bias training for selection panel members, are mandatory (see IES 3.3).

In preparing the Music REF submission, drafts of this Environment Statement were circulated periodically to all staff for comment; submitted outputs were selected by a panel including three Music staff, one an ECR, with a gender balance of F:M = 2:1. The balance of representation by outputs is F:M = 9:7.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

As a small research unit that aims to be world-leading in the study of ethnomusicology and the music of Asia and Africa, we exploit the support and facilities of SOAS, a specialist institution of international reputation, the interdisciplinary School of Arts to which we belong, and research income generated from external sources.

3.1 Income

We encourage and support staff in submitting funding applications to sources including the ERC, British Academy, Leverhulme and AHRC, taking advantage of grant-writing workshops provided by the Staff Development Office, Seed Corn Funding, and increasingly robust procedures for project development and internal review developed in the School of Arts and SOAS Research Office. This strategy resulted in 29 applications, a strong success rate (31%) demonstrating high quality bids, and a **total income of £908K, averaging £126K per FTE.**

Because of the time required to complete projects and bring major outputs to publication, some outputs and impacts in this REF cycle are linked to projects funded in previous cycles. Thus Durán's film *The Voice of Tradition: Bako Dagnon and her Family* (2015) arises from her AHRC-funded *Growing into Music* (2009–12); Impey's impact case study arises from *Future Pasts in an Apocalyptic Moment* (AHRC) (2013–18). Of projects begun in this cycle, Harris's *Sounding Islam in China* (Leverhulme, £304K) has generated 6 articles and book chapters, a book and an edited volume; and Melville's book *It's a London Thing* reflects his participation in a project with University of Westminster, *Bass Culture* (AHRC, £14K).

Recent awards include £300K for *Towards an alternative model of heritage as sustainable development: Uyghur meshrep in Kazakhstan* (British Academy, Harris), £70.6K for *Afro-Mexican musical youth in Oaxaca: roots, creativity, community* (British Academy, Durán), £33.7K for *Endangered songs: creativity and diversity in language and music* (Leverhulme, Widdess).

Our strategy also includes increasing external financial support for PhD and post-doctoral research. As a result, we acquired two Bloomsbury studentships, one studentship from Leverhulme (part of *Sounding Islam in China*) and one AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (with the British Library); post-doctoral researchers have been supported by the British Academy (two Newton International Fellowships), EU (Marie Curie) and Leverhulme (*Sounding Islam*).

3.2 Infrastructure and facilities

3.2.1 Structures

Responsibility for co-ordinating and supporting research is shared between the School of Arts and the Music Department:

(a) School of Arts

The Head of School co-ordinates financial planning and research strategy, by approving applications for internal and external funding, research leave, and faculty, Visiting Scholar and Research Associate appointments; supervises monitoring of early-career researchers, oversees Staff Development and Review, and encourages research collaborations. He is assisted by three officers of whom two were Music staff:

- Director of Research (Harris 2016–20): oversees staff research; responsible for SoA Research Strategy; supports research collaborations, grant applications, research initiatives and clusters across the SoA; convenes SoA Research Committee;
- Director of Doctoral Studies (Harris 2020–21): oversees PhD research, and co-ordinates research training across the SoA; oversees the progression and examination of Doctoral Researchers;
- Staff Research Seminar convenor (Williams): convenes monthly staff seminars reflecting activities of the Research Clusters.

(b) Department of Music

- REF Co-ordinator (Widdess) oversees the department's research and impact strategies, advises staff on their individual research plans, monitors research publications and co-ordinates internal and external review, drafts and revises the REF submission, and sits on SoA and SOAS REF working groups;
- Research Tutor (Impey) co-ordinates research training for Doctoral Researchers in Music, advises the Doctoral School on MPhil/PhD applications;
- Music Public Seminar co-ordinator (Williams) organizes a programme of public seminars with invited internal or external speakers fortnightly during termtime.

3.2.2 Support

Research infrastructure includes the SOAS Library, a unique collection of resources on Asia and Africa of international significance. The Library collects publications on Ethnomusicology, including books and journals relating to and published in our regions of research and in relevant languages, rarely available elsewhere in the UK. The Library collects music on CD and DVD, and provides on- and off-campus access to online resources including Oxford Music Online, Garland Encyclopaedia of World Music, Smithsonian Global Sound, RILM, JSTOR, etc. The Library's Archive holds unique documentation on A.A. Bake and other early ethnomusicologists associated with SOAS.

The Research Office advise and assist with preparation, internal review and submission of grant applications; and the Impact Officer advises on the generation and collection of impact data and the preparation of impact case studies.

SOAS invests financially in Music research, through: an annual research allowance (£750) for each staff member; competitive Seed Corn funding for individual and group research activities leading to external funding applications (£39.9K received for 11 projects); and Impact Acceleration and Enhancement funding (£13K received). Impey's Seed Corn grant (£8000) led to a commission to evaluate two music and peacebuilding projects in Palestine and El Salvador.

3.2.3 Facilities

Staff are provided with a computer and appropriate software, including database, music notation and analysis software (FileMaker, Sibelius, Transcribe! etc.) if required. Online access to key databases and reference works is available on- and off-campus through the SOAS Library (3.2.2). Video, audio recording and photographic equipment are available for loan from the IT department. An online repository for publications, website hosting facilities, and SoundCloud and YouTube channels are available for dissemination of research findings.

Estate and facilities relevant to our research include the Brunei Gallery, a purpose-built exhibition space with professional management, which hosts exhibitions by internal and external exhibitors. This space was used for a SOAS Centenary Exhibition *Celebrating Art and Music*, organized by the SoA, featuring the history of research in art and music at SOAS (2017); and *Stolen Moments – Namibian Music History Untold*, linked to Impey's research, in collaboration with the Namibian High Commission (2019). The same building houses the Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, which accommodates conferences and the SOAS Concert Series, managed by the Music department through a concert organiser; other space in the institution is used for the annual World Music Summer School.

In 2019, SOAS made a significant investment (c. £200,000) in facilities by creating a Media Studio, and appointing a Studio Manager (0.8, Grade 7–8). The facility came on stream in autumn 2019, and—although temporarily stalled by Covid—will support research training and staff research, leading to research income generation and impact, when we return on campus.

Another specialist facility located on campus is the film company Chouette Films, which creates innovative documentary films with an ethical and environmental agenda. Chouette collaborated with Widdess in 2019 on the documentary film *Musical heritage of the Kathmandu Valley*,

supported by a Seed Corn grant, using digital technologies to document marginalised musicians in Nepal, in line with our strategy on knowledge exchange (1.4.1).

3.2.4 Archives

Staff of the UoA typically accumulate personal archives of unique sound/video field recordings and other materials. These collections are deposited at the British Library Sound Archive, and at local archives in relevant countries where available, as a contribution to the research base, to Open Access, and to repatriation (see 1.4, 1.5, 4.3). Melville deposited filmed interviews with Jamaican music-makers in the UK at the BLSA, arising from his Bass Culture project, and Harris gained Newton International Scholar funding for a post-doctoral scholar to work on private archives in Xinjiang in collaboration with the BLSA. Durán and Widdess have deposited their complete collections.

A symposium on *Digital Archiving and Community Engagement* was organised at the BLSA by Widdess as part of Linda Barwick's Leverhulme-funded Visiting Professorship.

Historic archives deposited at SOAS have been transferred to BLSA, namely the sound and film collections of Bake, King, Rycroft and others, and staff of the UoA advise the BL on cataloguing such materials. Such collaboration has resulted, for example, in Durán's editing of an unfinished film documenting the construction of a kora in the Gambia shot in the 1970s by the late Anthony King, and shown in the *Celebrating Art and Music* exhibition (2017). Our close relationship with the BLSA also resulted in the award of an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (2016, Widdess) to work on the Bake collection.

4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

The UoA plays a leading role within the international discipline of ethnomusicology, through research collaborations, interactions with non-academic institutions and audiences, administrative roles in subject organisations, and our publication series. Awards and invitations to present high-profile lectures in international fora demonstrate international recognition of our role.

4.1 Collaborations, networks and partnerships

4.1.1 Academic research collaborations

In addition to participating in subject associations (4.3.2), **we collaborated with national (7) and international (13) research institutions**, including Bath Spa University, Chinese University Hong Kong, International Centre for Transitional Justice, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Shanghai Conservatory, Kathmandu University, etc. Our expertise enabled involvement in interdisciplinary collaborative projects with other institutions, which furthered the specific research goals of the UoA, contributed to national and international priorities, and/or led to significant impact.

Some projects were led by UoA members. Harris led the Leverhulme-funded *Sounding Islam in China*, in collaboration with Maria Jaschok (Oxford University), investigating changing patterns of religious belief and practice among Muslims in China through the medium of sound. She led the two-year project *Uyghur meshrep in Kazakhstan*, investigating the premise that intangible cultural heritage can be harnessed as a tool for sustainable development. Uyghur community organisations and academic partners in Turan University collaborated in the project, which aimed to build research capacity in Kazakhstan, and promote the transmission of Uyghur musical heritage. SOAS was the base for Widdess's collaboration with Leverhulme Visiting Professor Linda Barwick in 2019. The project included two symposia: *Language and music*, co-hosted with SOAS World Languages Institute to celebrate the UNESCO Year of Indigenous Languages, and *Digital archiving and community engagement*, co-organised with the British Library Sound Archive.

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

In other projects, UoA staff were part of a team based outside SOAS. Impey was co-investigator on the AHRC-funded *Future Pasts in an Apocalyptic Moment* (2013–18) with collaborators at Birkbeck, Edinburgh and Keele, and local affiliations with the National Museum of Namibia and the Namibian film company, Mamokobo Productions (1.5.2). Melville joined the AHRC project *Bass culture: Mapping the impact of Jamaican music on the UK* in collaboration with the University of Westminster. This led to the exhibition *Bass Culture 70/50* (November 2018), marking seventy years since the arrival of the HMT Windrush, and fifty years since the term “reggae” was coined. This project aims to feed back to a marginalised community their musical impact on UK culture, and to highlight this impact to the wider UK community. Widdess collaborated with Martin Rohrmeier (Lausanne) and Tudor Popescu (University of Vienna) on cognition in Indian music, leading to three articles. He is a member of the Music and Science research group, University of Cambridge, and a team investigating MIR and music transcription (Stockholm, Queen Mary, and Sheffield) bringing together the perspectives of ethnomusicology and science. Previously mentioned collaborations with the British Library Sound Archive are also relevant here (see 1.5.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2.4).

4.1.2 Collaboration with performers

Our expertise has enabled practice-based research in collaboration with performers. Such collaboration is fundamental to Durán’s work, as evidenced by her projects with Malian musicians (1.5.2); and Gray, whose collaborative composition projects include *The Birth of Kala* and *The Watchers by the Well* with story-teller and movement artist Tim Jones; *Bawang Merah Bawang Putih* with Balinese choreographer Ni Made Pujawati; the album *My Tricky Spirit*, and *Ardhanariswara* for string quartet, with Malaysian dancer Mavin Khoo. Harris’s engagement with maqam across borders brought together Central Asian musicians and SOAS students in a series of performances supported by the Association for Central Asian Civilizations. Widdess’s work on cognition in Indian music involves collaboration with sitarist Dharambir Singh and vocalist Ritwik Sanyal.

4.2 Relationships with key research users, beneficiaries and audiences

4.2.1 Engaging with diverse communities and publics

In 2018 the Music Department was nominated as **one of the UK’s “100 best breakthroughs”** by the *MadeAtUni* campaign (“showing how universities improve our everyday lives”), for our “major role in bringing world music into mainstream awareness in the UK”. Our reputation for expertise in particular music cultures makes us in demand as **consultants or advisors** for cultural organisations, media and creative projects. This is especially the case with Durán, reflecting her many years’ research in the music of West Africa and experience as a music producer and radio presenter. In 2015 she was employed by the production team of *ROOTS*—a critically acclaimed remake of the famous TV series—to advise on Mandinka music, language and culture.

Another significant collaboration was with the Aga Khan Music Initiative 2011–16, involving Durán and Harris as consultants; Harris advised on Central Asian concerts and recordings and helped set up a music school in Kazakhstan; Durán coordinated a programme at the National Museum of Mali to stimulate and showcase musical children in oral traditions. AKMI subsequently commissioned the album *Ladilikan* (1.5.2).

From 2014–20, Impey was **International Advisor** to “Hidden Years Music Archive Project”, Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation, Stellenbosch University, South Africa (funded by the Volkswagen Foundation). Her role included steering archive policy and research, giving public lectures, and PhD supervision. Impey’s Seed Corn grant “Strengthening the Case for Cultures in the SDG Post-Conflict Agenda” (£8000) for a collaboration with Netherlands-based organisation, Musicians Without Borders, led to a commission to evaluate two music and peacebuilding projects, in Palestine and El Salvador (private funding, €25,000).

Widdess and Williams acted as **advisors on Indian music** for BBC television programmes *Rhythms of India* and *Queen Victoria: My musical Britain* respectively (2019), and for two exhibitions at Asia House in collaboration with the Asian Music Circuit (2017, 2018). Harris was

a jury member for the *International Festival of Maqam*, Shahrizabz, Uzbekistan, and briefed UK and EU Parliaments on religious repression and cultural erasure in China.

4.2.2 Responsiveness to national and international priorities and initiatives

We demonstrated the relevance of our socially engaged research by responding to several international priorities and current global challenges. Impey's *Future Pasts* project responded to the AHRC's 2012 highlight notice on 'Environmental Change and Sustainability', and her engagement with Musicians Without Borders responded to urgent international peacebuilding initiatives (4.1.1). Harris's *Uyghur meshrep in Kazakhstan* project responded to the British Academy Sustainable Development Programme, supported by the UK Government's Global Challenges Research Fund; her *Sounding Islam* project led to direct responses to the human rights situation in Xinjiang. Durán's collaborative research in Mexico, supported by the Cultural Commission of the Senate House of Mexico, responded to a national campaign to increase awareness of Afro-Mexican communities, and their inclusion in the national census.

4.3 Contribution to the sustainability of the discipline

The unit contributes to the sustainability of the discipline of ethnomusicology, (a) through strategic promotion of new research, through its publication series and conferences; and (b) by taking a leading role in the organisation of subject associations.

4.3.1 Promoting new research

Our flagship strategy for promoting the sustainability of the discipline is the Routledge *SOAS Studies in Music* series (formerly SOAS Musicology Series), edited by Howard (to 2017) and Harris (from 2018). It is the **largest scholarly book series in ethnomusicology in the world**, with 83 volumes published by 2020. Impey and Widdess serve on the Editorial Board, alongside seven international scholars. The Series produces high-quality, ethnographically rich studies of music-making in the world's diverse musical cultures, engaging critical issues in ethnomusicology, historical and analytical approaches. Several volumes have won international awards. Since 2018 we have diversified the editorial board, and we use them actively to guide the series, assess applications, and solicit strong proposals which engage with contemporary concerns and methodologies in the discipline.

We published a research-based ethnomusicology textbook, *Pieces of the Musical World* (Harris & Pease eds. 2015). Reflecting the department's distinctive theoretical voice, this collection shows how broad issues in ethnomusicology can be illuminated by a close cultural and musical analysis of individual items of repertoire.

We promoted new research and interdisciplinary conversations by **organising conferences** ranging from small workshops (e.g., a 1-day conference on *Music and Language in Cross-cultural Perspectives*, 2016) to large international conferences. *Analysis, Cognition and Ethnomusicology*, 2014, brought together the British Forum for Ethnomusicology, Analytical Approaches to World Music, Society for Music Analysis, and Centre for Music and Science (Cambridge), and was attended by 200 international delegates. Harris co-convenes the annual Middle East and Central Asia Music Forum, and co-organised the "Islamic Soundscapes of China" conference (SOAS, 2014), which led to a special issue of *Performing Islam* journal, and the 'Ethnographies of Islam' conference (SOAS, 2017), which led to a co-edited volume. Williams convened two workshops of the South Asia Music and Dance Forum, on "Mediating South Asian Music: Manuscripts to YouTube" (2019) and "Music histories of the Kathmandu Valley" (2020).

4.3.2 Supporting subject associations

Staff are active members of the main **national and international subject associations** in this discipline: the British Forum for Ethnomusicology, the International Council for Traditional Music, and the Society for Ethnomusicology. During the cycle we contributed to these organisations as UK liaison officer and conference organizer for the ICTM (Howard), committee members of BFE (Howard, Webster-Kogen), and chair of prize committees for BFE and SEM (Harris, Impey), the Royal Anthropological Institute Ethnomusicology Committee (Impey), the Islam in China Network

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

(Harris) etc. We encourage our postgraduate students to become actively involved in subject associations; currently (2020) the unit is represented on the BFE committee by three recent PhD graduates.

4.4 Indicators of wider influence, contributions and recognition

Our national and international reputation is reflected in positions of influence, honours and prizes, and invitations to give prestigious lectures. Staff referee publications for journals, on average several times per year, including *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, East and Central Asian studies journals (Harris), *Analytical approaches to world music* (Widdess), and book series (OUP, Illinois: Harris). Harris edits the *SOAS Studies in Music* series (see 4.3.1); Widdess serves on the Editorial Board of *Analytical approaches to world music* (Widdess). Senior staff are called upon to assess promotion and tenure applications in the UK and USA. Harris is an External Evaluator for the Research Grants Council of Hong Kong and Kazakhstan's National Center of Science and Technology, and a member of the AHRC peer review panel since 2019; Widdess serves on the British Academy Standing Committee, History of Art and Music, and a cross-member of the Asia and Africa Section.

4.4.1 Awards and Prizes

Members of the unit received numerous awards for research and for specific outputs, including:

- Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (Impey);
- Award from the World Uyghur Congress for outstanding contributions to the Uyghur nation, 2019 (Harris);
- Fellow of the British Academy, 2015 (Widdess);
- Winner, Arts & Humanities Research Council 10th Anniversary Research in Films Award, "Best AHRC-funded film since 1998" for the film *The Voice of Tradition: Bako Dagnon and her family*, 2015 (Durán);
- ROOTS Critics Poll Album of the Year (2018), and Songlines Best Fusion album of the Year (2018), for CD *Ladilikan* (Durán);
- Grammy Award Nomination for CD *Toumani & Sidiki*, 2015 (Durán);
- Recent books by Webster-Kogen and Impey nominated for the SEM book prize 2019; Webster-Kogen's awarded the prize for best book on Jewish music, SEM 2019; Impey's awarded Commendation by BFE Book Prize committee, 2019.

Our Doctoral Researchers also won awards for their work; for example: BFE Student Paper Prize 2019—V. Tadros (winner), L. Chiarofonte and C. Stacey (highly commended).

4.4.2 Prestigious lectures

Every year our staff give several keynote and other invited lectures at prestigious conferences and institutions in the UK and overseas.

The following selection demonstrates the remarkable diversity of contexts in which we are invited to present our research:

Durán: Singing Storytellers, Cape Breton (SSHRC Canada) (2014); John Blacking keynote lecture, Royal Anthropological Institute (2016);

Harris: Cambridge (Music), Haifa (Music), 2017; Yale (East Asian Studies); Michigan (Music), 2018; University of Washington (Anthropology); UBC (East Asian Studies); LSE (Anthropology); Brussels Free University; KCL (Law), 2019, UCLA (Music), 2020;

Impey: SEM/ICTM, Limerick, 2014; SEM President's Roundtable, 2016;

Webster-Kogen: Institute for Musical Research Distinguished Lecture Series, 2017; Joe Loss Memorial Lecture, Jewish Music Institute (London);

Widdess: Hook Lecture, Sydney Conservatorium, 2015; Analytical Approaches to World Music, New York; *Saṅgītaratnākara* conference, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, New Delhi, 2017; Society for Music Analysis, London, 2018;

Williams: Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin-Dahlem, 2018; Wellcome Collection; RMA Study Day; University of Lausanne, 2019; Royal Anthropological Institute, 2020.