



WELCOME to the first edition of The Music Commission newsletter, designed to keep you informed on what we're up to each month.

The Music Commission is a large-scale enquiry looking at the educational, social and economic factors that influence how people progress in their music learning. Launched by ABRSM in July 2017 and chaired by Sir Nick Kenyon, the Commission will be guided by the evidence and knowledge of those in the music education sector, alongside the experience of parents, teachers and learners.

The trajectory of the Commission, its research programme and final recommendations are guided by our Panel of experts, in tandem with our Research Reference Group. Both will oversee and peer-review the work of the Commission and its outputs.

Over the coming months, we will be working hard to raise the national profile of the Commission and we look forward to meeting and working with many of you over the course of this process.

Best wishes,  
ABRSM Commission Team

Lincoln Abbotts (Executive Director: Strategic Development, Emily Field (Executive Officer) and Nerissa Taysom (Research Manager: The Music Commission)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Music Mark Annual Conference | 24 November | Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth

Be amongst the first to contribute to the Commission in this hour-long session, where the ABRSM team will be joined by Panel member, Carolyn Baxendale (Head of Bolton Music Services) and Professor Martin Fautley (Birmingham City University) to talk about the Commission and its aims.

[www.musicmark.org.uk/events/music-mark-annual-conference-2017/](http://www.musicmark.org.uk/events/music-mark-annual-conference-2017/)

## HIGHLIGHTS

ABRSM Teacher Conference | 4 November | Grange Tower Bridge Hotel, London

This was our first chance to talk to lots of music teachers about their experience of musical progress and progression. As part of two drop-in sessions, we asked them to think about the following questions:

*What tools do you use to engage your students with the wider world of music?*

*How do you develop your own practice as a teacher? Who supports you? What motivates you?*

*What words do you use with your students to talk about progress in their musical learning?*

Join in the conversation and tweet us [@musiCommission](https://twitter.com/musiCommission)

All Party Parliamentary Group on Classical Music | 1 November | Houses of Parliament

Lincoln joined forces with Sam Jackson – Managing Editor at Classic FM and one of our Panel members – to talk about the Commission to members. Lincoln has been invited to update the APPG on the Commission's initial findings next Spring.

'Breaking the Glass Ceiling' symposium, Bristol Plays Music | 29 September | Colston Hall, Bristol

Nerissa gave the keynote speech about how the Commission should reflect the experience of all musicians, including those from the disabled community.

Music Education Council symposium | 14 September | Regent's University London

Nick Kenyon delivered the keynote speech on the Commission, noting the scope of the project and who is involved. In afternoon discussions, members raised the need for a perspective on early-years provision, tapping into schools where high-quality music making is not accessible, and how musical skills can empower choice for children and young people.



ABRSM Teacher Conference 2017  
Teachers join the Commission team to discuss their experience of progress and progression.

## NEWS

Dr Jennie Henley will be joining the Research Reference Group in January 2018. Jennie is currently the Area Leader in Music Education at the Royal College of Music and brings with her expertise in community music and the ways that teachers work inclusively within different contexts.

The Commission is grateful to Professor Susan Hallam and Susanne Burns for sharing their unpublished literature review on 'Progression in instrumental music learning for learners from disadvantaged communities' (ACE & Opera North, forthcoming), which has provided an invaluable foundation for the Commission's research programme.

We have been talking to Panel member Hasan Bakhshi, Executive Director of Creative Economy at Nesta, about how we can use large-scale data to inform the Commission's research.

The Commission was discussed on BBC Radio 3's [Music Matters](#) show, hosted by Tom Service. Lincoln was interviewed alongside Diane Widdison (Musician's Union) and Fiona Harvey (ABO) in a conversation about how children progress in their music learning.

If you would like to sign up to our monthly newsletter, please email us:  
[info@musiccommission.org.uk](mailto:info@musiccommission.org.uk)

In October, the Commission presented its aims to the Music Education Advisory Council, chaired by Professor Linda Merrick (Principal of the Royal Northern College of Music).

Lincoln and Emily met with Suzy Klein at the BBC to discuss her involvement in the Commission Panel and her wealth of experience in the music industry as a writer and broadcaster.

## RESEARCH

With the research programme now underway, the ABRSM team is collaborating with the Research Reference Group to gather the literature and evidence needed to investigate the Commission's aims in more detail. Over the next 12 months, this will involve the following:

**Secondary Research** – drawing on the latest scholarly and cultural literature in the area of progress and progression in learning, as well as large-scale data.

**Primary Research** – 'on the ground' discussions, focus groups, observations and interviews with learners, parents, teachers, schools, music services and cultural organisations.

**Public Consultation** – Opening in January 2018, this will be a series of questions and an online survey, available via our website, inviting responses from those across the sector.

WELCOME FROM OUR CHAIR SIR NICK KENYON:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP247hHRuE&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP247hHRuE&feature=youtu.be)

**THANK YOU** to all those who we've spoken to in the last three months...

Arts Award, Arts Council England, Association of British Orchestras, Awards for Young Musicians, Barbican, BBC, Bristol Plays Music, DODS, Ealing Music Service, ENO Baylis, Fiona Harvey, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Help Musicians UK, Jukedeck, Katherine Zeserson, Lyric Theatre Hammersmith, Professor Martin Fautley, Music Education Council, Music in Secondary Schools Trust, Music Mark, Musician's Union, Nesta, Nigel Taylor, NYJO, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Professor Susan Hallam, PRS Foundation, Royal Academy of Music, Royal College of Music, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Royal Northern College of Music, Steinberg, Sing Up, Sound and Music, Sound Connections, Trinity College London and Youth Music.