

# Quality Criteria in Pre-College Music Education

EMU Capacity Building Seminar  
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# Menu

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- I. Aperitiv...introduction
- II. Startér ...history of criteria/standards  
...process and challenges
- III. Hlavní chod...pre-college standards
- IV. Dezert...feedback, amendments
- V. Zažívací...Q&A

# Orla McDonagh

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- Classical Pianist from Ireland who trained in the USA  
BMus in Piano Performance, Juilliard  
MMus & DMus in Piano Performance, IU Bloomington
- Lectured at Indiana University, Lewis & Clark College,  
Royal Irish Academy of Music 1997-2014
- Areas: Piano, music theory, analysis, aural skills, injury  
recovery and prevention
- Currently Head of Conservatory @ DIT Conservatory  
of Music and Drama in Dublin, Ireland

# Finding my way to Quality

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- Student Representative
- Head of Operations in the dorms
- Fixing Problems as a young lecturer
- Liaison for the LC Adjunct lecturers
- Member of review preparation teams (USA)
- Polifonia WG for QA, Benchmarking and Accreditation from 2011-2014
- Currently a member of the Fullscore WG on Evaluation 2014-2017
- Peer Reviewer for MusiQuE

# Polifonia to **FULLSCORE**

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- ◉ Polifonia I (2004-2007)
- ◉ Polifonia II (2007-2010)
- ◉ Polifonia III (2011-2014)



# Evaluation for Enhancement WG Members

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- **Stefan Gies**, Association Européenne des Conservatoires (AEC Chief Executive) and Hochschule für Musik Dresden
- **Orla McDonagh**, DIT Conservatory of Music & Drama (AEC)
- **Adri De Vugt**, Royal Conservatoire The Hague - EAS Past President
- **Gerhard Sammer**, Hochschule für Musik Würzburg - EAS President
- **Helena Maffli**, EMU President
- **Friedrich Koh-Dolge**, Stuttgarter Musikschule (EMU Board member)
- **Linda Messas**, Association Européenne des Conservatoires (AEC)

# Process & Challenges

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- ◉ EMU, EAS and AEC conversations
- ◉ Decisions regarding focus of WG
- ◉ Projects in sub-com, then WG and beyond...
- ◉ Challenges – words, definitions, diverse pre-college systems all over Europe
- ◉ Creating a useful “tool” without overwhelming Pre-college institutions unused to external QA review

# What is meant by 'Pre-college Music Education'?

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- Understood differently across Europe.
- For the Working Group, **'Pre-college music education'** defines a **stage of education which provides high level, specialised musical training to a level appropriate for entrance into higher music education if a pupil so should choose.**
- *Pre-college music education* can take place in a variety of settings: in independent specialised schools, in junior departments of higher music education institutions, as preparatory classes in music schools, or in privately organised contexts.
- *'Pre-college music education'* is characterised by the aim/capacity to bring pupils to an outstanding artistic level so that they are able to pursue their musical education at a higher music education institution after graduating.



# Glossary

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- **Classroom-related teaching**
- This includes classroom teaching as well as activities such as going to a concert
  
- **Pre-college training**
- Pre-college training defines a stage of education, which provides high level, specialised musical training to a level appropriate for entrance into higher music education if a pupil should so choose.
  
- The WG does not define it as taking place in an institution. It refers to programmes which have the capacity to (/which aim at) lead(ing) students to higher education/to the profession.

# Glossary cont.

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- **School-related general music teaching.**
- This term refers to general music education: music education that takes place in or around the school/general music education and is accessible to all (or most of) the children.
- [This takes place in the compulsory school. The opposite of that is music education pupils/students can choose for (music schools, orchestra, etc.) or which is not offered to all children].
- **Specialised music teaching**  
Specialised music education is optional; it can take place in different settings, including private teaching, choirs, orchestras, etc.

# Standards for Pre-college Music Education

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## ◉ Toolkit

- ◉ More guidelines than standards. (All in how the “toolkit” is used...)

## ◉ Structure

- 3 columns
- 1<sup>st</sup> is the “standard”
- 2<sup>nd</sup> is a list of suggested questions
- 3<sup>rd</sup> is a list of ideas for supporting documents

# 8 Domains of Enquiry

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- Institutional/School mission, vision and context;
- Educational Processes;
- Pupil Profiles;
- Teaching Staff;
- Facilities, Resources and Support;
- Communication, Organisation and Decision-making;
- Internal Quality Culture;
- Public Interaction

# Who might use it?

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- Pre-college music education providers interested in conducting a self-evaluation of the education they provide, with the overall aim to enhance its quality.
- Institutions or other stakeholders intending to set up a Pre-college programme.
- Pre-college music education providers undergoing an external quality enhancement review (at their own initiative or in the context of an evaluation or accreditation required by law).

# Domains and Standards

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- **Institutional/School mission, vision and context;**
- *Standard 1*
- **The institutional/school mission and vision are clearly stated.**
  
- **Educational Processes;**
- *Standard 2.1*
- **The goals of the institution/school are achieved through the content and structure of the study programmes and their methods of delivery.**
- *Standard 2.2*
- **The institution/school offers a range of opportunities for pupils to gain an international perspective.**
- *Standard 2.3*
- **Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.**

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- Pupil Profiles;

- Standard 3.1

- **Clear admissions criteria exist, which establish artistic/academic suitability of pupils.**

- *Standard 3.2*

- **The institution/school has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression and achievement of its pupils.**

- Teaching Staff;

- *Standard 4.1*

- **Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/ researchers.**

- *Standard 4.2*

- **There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.**

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- **Facilities, Resources and Support;**

- *Standard 5.1*

- **The institution/school has appropriate resources to support pupil learning and delivery of the programmes.**



- *Standard 5.2*

- **The institution's/school's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.**

- *Standard 5.3*

- **The institution/school has sufficient qualified support staff.**



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- **Communication, Organisation and Decision-making;**

- *Standard 6.1*

- **Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution/school.**



- *Standard 6.2*

- **The institution/school has an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.**

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## ● **Internal Quality Culture;**

### ● *Standard 7*

- **The institution/school has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.**

## ● **Public Interaction**

### ● *Standard 8.1*

- **The institution/school engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.**

- *Standard 8.2* **Information provided to the public about the institution/school is clear, consistent and accurate.**

# Feedback and Testing

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- Testing within:
  - Working Group
  - Eas, EMU, AEC
  - Site visits
  - Emails to colleagues
  - Review of a pre-college

Feedback

# Back to Martin's Concept of Quality

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- Tension between '(musical) standards' and '(educational) quality'
- Music sector has been strong on musical/artistic standards
- 'Educational quality' fairly new: organisation of the curriculum, student feedback, facilities, assessment rules, etc.
- Crucial for our type of institutions to bring both together

# Finally...

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- “To affect the quality of the day,  
that is the highest of the arts.”
- Henry David Thoreau