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ADULT MUSIC EDUCATION

Negotiating New Musical Learning Identities in Adulthood

Marian McRory

Submitted for the award of PhD

Technological University Dublin

Conservatory of Music and Drama

February 2024

Supervisor: Dr Helen Lawlor

ABSTRACT

The focus of this study is the synergising of music learning and adult learning. It explores the value of music education from the adult learner's perspective. The literature spans the two areas of education, namely music education and adult/lifelong learning. Two programmes, Allegro for Adults I and Allegro for Adults II, were created as a methodological tool for implementing the practical aspects of this research topic. The musical parameters of aims, curriculum, musical activities, learning outcomes and assessment are examined, based on the philosophies of music educators and theories of learning in adulthood. Participants were all over eighteen years old, ranging across the lifespan into older adulthood.

In light of the time-frame, this study spans the era of a decade (2012-2022) and this is reflected in the literature. Research combining adult and music learning has been evolving over the past twenty-five years and is therefore a relatively recent addition to the field of educational research. The value of music participation for maintaining well-being in adulthood, the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the role of technology for adult music learning are discussed. A pilot study was conducted during 2022 for the purpose of assimilating the processes of face-to-face learning with online learning.

This qualitative research study encompasses semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and reflective writings of participants and also of the researcher. Interviews were recorded and transcribed and all data remained in possession of the researcher, thus ensuring confidentiality. The majority of participants had some musical background, but many started with Allegro I (foundational), while those with three years' experience embarked on Allegro II (more advanced). Many participants completed the two programmes and the accreditation status of the programmes was recognised in facilitating entry into university.

The research findings reflect the important role of music education for adults. They highlight the multidimensional nature of music participation in terms of cognitive, musical, health, psychological, sociological and spiritual values throughout the lifespan. Post-Allegro philosophy includes future choices and opportunities for engagement with music. The sociological dimensions, both inside and outside the classroom are significant to enhancing life. The findings involving formal and informal learning in music education reflect the autonomy of the learner in making choices for their future musical experiences.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis which I now submit for examination for the award of PhD, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

This thesis was prepared according to the regulations for postgraduate study by research of the Dublin Institute of Technology and has not been submitted in whole or in part for another award in any other third level institution.

The work reported on in this thesis conforms to the principles and requirements of the Technological University Dublin guidelines for ethics in research.

Technological University Dublin has permission to keep, lend or copy this thesis in whole or in part, on condition that any such use of the material of the thesis be duly acknowledged.

Signature _____ Date _____

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background to the research

This study presented an investigation into the field of adult music education. The inspiration for this research stemmed from a perceived need for a uniquely adult learning programme which evolved into two programmes, Allegro for Adults I and Allegro for Adults II. The concept of this programme also involved the adult learning environment which was based in a music conservatoire in a university. Diversity in the curricular content was an important consideration and although the pedagogical approach was accelerated in nature, gaining knowledge and understanding underpinned the skills-based and compositional elements. Curricular choices were based on the researcher's personal and professional experience of teaching adults in terms of what would be most meaningful for adult participation in learning music. This doctoral research aspired to offer an alternative pedagogical approach to adults learning music in a formal higher education structure.

To produce this new paradigm, an action research model was used that was informed by current theories of adult learning and philosophies of music education. The first cycle involved Allegro for Adults Summer Schools (2011 and 2012) while the second cycle was the implementation of two new programmes, Allegro for Adults I and Allegro for Adults II (2012-2013). A vision to create a different style of music learning specifically embodying the needs of adult learners demanded a new tool, a new point of entry into music learning. The Allegro I and Allegro II programmes had a two-fold purpose; firstly to offer a point of entry into the world of music education in a Conservatoire and secondly to employ an investigative research tool (action research and ethnography) for

understanding how adults learn and how adults learn music. The findings were analysed in the broader context of musical development across the lifespan.

The inspiration for the title 'Allegro for Adults' came from two sources. Firstly, the courses encompassed several grades over the academic year (Allegro I covered four grades and Allegro II three grades) and secondly, my professional observations of the experiential and transformational nature of adult learning indicated that adults generally embrace diversity and intensity in a music programme. Aural, composition, listening, performance, analysis and research topics underpinned the diversity in the Allegro curriculum.

The context of the research and the positionality of the researcher was challenging at both ends of the process. The earlier stages involved getting the summer schools up and running and the launch and implementation of the programme formed the start of the journey. Although action research was the chosen methodology initially, personal observations and reflections over the coming years brought a realisation that an ethnographic approach complemented the original approach; quasi as a second level of reflection focusing on the 'why?" and "how?" , after the action research had addressed the "what?" aspects of the project. The concept of observer-participant was really at the heart of what this researcher was about – being part of the group both professionally and personally. Ethnography made sense as participants' interviews and reflective writing were ethnographic in nature; likewise the data from action research was similar to narrative ethnographies. Both methodologies proved a good fit for interpreting and analysing the findings. A decision to represent all the data, under the umbrella of Allegro for Adults, resulted in forty-three adults participating in this study. Personally it was heartening to hear the responses of these adults and their enthusiasm to contribute, not just on the basis of their music education experiences on the programmes but, from a

broader perspective as many said they wanted more adults to have similar musical opportunities. The revelations concerning the research methodologies, particularly ethnography, enriched my own perspective of the study not only to move forward but also to look backwards at the journey.

Arising from my existing passion for adult music teaching and learning, I wanted to give something back by making a unique contribution to adult music education, music education scholarship and also to all those adults who shared a mutual love of music learning. To achieve this a new tool was required and action research was the choice for investigating the research questions, with ethnography being a prefect approach to the second stage of the research.

1.2 Research questions and overview

The three main research questions underpinning this project focus on issues relating to both learners and teachers, and to learning and teaching:

- What are the learning needs of adult music students in a musicianship class context?
- How do adult music students experience and perceive their learning?
- How best can teachers facilitate adult music education, inside and outside the formal learning environment, that will inform and enrich new musical identities into their future.

All aspects of the study including the design of the programme, data collection, analysis and presentation of the findings were guided by the research questions. As researcher, my experience concurred with Conway noting, 'research questions often emerge and change throughout the process of research, which I believe is one of the most exciting aspects of doing research in a qualitative way' (Conway, 2014: 6). His comments on changes occurring throughout the research had been realised during the summer schools and also

during the first year of the programme which had several twists and turns from its original conception and commencement.

The willingness on the part of the researcher to 'let go' of preconceptions regarding outcomes proved a valuable method for allowing new concepts or changing ideas to emerge. The marketing of Allegro events, engaging other artistic professionals, organising themes and topics for inclusion, negotiating venues and encouraging adults to participate turned out to be an ongoing, everchanging process that resulted in outcomes were both insightful (for research) and valuable (for teaching).

1.3 The learning environment

Allegro for Adults classes were taught in the TU Dublin Conservatoire of Music. Founded in 1890 under the auspices of the Royal Irish Academy of Music as the Municipal School of Music, it later became known as the College of Music and had traditionally been inclusive of adult learning. Inclusivity of adult learners and lifelong learning has now become part of the fabric of many music colleges, continuing education colleges and universities on a global level (Finn, 2016; Boles, 2012; Lines, 2001).

The numbers of students in the Allegro classes rarely exceeded twelve. Traditionally music classes tend to have small numbers. As a music practitioner I favour smaller classes as the teaching and learning is more effective in terms of students' participation for singing and performing. It is easier to monitor the progress of individuals within smaller groups, as Sutherland reiterates it 'stimulates and accelerates cognitive growth, enhances social skills, communication skills and enhances creativity' (Mowatt & Siann, 1998, Cited in Sutherland, P Ed: 95). This was particularly true in the context of the adult music class.

1.4. The Allegro for Adults programme over the decade 2012-2022

This journey has been a long process in terms of the duration of the Allegro for Adults programme but more significantly in the context of the completion of this research. A five and a half years gap occurred during the research owing to personal circumstances including grief and loss, and a road traffic accident which resulted in a long period of recovery. It has been a very difficult journey and re-connecting with the work after such a substantive break proved challenging. Many changes had occurred over the decade in terms of course content, and based on personal reflections this inevitably led to changes in pedagogical approach and in the curriculum.

1.5 Aims and objectives

The rationale for this research evolved from personal experience teaching musicianship to part-time adult students in the TU Dublin Conservatoire of Music since 1990.[1] Due to cut-backs during the period 1997-2003 there was a steady decline in availability of specialist classes for adults in the Conservatory. This resulted in adults and adolescents learning in the same classes; a learning environment unsuited to adults in particular. It became increasingly evident to me that there was a demand and a growing need for a different pedagogical approach in the form of a specialised programme for the adult learner, one designed with their specific needs in mind.

To test the sustainability of my original ideas before undertaking formal research I asked a cross-section of the adult students in the Conservatory to write short reflections on the value they placed on music education in their lives. Arising from this informal research, I wrote some magazine articles for peer feedback that voiced reflections of adult music

[1] The Conservatoire of Music and Drama was re-named as TU Dublin: Conservatoire of Music and Drama, incorporated into the Technological University of Dublin. All future references to DIT in this work will be as TU Dublin: Conservatoire of Music and Drama.

learners and my own reflections. The articles were based on my then current practice with the aim of investigating how I, in some small way could effect change. The vision for a new programme, Allegro for Adults needed credibility both in terms of practice and research. The ultimate aim was to bring the area of adult music education into a credible domain by creating a new approach that would be recognised in both the music education field and the music education research field. Two things emerged from this collaboration: firstly I wrote articles for their magazine and secondly I held workshops for adults learning music in the Conservatoire as part of the Adult Learning Festival.

'A Positive Note for Music Education for Adults' was published by *AONTAS* in their *Explore* magazine (McRory, 2007). Subsequently, I was invited to participate in their 'Adult Learning Festival' (2007) which was held over one week period throughout Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. The festival promoted all areas of adult learning, (Tuckett, 2021) in all contexts including further education colleges and community-based projects.

In order to participate in the festival this researcher negotiated a link between TU Dublin Conservatoire of Music and AONTAS with a view to bringing music classroom practice a wider audience of adult learners. Following approval from TU Dublin Conservatoire, free music workshops we offered to the public; the first entitled *A Taste of Music* (2007) and the second event, *A Musical Experience* (2008). The workshops covered an introduction to aural activities (rhythm and solfa), basic collaborative composition, a little notation and some insights on how to listen to music. Both events were very successful and the experience confirmed my hunch that a different pedagogical paradigm could improve teaching music to adults. With hindsight, I now realise that most teachers who like me, are trying to effect change, are already wearing the cap of teacher/researcher in their everyday practice (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009). The reflective practice I had

consciously and unconsciously engaged in over the years laid the foundation for this current research which set out to explore and contextualise the needs of adults in music education.

The framework of this research was based on different learning practices, supported by literature in the areas of music learning, adult learning, adult music learning and personal teaching experience. This project encompasses:

- **Adult learning in the context of andragogy**[2] This was based on humanistic psychology and includes formal and informal learning, experiential learning and transformative learning
- **The value of musical engagement throughout the lifespan**. Such values encompassed cognitive, psychological, physical, emotional, spiritual and social concepts
- **The sociological dimension of learning** inside and outside the classroom that underpinned the holistic nature of adult learning. Formal practices are relative to classroom learning while informal learning took place outside the formal class setting in the context of attending social events and concerts as a music group.
- **The pedagogical approach** was based on international models of the three-dimensional paradigm of aural, composition and listening. Skills-based performance of the aural components were key in the experiential aspect of learning, as practical participation fosters knowledge and understanding. Notational practices give yet another dimension to the aural work. Informed listening, with knowledge of score reading and analysis combined formal and informal learning. The core of the Allegro programme was to experience the

[2] Andragogy is the science of adult teaching and learning and is based on humanistic psychology. The term was first coined by Malcolm Knowles in the 1970s.

musical concepts through participation, supported by the acquisition of musical knowledge to broaden understanding of the 'whole' class learning experience.

- **Creativity** was informed by experiential and transformative dimensions of adult learning. Self-knowledge and self-competence developed throughout the learning process, particularly through creative engagement with composition (musical/personal development) and the research project (academic/personal developments). Such creative opportunities on the programme wer designed to acknowledge the autonomy of the learner in exploring their individual creativity.
- **The Covid-19 pandemic.** The time-frame for the research encompassed the COVID-19 pandemic. Aside from the trauma of the pandemic, people had to adopt to a new way of living. Education was part of this scenario. Schools and colleges closed to protect citizens, therefore teaching and learning practices had to adopt to communicating on a digital platform. The challenges that emerged in music education in general, but particularly in the area of adult music learning, is investigated in this work (chapter seven).

1.6 Context of the research

Allegro for Adults I and Allegro for Adults II provided an alternative paradigm for adult music education: Allegro I was suited to beginners and Allegro II was suited to those who had a minimum of three years musical experience. The programmes went through a formal approval process in TU Dublin and, given the importance of accreditation and certification in adult learning, were approved under the banner of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), that included 5 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) at Level 6 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)[3]. The accreditation validated (Kelly,

[3] https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/the-qualifications-system/national-framework-of-qualifications

B.1995) learning standards and outcomes. It also offered future opportunities for those who wished to embark on further musical studies in institutes of further education or universities. The programmes organically grew to facilitate the aspirations of those adults who wished to expand their musical knowledge and their enjoyment of music.

To negotiate the programmes, a one-year framework of learning was envisaged that had entry and exit points and that was outside the instrumental learning operational procedures within the Conservatoire. The CPD route offered a course of learning to external students in facilitating them becoming part of the Conservatoire without the necessity of passing auditions to secure instrumental lessons.[4] Traditionally CPD courses were associated with in-service education and training, staff development, career development, human resource development, professional development, continuing and lifelong learning (Bolam and McMahon, 2004),. TU Dublin expanded its range of CPD courses from the mid 2000s onwards with the aim of promoting the concept of professional development in a broader sense. The Allegro programme, with its intake of extern adult students, was an ideal 'fit' for the newer CPD model.

Prior to the launch of the Allegro for Adults programme and in order to bring the courses to public attention, I organised two Allegro for Adults music summer schools, the first in 2011 and the second in 2012. They was designed to offer adult students a classroom musical experience along with additional experience of the arts in the form of concerts and exhibitions across a range of art forms. The time-line of the practical steps that were undertaken in setting up these summer schools are identified next, and an overview of

[4]CPD Continuing professional development were courses that offered a one-year credited module, offering certification. This type of course was suited to those who wished to avail of a formal structured course at a higher education college or university; the perception of CPD in this work was linked to professional development in its broadest sense.

the stages involved from setting up the first summer school through to the completion of the first two Allegro for Adults programmes in 2013 are presented:

1.7 Genesis of the research

Year 1

- Organisation of a three-day Summer School *Allegro for Adults* which aimed to introduce adults to learning music. It was held in DIT Conservatory of Music in association with NCH, IMMA, James Joyce Centre, with classes in dance and lectures Interior design in Feng Shui and music a diversity of music workshops.
- The design of two new CPD music courses (Level 6 on NQF and 5 ECTS Credits).
- Courses approved at CPD committee level, College Board and DIT Quality Assurance.
- Ethical clearance granted

Year 2:

- Launch of the new courses in Chatham Row – presentation of the courses followed by a reception for adults (past and future)
- Delivery of two CPD programmes.
- Three-day summer school in collaboration with IMMA and NCH and James Joyce Centre. This was a follow-on from the previous year.

Year 3

- Commencement and delivery of Allegro for Adults I and II programmes.
- Data collection included questionnaires, reflective pieces, interviews, reflective journaling.

- Presentations were made at two conferences to share the findings of the research to date. They were the CASAE Conference at the University of Victoria, Canada and The SMI Conference at Maynooth University, Ireland.

1.8 Motivation for research and positionality of the researcher

Two main challenges emerged for me as a music educator starting out on this action research project in a real-life setting. Firstly, I had to negotiate the operational and procedural challenges associated with the new academic programmes, with new pedagogical approaches and new syllabus content specifically designed for the adult classroom context. The programme needed to be well researched and accredited for the specialist music education institutions to acknowledge its credibility. Additionally I had to recruit suitable learners who would engage with the new curriculum and pedagogical approach and who also provide feedback and analysis of their experiences; such data was essential in supporting the research.

Reflecting on these issues I found myself caught between two dimensions – music education on the one hand and adult learning pedagogies on the other. I could confidently take "action" on the former but could I wear the cap of "researcher" when it came to the latter?; The feelings of uncertainty amongst action researchers are widely acknowledged in the research field by McNiff and Whitehead (2006) and Carr & Kemmis (2002). Nonetheless action research, with its self-reflective spiral of plan-act-observe-reflect, had proved the best methodology for this research. Reflexivity in the action research process further informed the methodology combined with reflective journaling.

The "need" for change had always been there, it just needed to be identified. A synthesis was required of the key components, namely, adult learning and music learning. Concepts

relating to experiential learning in the field of adult learning were identified by Fenwick (2001), Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner (2003), Knowles, (1980, 1984) and Rogers (2006, 2008). The field of transformational learning, a key component in the realm of lifelong learning, was developed by Mesirow (1991). Merging music education and adult education in this research filled a 'gap' in adult music education and in the process heightened an awareness of the intellectual, emotional, psychological, sociological, educational, creative and spiritual needs of adults.

1.9 Overview of Methodology

The research methodology initially employed was action-research. Two cohorts of adult participants informed the action-research for the programme. Over the ten-year span the methodological approach changed and, owing to the accumulative participant numbers, the ethnographic methodology replaced the action-research methodology which enabled a workable transition into the second phase of the process. This change was due to the gap in the research but merging the two methodologies demanded a seamless progression and, based on further research, I considered ethnography as the best method for creating cohesion in this project.

Evaluation by participants was a key dimension of the research. The ethnographical process was particularly significant for presentation and analysis of the data. Allegro programmes continued to be taught, without interruption, throughout the ten-year time-frame. In the academic year 2020-2021 the research re-commenced, now from an ethnographic perspective. During the action-research years data was collected, participants' consent was granted and all data was kept safely by the researcher. In line with qualitative research methodology, the same rigorous process that was employed in terms of data, through to the final stages of this project. Participants granted consent and, comparative to Pitts' study (2012), this researcher found that respondents' attitudes were

entirely positive; when asked about using their ethnographic material, the vast majority chose to appear under their own names, but pseudonyms were chosen as the preferred method (Pitts, 2012: 23). Wherever direct quotations or ethnographies of participants were included for this work, pseudonyms are used.

In order to give closure to the time-frame of the project, a six-week pilot study based on Allegro programme was held. It offered a general overview of the Allegro II programme within the six weeks. Twelve participants, from past and present Allegro years were invited to join the programme which covered the teaching of aural elements, written and listening of the musical parameters from the Allegro curriculum. The pilot study finished with the group attending a concert in the National Concert Hall.

The various strands of literature that were explored for this project included theories of adult learning, models of learning, psychology of adult learning, action research and philosophies of music education and ethnography. Reflexivity was at the core of this research along with action research; both areas focused on values which, by nature, tend to be grey areas. Schön's concept (2011) of the swampy lowlands where the practitioner operates is perhaps a good analogy of the comparable nature of reflexivity, action research and ethnographic research, as all are subject to interpretation of the practitioner. McNiff and Whitehead (2006) summed up the nature of what I was trying to do; to live in the direction of the values and commitments that inspired my life. In reality, my approach was to use a system of reflective journaling which will be discussed in the methodology (chapter three). The data provided by participants included questionnaires regarding their musical background, education, work, prior studies and their musical/educational aspirations; short reflective narratives of their experience of the programme and interview data that emerged from semi-structured interviews that were conducted at the end of the academic year (chapters three, six and seven).

1.10 Outline of Thesis Chapters

Chapter one presented the introduction to the thesis, the background to the work, the motivation and positionality of the researcher and the background and context of the research. A timeframe of the genesis of the project was identified. An overview of the Allegro programmes and the adult music learning environment were discussed. In conclusion a thread of the programme over the decade 2012-2022 was presented.

Chapter two addressed the value of music participation and music education for well-being throughout the lifespan. Values are the key components as they impact on quality of life. Cognitive, musical, educational, physiological, psychological, creativity, sociological and spiritual values were discussed and supported by the findings from the data. Literature in this chapter was diverse, ranging from studies in medical, anthropological, health, psychological, gerontological journals in support of the arguments presented. This chapter was holistic in nature, rooted in well-being through participation in music and therefore, hoped to sets the stage for highlighting the value of music in the lives of all adult music learners and music lovers.

Chapter three set out the methodological approach for the research. The cycles of actions research were presented. As previously stated, there was a shift from an action-research model to an ethnographic methodology. Although both methodologies are in the domain of qualitative research, the ethnographic method has the versatility to adapt to the variables in the research questions and thus enabled the researcher to choose which variable to manipulate, examine, or test while controlling all others (Krueger, 2014: 134). Data collection in the form of semi-structured interviews, reflective writings and ethnographies of adult music learners formed the basis of the data.

Chapter four presented a literature review of the three fields, music education, adult education, and adult music education; thus placing the research topic in the context of the literature (Ó Tuama, 2020: 63). A triple lens approach was employed for presenting each of the fields. The first lens explored adult learning theories, the second lens outlined the philosophy of music education as a basis for practice, and the third lens investigated music education for adults.

This chapter also included an overview of the origins of adult music education as an educational field. In the United States, Malcolm Knowles concept of 'andragogy' (1968) brought the adult education sector on an equal status with other educational sectors. Theories and models of learning, including formal and informal learning, experiential learning, self-directed learning, constructivist theory and transformative dimensions of learning were explored. Other concepts included curriculum theory and the distinctiveness of adult learning, based on Alan Roger's question 'what's the difference?' (2008).

Chapter five presented an overview of the Allegro for Adults I and II programmes in action in the classroom. The parameters of the curriculum were outlined and contextualised in terms of performance and musical activities. The three stages of learning were identified and each parameter was examined in respect of the learning objectives, class performance activities, curriculum content, collective methodologies and learning outcomes. The pedagogical differences and similarities of teaching the same musical elements to adults and children was one of the key areas of investigation in this chapter.

Chapter six presented the themes that emerged from the ethnographies of the participants and was based on the researcher's interpretation of the data from her positionality as observer-participant. There exists strong criticisms regarding the researcher being 'the

main instrument of data collection' (Ortlipp, 2008: 698). Denzin (1994) identified the 'interpretative crisis' in qualitative research but the ethnographic approach can enable a degree of greater flexibility for interpretation. From an ethnographic stance, this relationship enriched the data for this project. I acknowledged Allsup's argument (2014) of being wary of positive outcomes and the concerns around the issue of bias, and consistently endeavoured to adhere to impartiality in my interpretation of the data. Interviewees were urged to be open in their responses which would be the most valuable contribution to the research project. In this way the close relationship between students and participant/observer was a positive attribute in sharing a frank exchange of ideas. The semi-structured interviews, reflective ethnographies and the observations of the researcher form the basis for interpretation and analysis of this rich data. Description of the interview process, the analysis process and the dichotomy between scholarship and practice are discussed in this chapter.

The themes that emerged were: firstly, motivation based on a love of music and learning. Secondly, embracing a new role in life, becoming a learner again, negotiating one's life to balance work and family in pursuit of participating in music education. The third theme was rooted in the need to learn and understand the language of music, that included the commitment to engage in music learning while rising to the challenge of completing the programme. The fourth theme was based on the sociological aspects of the learning experience, both from the micro context of the classroom to the macro context of socialising by going to musical events and concerts. The fifth theme involved expanding social horizons. Based on the 'Allegro experience', which included shared views on musical choices and opinions, conversations inside and outside the classroom, of which the researcher was part, all helped to form a knowledge-base that would inform future choices, activities and a broader social network amongst like-minded music lovers.

Chapter seven investigated the challenges of adult music learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Education in general, the changeover to a digital platform for learning and the difficulties faced by children, parents and adults alike were addressed. International studies were represented for comparisons to the Irish context. The role of the media, the technology sector and the outcomes of the learning were addressed through the literature and media coverage. This chapter also outlined the pedagogical approach to teaching the Allegro programmes online and was supported by data from participants' interviews.

1.11 Overview of the Programme Allegro for Adults I and II

The courses were broadly based on the three components of Keith Swanwick's CLASP model (1979). A more detailed examination of the pedagogical approaches will be presented in chapter five. At this stage the components were generally identified and presented, while reiterating that skills-based acquisition is central to the learning in the three areas:

- Performance skills
- Composition skills
- Listening skills

1.11.1 Performance skills

Performance in the context of musicianship involved playing rhythm and singing, both of which were key activities in aural training. Learning to sight-sing, learning to sing in solfa and selective song repertoire remain crucial in developing inner hearing. The combination of these skills enabled students to sing from score and to actually hear as they composed their melodies or rhythmic patterns. Songs, including two-part songs and sight-singing were included in both programmes. Allegro I provided the foundational

knowledge and skills of the above areas and these are developed in Allegro II to an advanced level.

1.11.2 Composition skills

Composition skills linked directly to performance and listening: the student needed to develop aural awareness in order to compose creative melodies, understand chords and harmony, add chords to a melody, write figured bass, compose a piano accompaniment and compose a structured melody with modulation.

1.11.3 Listening skills

Listening was an active component involving directed listening. Understanding the stylistic features and musical characteristics periods of the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist and Modern periods in musical history were encompassed in the curriculum. The only outlet for inclusion of other genres was in the students' preferred choice of topic for their research project.

1.11.4 Research project

One of the unique aspects of the Allegro programme was to give students the opportunity to choose a topic for a research project. They could decide on a topic based on a period in musical history, a composer and preferred works listened to in class. Alternatively, they were free to choose a topic based on their own area of interest. Although not part of the formal curriculum the project is an ideal vehicle for a student to investigate musical genres they have always enjoyed by doing further research, while gaining credits for their project.

There was a distinction in terms of standards between two groups: students doing Allegro I students tended to choose such topics as the life of a composer or programme notes on

some of the listening repertoire on the programme. Allegro II students, owing to their prior musical experience, were motivated to engage in more adventurous topics. There were some adult students who had a wealth of musical knowledge from listening to music and going to concerts and such students were capable_of undertaking more advanced research topics. However such students frequently opted to enrol for Allegro I, recognising they lacked the formal musical knowledge required for Allegro II. The data revealed that these particular students expressed their preference for completing the whole two-year programme.

1.11.5 Assessment

Continuous assessment was key in the learning process to facilitate progressive learning with end of term assessments. At the conclusion of each academic year, students sat a written paper (that included composition) and an aural paper (which encapsulated the performance and listening components. Composition and creativity were integrated into much of the learning.

1.11.6 Continuity from Allegro I to Allegro II

The original cohort of Allegro II students were approximately grade six standard in terms of formal knowledge of harmony and melody, but not necessarily in terms of aural ability. The learning outcomes of harmony, counterpoint, melodic composition and figured bass were to an advanced standard. Aural skills were developed to a more proficient standard. Musical analysis endeavoured to develop a more advanced musical knowledge through informed listening.

The original cohort of Allegro II students entered the programme at an advanced level of study, the original Allegro I was not designed to meet the level of advanced learning required for Allegro II. This gap resulted in the original standard of the Allegro II

curriculum needing modifications. Students progressing from 1 to II were not at an advanced level but rather at an intermediate level, thus the learning outcomes were not as advanced as the original cohort. As a teacher I had always envisaged this 'gap' and while writing the programmes I had hoped ultimately, to introduce an Allegro for Adults III. The modified Allegro II programme (from 2013 onwards) was nonetheless intense in terms of the rate of learning and the overall outcomes reflected students had attained an intermediate/early advanced level of competency on completion of the modified Allegro II programme.

Based on these findings I wrote an Allegro for Adults III two years later. It was pitched to an advanced level that would ultimately facilitate a student to embark on an associate diploma or gain insightful knowledge into a first year degree module. The umbrella vision was to create a 'seamless' progression of musical learning for adults over a three-year period.

1.12 Findings from the research

Motivation towards musical participation was a key finding and from this standpoint, other findings emerged. The basis of many of the findings stemmed from adults' love of music and love of learning. Music had brought them together to share in musical performance, build musical knowledge, enjoy listening, engage socially both inside and outside the classroom and on a very personal level, to develop a sense of their unique musical identity. For some, their musical identity may be have been related to such concepts as self-confidence or self-competency in achieving their goals, while for others it may have been rooted in a need for creativity or spiritual fulfilment.

Responses from adults about embracing the role of becoming a student again was a revelation for this researcher. Although some respondents in interviews commented on

feeling ‘older’ in a university campus, these same people said they enjoyed returning to learning and didn’t feel awkward on a personal level. They absorbed every opportunity to learn and perform. Many had studied in third level colleges and were indifferent to being perceived as ‘mature’ students, feeling their prior experience was an asset in strengthening their current role of mature student.

The programme provided an entry point in gaining musical knowledge, but it also provided an entry point for sharing that knowledge with ‘like-minded’ individuals. It was music that had formed this synergy of shared musical knowledge amongst like-minded people[5]. This love of music permeated most of the findings. Expanding their musical experiences was important but sharing it was equally important. Class discussions gave the opportunity of sharing knowledge, particularly during the listening activities in class, and, on a personal level, observing the interests and reaction students was an enlightening and enriching experience. The data revealed that they enjoyed learning and embraced the challenges of music learning. They valued the opportunity to be able to fulfil their individual musical goals.

Feedback from interviews revealed students liked the diversity of the programme . One of my primary concerns at the start of the programme was the diverse nature of the curriculum. Despite my teaching experience, I couldn’t predict how the programme would be received on so many levels. The overall pedagogical approach, pacing the classes, introducing the performance parameters, tuning into the social dynamics of different cohorts of students based on their prior experiences, their motivations, shared values, and supporting them during exam periods, were all constant concerns for me.

[5] “Like-minded people” was a recurring term used by interviewees.

They required considerable reflection throughout the process to get an equilibrium, as both teacher and researcher who was responsible for implementing this new programme.

Expanding social networks was one of the most holistic findings in the research. The opportunity for social contacts inside the classroom and outside by attending social events as a group provided a valuable dimension to the programme. Sociology and anthropology are rooted in ethnography and this humanistic orientation in adult music learning can be life changing. Friendships are formed and future musical directions are forged in the spirit of valuing musical engagement, as the data revealed.

The value of the Allegro experience informed and enlightened adults of the opportunities available in the future. Many participants commenced instrumental learning, joined choirs (some with former Allegro classmates), continued the more formal route of music education by applying for a music degree course in university; all with a view to opening up new horizons of learning or participation. The data revealed how adults valued music by wanting to keep it as part of daily lives.

1.13 Limitations of the Research

The study focused on traditional music education practice and Western Classical music is core in its curriculum and pedagogy. There were no other musical genres on the programme. In action research the teacher was central to the research and consequently the pedagogical/andragogical approaches could be perceived to be compromised by being teacher-led. In defence of this limitation, adults needed to feel they were receiving guidance, being informed of *why* they are learning something and expecting direction on *what* to learn and *how* to learn. The Allegro concept was based on a formal music education paradigm rooted in the classical music tradition with some inclusion of folk elements (in the song literature).

As a researcher, the teaching and learning process, the social dimensions and the ethnographical processes enabled me to get to know the students on a more informal level. The role of the researcher in becoming both participant and observer may have limitations, in terms of maintaining impartiality in interpreting the data, but participants were informed that frankness and openness in their responses would enrich the research in terms of transparency and validity. Participants honoured this approach and were very transparent both in their interviews and reflective writings. This role, similar to the 'interpretive turn', can also be used to advantage in fostering more open forums for discussion. The advantages outweigh the disadvantages as adults offer rich insights into their musical thinking and perceptions that can inform both music education practice and scholarship.

1.14 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to set the stage for the overall thesis. Its contribution was to identify the motivations, contexts, limitations and contributions of the work and how these areas impacted on later chapters. The background of the researcher was presented and her motivations in pursuit of this project were discussed. This involved substantial experience of teaching musicianship to adult learners; this included teaching this area in other colleges prior to joining the Conservatoire in TU Dublin University. My personal love and dedication to this rich area of research was at the core of undertaking a doctoral thesis. It endeavoured to enrich the field of music education for all prospective adult learners, music educators and to make a contribution to research scholarship (discussed later in chapters three, six and seven). This was the logical basis for the rationale behind this doctoral research which in essence, is a culmination of my life's work.

The context of the research inspired the research for chapter two which investigated the value of music participation in adulthood. The latter offered a platform to investigate how

wellbeing through musical engagement has been identified by researchers in other domains; this is supported by empirical studies in the fields of psychology, education, sociology, philosophy, physiology, neuroscience, gerontology and spirituality. The data herein provided considerable support for these findings (chapters two, six and seven).

This chapter identified the research questions and provided a brief overview of the project. The Allegro for Adults I and II music programmes offered a unique paradigm for adult music education and the research examined the pedagogical approaches in the contexts of both in face-to-face learning and online learning during the pandemic (chapters five and seven). The differences between teaching adults and young students was integrated into each parameter of the programme; this informed both adult music education and research (chapter five).

The research process was interrupted with the unexpected intervention of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was not long after I returned to complete the second stage of this work when the pandemic struck and this event influenced me to undertake research concerning the challenges that faced the music education profession during the pandemic. The role of music researchers in responding to the online digital turn in music education had a profound impact on my personal teaching. Chapter seven discussed the impact of Covid-19 not on teaching the programme online but on its impact on students in having to adopt to a new platform for learning. Like other music educators, my pedagogical approach had to be re-invented in a way that would make the learning musically meaningful for students (chapter seven). This chapter was informed not only by literature from research media but also offered insightful data on adult students' perceptions of learning music online.

The limitations of the research are further realised in the context of the ethnographic methodology and the close relationship between researcher/teacher and students (chapters six and seven). Ethnography formed an bridge from the action research approach as they

shared comparable approaches to the 'plan-act-observe-reflect' cycle. They were also complementary in terms of data collection and analysis (chapters three, four, six and seven). All efforts were made to ensure autonomy of participants' contributions to the data. The value of transparency was emphasised by informing them that negative feedback was equally as valuable as positive feedback to the research. Transparency in communication was honoured by both the researcher and the Allegro participants.

One of the unique aspects of this study was its Irish context. Personal research had not identified a similar study in Ireland. In the international context, this work referred to international studies of adult music learning, primarily in the context of choral involvement, instrumental learning and the increasingly popular medium of music technology. The relationship between musical engagement and well-being is becoming increasingly recognised in other fields (chapter two). Negotiating the value of the Allegro programme to the university, gaining CPD approval, quality assurance recognition, accreditation and certification created as a prelude to the realisation of the Allegro for Adults programme; it aimed to provide future opportunities for adults to engage in music education (see chapter three). The value of music is indisputable and the value of adult music education programmes lies in their effectiveness of turning a vision for musical engagement in adulthood into a musical reality for life.

CHAPTER TWO

The value of participation in music education for wellbeing in adulthood

2.1. Introduction

This chapter investigates the physical, emotional, psychological, cognitive, social and spiritual values inherent in adults' participation in music learning. In order to introduce this chapter the historical background for access and opportunity for adults is presented. The motivations for adults seeking music in their lives are identified in conjunction with the interconnectedness of musical activities associated with music learning. Adulthood has a biopsychosocial dimension and each of the areas that enhance and enrich adults' lives are discussed separately for their unique values. Sociological and spiritual concepts are addressed for their worth as integral parts of the learner's educational and personal development. The overall aim of this chapter is to present an argument for the holistic nature and values of musical participation and music education in contributing to well-being in adulthood.

2.2 Adulthood in context

'Along with age shifts in the global population and perceptions of adult capabilities, there are also changes in how society defines adulthood' (Kerchner, Abril, Carlos, 2018: 258)[3]. The concept of 'adult' may now be broadly defined as one who assumes responsibility, develops a sense of identity, makes choices to marry or acquires a full-time position in

[3] During the post-World War II era, society in America and the West considered adulthood as spanning between eighteen to twenty-two years. Interestingly, in the early twenty-first century it was deemed to be between the ages of twenty-five to thirty-two approximately.

their job or career (Ibid. 259). Furstenberg et al. characterised the essence of emerging adulthood and suggest that individualistic and subjective indicators (such as a sense of autonomy, financial independence, self-control and personal responsibility) better signal adulthood (Furstenberg et al., 2003: 6). In order to differentiate age in adulthood, the term 'older adult' has been adopted as part of the research language in lifelong learning[4].

The combination of the decline in fertility rates against an average increase of twenty years in the life-span have resulted in the numbers of adults rapidly increasing in Western societies. Decline in fertility rates is a concern for Western societies because economies need younger generations to work, in order to sustain a balance between the workforce and retired citizens. There are major demographic changes happening at a unprecedented rate in the developed world. Statistics from The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention indicate the number of people over sixty-five in the United States will increase from 12.4% in 2000 to 19.6% in 2030; this is an increase from 35 million in 2000 to 71 million in 2030 [5] (Kerchner & Abril: 258). In the United Kingdom, Creech et al., (2013) present compelling research that demonstrates the power of music for enhancing health and well-being in older adults. Their research cited a study of twenty Swedish women (ages 60-83 years) that explored how culture functioned as a health resource for older women: 'singing, playing instruments, listening to music and dancing, it was reported, provided a source of self-recognition and comfort' (Forseen, 2007: 231. cited in Creech, Hallam, McQueen, Varvarigou, 2013: 87). Their research also reflected a the similar situation in the United States, 'where life expectancy at age 65 years is rising rapidly and yet where increasing numbers of older people are reported to be living in isolation or suffering from depression' (Ibid). These similarities exist also in Ireland where many older adults are reported to be living in isolation. Implications for older adults accessing

[4] 'older adult' is considered over seventy-five years.

[5] This is an increase from 35 million in 2000 to 71 million by 2030

active music-making is lacking in provision and implementation, despite its recognised value in enhancing the lives of older people (Ibid).

The lifespan is generally identified as being in four stages:

	Stages of the lifespan	Age bands
1.	First Age	Up to eighteen years
2.	Second Age	Eighteen to forty-nine
3.	Third Age	Fifty to seventy-four
4.	Fourth Age	Seventy-five and over

Figure 2.1. Stages of the Lifespan.

The above indicate the conceptualized age bands identified by Schuller & Watson, 2009, (cited in Creech et al., 2013: 89). Laslett (1989) acknowledged the difficulty of attaching a chronological age to these phases and argued that the Third Age represented a quality of life rather than a specific age band. Nevertheless Withnall states "the use of age bands has now become an accepted way to explore and to try to understand the experiences of different cohorts" (Ibid;, 2010:118). Schuller and Watson (fig.2.1) identify the Fourth Age cohort as the fastest growing age group in the United Kingdom.

These demographics present challenges for societies including the music education profession. Research on age groups that enter music education programmes indicate ages range from twenty-five to fifty-five years on average. Over the duration of over a decade Allegro participants augmented these age brackets by ranging from twenty to over eighty years. Based on the literature and research on the global adult population, the music education profession needs to educate aspiring music educators to understand the field of adult music learning, what Myers termed 'the lifetime continuum of learning' (Myers, 2008: 3). Hallam encapsulates the impact of learning on the 'self' stating, 'all forms of

learning share one common element – they involve change in the individual learner' (Hallam, 2005: 1). These changes in the individual are holistic in nature by incorporating cognitive, physical, psychological, sociological and spiritual values into the adult's life. Prior to exploring these concepts, an overview of historical developments leading up to adult music participation aims to provide a historical background and context to this chapter.

2.3 Historical developments in adult music education

2.3.1 Access and opportunity

The OECD 'Review Report on Higher Education in Ireland' (2005) informed the HEA (Higher Education Authority) of the Government's 'commitment to access, widening participation, improving learning and teaching cultures, and to lifelong learning' (Murphy, 2005: 10). As music is part of the higher education culture in Ireland, the widening of participation in the context of this research involved the implementation of CPD music education courses.

'Across cultures and societies music participation is considered an important element of making the life course a lovely ride' (Myers, 2019: 223). Valuing musical participation in childhood and adolescence is often referred by adults as a 'missed opportunity' by not realising the value of learning music in childhood. According to Roulston, this was the view at the start of the twentieth century which advocated that attempting to learn music later in life was futile (Roulston, 2010). Since the 1970s music educators began to view adults as active music learners and since that time progress has been rapid (Lane, 2019: 723). Myers emphasises that it is only in the last two and a half decades that the music education profession have undertaken serious research into adult music education. Providing opportunities for lifelong music learning is now a recognised as an important

dimension of the work of professional music educators; part of their role is to educate people in a given society to make, learn and engage in music throughout their lives (Kerchner &Abril, 2019: 257).

The reliance of adults' experiences on school music as a basis for lifelong learning has come under scrutiny by researchers, educators and notably respective adult learners. Research indicates that school music was not popular amongst adolescents and that despite more diversity in the curriculum, it was out of touch with their interests (Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003: 265). In the United Kingdom, Green alerted music educators that formal music education had 'not managed to stem the ebbing tide of involvement in music-making' (Green, 2002: 5), which impacted their lives in adulthood. She advocates this was not the case with informal music learning, such as in the case of popular musicians who are highly motivated and committed to their music (Green 2002 & 2005). Mok states the situation has been the same in Hong Kong citing McPhearson's report (2005) which indicates 'that students' enjoyment of Music and the Visual Arts declines over the years of schooling' (Ibid., 2017:169), hence it fails to entice people to participate in music once they leave school or university.

Provision and access for adult music education needs to be facilitated in more further education colleges and universities, as the data from this research identified the need for formal music education programmes that meet the needs of adult learners. In the past adult music may have been perceived as recreational rather than educational, resulting in their learning as being perceived as informal. Recognising the value of the latter, it must equally be acknowledged that there is a niche in the music education sector to cater for adults who wish to pursue a more structured form of learning that augments their musical knowledge, one that offers a formal programme of learning, a structured curriculum, an adult pedagogical approach, a learning environment that recognises their needs and

identifies authentic learning outcomes. Accreditation may also be part of this scenario and universities in particular have the power to facilitate such credits.

Societal changes need to be addressed by the music education profession as music, both inside and outside education, is rapidly evolving. Change in education demands change in educational policies (Murphy, 2005). In Ireland the White (2005) and Green (1992) Papers on Education addressed all aspects of education which broadly tend to mirror policies in the United Kingdom. The White Paper on Education (2005) addressed the value of the arts in general education but, despite the concepts being identified, provision and implementation were inconclusive. In the United States, The Housewright Symposium on the Future of Music Education (2020) examined current issues in music education including lifelong learning and music while addressing the challenges faced by the profession. The Housewright Symposium was very significant for music educators, researchers and musicians internationally and its theme of inclusivity is very pertinent in this context of music education in lifelong learning.

2.3.2 The Housewright Symposium: the theme of inclusion

In the United States twelve statements outlined by Marie McCarthy from 'The Housewright Declaration: A Lens for Viewing Music Education in the Early Twenty-First Century'. This declaration appeared at the conclusion of *Vision 2020: The Housewright Symposium on the Future of Music Education*. She identified two broad overarching themes from the twelve statements – inclusion and widening horizons; both are relevant in the context of lifelong learning. Inclusion addresses students, teachers, curricular content, dimensions of music making and music education for all persons across the lifespan' (McCarthy, 2020: 47). The start of the new millennium signalled a multiplicity of educational, societal and political changes and McCarthy specifically examined developments in music education from 2000-2020, hence its relevance to this

study. Derived from the twelve points, five are selected here for their relevance to this research (the bracketed numbers are the actual numbers in the Declaration):

1. All persons, regardless of age, cultural heritage, ability, venue, or financial circumstance deserve to participate fully in the best music experiences possible.
2. The integrity of music study must be preserved. Music educators must lead the development of meaningful music instruction and experience.
3. (4) All music has a place in the curriculum … educators should aim to integrate other music that people experience into the curriculum.
4. (10) Music making should be broadly interpreted to be performing, composing, improvising, listening, and interpreting music notation.
5. (11) Music educators must join with others in providing opportunities for meaningful music instruction available for all people beginning at the earliest possible age and continuing throughout life. (Ibid: 50-51).

Many of the students who entered the Allegro programme learned music at school. Aware of the challenges of learning in a formal environment, the emphasis was on bringing the music to life through participation in performance. Active learning is the cornerstone as Stephanie Pitts explains 'enjoyment, fun and pleasure are the driving factors in adult's participation in musical activities, and surely worthy of a central place in thinking about music education' (Pitts, 2005: 20). These were among the motivational factors for adults embarking on the Allegro programme, as evident from the data (chapters three and six).

2.4 Motivation to participate in musical activities

Susan Hallam (2010) states that motivation theorists argue that adults are highly aware of their freedom to choose which possible future selves or roles they want to adopt or strive towards and which to avoid (Hallam, 2010: 4). Adults employ self-regulation as a

means of ascertaining their choices to maximise learning (Walzer, 2020: 4). Music has often been part of the adult's childhood and a popular choice for participation, that can lead to a sense of accomplishment, enjoyment and self-esteem. Equally significant is the fact that music reminds them of their earlier years and reconnecting with this can be nostalgic and meaningful for many people.

According to Pitts, adults' attitude to music learning can be significantly influenced by the music teacher. Her research shows how values and attitudes are communicated through the school teacher and are formed as much outside the classroom as within it' (Pitts, 2008: 254-255). These findings concur with Lucy Green's in the case of informal learning/musical activities outside of school (Green, 2002: 6) which found adolescents could learn popular music independently of the music teacher. Both Green and Pitts focused on the impact that school music had on adults' participation in musical activities later in life.

Opportunity for engagement by the education professionals is key. Facilitating the musical needs and preferences has led to adults becoming motivated to engage in musical activities in formal, informal and non-formal contexts. Motivational reasons were as diverse as the choices available, ranging from instrumental learning and class-based learning, to joining choirs, orchestras, bands or musical societies. McQueen and Varvarigou summarised adults' motivations for musical participation:

- Personal motivations, such as self-expression, a need for achievement, enjoyment and confidence (Taylor and Hallam, 2008; Hallam, 2006)
- Musical motivations, such as love of music, performing for oneself and others (Taylor and Hallam, 2008) and learning more about music (Boswell, 1992).

- Social motivations, such as meeting new people and being with friends (Hays, 2005; Hillman 2002) and having a sense of belonging (Luakka, 2007; Hallam, 2006).
- Psychological motivation, such as pleasure, mood regulation and relaxation (Luakka, 2007).
- Spirituality, a term often used by music participants to express a 'sense of timelessness' (Hays and Minichiello, 2005).

(McQueen and Varvarigou: cited in Hallam and Creech, 2010: 163-164).

In this research these areas will be discussed in the context of health benefits for personal, cognitive, physical, musical, artistic, psychological, identity, sociological and spiritual wellbeing in adulthood. Pitts' thinking supports these concepts but her perspective is rooted in the actual values that adults derive from participating in musical activities (Pitts, 2005: 2008) .

2.5 Valuing musical participation

At its core, Pitts research examines adult music participation in musical contexts, investigates the motivation, values and experiences of the participants in order 'to theorize more widely about the contribution of music to social and personal fulfilment' (Ibid., 2005: 1). Researchers in psychology and sociology became part of the debate over two decades ago. During this time the focus has gradually shifted towards behaviour and values and the effect musical participation had on the adult learner and their engagement with other people (Ibid: 10). Pitts' study affirmed that musical activities were valued amongst her research participants for different and interconnected reasons namely,

- As a personal source of confirmation and confidence
- As an opportunity to demonstrate or acquire skills

- As an opportunity to perform with others
- As a forum for social interaction and friendships
- As a way of enhancing everyday life
- As a way of escaping from everyday life
- As a source of spiritual fulfilment and pleasure (Ibid.)[6]

The interconnectivity of the reasons outlined by participants in Pitts' study inform both personal and musical identities. Teachers can play a prominent role in facilitating these identities: firstly, by acknowledging prior experience through an andragogical approach (Walzer, 2010; Boswell, 1992), and secondly by providing programmes that meet the intrinsic needs of the adult learner (Williams, 2007; Boswell, 1992; Walzer, 2010). This researcher concurs with Estelle Jorgensen's views on the important influence of the teacher who is 'in a position to imbue lived life with imaginative thought and practice and nourish the hearts, minds, souls and bodies of young and old alike' (Jorgensen, 2010: 23).

2.6 The biopsychosocial nature of adulthood in music learning

The volume of research supporting the value of music in the lives of older adults has increased considerably over the past twenty-five years, not only by the music education profession but also by psychologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, and physical health professionals and spiritual practitioners. Investigational research by Creech et al. states

> Active music-making has been found to provide a source of enhanced social cohesion, enjoyment, personal development, and empowerment, and to contribute to recovery from depression and maintenance of personal well-being throughout these latter stages of adult life (Hallam et al., 2013: 87).

[6] A general analysis of Pitts' findings will be discussed later in the context of the data findings for this project.

A study by the Gerontological Society of America examined the physical health benefits, cognitive activities, social activities, spiritual activities and general life tasks among older adults (Kaufmann et al.) The value of music was investigated and demographically the average age of participants was 65.7 years.

Categories of listeners	**Findings: average age 65.7 years**
Non-listeners	20%
Average listeners	75%
High levels of listening	5%

Figure 2.2. Engagement with listening among older adults in the United States (Kaufman et al., 2017:270)

Adults undertaking music education programmes such as Allegro may benefit from increased listening experiences improving cognitive, physical, emotional and social engagement for well-being into the future life. Critical findings in connecting music to health reported,

> those who were average or high music listeners reported a greater number of hours engaged in several cognitive, physical, social and spiritual activities each week. Music listeners additionally reported fewer problematic health conditions than non-listeners … The purpose of the study was to investigate the connection between health, listening to music and engagement with life activities among older Americans (Kaufmann, Montross-Thomas, Lori, Griser, 2017: 270).

These findings support the value of music listening, the continuum of which has implications for increased engagement with life (Ibid). While the authors acknowledge that music can be related to a myriad of cognitive, physical, social and spiritual areas, they single out some in particular:

- Listening to music can stimulate certain areas of the brain that relate to attention and working memory.
- Studies show a link between music engagement and increased energy and physical exercise.

- Music can lead to physical relaxation via its demonstrated ability to reduce stress or agitation, improve sleep or relieve pain.
- Psychologically, music can give a sense pleasure
- Increased social connectedness and altruism are related to musical listening. Music can improve social functioning.
- Spiritually, music can serve as an anchor in religious practices or provide a sense of connection to the sacred (Kaufmann et al., 2017: 271).

All the above mirror the motivational factors identified by Hallam and Creech (2012) in the United Kingdom. These motivations promote what the adult may seek from life, including a sense of well-being, meaning, joy, connectedness, sociability and spirituality. The implication here is not to suggest that all adults seek all the above, but rather the research indicates that this signifies an average cross-section of the key areas that could motivate adults to pursue musical participation.

Dabback and Smith (2012) identify similar cross-sections which they maintain is dependent on the person's needs; an example would be that social components may exist alongside skill development. Needs vary according to each learner and may change over time. Regardless of such nuances 'musical experiences by nature contribute to the need for social involvement and community, whether the primary focus at any given time is educational, recreational or therapeutic' (Ibid: 236).

According to Lane (2019) there is a growing body of research that identifies the health benefits for adults' engagement in musical activities including improvement and maintenance of cognitive motor skills, reduction of symptoms related to arthritis, respiratory function and the physical side-effects related to stress. Psychological benefits include heightened sense of happiness and enjoyment, self-accomplishment, self-esteem

and overall spiritual well-being. In terms of the sociological perspective, active musical participation improves connectivity and a sense of belonging (Ibid., 724).

Today there is a diversity of pathways open to the adult music learner that may include instrumental and vocal learning, music theory, composition, classical, jazz, pop and traditional music - all of which have health benefits throughout the lifespan. Such research enlightens music educators as they forge the best way forward for their unique adult learner groups. Dabback and Smith researched the interconnectivity between music learning and other disciplines which in turn, seeks to inform adult music educators:

> Due to the biopsychosocial nature of aging, evidence-based principles and practices for older adult music education require an interdisciplinary approach. General education, sociology, and psychology provide substantive perspective to enhance dialogue. Constructs taken from these fields can provide music education practitioners with varied lenses through which to view their work among older populations' (Dabback & Smith, 2009: 231-232).

Kaufmann et al. also identified these areas of well-being for active older adults, which also indicated the interconnectivity between lifestyle activities and musical activities, and will be discussed in the context of this research (chapters four, five and six).

2.6.1 Physical well-being

Performance is the most popular choice for the adult who wishes to pursue musical activities. Joining music groups, whether it be class-based, choral, instrumental or other can bring enrichment into the person's life (Hallam & Creech, 2010). In the context of active music listening, increased physical activities is an important outcome that enhances lifestyle and quality of life throughout adulthood. The value of music listening while engaging in physical activities makes music part of the activity itself, either by prompting engagement with music or alternatively music is the choice of the individual to enhance the activity's bio-psychosocial benefits (Kaufmann et al:, 2017: 275). These researchers identified a correlation between average to high levels of listening and health problems:

> Compared to non-listeners, average music listeners were less likely to report having all the problematic health conditions as assessed in this study: high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, lung disease, heart disease, stroke, psychiatric problems and arthritis (Ibid: 274-275).

Singing and playing for well-being

Learning an instrument also facilitates dexterity and agility despite the physical decline in later adulthood. Performing, whether solo or in group ensemble, requires significant levels of energy which is reflective of the findings of Kaufmann et al. Musical engagement requires energy across a range of activities notably in dedicated time to practice, attend instrumental/class pedagogy and performance. Although their study correctly identifies instrumental learning as a cognitive activity, it is also a physical activity which demands motivation, dexterity and discipline in order to make progress. Attending concerts and lectures may also be part of the learning process (Ibid., 271).

The Allegro curriculum and methodology were rooted in singing and performance on percussion. Research in adult participation found that the choices available to adult participants tended to focus on singing activities, possibly due to a perception that learning to play instruments is the privilege of younger people (Creech et al, 2013). Such views have been voiced by Allegro participants, although approximately 60% have chosen to learn an instrument. Success on the programme has motivated them to pursue further musical learning through music-making. The goal of active engagement with instrumental and singing groups has been associated with a range of positive outcomes including physical well-being (Ibid., 92). A qualitative research methods project by Taylor and Hallam (2008) explored musical identity construction amongst six keyboard learners, aged over sixty. The findings supported the value of instrumental learning for adults and demonstrated their ability to challenge their earlier negative musical education

experiences. Transcending these earlier disappointments and criticisms resulted in a sense of empowerment, achievement and self-confidence, as outcomes revealed,

> The six keyboard players also demonstrated resilience when recalling past disappointments in music, suggesting that facilitators can support older adults in reframing perceptions of themselves as unmusical or incapable of engaging in active music-making (Ibid: 301).

2.6.2 Embodied Learning

In recent years research in adult education has expanded its parameters to include 'embodied learning' or 'embodiment', which pertains to the non-cognitive aspects of learning namely, emotions, the body, and spirituality (Roulston, 2010: 347). Embodiment may be interpreted as being applicable to instrumental learning and singing, as both engage the whole body. Freiler aptly refers to the 'body as a site of learning' (Freiler, 2008: 39). Roulston describes the impact of embodiment on adult music learners:

> Embodiment refers to the ways in which they must rely on multiple sensory experiences of music-making, often in relation to others. that is, a music-maker – whether playing an instrument, accompanying a singer or joining in choral singing – literally orients to others in order to perform (Roulston, 2010: 347).

Class ensemble is equally relevant to the above. Although she suggests that those who have experienced formal music learning and have achieved high levels of success in skills-based cognition, this cohort may experience frustration in attempting the coordination of audio-visual and sensory information gained through the ears and eyes with various bodily movements. There is a somewhat spiritual dimension to embodiment, nonetheless the ensemble activities in the Allegro classroom necessitated students to 'orient to others in order to perform' (Ibid). Singing and playing percussion also involve aspects of 'embodied learning' and kinaesthetic engagement for performance; students need instruction on how to sing (posture and breathing) and play (technique for holding an instrument). The psychology of such direction is to create awareness of the importance of integrating movement into performance activities, rather than passive observation.

2.6.3 Cognitive values

Angela Taylor's study (2011) revealed that "older people can continue to develop musically" which is based on the evidence that 'continuing plasticity of the brain and receptivity to instrumental music learning can counterbalance their reduced efficiency of memory, motor skills, sight and hearing" (Ibid., 2011: 346). Learning in adulthood is a continuous process of reconstructing and transforming the meanings that are learned in childhood. Jack Mezirow states that this process involves challenging our assumptions, our frames of reference, in the course of active interaction with our environment (Mezirow et al., cited in Rogers, 2008: 99), which this researcher found is equally relevant in the context of class music participation (chapters three, five and six). Maturity develops the ability to redefine our meaning schemes and perspectives and, combined with experience, this strengthens our personal category system,

> Transformation theory emphasizes that people make an intentional movement in adulthood to resolve these contradictions and to move to developmentally advanced conceptual structures by transforming meaning schemes and perspectives through critical thinking (Mezirow, 1991: 147).

In the context of adult education, the adult learner, and the adult educator he further develops the argument,

> In contemporary societies we must learn to make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others. Facilitating such understanding is, in this view, the cardinal goal of adult education. Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking (Mezirow, 1997: 5).

These values are inherent in music learning for adults. The transformative nature of learning for Allegro participants endeavoured to increase musical knowledge and self-knowledge through participation and creativity. The sociological aspect of the programme may have enhanced shared musical experiences which helped individuals reaffirm their previous experiences or as Mezirow maintains, opened up the opportunity to redefine their meaning schemes and perspectives amidst a holistic environment of like-minded people.

Group participation

This aspect interconnects ensemble, community and performance components. The value of group playing or singing is the element of practice. Adults mostly like to learn in groups and value the routine of practicing in order to join an ensemble or class (Ernst, 2001). Most interested adults who commence group participation also take private lessons to increase their individual progress and enjoyment (Ibid., 49).

Educators engaged in community music can become 'catalysts' in fostering the arts (Jorgensen, 2010). Although educational practice is more formal, the community aspect can be included from the perspective of 'engaging young people with those who are older with music' (Jorgensen, 2010: 23). The aspect of intergenerational participation weaves through musical encounters at both formal and informal levels. Students learn alone in order to play together and within this discipline 'people make and take music in their private places as they also participate in it on public occasions' (Ibid.). Taylor outlines significant reasons for adults to practice,

> Practising at home, arguably a form of self-directed learning as well as a time for reflecting on issues raised in class and improving keyboard skills, was very important to many of the participants, giving meaning in terms of providing something purposeful that contributed to their lives, even if they did not practise every single day (Taylor, 2011: 353-534).

The concepts involving both self-directed learning and reflection on class issues are embodied in adult learning. Allegro students often discussed musical concepts 'outside the door', such as sharing queries regarding rhythmic/singing elements or composition techniques that they envisaged needed further clarification in class. Their goal was to seek further ensemble practice in class in order to ensure they were practicing correctly at home (chapters five and six).

The research here supports Taylor's approach for performance, as Allegro students needed to learn and prepare the materials, rhythmic patterns, singing and songs, in order

to make progress in developing aural, visual and practical skills. The learning may be in a small ensemble but the challenge was not the size of the programme but rather the methodological approach (Adams, 2016: 69). Taking control of their learning and reconstructing themselves as mature adult learners was an important motivator of engagement with their instruments, according to Taylor. This was reflected in the class as everyone wanted to contribute both personally and musically to the spirit of ensemble performance. The idea of being part of a formal institution was another choice made by participants in Taylors' study; their reasons reflected those of Allegro students for taking 'regular lessons at a formal institution (was) to motivate themselves to practise and improve their skills and this suggests participants also wanted to meet the expectations of a tutor' (Taylor, 2011: 351). Based on my professional experience, adults generally tend to adopt similar attitudes to learning as they did in school and pleasing the teacher can be part of this scenario. However, this may be associated with the need for approval from the teacher rather than a personality trait; such adults often lack confidence in their own musical ability and they consequently need to seek reassurance.

Artistic expression

Merriam & Bierema (2014) identify the arts, including music, in the context of transformative learning that includes both body and spirit of the learner. Mezirow stated that the goal of adult education is 'to help adults realize their potential for becoming more liberated, socially responsible and autonomous learners' (cited in Merriam & Bierema, 2014: 94-95). He identified transformative learning as a cognitive and rational process that enables the person to make more informed choices by 'becoming more critically reflective thinkers' in their engagement in social contexts (Ibid: 30). Critical reflection is a key component in transformative learning and many researchers in this field maintain that it is best evoked through artistic avenues such as music, storytelling, drama or

literature (Clarke, 2012). According to Lawrence, artistic expression is a means of provoking transformative learning at both individual and community levels (Lawrence 2012b, cited in Merriam et al., 2014: 95). Lawrence states that because 'art is a universal language, witnessing art created by others can provoke community awareness and incite action to create positive change' (Lawrence, 2012: 479). Although referring to works of art, the same may be perceived true for other arts including music, whose values are central to the human spirit (Elliott, 1995). Music transmits sounds through the senses, impacting on the cognitive, psychological (self-esteem), creative, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the person. The activities of listening, learning and creating enrich all these possibilities for further development throughout the lifespan which they may choose to share with their communities.

David J. Elliott (2012) acknowledges the value of 'teaching music that is aimed at lifelong musical participation and personal fulfilment'. In his view music educators need to expand their vision to heighten 'our students' understandings of why, what, and how to implement the powers of music and music education as/for artistic citizens' He states,

> I am not alone in making these suggestions. John Dewey, Richard Shusterman, Wayne Bowman, Thomas Regelski, Tia DeNora, and many other scholars and musicians argue that music and the other arts should not be placed on an aesthetic pedestal' (Elliott, D.J. 2012: 25).

This view relates to the concept of elitism in music education but the educator can inform, enlighten and educate students about the power of music, which can enrich their lives in the present and into their futures. In reference to the above quotation this researcher concurs with the view that this responsibility lies with the music educator.

2.6.4 The value of listening

The concept of aestheticism is embodied in listening and in education. Listening to music is an everyday activity and consequently plays a vital part in people's lives; 'listening to music is today one of the most common leisure activities' while music itself has 'also

been coupled with the maintenance of well-being since ancient times' (Luakka, 2006: 215-216). In their study Smialek and Boburk (2006) advocate Reimer's philosophy on aesthetic listening and musical experiences as being central to aesthetic education. Reimer summaries the value of cultivating musical listening abilities stating, "the combination of perception (noticing) and reaction (feeling) constitutes 'musical experience'" (Reimer, 1985, p. xv; cited in Smialek & Boburk, 2006: 61). The Allegro programme aimed to teach adults how to listen to musical works, to give insight that heightened their awareness when listening, to develop a musically critical ear which in turn enriches personal musical experiences.

Participatory listening, whether in class or at concerts, provided a platform for personal views to be expressed a lively exchange of ideas were shared in class. Adams states that music educators need to be aware of how people use music in their lives in order to encourage 'active involvement with music in their adult lives' (Adams, 2016: 64). Although his research was centred on fostering music education amongst young adults for lifelong learning, the concept of encouraging adults to engage in diverse listening practices was equally relevant to Allegro adults, regardless of age. The most significant outcome was for the learner to become independent and knowledgeable in their choices for future musical participation. Subsequently music could be experienced with a deeper knowledge base whether in the context of listening alone or attending live performances.

Sharing of ideas about how to listen to music began in the Allegro class and concurred with Adam's views that firstly the teacher needs to create opportunities for students 'to verbalize and share their opinions with others' and secondly as they acquire greater proficiency in verbalising about music, 'asking them to support their opinions with deep musical knowledge about the music they are discussing'. This approach promoted greater autonomy for the Allegro adult student. This process, described by Green (2008) as

'critical musicality' empowers adult learners to share their ideas based on their prior musical knowledge and experiences (cited in Adams: 66.). Listening to these shared experiences amongst the Allegro groups was a valuable experience from the ethnographic perspective, as the informality of these conversations offered real insights into the adult music learners' perceptions and experiences. Data from the research indicated that such sharing was an important part of the social aspect of the Allegro programme (chapters five, six and seven).

In addition to listening, the class context created a practical environment to perform and *feel* the music, thus experiencing the transmission from symbol to sound. The participation of tacit learning by playing on percussion instruments engaged the body, mind and spirit in music making ensembles. The culmination of this learning process develops students' critical powers to analyse and interpret musical content and concepts heard in a performance (Ibid). Adams identifies the values of listening and creative exchange:

> Conversing about musical tastes, values and feelings concerning genres or songs is a crucial way in which people (even those who do not consider themselves to be 'musicians') use music; and music teachers can help students develop the abilities to engage in these conversations with more depth and knowledge (Adams, 2016: 65).

The ethnographic methodology opened up such avenues of communication not only among participants but also with the researcher as observer. This was a valuable tool in both the research process and the data collection.

2.6.5 Creativity and composition

Creativity is at the heart of composition and its value is recognised by many researchers and music educators including Swanwick, 1979; Elliott, 1995; Reimer, 1989; Jorgensen 2003a; Green 2008; and Hallam & Creech, 2010. There seems to be a turn towards the use of technology for teaching adults who, as research indicates, are generally drawn towards the arts and technology for personal fulfilment in later life (chapters six and

seven). During the pandemic technology was critical in keeping education afloat and consequently its value has become increasingly recognised as having a significant role in the future of music education.

Students on the Allegro I and II programmes learned to compose using their cognitive musical skills, their inner hearing (developed through singing and listening) and their acquired understanding of musical articulation and style. Performing their compositions necessitated planning, followed by doing and reflecting in action (Elliott, 1995). The combination of acquired skills and musical intelligence enabled them to perform various musical tasks (Gardner, 1993).

In his book *What to Listen for in Music,* Copland described composition as the 'creative process' and described the book as a 'composer's book' as opposed to being written from the 'standpoint of the music educator' (Copland, 1953: 33). Learning how to compose provided adults the practical aspect of the creative process of composition as Copland advocated. Composition facilitated self-directed learning wherein students had the autonomy to explore their creativity through style, listening, musical literacy and expression. Performing their own work developed both self-competence and self-confidence which are relevant not only to the cognitive, physical and creative aspects of music learning, but equally to the psychological, emotional and spiritual aspects of human potential for lifelong learning. The creativity of composition is also an artistic endeavour and according to Boswell, adult learners' express preferences toward the arts as 'they believe the arts contribute to quality of life and are essential for developing the person' (Boswell, 1992: 39).

2.6.6 Broadening Horizons: The role of technology in music education

Over the past two decades research in the fields of composition and creativity have linked the two areas of learning to technology particularly in the United States (Williams 2001;

Tobias 2013; Adams 2016; Walzer, 2020; McCarthy, 2022). Walzer's pilot study explored the andragogical methodologies for teaching music which recognises the prior lived experience of adults, thus forming a collaborative relationship between teacher and student (Walzer, 2020: 1). Although technology was not used as a learning resource for the Allegro programme, teaching during the pandemic gave adults an insight into the use of music notation software, namely Sibelius, which was employed for online teaching. Its value as a commendable resource was acknowledged during the pandemic by adult music learners (see chapter seven).

In questioning the role of music educators in how well they are doing their work, William maintains that the lines between

> the traditional roles of listener, performer, and composer are blurring. Thanks to digital technology, it's now possible to become the composer, the performer, and the listener at the same time – and much more accessible than at any time in history … increasingly music is becoming more multisensory as it becomes increasingly associated with visual stimuli. (William, 2007: 21).

The multidimensional aspects of teaching music on the digital platform will involve new ways of educating music teachers. Williams further states this new approach would facilitate the music teacher in providing opportunities for students to have 'ongoing opportunities to explore, experiment and create with aural and visual materials' (Ibid.). The Housewright Declaration acknowledged that 'advancements in technology have transformed the spaces of music, learning and communication' (McCarthy, 2020: 57). Music technology needs to become part of the music learning experience because technology is now part of the life experience for all.[7] The research here identifies the role of technology in music education and having taken precedence during Covid-19 and its role seems set to continue into the future.

[7] The role of technology in adult music education is investigated in chapter seven.

2.6.7 Psychological values

Elliott states that 'in addition to, and underlying all the various purposes for which music is made are the central values of music making as a human pursuit: self-growth, self-knowledge and enjoyment' (Elliott, 1995: 120). Allegro students had the opportunity to experience these values through the diversity of musical parameters in the classroom. Whereas Elliott described this environment as the 'practicum', Schön's likens the class to a 'virtual world' (Schön, 1987); the latter contextualizes the essence of Allegro wherein students could experience musical concepts without the 'risks and distractions that could otherwise disrupt or discourage the novice' (Elliott: 270). Both Elliott and Schön promote the concept of 'community of practice' which may be applied to Allegro as it also offers insights into the community of Western classical music. The classroom created a safe environment that aspired to offer a holistic 'virtual' music education for adults and concurs with Schön's 'induction process' which he describes:

> When someone learns a practice, he (or she) is initiated into the traditions of a community of practitioners and the practice world they inhabit. He learns their conventions, constraints, languages, and appreciative systems, their repertoire of examples, systematic knowledge, and patterns of knowing-in-action' (Schön, 1987: 36-37).

Enjoyment, happiness and a sense of autonomy all enhance psychological well-being (Luakka, 2007). Motivations for listening to sustain psychological well-being formed the basis of Luakks's survey that involved five-hundred Swedish people, aged sixty-five to seventy-five. The findings revealed that everyday listening evoked positive emotions which 'suggested that participants experienced significantly enhanced positive well-being when they used music for mood regulation, to nurture identity and agency, and for enjoyment' (Ibid: 225).

Boyce-Tillman describes music as 'an exploration of the unconscious, subconscious, or some personal Underworld' (Boyce-Tillman, 2000: 96) and this argument resonates with the notion of spirituality. The psychological aspects of composing, performing or

listening involves the conscious, unconscious and subconscious of which people are generally unaware (Ibid.). The interconnectivity between the practical and psychological concepts may therefore nurture real musical experiences both individually or in group performances. These creative processes and experiences may enable adults' identities to evolve particularly after life-changing occurrences such as, retirement, divorce, or bereavement (Taylor, 2012).

Sense of identity

Rohwer (2016) investigated adult music engagement and the concept of identity as the person makes the transition from career to retirement; her perspectives focus on their musical background, musical activities and social connections. She encapsulates the essence of identity through the role of one participant:

> For Jon, this addition of music as his new all-encompassing identity after retirement is an important part of his story … music is major part of his upbringing, and it is what he does and who he is now, the many roles he plays and people with whom he makes music are an integral part of his current music identity (Rohwer, 2016: 376).

Despite the specific context of this study, this perspective is reflective of many other lifelong music activities. In its broadest concept adult music education is the meeting, collaboration and sharing of ideas among like-minded people. This identity may incur a multiplicity of roles including learner, teacher (sharing knowledge with one another), professional (student's sharing their music or professional experiences with the group), amateur, organizer and other roles (Ibid).

The sense of music identity synthesizes with the andragogical aspects of adult learning and instrumental learning. Taylor and Hallam found that choosing what to learn and how to do it satisfies the need for achievement, enjoyment and self-confidence of older keyboard learners; enabling them to 'use their music learning to construct a dynamic musical identity as part of their self-fulfilment' (Ibid., 2008:1). Thus musical and personal

identities can be fostered in diverse music learning activities. Knowles, who pioneered andragogy as a specialized educational concept 'valued adult learners' ability to acquire experience and practical skills that suited their needs … with the ability to identify their deficiencies through problem-centred learning objectives (Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgartner, 2007; Knowles 1990; Knowles 1975). Knowles concluded that adults seek the learning they require that 'positively influences their circumstances after the learning process concludes' (cited in Walzer 2020: 4). The philosophy that underpinned Allegro advocated that through their newly acquired musical knowledge and understanding, students could develop a vision for possible future musical activities post Allegro; having acquired a sense of personal identity and musical identity within the realm of their new 'musical possible selves' (Creech et al., 2020).

2.6.8 Sociological values

Adults often choose musical activities as a social outlet. Although initially the idea of participation in a group may be perceived as challenging at the onset but the data revealed that Allegro students found the outcome was primarily rewarding. Classes foster friendships, a sense of community with like-minded people who share a love of music and an ambition to gain more knowledge and enjoyment of music.

Dabback and Smith identify quality-of-life programs for older adults in New York, Great Britain, Australia (Brisbane and Victoria) and notably, The Third Age Foundation in Ireland. The latter combined Choral Group with the Navan Travellers' Training Centre and long-term residents of St. Joseph's Hospital; 'the ensemble strives to foster friendships between older people from diverse backgrounds and upbringings' (Ibid., 2012: 237). Another dimension of lifelong learning, not dissimilar to diversity in background, is the intergenerational nature of participation in diverse music learning programmes.

In 2017 the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) claimed, while music education recognises the merits of technology (music technology) for undergraduate students, it has failed to address the needs of non-music majors. According to Walzer, older adults 'despite their varied life experiences, specialized needs, and an interest in music technology, remain overlooked' (Walzer, 2020: 3). This researcher would concur with this viewpoint and suggests that the andragogical approach enables music educators to connect more effectively with older adults. (Ibid.).

In their project 'Music for Life', Creech et al. reported, notwithstanding the isolation amongst sectors of the older adults and recognizing the psychological benefits of music listening, active participation was the most life-enhancing experience amongst this demographic. Their research revealed that 'active group music-making within community contexts may be a particularly powerful context for enhancing health and well-being for older adults as they move through the Third and Fourth Ages' (Ibid: 2013: 98).

There are barriers to collaborative learning: Hallam et al identified structural barriers including finance, location, timing and transport. There were barriers relating to costs of courses; 'social barriers included competing time commitments, ethnicity, gender and social class'(Hallam et al., 2012: 37). Despite the research being conducted in different locations, some of which were perceived as being elitist and exclusive, participants 'emphasised that their experience of music making had not been elitist and that this perception in the general community could be addressed through increasing participation amongst younger people' (Ibid). Findings from this research were similar to Hallam as, despite the programme being taught in the conservatoire, none of the participants felt there was any sense of elitism in the actual learning environment.

Research on adults' participation in formal and informal context found that people had positive feedback about their experiences (Creech et al. 2013; Jorgensen, 2010; Roulston, 2010, Ernst, 2001). In a survey on 'Students Evaluate Music Theory Courses' (2018), Gutierrez concluded that students feedback on the overall musical experience of their theory courses had been strongly positive. It should be noted that this demographic would have formed a younger adult cohort – music majors. They also advocated a need for change, particularly in the area of integration of the subject with other areas in their musical learning. The summary of this survey found 'theory classes that encouraged creative engagement were the most beneficial and most useful' (Gutierrez, 2018: 21). Although the focus was on young adults, the concepts embedded in creativity, participation and music integration equally applies to the older adult learner as evidenced from the literature discussed here and from the findings in the research data.

The dynamics of intergenerational engagement

'Adult music learning covers the entire lifespan after age 18, comprises diverse personal and professional motivations and includes a wide cross-section of performing, creating, and listening experiences (Myers, 2018: 225-226). Participation in such musical activities has, according to Boswell 'the power to fulfil the need for identity, participation, and partnership' (Ibid.1992: 38). Aside from Allegro, the intergenerational facet of class musicianship has been part of my professional experience and was a joy to witness. Music has the unique power to transcend age and having witnessed teenagers and older adults exchanging ideas on varying aspects of music learning in the past, was not only a revelation but a significant learning curve for this educator. Eighteen-years-old was the minimum age for Allegro applicants and over the decade ages ranged from twenty-year-olds up to an eighty-two-year old learner. Age was not a factor in class discussion. Over the years, younger students have said they were really interested in hearing the views of

older students and this exchange was equally honoured by older students who claimed they embraced hearing the viewpoints of younger generations, as they valued the insights gained from hearing the ideas and views of younger people. The uniqueness of this intergenerational experience, whether it be in a small or large group creates awareness while opening the adult learner's vision to new possibilities. Boswell maintains,

> Along with it comes new awareness of the influence and meaning of our (lifelong learners of middle to later years) affective experiences. The dynamics of culture and relationships include intergenerational support and interaction, a component sometimes lacking in our society. Performing in an ensemble is an ideal vehicle for fostering the vital interchange among generations, fulfilling our human potential throughout the life cycle (Boswell, 1992: 39).

Intergenerational participation has great value from a sociological perspective in side-tracking ideas of ageism and the integration of music and music education into aspects of social life can strengthen its power on both personal and social levels to enrich quality of life in adulthood. The outcome of adapting this approach to the value of music in society means 'we do not forfeit music's greatness and profundity; we fortify and increase it' (Elliott. D, 2012: 25). Thus, music education and music education for adults has the power bring a unique level of 'wholeness' to the individual in society.

2.6.9 Spirituality

The concept of wholeness is for many people embodied in spiritual values and according to Elliott, 'music education improves one's health, mind and soul' (Ibid., 1995: 13). In the context of music education, spirituality and sacredness are not synonymous; they are separated by church and state laws. In researching spirituality in music education, Freeman claims that a spiritual music education instils a positive musical outlook for life, from preschool through to adulthood (Ibid., 2002:1). The spiritual approach recognises that each student has a spirit which she defines as their inner core, embodying personality, physical and emotional self-image and learning style (Ibid:2).

She outlines the philosophies of music educators to examine their concept of spirituality. Swanwick uses the word 'feelings' when referring to the student's spirit, stating music 'helps us explore feelings because music structures feelings' (Swanwick, 1979: 112). The philosophy underpinning Allegro was reflective of Freeman's personal philosophy which infuses the concept of mutual respect between teacher and student to enable learning and performing in the classroom. Freeman's philosophy (2002) of music education can be encapsulated in her mnemonic:

- **S**ensitivity The teacher demonstrates empathy and flexibility
- **P**ersonality The uniqueness of each student is valued
- **I**nsights The students' knowledge and ideas are intrinsic in the class
- **R**aison d'être Current and long-term humanistic goals are nurtured
- **I**ndependence Standards of excellence support the students' self-image
- **T**ogetherness Respect promotes optimum musicing and relationships.

In concurrence with Freeman's philosophy, I aspired to appreciate the unique personality of each Allegro student, particularly in light of their musical life experiences and backgrounds. Respecting the student's musical insights fostered their self-esteem and 'raison d'être' by acknowledging their prior musical knowledge. Learning objectives that embraced a holistic approach with high standards of teaching helped adults develop self-directed learning and independence. Togetherness evolved through the medium of the performance components of the programme. Freeman's spiritual reflections were comparable to the broad-based reflections for this research project and the spiritual philosophy of Allegro. The researcher endeavoured to forge positive connections between teacher, student and music in the hope that the programme had the potential to create a spiritual musical experience that could resonate for a lifetime (Freeman, 2002:12).

The notion of music as nurture emerged from the practice of Western music therapy (Boyce-Tillman, 2000). Although this may seem a different argument, its relevance in this context relates to spiritual awakening through a sense of empowerment. In investigating the role of music education in fostering well-being, the authors describe the value of the challenge/nurture concept by maintaining that 'balancing challenge and nurturing successfully leads to empowerment'. She develops the argument stating that society has traditionally associated the nurture concept with younger people in music education, while 'challenge' being the only concern of the curriculum for older students (Boyce-Tillman, 2000: 96). Introducing new music education programmes for adults can change such perceptions by transforming music education into a holistically nurturing experience, regardless of age.

2.7 The role of universities in programme provision and assessment

University departments have a role to play in providing access for new programmes, as previously mentioned. Part of their mission is to serve society. A study in Finland, whose findings in the context of university reform, maintained that 'lecturers need to be equipped to teach differently, more as facilitators "learning to learn' (Miettinen & Myllymaki, 2016: 67). This concept of facilitator parallels the andragogical approach in adult learning, recognising the triangle of learner-facilitator-university in this context of 'learning to learn'.

The value of running programmes in colleges and universities lies in their resources and facilities for holding assessments and examinations (Boswell: 40). Broadening horizons that serve society includes valuing lifelong music learning. Embracing how society works and the needs of its citizens should therefore be part of the training for upcoming music teachers, in the context of what Myers describes as the role of universities in creating 'a music learning society',

> for music educators, the goal must be to think in terms of a music learning society, where adult education is not peripheral to the priority of pre collegiate music education but is seen as an integral piece of a composite music education vision for the good of society' (Myers, 2019: 227).

The conclusion from Walzer's study had similar findings and advocated a move away from the traditional music educator's role by 'preparing future music educators to adopt sensitive, collaborative, interdisciplinary teaching philosophies that will promote inclusivity, increase technological fluidity, and expand the learning possibilities for adult students' (Walzer, 2020: 15). Williams proposes that innovative universities must begin to address the needs of future music educators stating, 'we need pathfinding programs in the delivery of relevant new pedagogies, as found in digital media, so tomorrow's teachers will be prepared for the societal realities they will face' (Williams, 2007: 22). Thus the vision for adult music education needs to discover new pedagogical avenues.

Boswell (1992) had suggested that university departments could well facilitate certain adult learning groups. Today this has become more feasible. Allegro was taught in a conservatoire within the university. Interestingly, Lane claims that most music learning contexts for adults 'fall into the non-formal or informal; there are fewer instance of adult music learning in purely formal contexts' (Ibid:, 2019: 726). This research would concur with these findings but would also advocate change in such provision. These contexts may suit certain programmes but for formal learning the university or college environment is preferable because of its resources for assessment.

2.8 Assessment: fostering self-competence and self-confidence

Assessment is often criticized in the context of adult learning because it relates directly to formal learning, having a planned curriculum, teacher-directed class learning and ultimately assessment to ascertain the learning outcomes. Adults who enter music education programmes generally want to succeed, having moved beyond being spectators they seek assessment to identify their educational, musical and artistic achievements

(Hallam et al. 2012; Creech et al.2013; Taylor, 2013). Julie's reflective narrative encapsulated the value that adults place on music education, she wrote,

Vignette

Allegro for Adults changed my life! What a year ! I've enjoyed playing music my whole life and eventually decided to follow my dream and applied for a music education course to become a secondary school music teacher.
I have played music in orchestras , ensembles done grades for years, however I did not have the skill set to pass the entrance exams which included aural, rudiments and general knowledge. Allegro has given me these skills all in a space of a year and I'm delighted to be now starting Music Education in university in September.

The aspect of the course I really loved was the listening elements, learning how to read and follow a musical score and understanding form in music. I have a newfound love for Baroque music after our visit to the concert hall.

Overall personally I found the year wonderful , making new friends to go to concerts with and to talk endlessly about Mozart! Over the last year my practical skills has improved on all my instruments, even writing my own piano accompaniments . But most of all Allegro for Adults II has given me the confidence to go back to college and follow my dream of sharing my love of music with the next generation.

Flexibility in music education programmes and assessment cultures are issues that require further resolution. Clements suggests that higher education faculty members might consider 'using alternative approaches used in other higher education institutions for possible experimentation or implementation in your classrooms' (Clements, 2010: xii). Allegro and other similar programmes may have the flexibility for delivery in other colleges and institutions. Implementation of such programmes require facilitation for assessment as universities and colleges traditionally value the assessment culture, as indeed do many adult music learners. Concepts involving assessment are informed by particular theories and orientations to learning particularly cognitivist (learning to learn), behaviourist (competency-based achievements) and constructivism where ultimately the adult learner comes to rely on their own construction of knowledge.

Facing the examination is always a challenge and frequently arouses anxiety as the exam date approaches. Despite the worry and nerves associated with the exam culture, it may become a positive attribute if perceived as a tool for developing self-knowledge, self-competence and self-confidence. Opinions regarding the value of assessment differ among lifelong learners. Allegro was no exception. Some really valued the accreditation aspect while others were indifferent; in the case of the latter the majority held previous professional qualifications and perhaps didn't feel any 'need' for such validation.

Flexibility can still safeguard academic agency for change in quality assurance, as indicated in Simper's findings that 'processes should include the scope for individual freedom to work within the guidelines, thus leveraging intrinsic motivation for quality improvement' ((Simper et al., 2022: 1026). The data from Allegro programme indicated that adults valued the detailed breakdown of results in their assessments, assignments and examinations (chapters three, six and seven).

Over the ten year period of Allegro nobody declined to take the examinations which, in itself, was an indicator of the value students placed on achievement. Despite the anxiety pertaining to exams (aural exams meant solo performances with the teacher) their ambition to succeed appeared to transcend their concerns. Papageorgi and Hallam summarise the importance of assessment for adults stating that tests 'promote motivation, enable comparisons to be made, provide a structure for learning, and enable individuals to compete against their previous examination performances' (Papageorgi & Hallam, 2010:151). The outcomes of such accomplishments can develop self-confidence and self-competence for the adult music learner. The findings from the data support these concepts which identify the motivations for achievement to develop self-competence (chapter three) and later the ethnographic data reflects the views of adults on assessment (chapter six). All participants believed the examinations and assessments were an important part

of their learning in giving them a sense of how their individual learning was progressing. The data also identifies adult students' views on studying music in a university and how they experienced the Conservatoire in the context of campus life (chapter six).

2.9 Conclusion

The literature in this chapter was based on concepts of wellbeing in adulthood through participation in adult music education. On a positive note educators, researchers and policy-makers recognise the value inherent in providing music education across the lifespan. Aging affects each individual differently as there is no consistent pattern, but regardless of participants' ages, teachers assist learners to uncover preconceptions and existing knowledge and use them as points of departure. This reflective process underlies the best of adult learning models (Dabback & Smith, 2019: 238).

The uniqueness of music as an intergenerational platform, particularly evident in traditional music, has been acknowledged here through the data findings and literature.

> In respect of intergenerational contexts, the prime concern is fluidity in mentoring, and co-learning may provide scaffolding and freedom, and support learner autonomy in pursuit of self-directedness. Arguably, this is the prime objective not only of adult and older adult education but of learning across all age groups (Dabback & Smith, 2019: 238-239).

For a number of years I played violin in an amateur orchestra which was a very rewarding experience. Consequently, during my years of professional teaching I could empathise with the 'adult learner'. Regardless of background or professional qualifications, once we enter a new field of learning, we each become an 'adult learner'.

The unique nature of music with its power to change lives promotes well-being, opens up avenues of communication, gives people a sense of identity and, in the context of this research, creates pathways into the educational realm to learn more about the wonderful phenomenon of music. This chapter offered a critique of research from different fields of

expertise that supported the value of music throughout life. Music education must equally play its part by promoting inclusivity for adult music learners in universities and colleges.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology commenced as action research and transitioned into ethnographic research methodology, the latter complemented the original approach and encapsulated the plan-act-observe-reflect cycle. Firstly, this chapter outlines the qualitative aspects of the research, the epistemological stance guiding it and the research procedures undertaken throughout this work. Details of the Allegro for Adults programmes are addressed in the context of reflexivity within the action research process and later in the ethnographical context. The subsequent data gathering and analysis, including questionnaires, reflective writings of both participants and researcher are presented, and themes arising from the semi-structured interviews are identified. The ethnographic framework for the interpretation of data arising from fieldwork is outlined. Data included recorded interviews, reflective writings of participants, biographical narratives and transcriptions of the researcher in her dual role of participant-observer within the class culture.

3.2 Epistemological Foundations

Hesse-Biber & Leavy maintain that "methodology is the bridge that brings our philosophical standpoint (on ontology and epistemology) and method (perspective and tool) together" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011: 6). I would concur with this view from the standpoint that it is not only applicable to design considerations but to music learning.

In undertaking this research, I was aware of the philosophical, psychological, and theoretical dimensions it would entail. Mindful of that focus, I needed not only to decide on the best process to employ for the task but also on my own epistemology and ontology,

by continually questioning the purpose and type of my research, looking at how personal attributes might influence the research and the intended audience (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995: 331). I would concur with Pickard (2013) that contemplation is key when embarking on a research paradigm because it significantly affects the research methodology.

An investigation into the literature pertaining to quantitative and qualitative approaches to research revealed that qualitative research, with its constructivist orientation, was more suited to the humanistic world of music teaching and learning in this research (Crotty, 1998; Guba, 1990; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Bryman 2008). Bryman describes constructivism as "social phenomena" wherein "categories are not only produced through social interaction but that are in a constant state of revision" (Bryman, 2008: 19). I personally envisaged the continuous ebb and flow as a philosophical underpinning in the context of this research process. Bryman's philosophy reflected my own personal philosophy, not only in terms of my epistemological position but also in terms of my ontological and methodological considerations.

The subjective nature of this work was grounded in qualitative research which is "rich in the description of people, places and conversations" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998: 2). The diversity within adult education in the learning society (Jarvis, 2006) is reflective of the diversity within qualitative research, both being rooted in anthropology and sociology (Bryman, 2008; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Robson, 1993) and both encompass multiple realities that are socially defined (Firestone, 1987: 16). Based on contemplation of my own experience of teaching adult learners and my understanding of their personal, social and psychological motivations and desire to learn, the qualitative stance afforded greater flexibility for this researcher in terms of diversity and complexity (Hallam and Creech, 2002).

3.2.1 The ontological stance

I would concur with Bryman's view that the process is affected by the researcher's own personal view of social reality. This research set out to acknowledge that "multiple realities exist, such as the realities of the researcher, those of the individuals being investigated, and those of the reader or audience interpreting the study" (Creswell, 1994: 76). There were layers of social realities in this work which needed, not only personal reflection but, validation based on an investigation of the reflections of adult learners.

Pierce states that pragmatism is a "method of reflexion having for its purpose to render ideas clear" (Pierce, cited in Crotty, 1998: 72). The researcher identified with pragmatism as an interpretative approach in terms of its thinking, which places great emphasis on understanding the meaning of any action by looking at the consequences of that action, in terms of the practical significance for people in everyday life (Benson and Craib, 2001). James describes pragmatism as 'the attitude of looking away from first things, principles categories, supposed necessities; and of looking towards last things first, consequences, facts' (James, cited in Crotty, 1998: 73). For a number of years, Dewey was also an advocate of the pragmatist school based on James' views.

From an ontological stance, pragmatists are more interested in what happens in the world as opposed to the kinds of beings it contains (Kilpinen, 2008). The concept of change, wherein nothing is permanent is put forward by Rescher when he states that "change is the very essence of reality" (Ibid., 2008: 5). Kilpinen further states:

> That action comes ahead of knowing, in the sense that the subject first has to establish a steady relationship to his or her world, before closer investigation about it and the truthful statements that they could possibly yield come onto the agenda (Ibid: 7).

The researcher strongly identifies with the concept of change through understanding the world and the participants in this research. Dewey's views emphasise the need for

knowledge as part of our reality in order to survive in the world; knowledge is not simply something that we speculate about but rather is of practical importance in our lives (James, 2006: 35). The value of music to enhance education, experience and social interaction (Hallam and Creech, 2002) encompasses the multi-faceted nature of music in our world and its effect on everyday life. From a pragmatist viewpoint, what I most closely identified with was the acquisition of knowledge about the world, a world based on my own actions as a music educator, adult learners and the music education profession.

Thompson when he states that we *act* in the world and are not just spectators and action research provided an ideal platform for action which enabled a continuous ebb and flow for change. According to Thompson "facts about the world are shaped by our concerns and what we hope to do" and that "beliefs should accord with known facts and if the evidence is balanced between two theories, then accept the theory which will be of greater practical use" (Thompson, 2006: 35). This research reflected such views as it encompassed action research and ethnographic methodologies; the combination afforded the tools to present a new paradigm of music learning for adults. After twenty-five years in the profession and after music critical consideration of the literature above, I concluded this research could empower me to bring about change. I believed the two worlds – music education and adult education - needed to merge.

3.2.2 The researcher's ontological stance

Initial stages of the process revealed the complex diversity of research and possibilities that needed to be selected, processed, analysed and proved. Crotty's scaffolding gave a framework to the process which was helpful in organising the work into manageable components (figure 3.1). While acknowledging that qualitative research in social science is, by its very nature, overlapping in all dimensions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Punch, 2004; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995) it was most appropriate for this work.

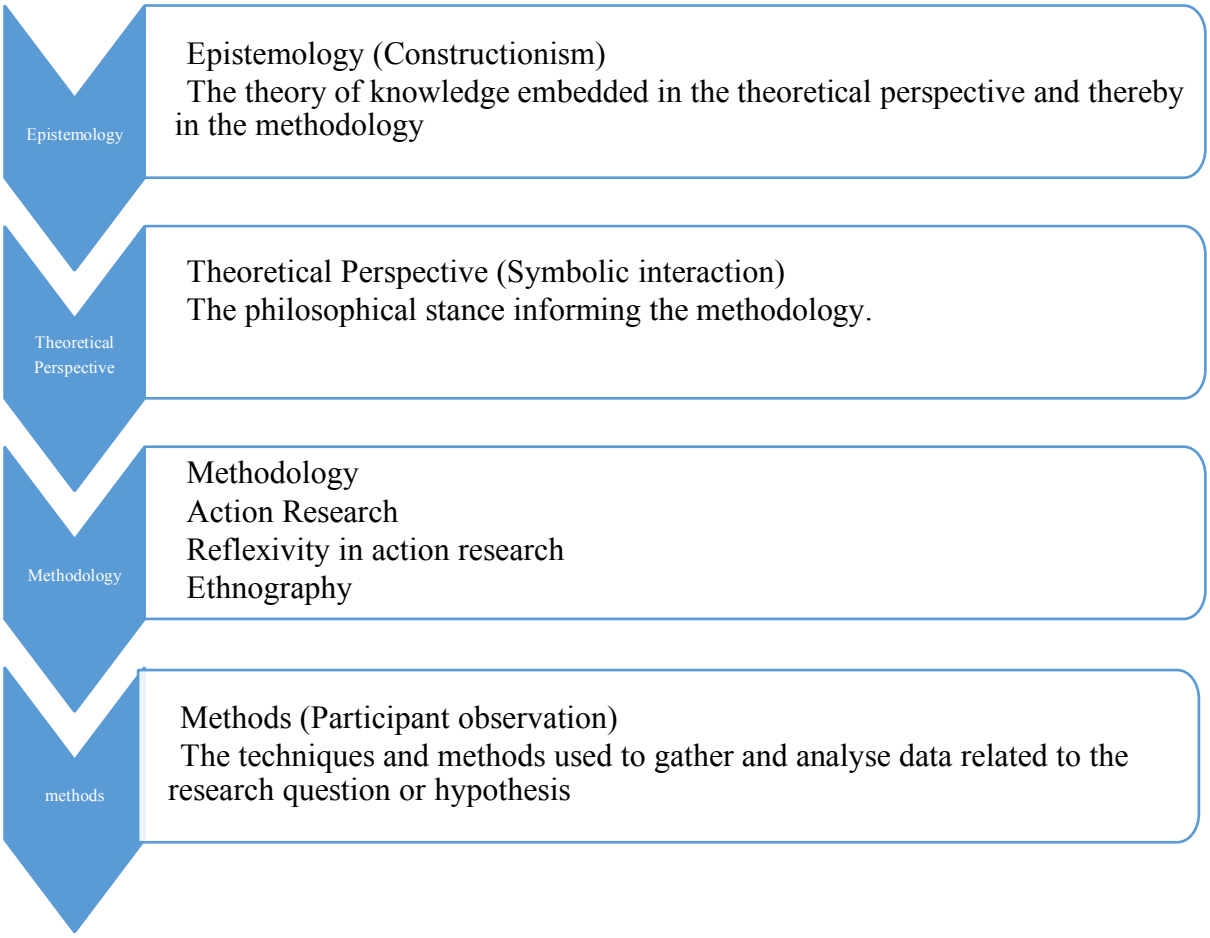


Figure 3.1. An adaptation/modification of the four elements for scaffolding identified by Crotty (2009: 4-5).

3.3 Research Methodology Design

A methodology, according to Silverman, refers to the choices we make about cases to study, methods of data gathering and forms of data analysis (Silverman, 2005: 99). In social research, methodologies may be defined very broadly (e.g. qualitative or quantitative) or more narrowly (grounded theory or conversation analysis). Throughout the research process, I have found Silverman's arguments to be most relevant, in the sense that similar to theories, methodologies cannot be true or false, only more or less useful (Ibid: 99). Methodology, methods and theories cannot be copper fastened as each contains a grey area and, based on personal experience, they constantly shift as the research process progresses and evolves.

In terms of the overall framework, Punch presented key questions in research - *What* is the research about? *What* am I trying to find out? *How* am I going to do it? *Why* is it worth doing? (Punch, 2004: 22). Throughout the process I have repeatedly asked myself these questions. These simple, yet searching questions kept this research grounded in the practicalities of the methodology and methods, aiming to maintain a clear focus on the task in hand as I attempted to navigate through, what Schön termed, the swampy lowlands of action research (Schön, 2011).

Descombe (2010: 3) states that there is no single pathway, a view supported by other experts including Bryman (2008), Robson (2002) and Hitchcock & Hughes (1995). Crotty declares there is a bewildering array of methodologies and it is up to the researcher to try to find order amidst the maze (Crotty, 2009: 1). He suggests the researcher needs to build on their own knowledge, and that of others in the various fields, and recommends the 'scaffolding' process to seek order and clarity in terms of ideas during the research process (fig: 3.1*)*.

3.3.1 Choosing the research process

The outcome of the above suggests there are fundamentally two questions to be answered, both of which were important in choosing a research process for this work:

1. What methodologies will be employed in the research process?
2. How will the choice of methodologies and methods be justified?

The second question is perhaps more pertinent at this point. Bryman (2008) suggests that the way the researcher's view of social reality is at the core of the research process. It can be undertaken in response to a social situation, personal experience or when a specific opportunity arises. The current research has emerged from the latter, wherein a "need" emerged that identified a gap in the choice and availability of an adult music programme

in the Conservatoire. Also fundamental to this research was the inquiry to seek what type of knowledge would transpire from the research. These are the epistemological questions which directly affected the choice of methodology and methods chosen in this context to seek the desired outcomes (Crotty, 2009; Guba, 1990; Robson, 1997).

3.4 Action Research

Action research originated in the work of American psychologist Kurt Lewin. McKernan states that the literature proves that action research is a methodology and "that it is a root derivative of the scientific method" (McKernan, 1991: 8). The progressive educational work of Dewey enforced the concepts that professional educators should become involved in community problem solving and furthermore, he proposed a scientific approach for solving problems in the areas of philosophy, psychology, aesthetics, and education (Ibid). However, it was Lewin who constructed an actual theory of action research, describing it as "proceeding in a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of planning, action and the evaluation of the result of action" (Kemmis & Taggart, 1990: 10). Lewin maintained that the only way to evoke change within social practices was to include practitioners from the real social world in all phases of inquiry (McKernan, 1991: 10). This research was situated in a real-world context of a conservatoire of music and encapsulated the areas that McKernan identified – philosophy, psychology, aesthetics and education – all of which are embodied in music.

3.4.1 Why action research?

Action research methodology resonated with this researcher because action transforms into new practice and research transforms into new theory. The two could be contextualised into the Allegro adult music programme. Existing classes in TU Dublin's Conservatoire were, based on professional experience, primarily modifications of those

suited to younger people, hence there was a need for a new programme. Observing and reflecting on how effective 'mainstream' pedagogy worked for adults in the classroom, and prior to Allegro, the researcher informally tested out a more holistic approach. The aim was to expand the adult's knowledge base by augmenting the set curriculum[8]. The findings suggested that the value of adopting this approach lay not solely in adults acquiring new knowledge but in recognising their prior knowledge.

Action research in education is concerned with the teacher reflecting on their particular teaching while studying the classroom environment (Elliott, 2001; Macintyre, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2009). This presented an ideal methodology in the context of this research as a form of self-reflected inquiry undertaken in social situations, in order to improve the rationality and understanding of a given practice in the environment in which the practice is carried out (Mc Niff & Whitehead, 2006). Although the researcher had written the two programmes which were approved by college boards, more was needed. Predicting how the programmes would be received by adults, meeting the aims and objectives in term of curricular content, monitoring the pedagogical approach and evaluating the learning outcomes needed a systematic technique. The programmes needed to be tried and tested; subsequently the rationale for choosing action research lay in its value as a tool for improving practice.

According to McNiff & Whitehead (2006) many practitioners may perceive themselves as capable in the role of contributing to new practices but would be less confident in their role of "capable theorist"' (Ibid: 48). These authors further state that when one tells people about one's work, the focus is on two things: firstly, how one has developed new

[8] The set curriculum was taught but some newer aspects were introduced, including class discussions of how art and architecture reflected characteristics of various musical periods. The informal learning outcomes, related to enjoyment of learning, sharing of ideas and people getting to know each other socially.

innovative practices and secondly, how these ideas are brand new. They state that "you may have adapted, or incorporated, other people's ideas into your own work, but the work is yours, an original contribution" (Ibid). A key feature for the choice of methodology is that it is research *in action* rather than *about action.* It is particularly meaningful in the adult learning context as it is both participative and collaborative.

John Elliott identifies the fundamental characteristics of action research as: (1) teaching, (2) educational research, (3) curriculum development and (4) evaluation. The aim of action research is "to improve practice rather than produce knowledge" (Elliott, J. 1990: 49), which was at the root of this research process. Kemmis and McTaggart state that the linking of the terms "action" and "research" generates a need to, not only improve practice, but that action research is a means of increasing knowledge (Kemmis and McTaggart in McNiff, Lomax, Whitehead, 1996). My initial aim was to improve practice and to generate new knowledge possibly in the form of new textbooks for adult music education. However this would not necessarily be new knowledge but rather a new and more innovative pedagogical approach specifically designed for adults to learn music. Despite the disparity of views identified by these authors, the current research aimed to incorporate all the above elements, action, research and improved practice, and to contribute knowledge to the field of adult music education for lifelong learning in further and higher education institutions.

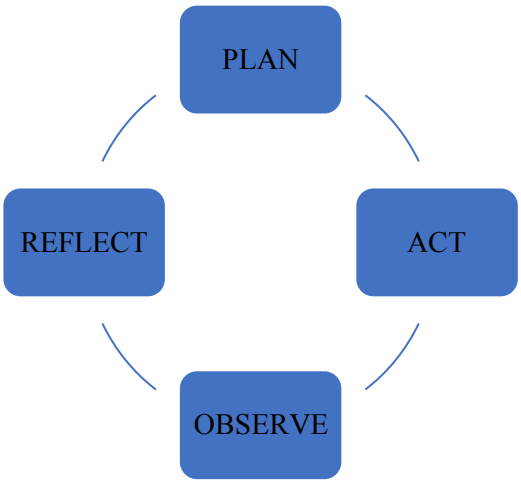


Figure 3.2. The Cycles of Action Research

The above plan of action is discussed in greater detail in chapter five in the context of teaching and learning in the classroom. The process and outcomes were interdependent and needed consideration from that perspective in order to improve, what Schön termed, *reflective practice* (cited in Carr and Kemmis, 1986: 162). In this study action research identified *real* components in the context of the *real* adult learners who would contribute to this research through the *real* experience of music and music education. Elliott's model of action research was considered the most appropriate model for this research as he is concerned with the values that constitute the ends or the learning outcomes (Elliott, 2001). The first stage was setting up the Allegro for Adults summer schools in 2011 and 2012; the next stage was to observe my own practice in the context of action research methodology (appendix D includes literature on the summer schools). The summer schools were designed to create a pathway that highlighted the value of adult music education and to inform the practice that would be part of the Allegro for Adults programme. They were designed as a prelude to the delivery of the programmes; the inspiration at that point was most holistically-based rather than theory-based. The data was collected for the summer schools was in the form of loosely structured questionnaires, more like feedback forms, which encouraged narrative-style responses from participants. (appendix C). Although they were designed to observe adults learning,

these cycles were different in context and process. The table (figure 3.3) presents a comparative overview of the musical experiences for participants on the summer schools to those on the programme[9].

Allegro Summer Schools	**Allegro for Adults Programme**
Short duration of learning – 3 days	Full academic year of learning
2011: 9 participants; 2012: 7 participants	Allegro I: 12 participants Allegro II: 8 participants
Teacher as practitioner, but limited in terms of getting to know participants	Teacher/ practitioner. Relationships were formed within the group and included the teacher.
Curriculum was limited, yet workshops were effective in terms of musical participation. It offered the experience of all the elements	Curriculum was introduced progressively in each of the elements. Students developed musically through practice
Findings from data interesting, but limited as weekend was of such a short duration.	Data collection had more depth and could be revisited during the year.

Figure 3.3. Overview of Allegro for Adults summer schools and Programme[10]

Based on the collegiality and friendliness amongst the two cohorts, my observation of the summer schools were they became a vibrant musical experience. When participants met each day they would chat about what they liked and what events they were looking forward to on the next day's agenda. However it was a limited time-frame and the teacher did not have the opportunity to get to know the participants, with the exception of those who subsequently signed up for the Allegro programme. Six people from the two summer schools collectively enrolled for the programme.

[9] The sixteen people in the summer schools do not form part of the forty-three participants in the overall data, as the methodology differs for both areas.
[10] Appendix D contains marketing data for the summer schools p. 361

The cycles below (figure 3.4) present the action research model that informed the summer schools. The first summer school (2011) represented the first cycle and the second summer school (2012) informed the second cycle, followed by the upcoming Allegro programme (2012-2013)

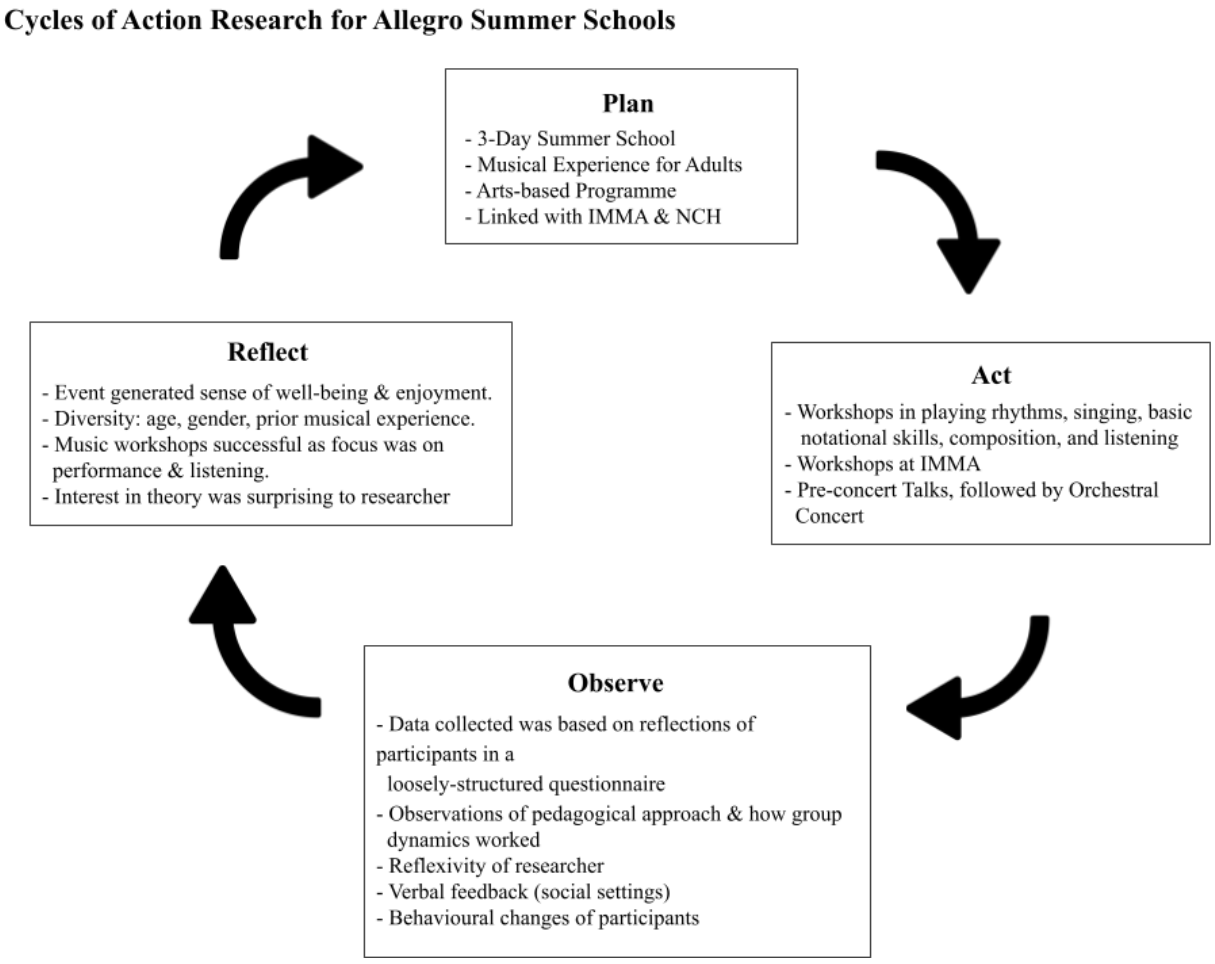


Figure 3.4. Cycles of action research in implementation of summer schools

This cycle represents the stages of the research, the context including locations, collaboration with other arts areas, teacher observations in terms of reflexivity and reflections on the outcomes of the event. A similar model will indicate the cycles of action research for the pedagogical approach in the Allegro programme (chapter five).

3.4.2 Improving practice through action research

The concept of improving practice through action research came through the action of writing because as McNiff and Whitehead claim, writing is itself a form of action (McNiff, & Whitehead, 2009: 2). They describe it as a multi-layered process which unfolded as I began to observe my own teaching through those layers – the action of teaching, the action of writing my own observations, reflections and the story behind the process. Writing up the findings is the inscription of a communicated idea (Deutscher, 2005:9) in making the external become internal for the researcher (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009: 2). The culmination of these aims contributed to this research in making a "political mark, your mark of symbolic power, in that you claim the right to make your mark" (Ibid). The duality of writing and being part of a professional institution afforded the opportunity to advance this research.

NASM[11] claimed that "Institutions that train professional musicians have responsibilities for addressing issues of music in general education" (NASM, cited in McPherson, Welch, Graham, 2012: 74). This applied to the genesis of this research which proposed to improve practice for teaching music to adult learners in a university context, namely TU Dublin Conservatoire of Music.

Elliott's model of action research was used for both the action research itself and reflective practice. My practice would now involve writing about the philosophy of music education for the adult learner, the pedagogical approach that required a research tool (the creation of new courses which will be discussed later in this chapter), the steps of both

[11] The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), founded 1924, is an organization of schools, conservatories, colleges and universities. It is the principal accreditor for higher education in music in the United States.

the pedagogical and the research methodologies, the reflexive nature of the process, the learning outcomes and critiquing a potentially new paradigm for adult music education.

I concur with Macintyre's view that action research is an "investigation, where, as a result of rigorous self-appraisal of current practice" (Macintyre, 2002: 1), I as researcher, could investigate adult learning in the context of music education. He maintains this concerns both the people involved in the process and the context of the learning. People and context were central to starting this particular investigation as it afforded the opportunity to bring my years of experience under the umbrella of a new approach to formal adult music education.

Wisker states that practitioner-based research is more of a focus rather than a methodology, but nonetheless it means "you can have real impact and ensure sustainable development" (Wisker, 2004: 228). Due to the interpretative nature of qualitative research, I felt all the above were applicable to this work but in their broadest terms. Based on my research experience, the unexpected nature of the ever-changing and ever-evolving nature of qualitative research brought with it the realisation that focus could be lost in a maze of theories and approaches. In order to investigate a new approach that would draw upon the relevant literature, theories and models a new tool was needed for the research.

Over the years I had always felt a deep-seated need to create something new in the music learning context, something that would challenge the adult learner educationally, musically, creatively, psychologically and intellectually. The aim was to augment their love of music, their ability to learn about it and to achieve learning outcomes in the form of accreditation that ultimately recognised their level of musical competence. Hence, Allegro for Adults music programme was a central tool for putting the action research process into action.

3.4.3 The action research process in action

The promotion of a new profile for adult music learners was a focal point for setting up the first Allegro for Adults summer school. Adults need to negotiate their busy lives around attending courses or activities outside their normal routines. The title of the courses 'Allegro' reflected the concept of 'fast moving' which aimed to embrace the needs of the adult learner by acknowledging the value of their time - an intensive programme that could meet their expectations in terms of their musical experiences and their learning outcomes at the event.[12]

The researcher set up a six-member committee that helped with promotions, recruitment and marketing; three of whom were invited specialist lecturers. Meetings provided the opportunity to brainstorm ideas and timetable the events. Considerable time was devoted to meeting people, e-mailing, contacting media, designing flyers and literature, deciding on locations and booking venues (apart from the Conservatory, venues included Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) and the National Concert Hall (NCH)). Meetings were arranged with the Head of Education in IMMA, and a written proposal to secure financial transparency was submitted to the NCH (appendix D). *lyric fm* had agreed to run a music quiz and the winner received a free ticket to the event[13].

The summer school was a three-day event. Workshops and lectures in music were interspersed with similar activities by specialists in literature, design, art, sculpture, and dance. The social dimension was enhanced by a reception with live music by the Conservatoire's adult cello group and the aesthetic experience was enriched by attending

[12] The word *Allegro* is an Italian word for *fast*. The interpretation of the title suggests an accelerated learning programme.

[13] *lyric fm* is a classical music radio programme. The question chosen was "What was Mozart's father's Christian name?" The winner told me later that he had really enjoyed the event but, at the time, had no idea what exactly he had won.

a concert in the National Concert Hall, prior to which I presented a pre-concert talk in the Kevin Barry Room. This groundwork was a sounding board to bring about public awareness of a new approach to music learning for adults, through radio interview, advertising, website advertising, networking for recruitment, flyers and promotions.

The event was a success in terms of the diversity of programmes offered and links formed with other arts. It was a unique, although small event which aspired to flying the flag for adults learning music in a formal educational setting. A second summer school was held the following June. The links with IMMA and the NCH were sustained and again it was another three-day event. The primary aim of these two summer schools was to test my 'hunches' for a the need for a new music curriculum for lifelong learning, which would put into action once the Allegro for Adults programmes were approved by TU Dublin committees, academic boards and quality assurance councils.

3.4.4 Action research methodology

The combination of these two summer schools was the first cycle of the action research process (2011-2012). The second cycle was the implementation and running of the Allegro for Adults courses (commenced in the academic year 2012-2013).

To launch the Allegro for Adults programmes a recruitment event was organised to seek future applicants. This event included a presentation on the profile of both programmes their structure and content, the assessment criteria, the time commitment involved for adult learners attending a weekly class. The event also highlighted the importance of the feedback of participants as a key resource both the pedagogical approach and their contributions would be a valuable aspect of the research data (appendix D). The talk was attended by the public, conservatoire staff and colleagues. It was followed by a reception with live music and attended by former and current adult students. Colleagues and friends

attended the event, some assisted in answering queries while others simply enjoyed an informal exchange of ideas about adult learners in music education. Current, past and potential adult music students were invited. The aim was to give participants a practical insight of real music learning in an authentic music environment.

Allegro for Adults I and Allegro for Adults II commenced at the Conservatoire in 2012 and offered the adult learner a comprehensive course of musical learning over a one-year period. The fundamental approach was its participative nature wherein adults would be actively engaged in music to develop musical skills. Both courses had accreditation of Level 6 on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and 5 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System). A general overview of the aims of the programmes is presented below.

Allegro for Adults I: Foundation Level

The aim of this programme was to encourage musical awareness, for the adult beginner, through developing an understanding of pitch, rhythm, reading, writing, hearing and memory skills, in a series of graded and progressive stages to reach an intermediate standard of competence in each of these areas.

Allegro for Adults II: Advanced Level

Allegro for Adults II aimed to offer a comprehensive independent course, for the more experienced music learner, with a view to developing their creativity in composition, harmony, figured bass, and counterpoint and to further develop their skills in aural work, score reading, history, musical analysis, and listening.

3.4.5 Reconnaissance and Allegro

This research sought to offer an alternative pedagogical approach to adults learning music in a formal higher education context. Cain states that action research in music education

leads to powerful learning for the student (Cain, 2008: 283). The ethos of this new approach intended to instil such learning; a new paradigm that combined the action-research model that was informed by current theories of adult learning with theories of music education. In all cases the participants were aware that they were collaborating in this research as well as participating as an adult music learner. Concurrently, I used a reflexive journaling method to record both the narrative of the cycles of action research and three levels of reflective analysis which were: 1) immediate response, 2) relationship with scholarship and theory and 3) identification of emerging insights into a possible new paradigm of adult learning in this field of practice.

3.4.6 The action-research cycles in Allegro

The second and third cycles of action research were embodied in the two Allegro courses over a one-year period. Classes were held once a week for ninety minutes. Throughout each semester, six assignments were given and at the end of each semester an assessment was given to test the learning outcomes. Assignments were undertaken as homework and there were also some 'class-based', end-of-term exams. Two formal exams, one written and one aural, were taken at the end of the academic year.

In contrast to the traditional musicianship curriculum, the Allegro adult music learners had the choice of doing a music project on a topic of their personal preference. In terms of reflectivity, I was aware of the limitations of the programme as other genres such as pop, jazz, rock, or ethnic music were not included. This was due to my own classical musical background, wherein I lacked the expertise to teach other genres. I openly acknowledged these limitations to the student but also expressed a willingness to have class discussions about other genres where they could share their personal musical experiences and genre preferences. I was aware not to impose my own preferences to the exclusion of others and therefore I adopted a facilitator's role in these situations. Classical

music teachers are aware of the perception of elitism in their genre which can discourage involvement in music education programmes[14]. One year after Allegro started, I was approached by Head of Academic Studies in the Conservatoire and the Head of Bachelor of Arts in Creative and Cultural Industries (BACCI) to collaborate Allegro as a module on this degree programme. These were young adults involved with popular and classical music and their degree studies encapsulated other cultural and creative studies. The commencement of this module, which was now integrated with the Allegro programme, broadened the age group of participants and, upon reflection, worked very successfully. (This discussion will be further developed in chapter five).

3.4.7 Ethical Issues

A proposal which outlined the nature and scope of research was presented for the purpose of obtaining ethical clearance to proceed with this research project. Documents relating to ethical clearance are included in the appendices of this work. All participants were offered anonymity and all consented to have their responses used in the research. Each signed a consent form (appendix A).

Action research had a direct impact on the learners. Throughout the process they were asked to complete questionnaires, write reflective pieces and were interviewed. This data was valuable and deserved careful and authentic analysis. Thus, the aim of ethical clearance was the protection of participants and was a major step in the research process (McNiff &Whitehead, 2009: 86) . The true value of action research is rooted in realities of everyday situations and "is the development of a practical wisdom grounded in reflective experience of concrete cases" (Ibid., 53). Another important aspect of action

[14] One of the emerging ideas from the research would be the inclusion of other genres to run in parallel with classical music in the actual programme. Similar to the summer school, experts in the field could be invited to give such classes. This is something for consideration in the future; its aim to broaden the adult students' musical knowledge, experiences and future musical horizons.

research is that it brings unity to the various strands of education: teaching, curriculum development, evaluation, educational research and professional development. Curriculum development and evaluation needed to be constantly revisited and revised during reflective practice which can only be realised during the teaching process.

3.5 Data Collection

Data collection from the summer schools was, owing to the short duration of the event, based on loosely structured questionnaires that were similar to feedback forms which facilitated self-narratives (appendix D). The methods used for the collection of data for the Allegro programmes included questionnaires, reflective pieces from participants, interviews with participants and reflective journaling on teaching practice. The data for the decade is based on the Allegro programme and is representative of the feedback on the views and experiences of its participants. The use of "multi-techniques" which aims to "secure a more penetrating grasp of the situation" (Elliott. J, 1991: 77) was undertaken to examine the diverse data collected for the study. The reflective nature of the action research process was recorded in the reflective journal; data regarding the background of the students and their expectations of the courses was sought through questionnaires; students' thinking and understanding of music, both in their lives and in the educational context was manifested in their own reflective pieces which tended to be autobiographical in nature; and interviews were conducted in a semi-formal context to investigate students' opinions and experiences of the programme.

This process was well suited to both action-research and ethnographic methodologies. Questionnaires, interviews, and reflective writings of the Allegro participants formed an integral part of the data. The evaluation of this data aimed to discover how to apply adult learning theories to musical learning. This collective data is partly informed by both the

initial findings and the overall findings. The core of the research synthesised the reflexivity of the action researcher and the experience of the adult learner.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

According to Bryman, "questionnaires that are completed by respondents are one of the main instruments for gathering data in social survey design" (Bryman, 2012: 232). In this research the questionnaire formed an introductory insight into the education, work, prior studies and musical aspirations of participants. The questionnaires were distributed upon commencement of the course and were completed over a one-week period (see Appendix A). Profiles of Allegro participants in terms of numbers, age, and gender are presented in figure 3.5 below.

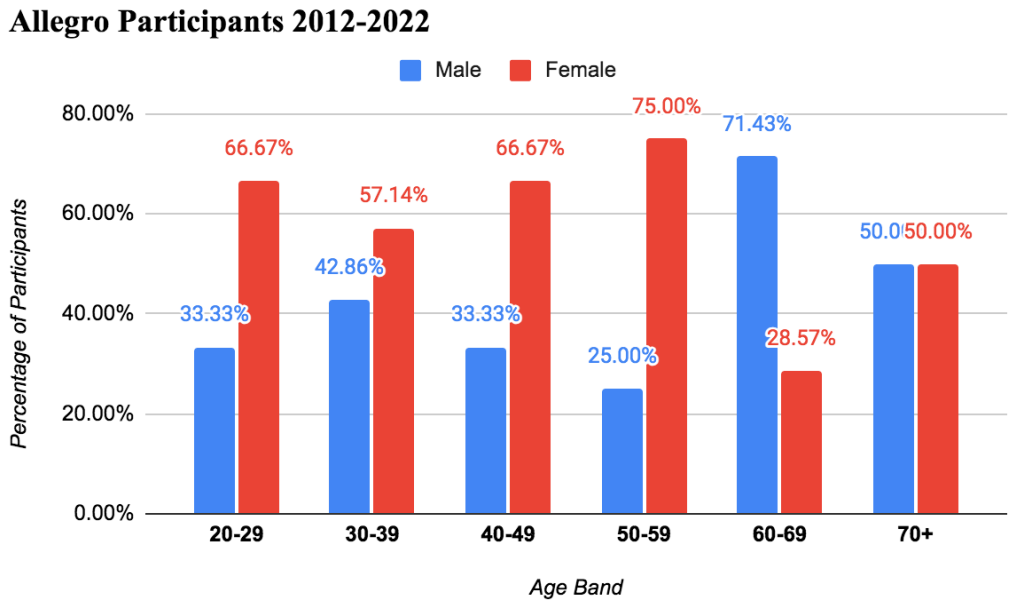


Figure 3.5. Profiles of numbers, age, and gender

3.5.2 Interviews

Participants had agreed to be interviewed upon completion of the course, which was conducted on a voluntary basis but the majority were interviewed. For the purpose of the

research pseudonyms were used. One-to-one semi-structured interviews were undertaken. Conducting a semi-structured interview seemed the most appropriate technique in the context of this work because it afforded the interviewee greater versatility in terms of their responses. I concurred with Bryman that the researcher "has a list of questions on fairly specific topics to be covered, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply" (Bryman, 2008: 438). In terms of reflexivity, this proved to be a rich source of data collection as it reflected how they viewed the experience in terms of my professional practice, my own history and also how my observations in the teaching-learning context had impacted on the students (figure 3.6 presents a breakdown of the interview process).

The interviews were conducted in-person. During the pandemic all students had to be interviewed on Zoom, owing to the lockdowns during COVID-19. Chapter seven will identify the different cohorts of students impacted, but final cohort were given a choice between zoom or in-person. Regardless of interviews being in-person or online, all interviews were recorded and transcribed with the consent of all participants, on the understanding that anonymity would be protected.

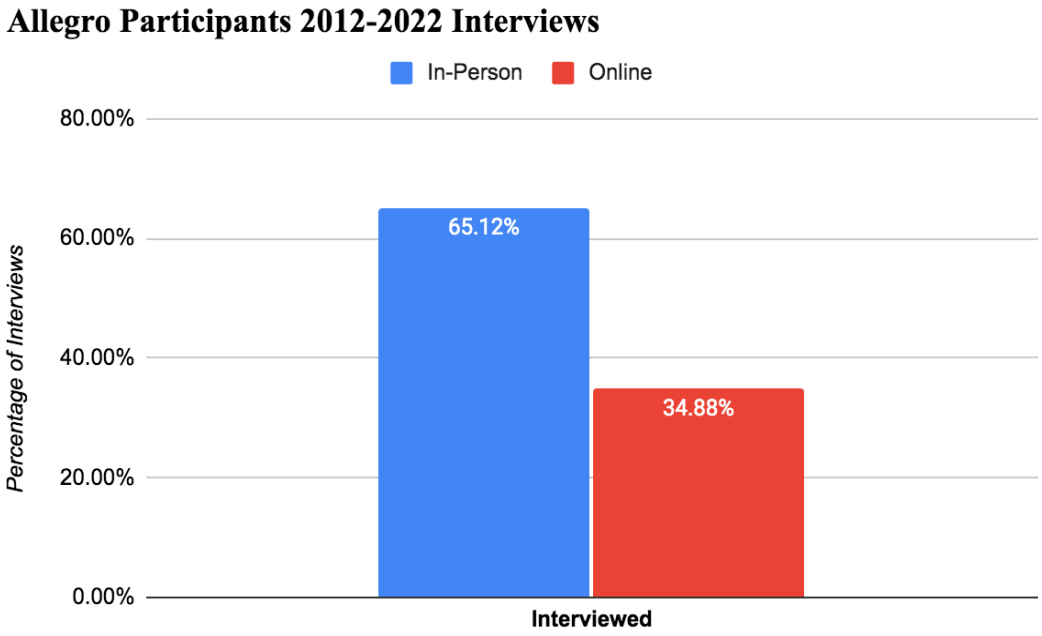


Figure 3.6. Breakdown of interview process

3.5.3 Reflective journal

Bourdieu (1984) states that you claim your own kind of distinction in different ways. In your writing, you write your life as a person who can make a quality contribution to the world. The process of keeping a reflective journal was another tool to add to this researcher's contribution to this relatively new research area. The reflective journal embodied the action research process, my observations in the teaching/learning context, and the psychological aspects of teaching music to adults – how they adopted in the educational environment, their openness to learn musical skills, their willingness to experiment with the realm of musical creativity, their commitment to attendance, their motivation to learn and ultimately, their endurance to acquire the necessary musical knowledge and skills which would earn them accreditation. This would translate as experiential learning for the adult student wherein outcomes could prove to be both musically and educationally meaningful in their lives.

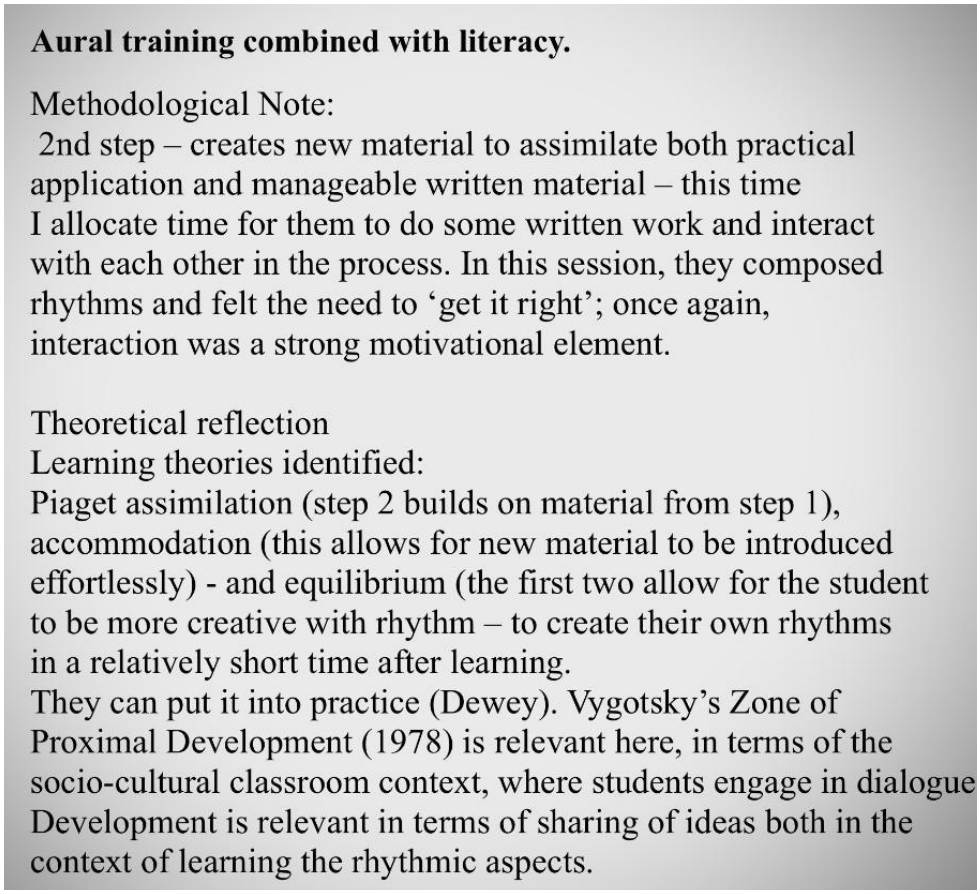
All participants were aware that they were contributing in this research as well as participating as an adult music learner. Concurrently, I used a reflexive journaling method to record both the narrative of the cycles of action research and three levels of reflective analysis which were: immediate response, relationship with scholarship and theory and identification of emerging insights into a possible new paradigm of adult learning in this field of practice (chapter five).

There were four aspects in this researcher's reflective journal which are listed below. After each class or encounter entries were made with particular references to any new or surprising elements. There are many such entries in relation to all facets of teaching and learning (figure 3.7 illustrates an example of transcriptions from my reflective journal).

Aural training combined with literacy.

Observational notes:
First step: The aim is to introduce Kodaly concepts through practical aspect. The written aspect is not usually introduced yet, but there is a real motivation to write down the rhythm, which surprised me and meant I had to devote considerable time to this. Observing how engrossed they were in this formal style learning, I changed the balance of the pedagogy and they really enjoyed the whole process. I was very taken aback, as I would have thought it a tedious and rather uncreative aspect of the learning. They continuously asked questions as I passed amongst them and shared their ideas with each other.

Reconnaissance – I have misjudged, possibly undermined, their capabilities – reflexive in terms of my values/expectations. Perhaps I was imposing my values on them?
Personally, I welcome any 'surprise', as this educates me and requires further critical thinking in terms of the group dynamic, as well as the pedagogical approach.



Aural training combined with literacy.

Methodological Note:
2nd step – creates new material to assimilate both practical application and manageable written material – this time I allocate time for them to do some written work and interact with each other in the process. In this session, they composed rhythms and felt the need to 'get it right'; once again, interaction was a strong motivational element.

Theoretical reflection
Learning theories identified:
Piaget assimilation (step 2 builds on material from step 1), accommodation (this allows for new material to be introduced effortlessly) - and equilibrium (the first two allow for the student to be more creative with rhythm – to create their own rhythms in a relatively short time after learning.
They can put it into practice (Dewey). Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978) is relevant here, in terms of the socio-cultural classroom context, where students engage in dialogue Development is relevant in terms of sharing of ideas both in the context of learning the rhythmic aspects.

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Figure 3.7 Transcript from reflective journaling

This vignette presents evidence of the interactive nature of the learning and incorporates the learning theories. The teacher's role here is to facilitate the learner to use the knowledge, to build on it in terms of practice and writing and to find a creative aspect within the two parameters. The models of learning were more interactive-based in the class rather than instructional. This interaction could underpin what Swanwick (1999), Elliott. D (1995), and Kodály (1966) meant when they stressed the importance of students learning to think for themselves. In this learning context the participants were very willing to collaborate and contribute to adult music education research; the data reflected that they recognised the value of their participation for future adult music students.

3.5.4 Reflecting on Reflexivity

The reflective process involved me reflecting on myself in terms of personal values, history, social relationship and pedagogical methodology. These issues reflected back on me as a practitioner when I entered the teaching environment. Of course, this in turn impacted on those I was teaching and my observations while teaching. The self-reflective nature of the process allowed me to bring my knowledge and expertise forward as a researcher and to bring it into a teaching/learning context as facilitator. Cain stated that there was little focus on reflexivity in action research (Cain, 2008: 283), but there has been a greater recognition of the relevance and importance of reflexivity amongst others including Elliott, J. (2001). The thinking in this research resonated with Elliott's who maintained that self-awareness, and awareness of the institutional context where the learning takes place, are part of the same reflexive process, wherein reflexive practice implies without doubt, self-critique and institutional critique. Both of these processes were present throughout the entire research process and were always under consideration in the teaching/learning environment.

3.6 Data Analysis

In gathering the data I had iteratively synthesised information about events, actions and happenings in order to make meaning out of the situated experience. The hope was to obtain new insight into "new episodes of practice" (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006: 117). The experiential and transformational nature of the students' experience could inform the transformation in my own critical thinking and practice. The nature of the reflexive process within the methodology presented themes of a holistic nature, which in turn provided a criteria for transforming the data into evidence of professional development (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006).

The initial questionnaires presented an introductory overview of the participants in providing some useful and guiding insights.[15] This included early personal statements which were informative in themselves and of value in guiding the interview questions. Upon completion these questionnaires were analysed promptly and this initial data allowed early themes to emerge and to guide the interview process.

Corbin and Strauss promote the notion of themes in qualitative research stating, "concepts that are grouped together by the researcher form categories (sometimes referred to as themes)" (Corbin and Strauss, 2015: 7-8). The use of themes or codes was the preferred choice for this work. I would disagree with Charmaz's view that "coding for themes rather than actions contributes to remaining at a descriptive level" (Charmaz, 2006: 137). Although, in fairness, she states this in the context of her preference for grounded theory, I felt that themes which offered descriptions were valuable for the interview data pertaining to this research. I concurred with the concept that coding offers "delineating concepts to stand for interpreted meaning of data" (Corbin and Strauss: Ibid.).

In the context of adult learning much is open to interpretation and description particularly in the interviewing process. Figure 3.8 identifies some of the themes that emerged from the interview data. The issue of themes will be discussed later in chapter six in the context of the ethnographic data; this chapter will also endorse the natural transition from action research methodology to ethnographic methodology across the time-frame of this project.

[15] Appendix B includes questionnaires and interview questions about the programmes.

Theme	Response
Commitment: How did you find the commitment of attending the Allegro course once a week in terms of getting it to balance with other aspects of your life?	***Killian****:* I blocked out Tuesday at the start of the year, then I had to find the time to do the homework and all that! I do this in the middle of the day and go to Art on Tuesday night….. and that was another part which you brought out well which was the relationship between music and painting in terms of the Impressionists and Bach and all that stuff and I mean that's fascinating. ***Marie:*** I thought that the classes always started on time and ended on time, which is very good for adults coming in. I imagined every ten or fifteen minutes we went into a different aspect, which was very good. But you know it was very structured. ***Bill:*** It wasn't a problem at all as I'm retired. ***Gerard:*** It was difficult because I was in my final year in college. ***Paul:*** It didn't bother me at all. I was coming in from Bray on the bus ..But you sign up for these things, you know the score, you know what's in front of you, you do it or you don't. ***Eoin:*** It was a bit of a challenge because I was working 9-5. I had a really understanding manager who was really supportive in terms of working the time off for me and fixing the so-called clock to make it Happen. It was lovely to get out of work for two hours!
Enjoyment Were there any particular aspects of the course that you particularly enjoyed?	***Nora:*** I really liked the music history because it gave me a good background but also, I really enjoyed the practical things like the composition and you know the tapping out, (playing on percussion instruments) and the singing I really enjoyed as well. ***Caroline:*** I loved being in a classroom setting, that I wasn't on my own - to be with people that had the same love of music that I did. I also loved doing rhythm, I definitely needed work on rhythm and doing it with the percussion as well was fantastic and I loved doing the aural. The aural

Theme	Response
	gave me a sense of how to listen to music and how to understand it better. I find now when I's listening to orchestras, the way I listen to music is completely different that it was before. ***Thomas:*** I enjoyed how broad it was and how you learned so many different aspects. You learned the theory of rhythm, theory of melody and then you learned the history of music and the different eras and you got to do practical thinks like playing and singing as well; so you got to do different things rather than always writing or listening – it was the way you mixed up the different things that I enjoyed.
Musical Identity Did you discover anything new about yourself, in terms of fulfilling a desired need?	***Robbie:*** I learned a lot about myself from a personal point of view. Mixing with people, walking into a class and having to interact with them – it's difficult for me but that's what I learned about myself – that I can do it. If I got nothing else out of the class that alone was a bonus. That's a big learning curve for me. ***Julie:*** I enjoyed it. I loved it. It was my time. It was doing what I love doing and I would have loved if it was on more days a week. ***Olivia :*** Well, I feel I know more about music now. I feel better about myself now, because I felt a bit useless like you don't know anything about music and your Dad is good at music, and after doing piano for so long and not being able to read it properly. So I feel I'm able to get to grips with that now and am able to sit down and try to work it out.
Social engagement How did you find the class environment and group dynamics?	***Caroline:*** The class environment was fantastic. I've met a lot of great people and we would often play the piano if we arrived early ... we often met during the week to study. Concerts are great when you are going with people that love being there as much as you do. It's a social outing and after doing the aural I found that listening to the orchestra is completely different – I listen differently now. ***Alan:*** I think because the classes are more intimate it's easy to start a Conversation through music.

Figure 3.8. Responses to themes that emerged from the data

3.6.1 Reflective writings of participants

Participants' evaluation of Allegro in terms of their expectations, experiences, acquisition of musical skills and knowledge, social encounters and assessments procedures, were key dimensions in the research. Students completed questionnaires at the start of the programme regarding their education, work, studies, and their musical/educational aspirations. Mid-way through the process they wrote short reflective pieces on what the course meant for them – unlike the questionnaires this process was entirely individualistic and open as it afforded them the opportunity to write whatever aspects were important to them personally. A few informal ideas were offered verbally, for example: Why they signed up? Why they decided to make the commitment? What value music held in their lives? These were optional suggestions for those who asked for some direction as to what to write. However the aim was for them to write spontaneously about whatever they felt was important for them personally and musically. The questionnaire that participants had completed at the start of the programme dealt with factual aspects. In their reflective writing however, participants were willing to share their life experiences. Almost all gave some biographical details about the value of music in their lives both formal or informal experiences. The majority had agreed to be interviewed on completion of the course. Although they wrote their names on the questionnaires and reflective pieces (some only by their first name), they were assured of privacy at all stages throughout the data collection process.

In terms of reflexivity, the findings proved to be a rich source of data for valuable insight, not only into my own practice and my own history, but also for the value of music throughout adulthood. It identified the reasons for adults embarking on the *Allegro* programme: had a transformational aspect had influenced their decision to sign up? how

they found the whole experience educationally, musically, aesthetically and psychologically? what skills they had learned? and ultimately if the whole experience lived up to their expectations? Responses to these questions are contained in the data (chapters six and seven).

3.7 Introducing Ethnography

Multiple developments and changes in all areas of education occur over a decade; is a long time and the rate of change is ever-increasing. This necessitated a change of methodology to bring cohesion within the timeframe. In order to manage data gathered from participants, a narrative-ethnographic methodology was given consideration as the most feasible approach for analysis. Perspectives from the social sciences standpoint, musical ethnography and musical scholarship are given critical consideration.

The method of using lenses to examine ethnography, autoethnography and narrative-inquiry was undertaken. Organically they follow similar pathways and hence the narratives that emerged from participants' data in fieldwork, culture, observations, semi-structured interviews, reflective writings and questionnaires merged into a holistic 'whole' creating cohesion within the time-frame of the work.

3.7.1 Defining ethnography

Popkewitz (1981) defined ethnography as 'a methodological approach that describes, analyses, and helps one understand a particular culture' (cited in Krueger, 2018: 134). This comprehensive definition could be applied to the social sciences in general. In music education, Krueger suggests an ethnographic approach necessitates using a different lens which she describes as follows:

> Centred in the qualitative research tradition, ethnography allows the researcher to investigate contextual questions beyond the reach of methodological approaches in which

> particular variables are isolated. An ethnographic approach may provide a complementary study, since it allows a view of social interaction occurring within a natural setting. (Krueger, 2018: 134).

The versatility of ethnography enables interpretative aspects of social setting within a college or class; educational ethnography has evolved from sociology, psychology and anthropology (Krueger, 1987: 70; Barton, 2014: 97).

Ethnographic research in music education has, according to Barton, proved itself to be an appropriate framework in which to observe practice because 'it is through rich descriptions, interpretations and representations of teaching and learning that is the focus of inquiry (Barton: 97). Similar to qualitative research the process involves:

Data collection

Fieldwork

Researcher as observer-participant

The outcomes, involving fieldnotes, interviews, audio and video recordings led to transcriptions which ultimately necessitated interpretation by this researcher.

Campbell writes that 'research would emerge in music education that utilized fieldwork, participant-performance, and transcription techniques' (Campbell, 2003: 24). From a personal perspective, the inclusion of ethnographic methods for music education facilitated a more holistic approach for the students and also for the teacher. It opened up channels of communication through class performance, attitudes to learning, bringing enlightenment and knowledge through the curriculum and developing social connections both inside and outside the learning environment. Ethnography seemed to reflect the pre-Allegro experiences of the teacher's connectivity and experience with adult classes, including the informality of group dynamics and their motivation to learn and succeed.

3.7.2 The Ethnographic Framework

The methodological process for the project data was inspired by the thinking outlined to date in this chapter. Cross-disciplinary need not be confined to universities, the concept works equally well in collaborative ventures such as summer schools, modularised courses or pilot programmes. Embracing other disciplines enriches the learners' experience of music within arts-based learning (chapter one); narratives of Allegro participants supported such findings. Coming under the umbrella of the social sciences narrative enquiry and ethnography were adaptable methods for examining data from the fieldwork here that included: observations of classroom activities and students' learning experiences, writing musical ethnographies that critically evaluate the needs of learners, musical values, personal and musical development, group culture, pedagogical, psychological and sociological areas. All of these elements informed the transcriptions and interpretations of the fieldwork for this project.

3.7.3 The Ethnographic Lens

Narrative ethnography is sometimes referred to as narrative research or narrative enquiry (Brand: 2006)[16]. Brand supports O'Toole's views that narrative inquiry in educational research is comparable to music education. The former describes her 'growing hunger' for an alternative form of music education inquiry, away from 'music education's obsession with sterile research reports … (its) research literature squeezes the life out of words' (Brand, 2006: 75). This accelerated interest in narrative inquiry was also identified by Clandinin (2018) and O'Grady (2018).

Brand maintains that this methodology offers what is missing from music education research, notably connection to music teachers' lives within the context of cultural,

[16] According to Brand, the terms narrative research or narrative inquiry are interchangeable.

educational, psychological, sociological and musical perspectives. Synergising these perspectives may include 'the music teacher's self, professional career, experiences and identity'(Brand: 76). Thus narrative ethnography offers meaning by focusing on interpersonal and intercultural themes.

In the context of this work ethnography involved data collection, fieldwork and my role as participant-observer which cumulatively enabled interpretation of the collected data from interviews, reflective writings and observations of the researcher as part of the group culture. Ethnography brought new life to this research. The fieldwork, although similar to action research and other qualitative methodologies, has strengthened communication between the researcher and the groups. In truth, having the opportunity to actually interpret the data, reading the narratives and interview transcriptions has brought the study back to 'real-life' research, based on my personal reflection as a teacher.

3.7.4 The Autoethnographic Lens

Chang's book 'Autoethnography as Method' (2008) was a considered choice for this research, possibly being an autoethnographic lens for the data and I would concur that her work 'makes autoethnography a practical and reasonable endeavour' (Steeg & McCarthy: 125). She presents a three-stage approach to autoethnographic research:

- Conceptual Framework (relating to culture, self-narratives and autoethnography)
- Collecting autoethnographic data (rooted in the questions how?, why? and what? plus ethical issues).
- Turning data into autoethnography (managing, analysing, interpreting and writing data) (Chang, 2008: 10).

The three-stage approach works equally well in ethnography as in autoethnography according to Chang, stating 'like ethnographers, autoethnographers follow a similar

ethnographic research process by systematically collecting data' for interpretation and analysis to produce scholarly reports, also called autoethnography. She says 'in this sense, the term "autoethnography" refers to the process and the product, just as "ethnography" does … like ethnographers, autoethnographers attempt to achieve cultural understanding through analysis and interpretation (Ibid.: 48-49).

Although Brand's views resonated with this researcher on the basis of using narrative ethnography for this study, there was an issue with the idea that autoethnography can mean different things to different people. Social scientific inquiry, anthropology and narratives are also embodiments of ethnography and ethnomusicology, the latter two were deemed more closely aligned with the musical values of Allegro. The validity of using autoethnography as method in this particular context arose some scepticism for this researcher.

Chang outlines three stages which form the basis of the data presentation, interpretation and analysis for this study. The concept of culture is incorporated into the first stage and 'autoethnography is affirmed as an ethnographic research method that focuses on cultural analysis and interpretation' (Chang: 10). Collecting autoethnographic data in the second stage of the method encompasses four rudimentary questions: 1)why undertake an ethnographic study? 2) how to find a research focus? 3) what initial steps should be taken for the study and 4) how to handle ethical concerns (Ibid: 59). The focus of her approach was the combination of,

> cultural analysis and interpretation with narrative details. It (autoethnographic method) follows the anthropological and social scientific inquiry approach rather than the descriptive or performative storytelling. That is, I expect the stories of autoethnographers to be reflected upon, analysed, and interpreted within their broader sociocultural context (Chang, 2008: 46).

A decision between choosing ethnography and autoethnography was required in order to progress the research.

3.7.5 Choosing a lens: Ethnography or Autoethnography?

Initially, the collective data from Chang's theory purported to interpret the research in the broadest concept, adhering to the participants' contributions maintaining precedence over the personal experiences of the researcher. Upon reflection, having analysed the suitability of her autoethnographic method, the researcher considered the emphasis to be mostly on the 'self' and in the context of this study, could potentially marginalise the significance of participants' contributions and consequently impact on the data findings.

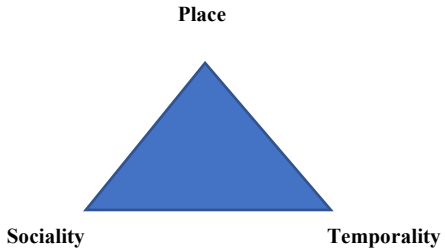
When I started researching ethnographic methodology I reflected on the possibility of using an autoethnographic approach. Pierce's pragmatic view of reflection to seek clarity of ideas in the context of methodology was examined. Considerable thought and research needed to be processed before decisions could be made that could facilitate the research in moving forward. From this researcher's stance, the study would be more enlightening and authentic if it was rooted in the data, rather than participant-observer reflections. On the basis of these considerations, I choose the ethnographical methodology as opposed to autoethnography. The pragmatic approach is merely a tool to come to a decision about what would be the best choice in creating cohesion for the 'whole' project. Similar to ethnography, pragmatism has an interpretative approach that for me, focused on understanding actions in terms of their significance of my research actions and examining the consequences of these actions for the Allegro programme and its participants.

3.7.6 Three-dimensional narrative inquiry within the social sciences

Narrative inquiry is a means of understanding experience and the reasoning for its inclusion in this analysis was determined by its value for studying the experiences of individuals over a period of time and in context (Clandinin and Caine, 2008: 542). The Allegro programmes had run for a decade in the formal environment of the Conservatoire.

The above authors state ‘narrative inquiry is marked by its emphasis on relational engagement between researcher and research participants’ (Ibid.). The small class sizes of Allegro fostered a more intimate relationship between researcher and participants, which in turn created a more socially holistic environment from which individuals and groups could develop friendships and a greater understanding of themselves personally, musically and socially.

Narrative inquirers use the term ‘field texts’ to describe the means of gathering data, be it interviews, conversations or participants’ observations. The triangulation of the three-dimensional narratives (below) identifies place, temporality and sociality as a means of studying experiences; these dimensions create space for inquiry into the life and experiences of participants and researchers.



The triangle of the three-dimensional narratives by Clandinin and Caine:

Temporality comes into play in two ways; the first is that field texts are composed over multiple interactions with participants; the second, through participants’ reflections on and of earlier life experiences. In the context of the Allegro programme, the relevance of temporality was the multiplicity of weekly interactions over a full academic year. Social interactions of concert-going further deepened friendships and collegiality amongst like-minded individuals. The reflective writing of participants frequently included their earlier life experiences.

Sociality directs attention inward toward the participants' thoughts and emotions about past events that surfaced during interviews and in participants' reflective writings. These concepts were evident in their writings, not only of earlier life experiences and also of current and past musical experiences.

Place directs attention to places where lives were lived as well as to the places where inquiry events occurred (Ibid: 544). Place was more frequently identified in the context of the Allegro classroom in the Conservatoire where the inquiry events occurred.

Clandinin and Connolly use the Deweyan theory in what they term, its broadest context, and with 'this sense of Dewey's place in our thinking about narrative inquiry, our terms are *personal* and *social* (interaction); *past, present, and future* (continuity); combined with the notion of *place* (Clandinin and Connolly, 2000: 50). They developed Dewey's 'interaction' further by focusing on four directions of any inquiry: inward and outward, backward and forward, as they explain,

> By inward, we mean toward the internal conditions, such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions. By outward, we mean toward the existential conditions, that is, the environment. By backward and forward, we refer to temporality – past, present, and future … to do research into an experience is to experience it simultaneously in these four ways and to ask questions pointing each way (Ibid).

All such theories are equally as relevant in music education as in the general field of the social sciences, particularly in terms of students' stages of musical development.

Narratives and shared experiences

Narrative inquiry could be adaptable to the data of adult music learners and their experiences. The reflective writings of adults recounting their early musical learning and sharing their views both in the micro context of the class and the macro context of the institution and social events works well in these contexts. Interviews often get side-tracked by stories of the past that are important to the interviewee and may emerge from

a particular question or topic of discussion. Crucially, narrative ethnography provides the opportunity for students to share their experiences and hopefully this project provided a platform for participants to not only discuss their stories and experiences, but to write about them in their reflections.

From the researcher's standpoint the significance of narrative inquiry, dominated with the "so what?" question, was to sharpen the focus of what was important from both participants' and researcher's perspectives (Wiley. 2019; O'Grady, Clandinin and O'Toole. 2018). According to Clandinin and Connolly (2000) researchers need to consider that 'being in this world, we need to remake ourselves as well as offer research understandings that could lead to a better world … because researchers are not mere observers but rather, are complicit in the world we study (Ibid: 61). Relationships between participants and the researcher have developed over the years, thus forming a strong bond of mutual respect. Such relationships open up avenues for discussion of genuine reflections of past experiences, but equally important the can be reflective of the participants' emotions behind the narratives.

The researcher's role here was to adhere to her responsibility to the scholarly community, by writing up data that answered the questions of "so what?" or "who cares?". The outcomes of such repeated questioning about the significance of the research evolve through participants (re)-living and (re)-telling their experiences (Ibid.). This researcher, in turn, embraced the role of author of these narratives and the culture within which they were created. I concur with O'Toole that 'narrative ethnography serves as an innovative approach', for analysing both personal and institutional stories in a 'variety of settings including schools, classrooms, curricula and wider informal learning spaces' (O'Toole, 2008: 154).

The recognition and popularity of narrative enquiry amongst educationalists had been growing steadily over the past three decades. According to O'Toole social researchers can no longer ignore social phenomenon in the forms of narratives and stories, but must rather recognise their value in the context of education and narrative enquiry.

The willingness of students to participate in this research moved the researcher very deeply. Their motivation stemmed from a collective need to contribute to the future value of adult music learning, which they did by sharing their personal narratives for the purpose of this study. This argument concurs with the words of Clandinin and Caine, that 'narrative inquiry is marked by its emphasis on relational engagement between researcher and research participants' (Ibid.). Analysis and interpretation of the data through the lens of narrative-research was ultimately the responsibility of the researcher by honouring the contributions of all the Allegro participants.

3.8 The role of the researcher

Whatever the definition of ethnography, the role of this researcher was that of an 'overt full member' which means 'full membership of a group but the researcher's status as researcher is known' (Bryman, 2012: 441). Although teaching the group, I could identify with Hodkinson's participant observation study (2002). Here he adopted a multi-method ethnographic approach which, similar to Allegro, included interviews, questionnaire, observations and, of significant relevance for this researcher, where he said that 'insider status was actually enhanced' as the project included attendance at festivals … (and) internet group discussion groups (Cited in Bryman: 441: Hodkinson, 2002: 4-5). Concert-going and other musical events were integrated into the fabric of the Allegro programme; this social culture assumed particular significance for participants (chapters five, six and seven). The pilot study offered a platform for discussion regarding curriculum content, processes of teaching and learning methods, engagement outside the

'online forum' which entailed creative composition, aural practice, learning songs and listening to online video performances of international artists. Online discussions and chats at musical events further strengthened the rapport between participants and the researcher on a more personal level.

Bryman cautions against treating participant observations and ethnography as synonyms, but he emphasises that the approach to data collection of the two is practically similar as 'the researcher is immersed in a social setting for some time in order to observe and listen with a view to gaining an appreciation of the culture of a social group' (Bryman: 383). This concept of gaining insight into the Allegro culture was inherent in the interpretation and analysis of the data through the lens of narrative ethnography. The stories shared by participants in their interviews and reflective writings formed a rich tapestry for the data.

3.9 Narrative-ethnography in the 'culture' of adult music education

The methodological approach of ethnography helps educationalists understand the culture in which they are teaching which has the potential to supply information and insight into music education research (Krueger, 1987: 69). Narration was based on the shared musical and personal experiences of the Allegro participants and concurs with the views expressed by Ellis and Bochner:

> Autoethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations (Ellis & Bochner, 2000: 739. cited in Wiley: 81).

The wide-angle lens involved the researcher's teaching and observation of Allegro participants, which over a period of time evolved into a music group culture, which emulated respect and autonomy in a holistic learning environment. Over time, trust and familiarity opened up avenues of communication with students who, through interviews,

questionnaires and reflective writings, shared their personal and musical experiences with the knowledge that their stories would contribute to the data. However, as Wiley said, 'there's a world of difference between merely telling a story, and using it as a means of understanding the culture of which the storyteller is a part" (Ibid: 84). Thus, this researcher had a responsibility to manage the data from two perspectives: firstly, turning data into ethnography and secondly, adhering to the scholarly community of researchers.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the ontological, epistemological and methodological concepts identified in this work. Reasons for the choices in qualitative research, resulting in action research and ethnographic research have been presented. The actual methods employed have been examined in the context of action research, real-world research, reflective practice and ethnographic research. A presentation of some of the data has been introduced that identified a selection of emergent themes from the interviews.

There was considerable deliberation required to decide upon the best methodologies to employ owing to the ten-year timeframe of the project. Re-entry into the doctoral programme after five and a half years posed challenges on how to present the data in terms of giving clarification to the process and cohesion in the overall findings. The summer schools were a test for a musical education programme from a broader arts-based perspective. At the time, the aim was to include some extern arts-based lectures into the Allegro for Adults programmes, but owing to the unforeseen circumstances[17], the action research was discontinued and upon re-entering the programme the ethnographic

[17] The Allegro I and II programs were continued during the academic year 2013-2014, but as a result of a car accident, I was unable to teach, and the programme was taught by an excellent colleague. We maintained a close collaboration, with continuous meetings, in order that the pedagogical methodology was continued as the previous year. This is the significant factor that caused a gap in the research.

methodology was employed to synergise the two methodologies in order to advance the work in moving forward.

The ethnographic approach was a very good fit as the processes are similar to action research. Collection of data, presentation and analysis are similar, but ethnography enabled greater flexibility for the researcher in terms of her role as observer-participant. This enriched the relationships between researcher and participants, which gave greater insights into the ethnographies of students (discussed in further detail in chapter six). Ethnography has, in this researcher's opinion, brought the entire process towards a full circle. At the start, the initial aim was to improve practice and create new knowledge, based not only on literature and theoretical methodologies but on the rich sources of data that the participants freely shared.

The combination of the two methodologies has not only made the research process manageable in terms of creating cohesion, it has the enriched this researcher's insights into what music education can bring into people's lives. This chapter has outlined how the process evolved and how the data supported some of the findings. It was the data that brought enlightenment regarding the value of music education in people's lives. The privilege of moving from the roles of teacher/researcher in action research into observer/participant in the ethnographical methodology, enabled me to witness and share in the rich data that the Allegro participants, thus completing the methodological full circle.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Adult Music Learner

4.1 Introduction

This chapter constructs a condensed overview of three areas of literature relevant to this research: firstly music education, secondly adult education and thirdly adult music education. The aim of this chapter is to present an insight into the three areas of study relevant to the adult learner in music education with a view to setting up a theoretical framework for the research. The literature presents an insight into the three fields of study by means of a triple-lens approach, while providing a background to each field. The chapter concludes with the research questions that underpin the study and a summary of the research argument.

Each lens presents a different area: the first examines adult learning, the second presents philosophies and practice of music education, and the third investigates adult music learning. The first lens presents theories of adult learning with particular emphasis on experiential learning, transformational learning and andragogy. Merriam and Caffarella's Model of the Constructivist Orientation in Experiential Learning is concerned with the learner, the pedagogical framework, the teacher and the learning context, and arising from this, the chapter discusses the behaviourist, cognitivist, humanist, social and situational and constructivist areas in the context of the model itself and also of the adult music learner.

The distinctiveness of adult learning is also examined with particular reference to the research of Alan Rogers (2008). Acquisition learning and formalised learning are at the core of adult learning according to Rogers. The distinctiveness lies not so much in the

learning but in the teaching; it is the teacher in the role of facilitator that further constitutes this distinctiveness. Knowles' Model of Assumptions is discussed in the context of andragogy and the adult learner. Mezirow's conception of the Ten Phases of a Perspective Transformation is investigated in terms of its adaptability to adult music education and the Allegro programme (figures 2.1 and 2.2).

The second lens outlines the philosophy and practice of music education. The link between philosophy and methodology with particular emphasis on the philosophies of Kodály, Swanwick and Elliott are examined. The relevance of aesthetic and praxial philosophies are also outlined for their value to pedagogical and philosophical research in music education.

The third lens merges adult education and music learning. Adults' "need" to learn is discussed and curriculum theory is presented in light of adult music education. The role of the teacher, in relation to Roger's views on the distinctiveness of adult learning, is contextualised with adult music learning and discussed in relation to the programme (chapters five, six and seven).

Chapters two and seven carry their own literature. Chapter two in some respects, sets the stage for the whole thesis as it outlines the value of participation in music education for adults in terms of their physical, cognitive, creative, psychological, sociological and spiritual wellbeing. It includes international empirical studies from anthropological, psychological, sociological, medical, health and holistic journals. The importance of the role of technology is also addressed. Chapter seven explores the ethnographic methodology and the positionality of the researcher as observer/participant, in the context of interpreting interview data, reflective narratives and questionnaires. Themes that emerged from these particular research areas are identified and discussed in this chapter.

4.2 A triple-lens perspective

Silverman (2005) states that while lenses allow us to narrow down the concept into small and manageable components, they offer the versatility to broaden the focus at a later stage. The decision to explore the literature using the lens technique was further informed by Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, who argue that lenses simultaneously allow us to see things and limit our view at the same time (Ibid, 2007: 131). The objective here was to enable greater clarity in presenting the diversity of literature.

4.3 The first lens: Adult Learning

This lens examined theories of adult learning by focusing on experiential theories, including Fenwick's critique on experiential learning; transformational learning and self-directed learning, referencing Mezirow's work (1991); models and orientation of learning in adult education and Knowles' concept of andragogy was also presented.

Learning, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is 'to acquire knowledge of (a subject) or skill in (an art) as a result of study, experience, or teaching'.[18] The learning and teaching of musical skills, knowledge and understanding are at the core of adult music learning. Knowledge of music and skill acquisition can be drawn from this definition. According to Rogers, 'learning is only learning when it leads to action'(2008: 84). Although he is referring to learning in general education, this researcher believes that such a view equally resonates with philosophes of music education which ultimately transform into practice. Action in the form of skill acquisition while developing knowledge and understanding is the foundation of sound music education practice. Participation in musical activities and the role of music educators in seeking an integration of theory and practice shows 'why

[18] https://www.oed.com/oed2/00131039;jsessionid=66553C08C9CA59A8C5014652E5993EC2. Oxford English Dictionary. A definitive guide to the English language. (1989, 2nd edition).

music can be considered a form of knowledge' (Swanwick, 1994: 2). Adult group performance is invaluable as 'music making in groups has infinite possibilities for broadening the range of experience' and from a sociological perspective 'music is not only performed in a social context but is learned and understood in such a context' (Ibid: 150)[19]. The data reflected how adults valued group participation and social encounters (chapter six).

4.3.1 Theories and models of adult learning

Silverman (2005) states that without a theory there is nothing to research as theories provide the impetus for research. He suggests that a model offers the researcher an overall framework for looking at reality (behaviourism, cognitivism, humanism relate to this research topic) and further explains that models, concepts (an idea derived from a model) and theories are 'self-confirming in the sense that they instruct us to look at phenomena in particular ways. This means they can never be disproved but only found to be more or less useful' (Silverman: 99). I would concur with Silverman, that theory can be developed and modified by good research, starting with theory followed by process.

Learning theories enable the teacher to make informed decisions regarding the learner and what is being learned. There are two approaches in the field: the first focusing on *why* we learn and the second on *how* we learn. The humanist school tend to embody the first approach, endeavouring to seek what motivation, needs, drives or experience the learners have that lead them to seek a change in their learning. They don't address the *how* aspect. In contrast, the second approach, which is more concerned with the cognitive aspects of learning, the *how,* while not truly recognising the *why*. Both are key elements in adult

[19] Performance, and group performance, refers to class music performance for adult learners in the context of this thesis. It does not imply 'chamber' style or instrumental teaching, but is more a musicianship-based performance, where the aim is for students to sing or play percussion instruments, as part of aural training, musical reading and composing.

learning but needed to be unified. In the writer's experience the adult learner is motivated by both *why* they want to learn and *what* they want to learn. Perhaps even more fundamental is the learner's *need* to learn, as they bring their prior experience into the learning environment in seeking life changes. These concepts will be explored further in chapters five and six.

The works of Merriam et al. (2014, 2007) was proved to be an invaluable resource for researching the literature on adult learning for this project. The breath of literature extends from the foundational material of andragogy to more recent thinking, offering a synthesis of context and positionality, theory-building, identifying participants in *what?* and w*hy?* they learn, how social and ethical issues pose challenges for adult educators, the nature of the learning process - the *how?,* and new approaches to adult learning (Merriam, Caffarella, Baumgartner, 2007: preface). Andragogy is a term synonymous with adult learning.

4.3.2 What is Andragogy[20]?

In 1968 Malcolm Knowles coined the term 'andragogy' which he described as 'the art and science of helping adults learn' (Knowles, 1980: 43). This contrasted with 'pedagogy' which is concerned with children's' learning. Based on the perspective of humanistic psychology, Knowles presents the individual learner as one who is autonomous, free and growth-orientated (cited in Merriam et al., 2001: 7). Knowles perspective on andragogy is not strictly a theory but rather a Model of Assumptions which largely focuses on the individual rather than the learning environment. The Model of Assumptions states:

1. As a person matures, his or her self-concept moves from a dependent personality toward one of a self-directing human being.

[20] Andragogy focuses on the adult learner and their life situation.

2. An adult accumulates a growing reservoir of experience which is a rich resource for learning.
3. The readiness of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social role.
4. There is a change in time perspective as people mature … an adult is more problem-centred than subject centred in learning (Knowles, 1980: 44-45).
5. The most potent motivations are internal rather than external.
6. Adults need to know why they need to learn something (Knowles & associates 1984: 12)[21].

Andragogy was identified as essential to this particular study as the value of the term 'andragogy' lay in placing the area of adult learning on a par with other learning domains. Numbers two, five and six partly informed this research, but I concurred with Brookfield's criticism of Knowles' assumptions when he states the first assumption (self-directed learning) is more a desired outcome rather than a given one. Brookfield also criticises numbers three and four stating these two assumptions

> could lead practitioners to equate the sum total of adult learning with instrumental learning; that is, learning how to perform at an improved level of competence in some redefined skill domain (Brookfield, S. 1986: 99).

Knowles' model was criticised for focusing exclusively on the individual learner to the exclusion of the learning context, which contrasts with the Allegro ethos. Tennant (1988) was also critical of Knowles, claiming his model lacked clarity by assuming that all adults have the above attributes. He takes issue with the notion that adults can be weaned away, by the educator, from their traditional ways of learning towards more self-directed learning. The researcher would agree with Tennant that adults do not necessarily want to move from dependence on the teacher towards self-directed

[21] The original model contained four assumptions; four years later Knowles added the fifth and sixth.

learning, but rather there needs to be balance and flexibility between teacher-led and self-directed learning processes (chapter five). On the positive side, the pioneering work of Knowles and Brookfield acknowledged the needs of adult learners and enabled adult education and those teaching adults to have equality of status with other educational professionals. This subsequently changed the role of the adult educator, in a role that is being continuously defined and refined in the learning process (chapters five and seven).

4.3.3 Self-directed learning

The main goals of self-directed learning are: (1) to enhance the ability of adult learners to be self-directed in their learning, (2) to foster transformational learning as central to self-directed learning and (3) to promote emancipatory learning and social action as an integral part of self-directed learning (Merriam et al: 107). Self-directed learning is concerned with the individual and self-development, with learners expected to assume primary responsibility for their own learning (Caffarella, 1993: 26). The key factor at the core of this discussion is the empowerment of the learner (Jorgensen, 2003; Rogers, 2008; Merriam et al., 2007). Much of the research and writing in adult learning is grounded in the humanistic orientation of learning and is reflective of the Allegro philosophy.

The concept of self-directed learning has differing perspectives but in the case of this study, Grow's Staged Self-Directed Learning (SSDL) is comparable, as it is informed by learning in formal settings that integrate self-directed learning into new courses or activities. The Allegro programmes are in the domain of formal learning but Grow's staged concepts can be contextualised within the musical development of Allegro students. Both Grow and Allegro encompass the process of 1) dependent learner, 2)

interested learner, 3) involved learner and 4) self-directed learner (Grow, 1991).[22] The learning outcome in the fourth reflects that of the Allegro rationale wherein the process becomes continuously independent of the teacher. Thus self-direction empowers students with the knowledge and independence to explore future avenues of musical engagement, post Allegro.

4.3.4 Transformative Learning

Transformative learning is essentially a learning process of making meaning of one's experience (Merriam & Bierema, 2014: 84). This is a cornerstone for adult learners as they seek new meaning, activities and values through music participation. Mezirow was the first to articulate transformative learning as a cognitive, rational process, which he describes thus:

> Transformative learning involves an enhanced level of awareness of the context one's beliefs and feeling, a critique of their assumptions and particular premises, and assessment of alternative perspectives, a decision to negate an old perspective in favour of a new one or to make a synthesis of old and new, an ability to take action based on a new perspective, and a desire to fit the new perspective into the broader context one's life (Mezirow, 1991: 161).

He further refined his theory to include processes of reflection that included:

- Content reflection: on *what* we think, feel or act upon.
- Process reflection: on *how* we perform these functions of thinking, feeling or acting
- Premise reflection: on going deeper into *why* we perceive, think or feel as we do (Mezirow, 1991: 107-108).

Reflective processes are in almost every aspect of the human psyche and in the educational context they have become central to teaching and learning. The processes that

[22] Grow's process of SSDL, identifies with the Allegro learner with similar stages: 1) dependent learner, 2) interested learner, 3) involved learner, and 4) self-directed learner (Grow, 1991).

Mezirow identifies may be an ideal fit for the adult music learner, as his work identifies how participants made decisions – to include more music in their lives, reflecting on *what* they want, *how* they could enter music learning and *why* they need to pursue it. They subsequently wrote about their personal choices and experiences in their reflective narratives and some of these were based on a transformational experience (chapter six).

4.3.5 Mezirow's Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning

Mezirow's theory of transformational learning is also based on the concept of conscientization found in Freire's work in the 1970s. Three key elements of transformation are:

1. Life experience
2. The nature of critical reflection
3. Connection between transformational learning and adult learning (Mezirow, 1991).

He contemplates a philosophy of education describing transformation theory as a philosophy and theory of adult learning, describing it thus:

> A philosophy of adult education predicated upon this understanding of the nature of adult learning is a prescription for the educational interventions that are appropriate to help adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991: 198).

Learning theories are not easy to segregate and Mezirow is often categorised as both cognitivist and humanistic but he claims to be more affiliated to the constructivist school of thought (cited in Rogers, A. 2008: 101). Rogers states that theories do not allow for diversity of human responses and they tend to be more Western focused. Mezirow's transformative theory tends to be broad-ranging and incorporates, in varying degrees, all of these orientations. Learning theories have one thing in common, the whole person is involved in learning, according to Rogers, A, (Ibid: 101). This also reflects Jarvis' humanistic views on the 'whole' person being affected by experience (Jarvis, 2006). This

concept of the 'whole' resonates with the adult music learner in adult music education and was identified in both participants' and the researcher' data (chapters two, six and seven).

Learning in adulthood is a continuous process of reconstructing and transforming the meanings that are learned in childhood. Mezirow states that this process involves challenging our assumptions and our frames of reference, in the course of active interaction with our environment (Mezirow et al. 2000, cited in Rogers, 2008: 99). Maturity brings the ability to redefine the person's meaning schemes and perspectives and in his view this, combined with experience, strengthens their personal category system.

> Transformation theory emphasizes that people make an intentional movement in adulthood to resolve these contradictions and to move to developmentally advanced conceptual structures by transforming meaning schemes and perspectives through critical thinking' (Mezirow, 1991: 147).

In terms of adult education, the adult learner and the adult educator, he states that individuals must learn to make their own interpretations rather than 'act on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others. Facilitating such understanding is the cardinal goal of adult education and transformative learning develops autonomous thinking' (Mezirow, 1997:5). He identifies ten phases of perspective transformation describing them as follows: disorienting dilemma; self-examination; critical assessment of assumptions; recognising that one's discontent and the process of transformation is shared; exploration of options; planning a course of action; acquiring new knowledge and skills; trying on new roles provisionally; building competence and self-confidence; and re-integrating the new perspective into one's life (Mezirow, 1997). This model provided a framework for informing the Allegro for Adults students' experience of the programme (figure 4.1).

In the context of the Allegro programmes, the concept of transformation was based on the knowledge that music and the participatory nature of the musical experience would enrich and transform cultural aspect of adults' lives. The model below presents the strands that lead to transformative learning, which in turn may lead to transformation in the person's life. This model in action commences with the notion of an adult who had learned music as a child and always wanted to return to learning (disorienting dilemma); they explore options available for returning to music (exploration of options and plans); they investigate what courses or programmes may best suit their needs (critical assessment and examination of assumptions); and lastly, they choose the best course of action to acquire new knowledge (acquisition of new knowledge and implementation of plans). Transmission through each of the strands leads the person towards transformation. In parallel to Mezirow's theory (figure 4.1), a comparative overview of how this integrates into adult music education is also presented (figure 4.2).



Figure 4.1 Mezirow's Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning

1. Disorienting Dilemma A possible lack of meaning in the person's life. They need to do something but not sure what steps to take or in what direction to go.	**6. Planning a course of Action.** To undertake and successfully complete an Allegro course and to gain accreditation on completion
2. Self-examination Students on the programme said they always felt they had a need to go back to music and learn some new knowledge. This they inherently knew upon self-examination	**7. Acquiring new knowledge and skills** Learning new musical skills in the practical components of rhythm and melody. Learning how to listen to music, how to compose music, how to sing a melody and play a rhythm. From the educational perspective – learning how to research and write a project based on their own choice of material from what they have studied on the course. Thus giving the individual a sense of autonomy from both educational and musical perspectives.
3. Critical assessment of assumptions Many of the participants felt they should have taken action sooner but were unsure of how they would cope in a music education situation. They wondered if they had left it too late (this was a common assumption regardless of age, based mostly on the fact they were now adults). They were sceptical of their ability to learn new material as they associated music with concepts such as talent and giftedness – consequently they assumed they may not have the musical ability to learn new skills and knowledge at this stage.	**8. Trying on new roles provisionally** Becoming a student again by participation on a further education programme in a Conservatory of Music in a university. Participating in musical performance activities in a music class with like-minded people. Becoming part of a social musical group by attending concerts and other events.
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation is shared Fenwick's statement that "learning is rooted in the situation in which the	**9. Building competence and self-confidence** The development of learning new musical skills which are both theoretical and practical gives the student an insight into

person participates, not in the head of that person" (Fenwick, 2003, p.25) is fundamental in situative theory and also in this context. The very first adult music class of every year proves this point as people said they liked being part of a class as it allowed them to share their past musical experiences and realise that they shared a common interest and a common goal.	the business of music – its theoretical and practical dimensions. This musical knowledge, which is mirrored by practical skills, builds up competence in the subject which, according to Allegro participants and personal observations, leads to a sense of self-confidence and joy in learning music.
5. Exploration of options Commencing Allegro would hopefully open them to new experiences and allow those who wished to pursue further studies to see a way forward for their future. Fundamentally they all felt that Allegro offered them the option to further their musical knowledge and learn new skills.	**10. Reintegrating the new perspective into one's life.** Going to concerts with new friends enriches social life indicating transformation in musical learning (Jorgensen, 2021) Adults can now re-invent their biographies and build upon their reflections into their futures (Pitts, 2012)

Figure 4.2. Allegro in the context of Mezirow's Ten Phases of a Perspective Transformation

Much of the research and writing in adult learning is grounded in the humanistic orientation as promoted by Maslow, Rogers, Knowles and Bandura. The field of self-directed learning belongs in this domain, being concerned with the individual and self-development, with learners expected to assume primary responsibility for their own learning (Caffarella, 1993: 26). Once again, the key factor is empowerment of the learner, with the learning process recognising and facilitating the learner's needs. (Knowles, 1980, 1984). Mezirow's model also encompasses these concepts as a pathway to transformation for the person.

4.3.6 Experiential Learning

The term "experiential learning" is often used to distinguish non-directed 'informal' life experience from 'formal' education. In general, the main forms of experiential learning

are identified as lifelong learning, workplace learning, informal learning and self-directed learning. Although they cannot be synthesised, they are fundamentally cross-related. This term became popular amongst educators in the late 20th century prior to which educational institutions failed to credit or value adult education and adult educators. Experiential learning gave meaning to educators work as a specialised discipline while recognising the value of the learner's individual experience and development.

Dewey also offered great insight into the connections between life experience and learning by advocating that "every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after" (Dewey, 1938: 27). He maintained that every experience is a moving force and as music has the power to move the individual on many levels – intellectual, psychological, emotional and spiritual – the experience of learning music could be perceived as a double-loop force; an interface between the musical life experience of the learner and the nature of musical experience itself. Dewey's ideas were discussed in chapter two in terms of the power and value of music in people's lives (see also chapter six).

Experiential learning can imply terms like 'radicalism' which is associated with learner empowerment, such as in Freire's theory of 'Conscientization' - which relates to freedom from oppression through communities developing a critical understanding of their social realities - and also Vygotsky's ZPD 'Zone of Proximal Development' the latter defines the space between what the individual can do alone and what they can achieve with the assistance of an adult educator. Although these educational theories do not inform this study and may seem far removed from adult music education the literature that evolved from these theories forms a cornerstone in the overall international field of adult

education and therefore necessitates recognition in this research[23]. People may embark on a music education programme to further their ambitions, fulfil their earlier childhood experiences, or alternatively feel a need to develop their creativity, self-identity or spirituality. In their broadest perspective the theories of Freire and Vygotsky relate to personal development and are therefore, in the researcher's view, relevant to adult music education.

Valuing the learner's prior knowledge and experience challenges traditional formal learning and disciplines. Fenwick (2000) states that the term 'experiential' learning is often used both to distinguish ongoing meaning-making from theoretical knowledge and non-directed informal life experiences from formal education. She further maintains that the 'constructivist perspective' is dominant in experiential learning (Ibid: 2001).

The experience that adults bring to the music classroom can be worthwhile and meaningful in terms of their listening skills, singing (choir members are attracted to music programmes) and their intrinsic need to create and learn. Such needs can also be transformative in the sense of fulfilling a long overdue ambition to return to learning, to engage in a new experience or to re-enter music learning based on past musical knowledge and experiences.

Fenwick (2001) asks two questions in relation to experiential learning. The first, 'what does it mean to learn from experience?' which is concerned with the learner. The traditional view of adult education which was predominately credentialed had not been previously challenged up to the year 2000, according to Fenwick (2000). She maintains the concept of credentials is identified in the context of a person's suitability for a job, an

[23] Music education, particularly formal music education, is often perceived as elitist and contradictory to the above theories. Their mention here, as part of the overall field, represents the breadth and diversity of adult education.

educational course, an activity or other. In adulthood people can also learn from experience, through self-directed learning or informal learning, yet none of which may be credentialed. This notion of accreditation will be discussed in chapter five, but it should be stated here that the data indicated that Allegro participants had mixed views on the value of accreditation.

In the past, conservatories and specialist colleges tended to adhere to their traditionalist stance of music education being essentially for the young. However music education, in line with other educational sectors, has in recent years adopted a more inclusive position by making access and provision for a more diverse student population on their campuses. These concepts will be discussed in greater detail in chapters six and seven supported by literature and data in the relevant fields.

The second question posed by Fenwick concerns the educator, 'what, if any, is an appropriate role for educators in this process?'. These two questions encapsulate the 'whole' concept of adult learning and teaching and are equally relevant in the context of adult music education. Recognition of prior learning experience and the person's autonomy are key elements in adult education. In the field of music education, D.J. Elliott (1995) argues that the music educator should adopt a philosophical stance in both educatorship and musicianship, thus enabling the educator to decide upon what is to be taught and how best to make the learning experience meaningful. This researcher identifies similarities between the literatures of Fenwick and Elliott in terms of the role of the educator, as both are concerned with the teacher's role in bringing authenticity and meaning into the learning experience. Such concepts are embedded in value systems and values rank highly amongst such music education philosophers including Swanwick (1979, 1988, 1994), Elliott, D.J. (2005, 2012), Kodály (1965, 1973) and Jorgensen (2001, 2003a, 2021). Dewey was among the first to advocate similar values, both of education

as instruction and art as experience (Ibid: 1934). Music is a valuable asset in and of itself and also in education.

Furthermore, valuing the learner's prior knowledge and experience challenges traditional formal learning and disciplines. Fenwick (2001) identifies four other orientations on experiential learning that have emerged over the past twenty years in the theories of learning, pedagogy and cognition. Cumulatively these orientations are concerned with the educator's role in working with adults' experiences.

This research is primarily concerned with the first and second parts of her critique. The alternation conceptions, while being very relevant to scholarly research, are less relevant to the context of this work. The first offers insight into the existing theories and the dominant role of the constructivist orientation in experiential learning, which is most relevant to the practical nature of this research. Fenwick advocates that

> educators have developed a variety of ways to enhance this process, by facilitating adults' reflection and critical reflection on experience, by instigating holistic 'experience' in instructional settings, by coaching and mentoring adults to enhance their learning in the midst of experience, and by assessing adult's experience" (Fenwick, 2001: 1).

Fenwick's question "what does it mean to learn from experience?" has been continuously receiving recognition within higher education sectors for more than two decades. The traditional view of adult education being credentialed had not been previously challenged, but this challenge was welcomed by adult educators. In the world of music education, conservatories and specialist colleges faced challenges concerning their philosophical stance of the traditionalist view, that music education is essentially for the young. There are mature students in many university music education departments today indicating that inclusivity and transparency have gained momentum over the years.

The experience that adults bring to the music classroom can be worthwhile and meaningful in terms of their prior listening skills, singing experience (choir members

are attracted to music programmes) plus their intrinsic needs to create and to learn. The latter two needs can also be transformative by fulfilling a long overdue ambition to return to learning or to embark on a participative musical experience, the latter being termed a transformative experiential process. The musical and life experiences that adults bring to the music classroom influence their current learning and therefore reflect Dewey's insight into connecting learning and life experience; the practical aspects of this philosophy will be discussed in further detail later (chapters five, six and seven).

4.3.7 Orientations of Learning: Constructivism

Cognitive reflection based on concrete experience is the orientation known as *constructivism* and is the dominant approach to understanding experiential learning in adult education (Fenwick, 2000). Constructivism significantly informed this study as it portrays learners as independent constructors in the process of gaining knowledge based on their own confidence and capacity to rely on their own constructions (Ibid). The concept concludes that knowledge is not an existing reality 'out there' to be discovered, but rather relies on continuous interpretations in light of new experiences (Mezirow, 1994a); these concepts of constructivism and transformation will be developed later (chapter five). Mirroring Fenwick's thinking, Merriam and Caffarella also concur with the notion that constructivism is compatible with "adult learning theory" (Ibid., 1998: 262)[24].

[24]The model is concerned with learning that is situated within a pedagogical framework and with the interaction between the subject (learner), the educator and the learning context.

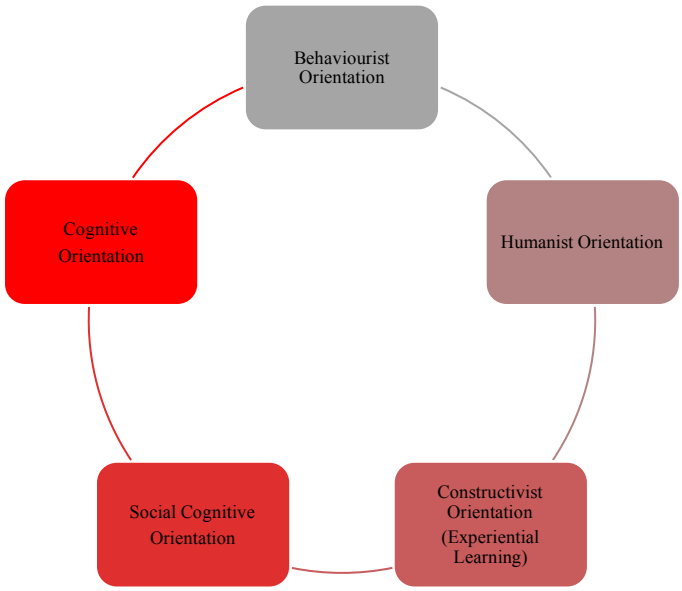


Figure 4.3. Model of the Constructivist Orientation in Experiential Learning

These orientations informed the current project and each are outlined in relation to adult music learning (figure 4.3)

Behaviourist implies a change in behaviour; the purpose of education is to produce desired change of direction and the educator's role is to elicit the desired response. *Behavioural* objectives concern competency-based learning and skill development. Contextualised within this research, the perspective adult music learner seeks a change of direction, choosing music education as a means of developing skill and competency through engagement in educational musical activities.

Cognitivist: involves processing information, insight, memory and perception - learning how to learn. In the current context, fulfilling the curricular content encompassed all the above processes within each of the musical learning parameters (chapter five).

Humanist: Personal act to fulfil potential. Bandura's self-efficacy (1977) resonates in this context with the desire for autonomy, self-confidence and self-competence for the adult music learner. Encapsulated into these concepts is the holistic view presented by Jarvis

that learning should contribute to the development of the whole person (Jarvis, 2016). The love of music frequently operates on a cyclical basis as adults who return to music on the basis of their childhood experiences of learning a musical instrument, frequently seek a new direction that will enable them to embrace musical participation, including new knowledge and learning, to enrich current lives; in the broadest sense, this could be interpreted as completing a musical cycle in the person's life. The data from this research supports the value that adults place on participating in musical learning in childhood and adulthood (chapters six and seven).

Social and situational: is concerned with moving from the periphery to the centre of a community of practice. In music the implications can include social encounters in the classroom through shared experiences and social participation outside the classroom by attending musical events as a group (sociological engagement is discussed from diverse perspectives in chapters two, five, six and seven).

Constructivist: relates to construction of meaning from experience, in the educational context to construct knowledge and meaning-making for the learner. Manifestations in adult learning include experiential learning, transformational learning, reflective practice both in action research methodology and ethnographic methodology. Theories and orientations of adult learning will be discussed in greater depth in the context of the Allegro curriculum of musical parameters for learning (chapter five).

The above model is a modification of the five orientations to learning as identified by Merriam et al., (2007: 295) The selected orientations that informed this study evolved from a combination of informed decisions (from the fields of literature) and personal teaching experience. This researcher would concur with Fenwick's views that the value of critical reflection and the implementation of holistic experiences are key elements in adult learning, stating,

> educators have developed a variety of ways to enhance this process, by facilitating adults' reflection and critical reflection on experience, by instigating holistic 'experience' in instructional settings, by coaching and mentoring adults to enhance their learning in the midst of experience, and by assessing adult's experience (Fenwick, 2001: 1).

There are numerous factors that influence how people learn including ability, personality, age, attitude, previous learning experiences, life experiences, health and time availability (Hillier, 2012: 98-99). This research embodied such diversity which was evidenced by the data findings (chapters six and seven).

The value inherent of Allegro adult participants writing about their reflections of past musical activities gave them the opportunity to write about and share their experiences, past and present, on becoming adult music learners. This data aimed to support real-life research into adults' experiences by revealing how such experiences ultimately brought them on the pathway of music learning, that offered a holistic experience within the context of a formal music education setting. Although the focus of each of the constructivist orientations is connected to experiential learning, they cover a broad spectrum ranging from the individual, their community, the learning context, cultural dimensions resulting in social transformation, and finally the broader ecological picture of global issues.

The adult learning process in multi-layered, on one hand the practitioner-researcher wears two caps, teacher and researcher (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; McNiff & Whitehead, 2009), while on the other hand, adult learners bring their own musical and life experiences into the learning context. Arising from these dynamics the teacher/practitioner/researcher assumes the role of facilitator-observer; thus acknowledging the adult's autonomy by enabling them to assume responsibility for their learning. Fenwick describes the process as follows:

- Management of learning for economic goals
- Intention to ensure conformity when the adults' experience is shaped through 'prior learning'.
- Assessment processes to fit educational standards and their institution.

- Education as surveillance, such as adult being asked to share their experiences and reflections to the class or educator (Fenwick, 2001: 5).

The latter three concepts can be linked to both action research and ethnographic methodology; the former recognises the teacher as researcher, the latter ties in with 'education as surveillance', as adults share their experiences and reflections with the class and the educator.

In this researcher's view, the most critical concepts to be drawn from the above in terms of their relevance here are twofold: Fenwick states that some educators view experience as a product to motivate learning and training, which based on personal professional experience, is credible. However her second belief, that the educator's intervention into the learning experience is neither neutral or innocent resonates a more profound reality for this work. These concepts are rooted in prior experience, education, music and music education and will be further developed later (chapter five). Cumulatively, these concepts reflect the complexity of adult learning or, to use Rogers' term, the distinctiveness of adult learning.

4.4 The Distinctiveness of adult learning

In his book 'What is the Difference?' (2006) Rogers identifies two major ways of learning for the adult. The first is *task-conscious learning*, where the learning is engaged at both a conscious level or an unconscious level. The second is a more formalised process of learning, *conscious-learning*, where the learning takes place in a more formal context. Adults, like younger people, engage in a mixture of the two – acquisition learning and formalised learning.

Rogers asks two question: what is the difference between adult learning and young people's learning? and what are the various forms of learning that could be deemed uniquely "adult"? He presents four approaches, citing other researchers in the field,

which contribute to the uniqueness of adult learning and which could be equally applicable to adult music education:

1. Mezirow (2001) claims that transformation of meaning is a uniquely form of adult learning as adults transform meaning. Rogers states there is insufficient research to support Mezirow's theory, stating that although adults do more transformation than children, it is not clear from the research that transformation is confined to adults alone.
2. Lave and Wenger (1991) discuss learning through communities of practice by engaging in what they term *legitimate peripheral participation.* This involves striving to engage with the cohort and belonging to the group. However current research amongst cohort groups suggests this can equally apply to younger persons.
3. Perhaps the most significant approach is the area of experiential learning. Adults learn based on their experience – life, jobs, relationship, political views and their own experience of being a child. However, Merriam (2001) states that children also base their learning on experience and although the experiences may be different for children to adults, the learning processes appears to be the same.
4. Some research proposes that the person of the adult learner is different. Although the world of lifespan studies has been shown to be more complex than many have suggested and there are those who propose that adulthood consists of a developmental phase which differs from that of the child (Ericson 1965; Hudson 1991).

The above four underpin Rogers' criticism of Mezirow and other researchers who maintain that their perspectives are equally applicable to children and adults alike. In his viewpoint, adults do not learn differently to young people. Rogers proposes the

uniqueness of adult learning does not lie with the learner but rather with the facilitator or teacher. This may be considered thought-provoking for adult educators but, based on personal professional experience as a teacher/research and combined with the data collection for this research, I concur with Rogers arguments.

The twentieth-century witnessed a profound epistemological turn in the field of social science research particularly with regard to education and schooling. Allsup (2014) identifies the "interpretive turn" which is investigated further in the context of the ethnographic methodology (chapter six). He advocates that an understanding of this paradigm shift and how it shapes musical practices is important, not only in the context of knowledge and epistemology of classroom practice but, among music education researchers (Ibid: 69).

The first lens had investigated adult education which formed the basis of the second lens, namely the philosophical underpinnings of music education. Developments in both sectors have moved forward at an accelerated pace over the past three decades as teachers and researchers in music education strive to keep abreast with this ever-changing ebb and flow.

4.5 The Second Lens: The philosophy and practice of music education

Philosophy in music education research is inquiry that incorporates many branches including aesthetics, logic, epistemology, ethics and metaphysics (Phelps, Sadoff, Warburton, Ferrara, 2005: 119). These authors state that philosophical inquiry is a methodology rather than a branch of philosophy and, as such, can be used as research in music education. This researcher supports the concept that the content of a particular philosophy, such as those of Swanwick, Kodály and Elliott, transforms into method.

Philosophy and methodology are inextricably linked to form a philosophical method that ultimately provides a system for uncovering and articulating the meaning of that content.

The philosophical underpinnings of the Allegro for Adults music programmes were informed by these concepts. The pedagogical approaches were based on the then current philosophies of music education – in particular those of Swanwick (1988), Elliott (2005) and Kodály (1968) – whose philosophical stances have been connected with direct involvement in the teaching/learning process. In addition Dewey's philosophy has, according to Murphy (1997), influenced the curriculum in Irish schools and although her research stems from over twenty-five years ago, today his philosophical foundations remain central in music education and music education research.

The aesthetic philosophy of music education is centred around the idea that music expresses emotion. Reimer (1990) advocated that music education needed one unifying philosophy of teaching, learning and advocacy so we could better position the role of music education in schools. Music can also become an essential part of the lives of many adults as was evidenced from international research (chapter two) and also supported by the data in this research (chapter six). Swanwick promoted concepts that music is of value in and of itself, exploring music education as aesthetic education, identifying expressive character and the value of musical knowledge; the culmination of which creates a progressive pathway for musical learning and teaching (Swanwick, 1979; 1994). Despite the disparities between the philosophical stances of Reimer and Swanwick they both shared and valued key concepts, such as the belief that studying music develops self-knowledge can ultimately enhances a deeper access to the person's emotional life. In this way aestheticism in music education promotes an understanding of beauty, emotion and expression that is only possible through music (Boler: 2010: 10). In respect to the aesthetic argument Gardner states,

> The aesthetic involves an attempt to communicate. It is deliberate, intentional. The artist fashions something that would have an effect on someone else. Because the arts involve communication between subjects, human beings must be involved in the artistic process. (Ibid., 1994: 30).

This participation is central to all other aims in music education. Gardner's theory underlines those of Swanwick and Elliott. Although these specialists are advocating the importance of music learning, their inclusion in the context of this research is because they value music in education, while acknowledging its holistic values in the educational, psychological and sociological development of the adult learner.

Self-knowledge also encompasses creativity - a cornerstone of artistic development in music education. Composition and creatively are inextricably linked. The data relating to composition in this research may be viewed from a dual aspect: 1) some participants found composition challenging but found the creative aspects very rewarding and even enjoyable; 2) others found it challenging for quite a while but gradually came to value the experience, despite self-criticisms of their creative compositions. Concepts involving creativity, feeling and emotion all embody the aesthetic musical experiences contextualised in the composition and listening parameters of the Allegro curriculum (chapter five).

The concepts surrounding praxis in Elliott's aims and objectives in the curriculum influenced the formation of the Allegro curriculum in the early stages, having researched his philosophy as part of this researcher's M.Ed. thesis. Although the concept of praxis dates back to Aristotle, the concept of praxial philosophy in music education re-emerged during the 1990s in Elliott's research and, as a former student of Reimer,s he also maintained that music was not purely an aesthetic experience, but rather a human activity. Elliott uses the term 'musicing' which was first introduced by Christopher Small and who, like Regelski and Alperson supported the concept of the praxial philosophy of music education.

As researcher, I concur with Boler when she states that educators who belong to the field of praxial philosophy teach their students to become 'holistic problem-solvers, thinkers, and artists as … they are placed at the centre of their own learning' (Boler: 14). The aim is to empower adults to make informed musical decisions based on skill acquisition which must be grounded in musical knowledge and understanding. In addition, the praxial approach makes it possible to acquire musical values that they can share amongst their peers and communities (chapter five); the data here supports the thinking that 'no other subject synthesizes the value of the human experience, the process of learning and the context of art in the way music does' (Ibid: 14). Both philosophies, grounded in the aesthetic and praxial dimensions have made major contributions to music education and in the context of this project, were valuable in informing the philosophical and pedagogical research process and practice.

4.5.1 Curriculum Theory in the context of adult music education

When researching curricula paradigms in lifelong learning many of the findings related to the more philosophical concepts. Much of the literature on curriculum in lifelong education, tends to be sought from the mainstream education curricula for schools (Rogers, 2007; Duckworth & Tummons , 2010). The choice for curriculum theory in adult education is, as earlier stated, more rooted in the programmes being taught and the role of the teacher/facilitator in the learning process.

The curriculum, as defined by Stenhouse, aims to communicate the essential features and principles of an educational proposal in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice (Stenhouse, 1975: 2); the latter was key in the delivery of the Allegro programmes. Stenhouse was critical of curriculum learning objectives, believing that this approach was more concerned with assessment and outcomes rather than the actual process which, in his view, meant that teachers could

work with students. This thinking reflects the action research approach in this work where the teacher becomes a researcher, yet works within the group. Action research is rooted in the process, with observations and evaluations reflective of the actual learning process and the learners. Caffarella (2014) promotes learning objectives for adult education programme planning but she also identifies goals in the context of objectives (chapter five). This would be in keeping with adults taking responsibility for the courses they undertake to achieve predetermined goals that will enhance their musical experiences through participation in musical activities with like-minded people. The realisation and awareness of such values enrich can the future life of the individual (chapter two).

Stenhouse presented the curriculum as an interaction between students, lecturers and knowledge through his Process Model. It offered greater choice for students while maintaining that content and learning would evolve based on this interaction, whereby students and teachers would collaborate together to give meaning to the learning. He interpreted the curriculum as an active exercise as opposed to a technical one, would be comparable to Rogers's thinking (2006). Although the two approaches to learning are similar Rogers contrasts with Stenhouse in maintaining the difference lies in the teaching; a philosophy that formed the basis for the Allegro programmes (chapters five and six).

4.5.2 Curriculum: five elements for the adult music curriculum

Methods and content make up the curriculum but unlike curricula at primary or secondary levels, adult education curricula have no such structures and there is relatively little material on the curriculum suited to adult education (Rogers, 2007). It is therefore necessary to adapt what is known about curriculum in schools to adult learning curricula, which cannot be not just a list of subjects but rather the teaching approach is crucial; 'it is not only what you say, but how you say it!' (Rogers, 2007). The curriculum consists of 'the activities which the students will undertake to achieve their own learning goals rather

than a programme of action which the teacher will fulfil' (Ibid). He is referring to the fact that adults frequently have set goals when embarking on a course and that these take precedence over the programme being taught. According to Rogers there are five elements that make up the curriculum which are presented below:

1. Philosophical framework
2. Context
3. Content
4. Events
5. Processes of evaluation

All five are relevant to the Allegro music programme and each element is discussed in the two contexts of adult music learning and action research.

1. Philosophical Framework

Regardless of the subject, whether sociology, natural history or music, the difference is rooted in the way the subject is taught (whether part of a college course or to pursue a music degree or other certification). The construction of the learning programme can be a matter for negotiation between provider, intermediary agency, employer and teacher; but in the end it is the student participant who will respond to the learning opportunity on offer, who will determine whether or not to take up the programme. When choosing a course such as Allegro for Adults, it is the prospective student who chooses to pursue music. There is an unspoken agreement or contract between the adult learner and the teacher – they agree to learn together. These are the factors that make the education of adults different from other education sectors. According to Rogers, teaching adults is different for two philosophical reasons; firstly, the organisation of learning is different. In Allegro prior learning and life experience were acknowledged in the music classroom.

The language used to teach adults differs from teaching young students. The rationale for teaching certain areas needs to be explained in greater depth to adults – they need to know 'why?' they should learn something. Furthermore the music curriculum can be broadened to include other arts, some of which adults may have previously experienced in life.

Secondly, the relationship between the teacher and adult participant is different from mainstream education (Ibid: 14). A policy of inclusivity prevailed in the adult music classroom and discussion on aspects of the curriculum and the thoughts of students regarding what was being learned, their personal preferences and the rate of learning were all teased out by the teacher, because ultimately the outcomes of these reflections impact on how the course is managed.

2. *Context*

The context of the learning was in the Conservatoire of Music in a university. The hub of the formal learning was the classroom. Attending concerts was another form of learning but decidedly more informal. The social dimension is important for adult learners and the Allegro programmes encompassed this both inside and outside the learning environment.

3. Content

The content of the learning programme is normally set out in a syllabus but, an adult education syllabus rarely mentions the conditions attached to the learning or includes the actual content/materials for teaching (Rogers, 2008). In contrast, every year the Allegro syllabus was presented to prospective students at an introductory lecture to offer some insight into how the class works and the materials provided for the year ahead. The content of the broader curriculum was influenced by Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P model and significantly informed the research. The model offered diversity in terms of musical

experiences in CAP (composition, audition, performance) while offering L (literature studies: history and analysis) and S (skills: aural and written). These parameters were explained in terms of their relevance to the Allegro curriculum (chapter five).

4. Events

Rogers refers to unplanned occurrences outside the learning context, including learning through interruptions or substitute teaching. In this project events were planned activities ranging from discussion about online video performances or shared preferences of musical experiences from travelling abroad. The social interaction could involve conversations at the beginning or end of a class. External events such as going to concerts or masterclasses tended to strengthen relationships amongst adults (chapters five and six).

5.Processes of evaluation

Examinations, assessments, assignments, criticism and feedback all form part of a curriculum and these processes were integrated into the Allegro curriculum. Feedback and criticism were important processes in facilitating learners to express their viewpoints and/or concerns.

Rogers sums up the five elements stating that they 'contribute to that sequence of experiences and the philosophy which embraces them together to make up the learning course' (Ibid., 2008: 206-210). These elements are also reflective of other music education philosophies in this study, most notably those of Swanwick, Kodály and Elliott. Cumulatively they informed the philosophical framework for the programme including the process of evaluation.

4.5.3 Developing the Allegro for Adults programme

When writing the Allegro for Adults programme, devising a curriculum as a continuously progressive form of learning was key – the vision was to keep a continuous flow in the learning in order to develop the concept of the Allegro in action. The working tool for the adult music education programme was partly influenced by Plummeridge's perception of the content and design wherein he states,

> In practice, the curriculum is not simply a body of knowledge or subject matter, it is a dynamic process. The curriculum should embody a springboard for learning for music students, thus enabling them to learn something of the "workings" of music through "action" (Plummeridge, 1991: 49).

The curriculum and pedagogical approaches for the Allegro-in-action programmes aimed to embody the concept of learning the 'workings' of music through 'action'. This approach also resonates with the pedagogy of Swanwick, Elliott and Kodály, all of which significantly influenced the music education context of this work.

The orientations of adult education were informed by the work of Merriam et al, (2007) and Knowles' Model of Assumptions and Andragogy (1980 & 1984). Concepts of self-directed learning and transformational learning are central to adult education (Mezirow,1990). Experiential learning is rooted in adult learning (Fenwick, 2001) and Rogers (2008) informed perspective of theories and orientations of adult learning embody the personal and musical needs of adults (chapters two, three, five and six).

The development of a curriculum is fundamental to identifying the knowledge and skills that need to be developed sequentially over the course of the programme. It may be argued that the curriculum is the theory of learning and the philosophy is grounded in practice; their combination enabling musical experience to come 'alive' in the classroom (chapter five). The synergy of the two fields, music education and adult education created a third lens.

4.6 The Third Lens: Merging two philosophies of adult learning and music learning

The third lens focuses on the context of curriculum theory and its relevance to synergising adult learning and music learning. Although curriculum in general was discussed in the second lens, its relevance here was to seek out a curricular 'fit' for adult music education. Duckworth and Tummons (2010) state that 'curriculum' is a difficult word to pin down and therefore they recommend the term 'exploring' as more fitting to cater for the diversity of contexts in which the word 'curriculum' gets used; this perspective was a good fit for Allegro and adult music education. Despite the challenges of defining 'curriculum' many social scientists and educationalists use the word to analyse particular effects or consequences of educational provision. This researcher concurs with the quotation below as a comprehensive overview of what is entailed in a curriculum:

> Put simply, it is a word that does a lot of work, and that requires careful consideration of the context within which it is found. But once these contexts and meanings are established, an understanding of curriculum studies, an exploration of curriculum, can be extremely fruitful in providing us with insights into not only what courses or programmes of study are planned, delivered and assessed in the ways that they are, but also why they are offered in the first place, what happens to students who travel through them, and how current political as well as educational debates shape the curricula that are found in the lifelong learning sector. (Duckworth and Tummons, 2010:81).

This ethos of the Allegro curriculum was closely aligned to this thinking, reasons for the course being offered and its values were explained, the programmed was delivered and assessed while observing the value of the learning that students gained from the programme. It is the view of this researcher that the description of professional practice in the sector LLUK (Lifelong Learning Sector, United Kingdom, 2006) provides a philosophical framework suited an adult music programme such as Allegro for Adults. It advocates ways in which learning promotes the emotional, intellectual, social and economic well-being of individuals and the population as a whole (cited in Duckworth & Tummons, 2010: 80). The latter concepts relate directly to the adult learner and their experience of

music learning in terms of meeting their needs and expectations (chapters two and six). An exploration of the philosophical framework, learning context, curriculum content and processes of evaluation were all essential components in finding a niche for Allegro for Adults within the broader spectrum of adult music education.

4.7 The "need" to learn music

The experience of learning and the need to learn is inspired by a love of music and, which in turn, fosters a desire for participation, regardless of such titles as 'formal' and 'informal' (chapter two). The data from the interviews and reflective writings of Allegro participants reflected this need to learn and succeed (chapter six). Thompson's concept of pragmatism, wherein we look at last things first and first things last resonated with my idea of creating something unique for adults. Initially, I looked at the perceived outcome of the research and how this could enrich people's lives, hence looking at last things first. The next stage was to undertake a research process that could become a reality in people's lives, looking at first things having investigated the perceived outcomes. As stated in chapter two, the combined love of music and learning inspires adults to search for participation and arising from this, a need for achievement and self-competence manifests itself. In educational terms this involves assessment as a tool for self-knowledge, the outcome of which can lead to greater self-competence and self-confidence (chapters two and six).

Hallam and Creech (2010) state that 'never before have so many different kinds of music been so easily available to so many people' (Hallam & Creech: 2010, 2). It is not suggested here that the Allegro programme is unique but rather it offers a holistic music educational experience for the adult learner. I concur with Jorgensen's philosophy that

> Music education comes alive when it is experienced holistically …. It comes alive when learners view knowledge as relevant to their lives; within their powers to grasp;

> challenging, inspiring and encouraging them to move beyond past attitudes, abilities and attainments. (Jorgensen, 2003a: 125).

The needs of the learners and their motivations for learning informed the process and the curriculum. The concept of motivation is addressed by McQueen and Varvarigou (2010) and their research identifies the most salient motivations for adults' participation in music which is supported by the other literature in the field of musical engagement in adulthood:

1. Personal motivations, such as self-expression, a need for achievement, enjoyment and confidence (Taylor and Hallam, 2008; Hallam, 2006)
2. Musical motivations, such as love of music, performing for oneself and others (Taylor and Hallam, 2008) and learning more about music (Boswell, 1992).
3. Social motivations, such as meeting new people and being with friends (Hays, 2005; Hillman 2002) and having a sense of belonging (Luakka, 2007; Hallam, 2006).
4. Psychological motivation, such as pleasure, mood regulation and relaxation (Luakka, 2007).
5. Spirituality: a term often used by music participants with an intension to express a 'sense of timelessness' (Hays and Minichiello, 2005). (McQueen and Varvarigou: cited in Hallam and Creech, 2010: 163-164).

The need for achievement and confidence is identified as the first motivation and may be linked to the more formal aspects of learning (chapters two and five). The data from this research suggests that achievement develops a sense of confidence. These five descriptors of the motivations of adults' musical participation are reflective of much of the research presented in chapter two - these chapters mirror each other. The literature cited by the above authors will be explored later in greater depth through the data (chapter six).

4.8 The Role of the Teacher

Revisiting Fenwick's questions, "What does it mean to learn from experience? And what, if any, is an appropriate role for educators in this process?" (Fenwick, 2001:1), may be viewed as relevant to the music education philosophies of Swanwick, Elliott, and Kodály. These questions have relevance here from different perspectives but they share common philosophies. All advocate the importance of music teachers constantly questioning their role, the pedagogical processes they employ and how to progressively build a sound knowledge-base for the student's development. Music education should aim to give adults autonomy in terms of the skills they learn, which in turn affords them the opportunity to further develop these skills and seek other avenues of musical participation post-Allegro. In the context of this research, the aim here is to respond to Fenwick's questions from a music education perspective; ultimately the role of the teacher must be to enable the adult music learner, through music engagement, to reach their full potential.

Philosophy is at the heart of what the teacher believes to be the most meaningful learning musical experiences for the student and the teacher's role is to communicate these skills and knowledge to them. What the educator teaches is rooted in their perception of worth. The teacher's intelligent grasp of value always precedes perception of worth, because 'we teach what we think is worthwhile; our own subject is what we perceive to be worthwhile to teach' (Murphy, 1997). In this research project, the Allegro formal music education was the worthwhile programme for delivering an authentic experience to adult learners. Accreditation partly informed the authenticity of the programme, motivating the student to attain musical competence and meet the assessment criterion. Their success may be formally validated in the knowledge that the Allegro programme was recognised by music departments in higher education and Government education departments.

4.9 Conclusion

An examination of the literature through lenses endeavoured to narrow the focus for this research topic. Andragogy defined adult education as a field comparable with other educational sectors. Although Knowles' model was criticised for its focus on the individual rather than the learning environment, its holistic nature in recognising the adult as a learner should resonate with the nature of music learning for adults. Concepts involving self-directed learning recognised the autonomy of the adult learner in musical composition by fostering the opportunity for creativity, performance and making personal musical choices. Self-directed learning encouraged self-development and was also ingrained in transformational learning in the programme. The latter was concerned with the autonomy of the individual in making meaning of their life by becoming aware of their perspectives, beliefs and assumptions. This type of reflection, on the past and present experiences, empowers the person to make changes which can lead to action. This chapter examined how Mezirow's ten phases of a perspective transformation was a good fit for the Allegro music student's profile, while providing a solid philosophical framework for transforming theory into practice.

The duality of the comparative aspects of Fenwick's critique of experiential learning to that of Elliott's philosophy on the role of the teacher partly informed this research. Experiential learning is central to adult learning (Fenwick, Merriam, Caffarella, Merriam et al., Rogers A, Dewey) and is also relevant in music learning (Dewey, Jorgensen, Elliott, Swanwick) and cumulatively it is particularly relevant for adult music learning. The value of prior musical experience must be recognised by the educator as an integral part of the student's musical development in the process of adult music education.

The dominance of experiential learning within the constructivist orientation in adult learning was examined and the five orientations: behaviourist, cognitive, humanist, social

and situational and constructivist were outlined for their connectivity to adults' music learning experiences (Fenwick, 2001; Merriam et al., 1998, 2007, 2014). Reflective writings of participants considerably informed this part of the research while supporting Fenwick's argument that the educator should facilitate critical reflection. It is my view that the value of reflection, by participants and teacher, cannot be overstated in adult education as it is their experiences and reflections that inform real-life research.

The distinctiveness of adult music learning was reflective of the researcher's thinking. Teaching the Allegro programme was different to teaching younger students and a detailed examination of the differences of teaching each of the musical parameters to adults and children will be discussed in next chapter. Based on professional experience, I would agree with Roger's view that adults and children do not learn differently but, rather the difference lies in the teaching. Communication, rate of learning and explanations of 'why', 'what' and 'how' to learn are central to developing a strong equilibrium in teaching music to adults (Rogers 2008).

In the past the focus of music education was on the younger generations and school-based learning. Music education is undeniably vital for every young person but research supports the value of music participation towards adults well-being and their quality of life. Although referring to age groups up to eighteen years old, Kodály's frequently cited that, 'music belongs to everybody' and this ethos may extend its horizons to include adults of all ages (cited in Szönyï, Erzsébet. 1983: 7). This research presents a new programme of adult music education at two levels, Allegro for Adults I and Allegro for Adults II and operational procedures involved are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

Allegro-in-Action

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the implementation of action research. The questions why? what? and how? will be addressed in the context of their relevance to this work. Action research was the initial methodology undertaken (the first stage) that evolved into an ethnographic methodology, which proved an ideal fit for the second stage of the research (chapters three and six). The central focus is to present the Allegro curriculum in action; an overall view will be presented first followed by a detailed analysis of each of the musical parameters of this new interactive model. Aspects of an eclectic are examined and the rationale behind the philosophical and pedagogical approaches are presented in the context of adult music learning. The relevance of theory-based or musicianship-based courses such as Allegro are outlined for their importance in musical understanding, learning and development[25].

An important aspect of the chapter is the identification of the differences and similarities of teaching adults and children within the context of each individual musical parameter. Collective methodologies for the curriculum are discussed within the context of the stages of learning and learning outcomes. The chapter concludes with a detailed overview of the action research methodology which commenced with the

[25]The significance of the word 'theory' in this context, is not purely 'theoretical' but rather general; as Clendinning & Marvin say 'music theory is all about music'(xxxii) – it assumes priority in the sense that it encompasses all the elements of how music actually works. Music may 'give the impression that it is a technical language; but music transcends terms and categories'. From the research and teaching perspectives, theory can provide a framework (xxxi). An explanation of how these elements are fused together is presented to prospective Allegro students at the commencement of the programme each year.

summer schools in 2011and 2012 followed by a more in-depth representation and analysis of the Allegro I and Allegro II music programmes.

5.2 Rationale for choosing action research for Allegro

In response to the question 'why?', firstly, a new tool was needed as a means to investigate a music programme specifically designed for adult learners and which was best suited to inform the research by aiming 'to improve practice, rather than produce knowledge' (Carr & Kemmis, cited in McNiff & Whitehead: 82). The programme was a good fit for the research process as it encapsulated action, research, improved practice and knowledge. Secondly, was the argument to identify 'what?' was needed. Pending approval I already had a plan of action in the form of a new programme that would be taught in the Conservatoire. Thirdly, I investigated the most suitable methodology for 'how?' to improve what I was doing. The use of action research reflective cycles to express and identify concerns and outcomes was considered the best course of action with the intention of improving new practice and researching new theories (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009: 45).

5.2.1 Philosophy underpinning Allegro for Adults class-based activities

The Allegro programme was a musicianship-based programme for adults[26]. One of its unique aspects was the intense nature of its curriculum content which, while providing a wide variety of learning was tailored specifically to the needs of the adult learner. Key factors such as the rate of learning, understanding musical concepts, experiencing and

[26]Musicianship, in this work relates to the three-dimensional model of aural/performance – composition-listening. The concept was discussed in detail in chapter three, in relation to Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P model, that encapsulated the five parameters: composition, literature studies, audition, skills and performance. The core of the mnemonic derives from CAP (composition – audition – performance). Composition refers to composing music, audition is rooted in aural and listening, and performance refers to class-based activities of playing and singing. Swanwick's model had influenced music curricula in the U.K and Ireland since the 1980s.

developing musical skills and manageability of the course content were critical to each parameter in each stage of the learning.

Rogers (2004) in discussing the purpose and goals of music theory, defines theory as an activity, similar to composition or performance. He maintains that music is more likely aligned to philosophy than mathematics (the latter frequently advocated as being the most aligned to music). I would concur with his viewpoint:

> The activity is *theorizing; i*.e. thinking about what we hear and hearing what we think about – and I would include even thinking about what we think. A music theory program must distinguish between means (short-term goals) and ends (long-term goals). The acquisition of musical knowledge (facts), skills (performance techniques), and literacy (music reading) is *what you do* to make the final goals possible but does not represent the goals themselves. The purpose of all music training is to teach for musical understanding (to perceive, organize, and then conceptualize what you hear and consequently learn how to create musical expression and how to develop an aesthetic response to that expression (Rogers, M., 2004: 7).

The Kodály principles of music education philosophy is also inherent in Rogers' views as the inspiration for both partly stemmed from their observations of students in music classes which revealed that students were creating melodies and harmonies without being able to hear what they were writing. Swanwick's musical parameters are also encompassed in the above quotation in terms of musical knowledge and performance. The essence of these philosophies underlines the multi-faceted nature of musicianship or musical theory. Although it is not proposed to compare Kodaly's philosophy to the Allegro programme, its philosophical underpinnings significantly influenced its ethos.

Houlahan and Tacka present Kodály's principles of music education in the context of its value throughout the lifespan of the person stating,

> (w)ith music, one's whole future life is brightened. This is such a treasure in life that it helps us over many troubles and difficulties. Music is nourishment, a comforting elixir. Music multiplies all that is beautiful and of value in life' (cited in Houlihan and Tacka, 2008: 19).

Although the essence of Kodály's philosophy is rooted in the education of children, the philosophy of Allegro aimed to embrace Kodaly's principles by

engaging adults in musical activities in ways that were meaningful, practical and more musically-orientated.

As a response to the educational and musical needs of adult learners, this researcher conceived the idea of an 'accelerated' music programme (Ibid: 419). Realistically it may not be possible for adult learners to 'catch up' on younger people who have studied Kodály's principles through a sequential music programme, but the adult student can still aspire to achieving a level of proficiency in performance, composition and listening. In the words of Kodály when speaking about the One Hundred Lessons, he states the student

> should not despair at not having completed them by the age of twelve; he can still win laurels. Even an adult musician will experience renewed discovery through studying these lessons, which may indeed overcome many small shortcomings in his proficiency' (Erzsébet Szönyï, cited in Houlihan & Tacka: 419).

Learning is a continuous process and expectations need constant monitoring and assessment procedures require reviewing; such were the factors that influenced the Allegro curriculum, methodology and assessment. Action research provided a platform for both teacher and student to rise to the learning challenges as they emerged in order to develop greater musical proficiency.

5.3 Transition from action research to the current Allegro for Adults paradigm.

One of the difficulties resulting from the time-frame was how to present the research from an action research perspective to the current model. The cycles of action research were carried out over the three semesters of the academic year. A timetable of curriculum content, musical activities, monitoring and observation, and comments/reflections (Elliott 1990) will be addressed later in this chapter. The reason for not including it at this point is to prioritise a presentation of all the musical parameters in Allegro, followed by an overview of the action research cycles later in the chapter.

5.4 Why study Allegro for Adults?

Theory, musicianship, music course, class music, or music programme are all names given to class-based music learning. Regardless of the term used to describe this area of study, at its core theory is all about music. In response to a frequently asked question 'why study music theory? Clendinning & Marvin offer a comprehensive reply,[27]

> One of the most important things to remember about music theory is that it is all about *music* – how and why music sounds the way it does, and what elements of a piece of a performance move us. …Music theory is absolutely relevant to the music making we do - whether it's listening, performing, analyzing, or composing (Clendinning & Marvin, 2021; p. xxxii).

Musicianship or music theory is fundamental in music education and is multidimensional in nature. Adults who pursue music learning are motivated to participate in performance, listening or composing but they also need to be informed of *why* they are learning a particular concept or engaging in a specific activity.

Music has its own unique language comprising of words, sounds and symbols. Although it encompasses the elements of terminology, sounds and symbols, music theory transcends these fundamentals as it provides a framework for understanding how music works, 'what musical elements are in play, when particular styles were prevalent, and why music sounds the way it does' (Ibid: p.xxxi). Effectively music theory transcends being a technical language to becoming a course of study that informs students how music is put together, how it works in action. Taken separately these elements are precious instruments in music education. Music theory is an enriching learning curve, particularly rich in its value of participation amongst people of all ages. As investigated in chapter two, adults have the autonomy to make musical choices, to research what's available to join and what is suited to the individual's lifestyle. The choices made by Allegro I and II

[27] Theory & Analysis by Jean Piper Clendinning and Elizabeth West Marvin, offers a very comprehensive approach to class teaching and has very practical exercises to strengthen and give meaning to the theoretical components.

participants (figure 5.1) indicate the majority took the both programmes to complete a two-year cycle of a formal music education programme.

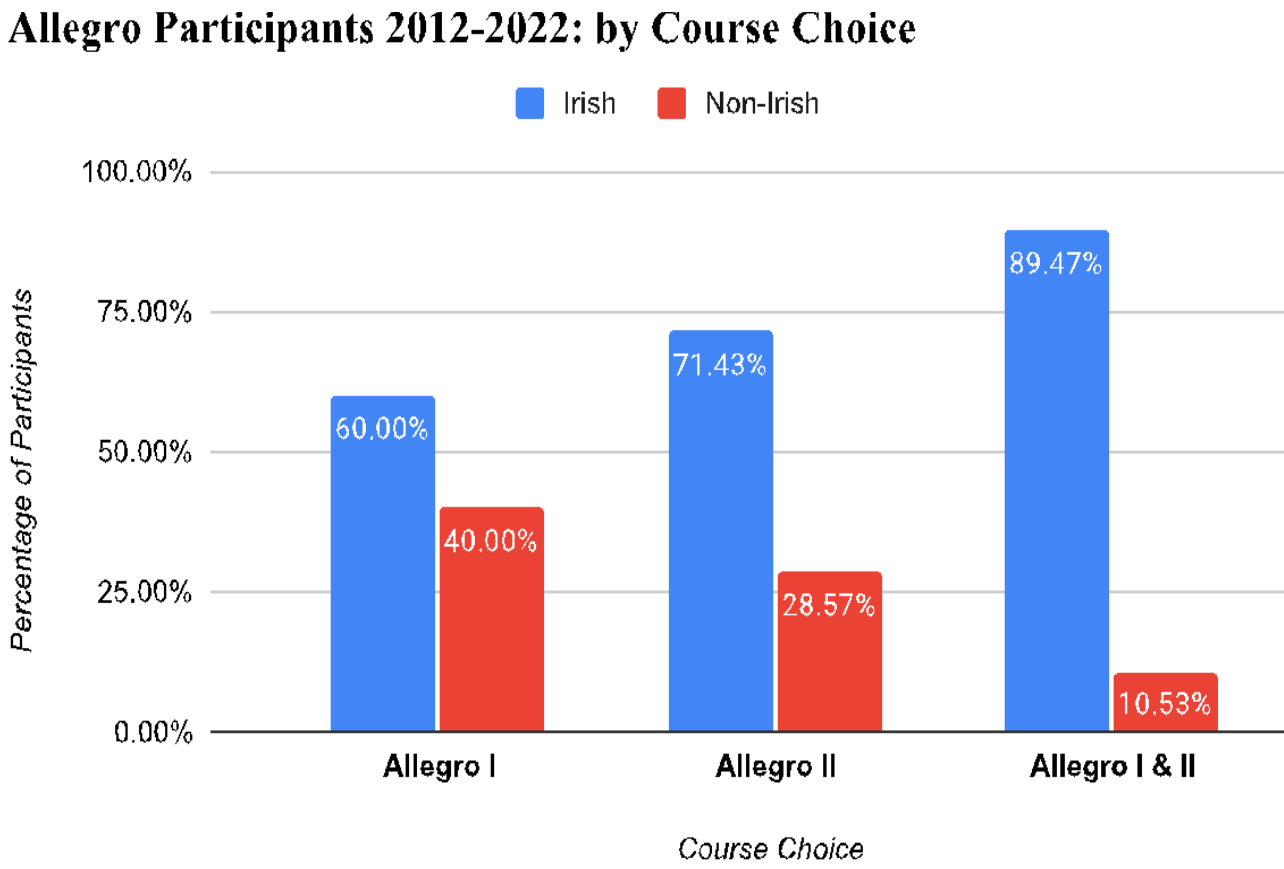


Figure 5.1. Allegro participants: choices of Allegro I and Allegro II

5.5 Rationale for an eclectic curriculum in the Allegro programme

The rational for an eclectic curriculum is, in the view of this researcher, comprehensively outlined by Landis and Carder:

> The basic ideas on which successful teaching methods are built seldom are entirely new, nor do good ideas, as a rule, come from only one person…. The individual teacher always has carried an important responsibility for awareness of current trends in educational thought, for making judgements on the value of these trends, and for putting into practice those procedures he believes best suited to his students (Landis, B. & Carder, P. 1972: 3-4).

5.5.1 The eclectic music curriculum

Five decades since Landis and Carder's publication, the thinking presented in respect of the creation of new ideas built on the old and the responsibility of the teacher in making sound judgements based on educational trends and practices, resonated with this researcher when writing the Allegro curriculum. Although the authors were discussing musicians of the calibre of Kodály, Dalcroze and Orff, the general philosophical concepts were adopted for this project. Mindful of the needs of adult students in making judgments for selected musical parameters in the curriculum, demanded research of existing philosophies and methodologies in order to ensure quality of learning and, even more critically, realistic learning outcomes.

In much the same approach as the concept of 'modification' discussed in the previous section, the formation of an eclectic curriculum for Allegro may also come under the umbrella of 'modification' in terms of content and accelerated learning. Although the Kodály approach is the mainstay of aural/kinaesthetic/performance, the course was not a specialised Kodály programme but rather an eclectic mix of his method combined with other more traditional pedagogies including, amongst others, Swanwick. Owing to Allegro being a one-year CPD music course the learning needed to be intense and students practiced the class-based activities as homework in order to develop proficiency in specific musical skills.

5.5.2 Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P Model

The concept for Allegro was based on Keith Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P Model of Musical Parameters (Swanwick, 1979). Derived from the latter, CAP (composition, audition and performance) formed the core of the approach with L & S (literature and skills) offering supporting parameters to create a holistic 'whole' for a class-based learning experience for the adult. All five parameters were included in each lesson and these parameters were

crossed and re-crossed during the class, to create an interactive methodological and pedagogical approach in the Allegro curriculum (Parkin, 2021; Swanwick, 1979). Due to the accelerated nature of the programme, the structure of the curriculum, its collective methodologies and assessment criteria, plus the fact that it was designed for adult learners, the parameters in Allegro differed from Swanwick's model, (these differences will be discussed further at section 5.8).

5.6 Sound before symbol: 'In singing our voice is the music'[28]

The two components associated with aural training, sight singing and rhythm performance, necessitated an integrated approach. Due to its multidimensional nature, the aural component in the Allegro curriculum demanded a 'radical' U-turn away from the more conventional approaches. The aural components of Allegro focused on the concept of sound before symbol (Odam, 1995) wherein training and experiencing rhythm and melody through performance came before introducing notational elements. Allegro aimed to introduce the student to music through the experiences of performing, listening and composing prior to written notation. Listening is at the core of all musical activities and this researcher would support Odam's views that 'listening to music can be a profound and beneficial experience inherent in us, but enhanced by learning' (Odam, 1995: 83); the value of listening was also explored in chapter two. It is particularly relevant in the context of adult music education wherein the individual embarks on the programme with prior musical preferences and experiences. The data identified in chapters two, three and six highlight the value that Allegro participants placed on listening. It offered a window of opportunity into the future as many stayed in contact,

[28] In Bartholomew's article (1995) 'Sounds before Symbols: What does Phenomenology have to say?', he maintains this principle has become something of a benchmark in music education. This researcher suggests that this approach holds true today in the pursuit of teaching music musically and meaningfully to students of all ages, using the voice as their instrument (p.5).

post Allegro, with other class members. This was evidenced over the timeframe by the diversity of groups who attended concerts and social events from past years.

Practice is key for developing fluency in much the same was as language and as Fleet aptly summarises ‘ear training is a lifelong skill. Just as the acquisition and use of language is a lifelong skill, so is the ability to listen to sounds being produced and recognize and understand them’ (Fleet, 2021:15). Sound is at the core of language and music, therefore knowing and understanding the sounds should come before writing them; this was the ethos of Allegro. In answer to her own question: What does language development have to do with musical learning? Jordan-De-Carbo states ‘both language development and musical development deal with aural stimuli’ (Ibid.,1997:35). The pedagogical approach of sound before symbol, aural before visual, developed rhythm, singing, composition and listening skills. An in-depth analysis of these parameters is presented later in this chapter, which reflects Bartholomew’s view that ‘it is the musical experience that we need to attend to in order to tease out principles and sequences of instruction … the sound before symbol claim emphasizes active musical participation’ (Ibid, 1995: 3-5). This formed the basis of the pedagogical approach for Allegro’s aural activities.

The time-frame was a significant factor in the choice of aural activities and was largely impacted by the short time frame of a one-year course and the diverse musical backgrounds of the adult groups. The aural component needed to embrace skills that could be acquired with class-based and outside class-based practice. Students would need to start at the point upon which they entered the class, the teacher would need to assess or gauge the overall musicality of the group to facilitate meaningful outcomes in the context of accelerated learning (Houlihan & Tacka). Hicks also endorses the sound before symbol principles emphasising its value for teaching and learning: ‘sound before sight and

experience before theory are sound principles that should permeate good pedagogy at all levels of instrumental learning' (Hicks, 1980: 54). This researcher would add that everyone has a voice and as the voice is the primary instrument in aural activities, Hick's views support Bartholomew's quote that 'our voice is the music' (Ibid., 1995).

Most musicianship teachers are aware of the challenges of development in aural skills; as opposed to theoretical, analysis, compositional or listening to musical works, aural more dependent on continuous practice for the acquisition of proficiency (Parkin 2021, Fleet 2021). Most of the rhythm and singing exercises presented later in this chapter were composed by this teacher. These were representative of a cross-sample of the three different progressive level, spanning the early-middle-later stages of learning. They were designed to support class performance, whether solo or ensemble, to foster a meaningful approach that would develop students' musical competence and confidence. The aim was to offer a formal music education programme to adults that would 'provide for continuous development which is the very essence of the educative process' (Jordan-De-Carbo: 34).

Adults lead busy lives and the time frame was an important factor in determining what could be realistically mastered within one academic year and such considerations were crucial for making curricular decisions. The demands on people's lives are both internal and external while "the self and social demands required by a person maintain a minimal level of autonomy (McClusky, 1970: 27). The time factor, accelerated learning and consideration of the students' time were at the core of decision making in forming the essence of the programme.

Addressing adults' questions of 'why?' and 'what?' they are learning and 'how?' to learn, Parkin and Fleet maintain there was not enough emphasis on training, stating 'although the skills taught by traditional aural training are manifestly useful, perhaps they don't immediately engage with performance and composition in the way that they might'

(Fleet, 2021:14). The Allegro programme aimed address such concerns as the aural parameters are designed to encourage musical engagement in order to develop the necessary skills to compose and perform.

Aural activities are a wonderfully unifying force in dispelling preconceptions by creating a sense of unity and cohesion in the group. Beating a rhythm or singing a song that goes astray can result in fun and laughter, thus easing tensions or apprehensions that some adults may harbour in the early stages of learning. Amidst the diversity of backgrounds and musical experiences present in an adult class, the teacher needs to seek a balance, to find a point of equilibrium in the group. Aural activities provide the best foundations for participation, congeniality and sociability. In adult learning the social aspects are equally as important as the cognitive and musical aspects. Everyone participating in the same musical activities can experience a holistic learning experience even in the context of a formal educational programme. Findings from the data will discuss the views of Allegro participants in respect of these learning experiences (chapter six).

New methodologies and more creative technology are essential for providing real support and resources for aural teaching and training into the future. Fleet claims that many institutions are now considering how to teach aural training online (Ibid.); such challenges were highlighted during the Covid-19 pandemic and the data from this research offers genuine insight into adult music learners' attitudes to online learning (chapter seven).

5.7 Overview of the Allegro I and II programmes

Every class began with aural activities, either clapping or playing a rhythm or singing in solfa; experiential, informal and formal learning are encompassed in these activities. The objective was to equip the student with the skills to hear the sound before writing it; a skill that can ultimately enable them to create and perform their own compositions.

Concepts concerning the development of inner hearing were outlined in class with a view to clarifying the reasons for acquiring specific musical skills. Questions concerning *why?, what?* and *how?* were discussed with students in class in relation to each musical element. This approach was adopted in the action research methodology (chapter three) and the ethnographic methodology (chapter six).

The aural exercises in rhythm using Kodály's rhythmic names formed the basis of rhythmic training in Allegro. Learning sol-fa was at the heart of all melodic activities in class. The inclusion of hand signs lightened the mood despite the challenges for students in co-ordinating singing with hand signs, yet their endeavours were regarded as fun.

Rhythmic performance is particularly effective in providing a good 'warm-up' to get everyone motivated. The lesson plans outline the pedagogical approaches to rhythmic performance, beating pulse and clapping/playing different patterns to Kodály names[29]. The lessons aimed to enable students to clap a rhythm of two to four bars; firstly, by experiencing and hearing the sounds and gradually progressing to reading from notation. The general consensus among students was, the use of Kodály names greatly enhanced accuracy in performance.

5.8 The Musical Parameters

The parameters for Allegro were designed to suit the curriculum and collective methodologies for adult music teaching and learning and this worked equally well in the action research model. The class activities were synchronised thus: 'hear, feel, pulse, perform' or 'hear, feel, pulse, read, pulse and write'; the objective was to enable students

[29] Appendix B contains sample lesson plans and teaching data p.337.

to hear what they were composing; performance impacted on how they engaged with music.

5.8.1 The interactive model of musical parameters in the Allegro curriculum

The musical parameters in Allegro were partly informed by those of Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P model[30]. The Allegro curriculum encapsulated these parameters, but while contextually there were similarities, there were also modifications to facilitate the adult music learner which are outlined below:

Composition	Rhythmic and melodic composition, creating ostinati, musical responses and performance
Literature studies	Background to musical works, analysis, history, listening.
Audition	Development of aural skills – responding to rhythmic and melodic patterns, listening to and identifying musical features, listening with score and performing.
Skill acquisition	Music notation, terminology, Kodály rhythm names for accuracy in rhythm performance, sol-fa for correct intonation in sight singing and song repertoire, hand signs for interval recognition, singing chords, melody accompanied by chords: all class-based performance.
Performance	Singing was the main instrument, percussion instruments were used for rhythm and ostinato, song repertoire: learning through group participation and performance.

[30] **C** Composition: formulating a musical idea, making a musical object
(L) Literature studies: the literature of, and the literature about music
A Audition: responsive listening as (though not necessarily in) an audience
(S) Skill acquisition aural, instrumental, notational
P Performance: communicating music as a presence
(Swanwick, 1979: 45)

The musical parameters in Allegro I and Allegro II (figures 5.2 and 5.3)

The programmes will be discussed under the following categories:

- The point of entry for the students
- The time allocation
- The collective methodologies
- Stages of learning
- Learning outcomes.
- Discussion of the differences between teaching children and adults

Browning (2017) outlines the process of skill development which equally suited the aural musicianship for Allegro's stages of learning. She states the *cognitive stages* require the performer to engage higher mental processes to guide the acquisition of skills (related to the *early stages* of learning in Allegro - listening, playing back a musical response, learning how to play a percussion instrument or sing). During the *associative stage*, the performer practices the psychomotor task (practicing at home to improve rhythmic and singing – the *mid-way stage* requires a moderate level of proficiency). She states in order to reach the *autonomous stage*, the performer must be 'free to deal with matters other than the skill itself – the execution of the skill must seem to flow' (Ibid., 2017: 91). The latter applied to the *later stages* of the learning. The parameters always crossed and re-crossed each other during the learning process.

In relation to the sound before symbol principle, the language of music is an important aspect of learning rhythm and melody. The Kodály approach offers a vocabulary for rhythmic performance with the use of rhythmic names and the use of solfa for singing, thus facilitating a musical vocabulary within a musical language as a basis for aural parameters. According to Jordan-De-Carbo, 'Kodály is a method that approaches

musical learning in an ordered sequence … uses a rhythmic language (*ta-ti)* … (and) the melodic language uses the movable *doh* system' (Ibid., 1997: 37). Although she takes issue with his rhythmic and melodic language, this researcher found this sequence of learning had significant value for adults. The findings of the research identified the value of the Kodály approach for Allegro students and this was evident in the data (discussed later in this chapter and in chapters six and seven).

Below is a presentation of the interactive parameters of the Allegro for Adults I and II Programmes (figures 5.2 and 5.3). Each programme had its own model from which the parameters evolved and interacted.



Figure 5.2. Interactive Model of Musical Parameters: Allegro for Adults I

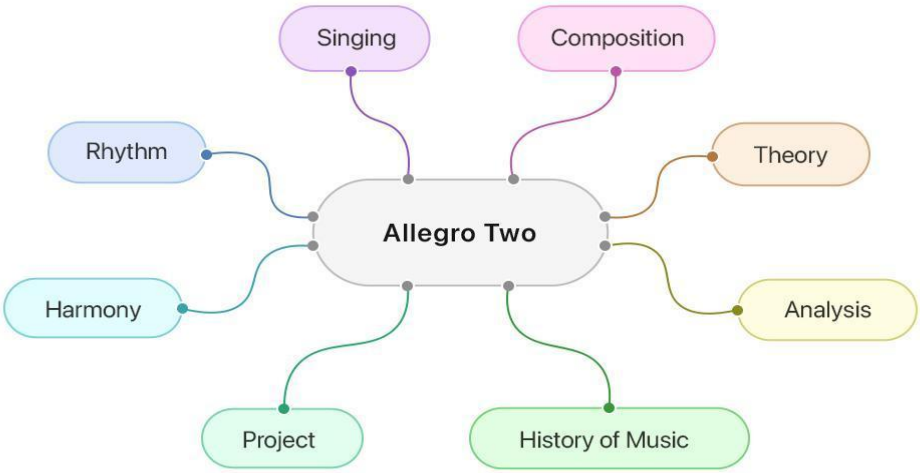


Figure 5.3. Interactive Model of Musical Parameters: Allegro for Adults II

5.8.2 Rhythm

Diversity pertaining to students' musical experience was evident from the information submitted on participants' questionnaires at the start of the academic year. The starting point for Allegro I required no prior knowledge of rhythmic performance. Initial learning focused on echo-clapping, beating pulse and general imitation of patterns performed by the teacher.

Rhythm names

Adults, in contrast to young students, could perceive using Kodály names as 'childish' thus impeding their initial engagement with music. The difference with the methodological approach for teaching this parameter to adults was the necessity to explain the value of the process by stating the basis for their use - that rhythm names convey the length of musical sounds. A simple two-step demonstration of the effectiveness and accuracy of clapping or playing with names was the best approach. Firstly, the teacher clapped a two-bar rhythm, simple duple time while counting in numbers; the students echo-clapped, counting in numbers. Secondly, the teacher clapped the same rhythm using Kodály names (e.g. ta ti-ti ti-ti ta) and the class echo-clapped to the names. When asked if they noticed any difference(s) between the two versions, the general consensus was the quavers were more even and the overall the performance was more accurate in the latter. The objective of this demonstration/imitation was that students could 'experience' the difference in preference the teacher to 'explaining' the difference. Similar to children, adults enjoyed clapping to these names with the knowledge that every sound they clapped or played on percussion had a particular name which, based experiencing their own rhythm performances, created greater accuracy in performance.

Stages of learning

The parameters will be discussed in three stages of musical learning and development:

Early stage: classes 1-8

Middle stage: classes 9-16

Later stage: classes 17-24

In teaching rhythm and melody, the same type of lesson plans used for children can be used for older students, according to Houlihan and Tacka. The difference with the older group is the necessity to pay more attention to developing vocal skills throughout the lesson. They recommend developing the students' intonation while working on specific rhythmic elements (Ibid: 427).

Training the ear before introducing the notational symbols improves accuracy in performance. Examples below indicate the three stages of rhythmic development:
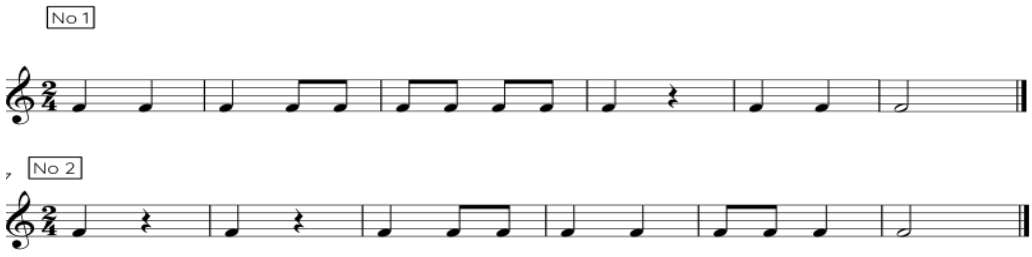


Figure 5.4 Early stage of rhythm (Allegro I)[31]

[31] Most of the musical examples were created by the teacher (figures 5.4-5.6). Further examples will be referenced as Marian McRory. All other sources will be identified in the footnotes.

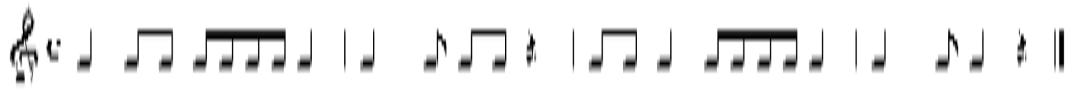


Figure 5.5 Midway stage of rhythm (Allegro I)



Figure 5.6 Later stage of rhythm (Allegro I)

Formal and informal learning in rhythm

Aside from the rhythmic parameter facilitating a 'warm up' it also engaged the student's listening. Participation as an informal approach was followed by the more formal aspects of notation where rhythmic patterns were written on whiteboard for the class to sight read and perform. The objective was to train the ear before the eye to enable the student to know the sound (aural) before the symbol (written).

Collective methodologies

The collective pedagogical approaches of echo-clapping, beating meter, reading notation, creating rhythmic patterns in response to a given rhythm and using an ostinato bass were all similar to teaching children. Explanations of the methods used at each stage were discussed with the groups in relation to the meaning and value behind the learning of each particular activity. The basis of such discussions was to offer insight and assurance to the adult learner. Two-part rhythm exercises added both challenge and enjoyment to this

performance activity centred as performers in both groups had to listen to each other while feeling the pulse and playing. Examples of two-part exercises are presented in figure 5.7.

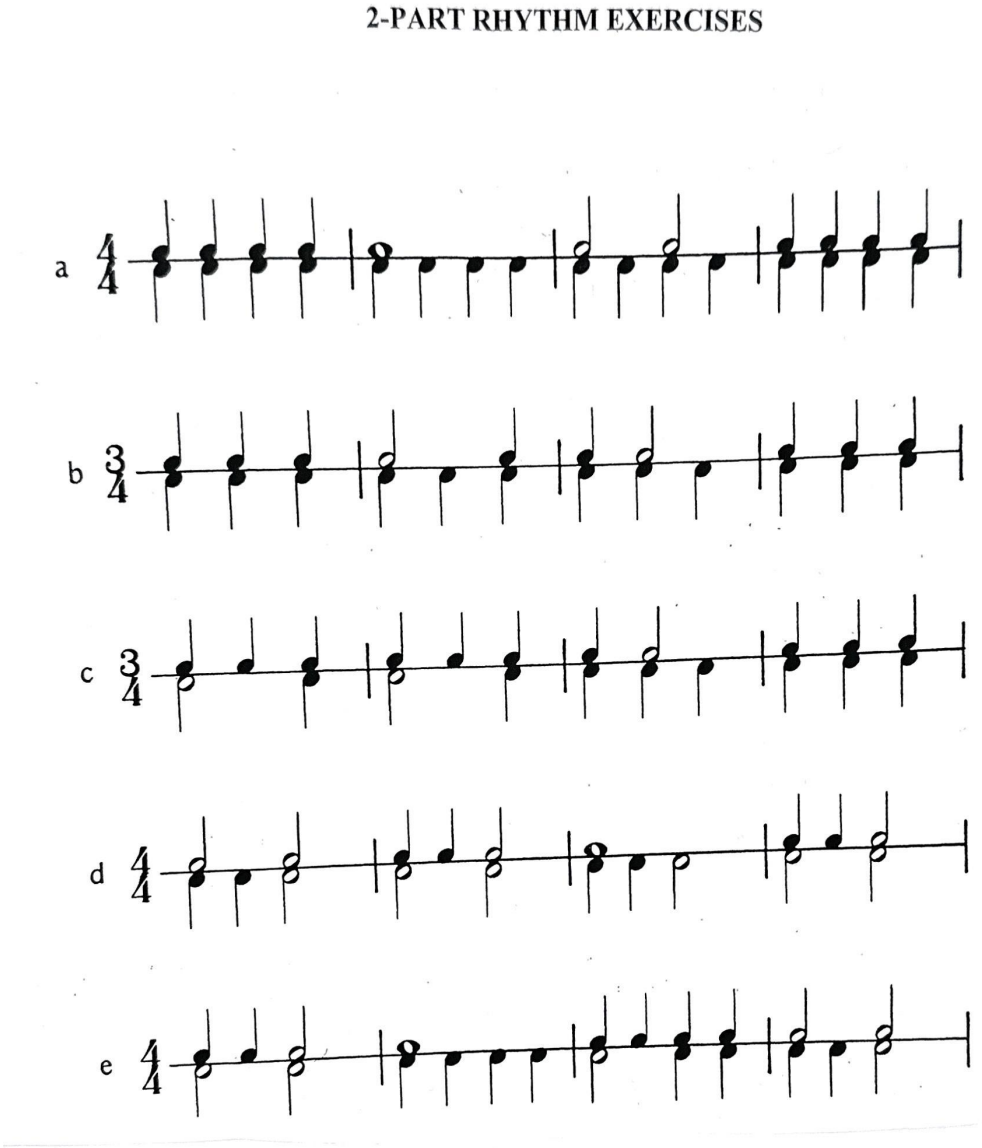


Figure 5.7. Basic two-part rhythm worksheets. Allegro I[32]

The value of practicing at home was discussed with classes emphasising how development of ear-training abilities and mastering sight singing normally takes many hours of practice. Allegro classes were small and the opportunity for practicing in small groups was valuable because it helped in 'sharpening their listening skills by evaluating

[32] Fraser, Sheena. Sing at Sight

each other's performances, students who practice with their peers are far more secure in their performance when called on in class' (Houlihan & Tacka: 428). In order to introduce 'choice' into the class, solo performance on a voluntary basis was encouraged. In the early stage perhaps only one volunteer might come forward but as the semesters progressed, more students volunteered. This is partly a transformational aspect of the learning as by listening to another person perform, others can gain a sense of self-confidence and competence arising from their musical knowledge. The process also related to behaviourist objectives where the group learn from one another about how to develop musical competency and skills; the latter also relates to the cognitivist orientation to learning as it entails processing information.

Allegro II

Despite Allegro II students having previous musical knowledge, it transpired they had very little experience of rhythmic performance. Often their experiences came from being choir members so they understood the concept of group performance. Based on personal experience of teaching choirs much of the learning tends to be by rote and consequently understanding the elements of rhythm and sight reading may not necessarily be part of the practice environment. The pedagogical approach for teaching the elements in Allegro II were similar to Allegro I. Examples of the three stages of rhythmic development
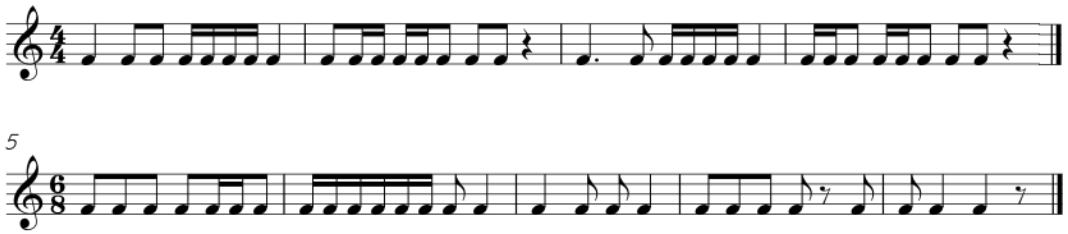


Figure 5.8. Early stages of rhythm (Allegro II)[33]

[33] Marian McRory

The class was divided into groups for performing ostinato or beating meter with alternating groups for each activity, similar to the pedagogical approach for children. Although the methodology was similar more assurance was needed for adults. At times, some would not join in initially until they heard others perform. Autonomy of the adult learner was respected and subsequently the role of facilitator, rather than teacher, was adopted during performance activities. This aimed to facilitate flexibility whereby the student could join in when they felt confident enough to participate.



Figure 5.9. Mid-way stage of rhythm Allegro II
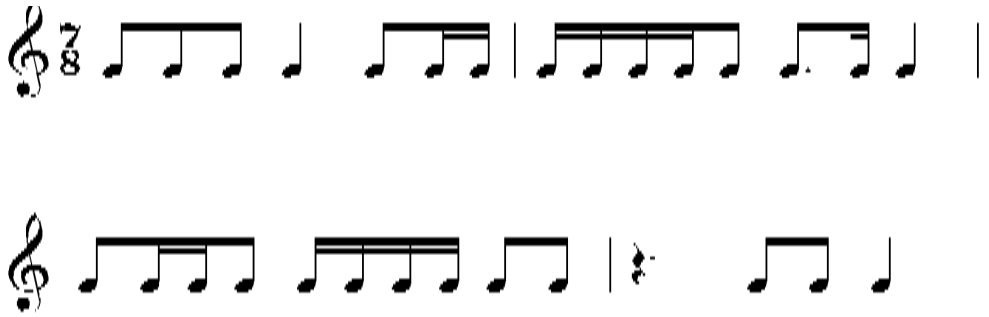


Figure 5.10. Later stage of rhythm Allegro II[34]

Teachers are part of a child's everyday life, in contrast to many adults who may not have been in a classroom for a considerable number of years and not in the learning mode. Undoubtedly children also need encouragement and even at times coaxing, but the adult

[34] McRory, M (figures 5.8, 5.9, 5.10).

can harbour greater insecurities, primarily 'because' they are an adult they believe they should be able to do better. This belief resonated deeply with many Allegro participants and hence the necessity for reassurance and discussion particularly concerning performance activities, as in this context the individual may feel more 'exposed' in the learning environment.

Introducing movement in performance: the differences between teaching rhythm to adults and children

In light of the fact that children are generally less self-conscious than adults, the collective methodologies of teaching adults and children was different in the context of age, life experiences, psychology and the sociological perspective; in the case of the latter the interaction was more informal. All exercises in rhythm in this context were introduced during the action research methodology and later in the ethnographic methodology, where my role, as participant/observer enabled reflection on the "plan-act-observe-reflect" a process similar to both methodologies. The rate of learning in this parameter varied amongst adults. One of the key ingredients of performing rhythm is movement. The children's class can march around the room to a rhythm in four-time or swing to a rhythm in three-time; this type of activity would be unsuited to adults learning in a university[35]. Movement of this kind was never included in rhythmic activities for this project; instrumental playing was the preferred option which nonetheless required action and co-ordination.

Performing on percussion instruments was therefore important in facilitating the opportunity for movement; playing required movement and each person was observed by the teacher to assist with fluidity of movement. Clapping was the focus in the earlier

[35] The researcher told classes about this activity in order to test their overall response; preference for adults was to engage in the activity of playing rhythms on percussion instruments

classes but, after the third class, instruments were introduced with each student choosing their preferred instrument for the performance activities. This approach was similar to teaching the younger students' classes.

Class music teaching was both formal and informal. The performance and fun involved in playing percussion naturally creates an informal atmosphere. In contrast to children, adults can initially feel a little challenged with such activities which therefore necessitated a more teacher-led methodology in the earlier stages of both programmes. More handouts were given to the adults than children as they valued such resources for keeping track of the progressive stages of the rhythmic exercises. By nature, adult students tend to assume responsibility for their own learning and home practice was essential to making progress.

The Learning Outcomes

The Kodály approach is not a method but rather a set of guidelines for a progressive approach to teaching and learning rhythm and singing. Learning is enhanced through skills-based activities which include rhythm names, solfa and handsigns. The majority of Allegro students were not taking instrumental lessons and therefore the use of percussion instruments to experience sound to symbol performance was key to the learning process.

Two-part rhythm exercises were introduced in the second semester. This activity developed aural awareness in listening as the student endeavours be aware of their own group performance, while listening to the other group. The class was divided in half for this exercise and then interchanged between upper and lower voices. Some examples of two-part rhythmic performance for Allegro II are presented below (figure 5.11).
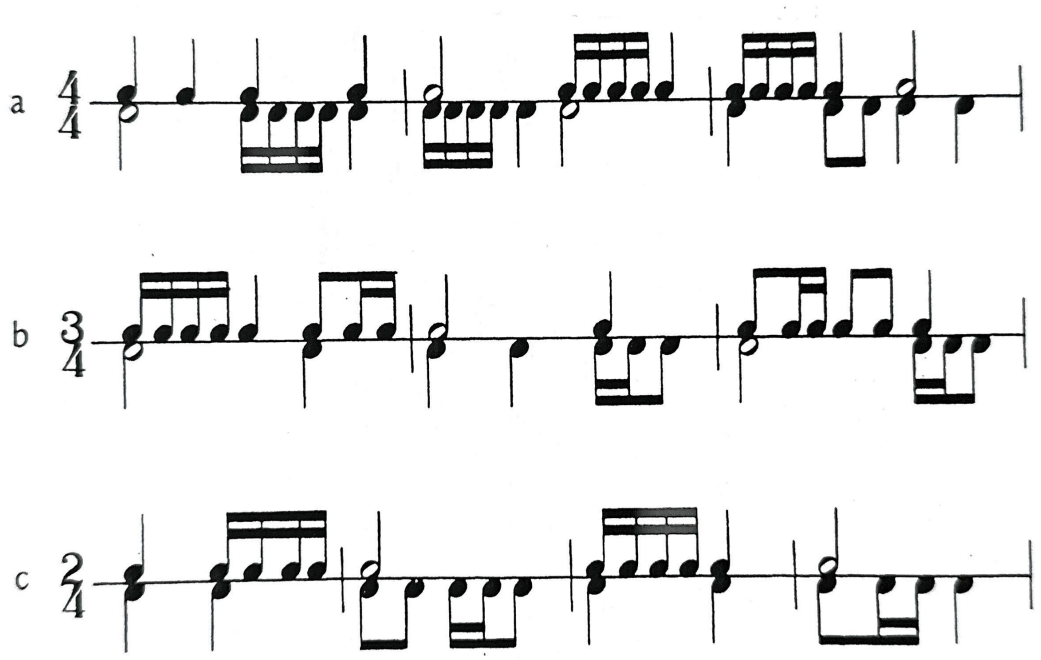


Figure 5.11. Example of two-part rhythmic performance Allegro II[36]

5.8.3 Singing

According to Gault, singing has been characterised as the primary vehicle for music participation (Ibid., 2016: 73). He refers to the concept of 'Kodály-inspired teaching' which reflects the thinking behind the aural musicianship in this context. Kodály, as previously stated, is not a method but rather a set of principles and Gault presents the argument that 'teachers might consider making adaptations as they apply Kodály's principles to new situations', (Ibid: 87). The aural/musicianship principles were similarly adapted for this new Allegro programme.

Most participants had prior experience of singing. The point of entry to the programme varied. Many sang sol-fa in primary school, others were choir members (past and/or present) and some learned instruments in childhood. These prior musical experiences applied to both Allegro groups throughout the timeframe of this research.

[36] Source: Fraser, Sheena. Sing at Sight

The aim was to develop rhythm, movement and performance, all of which was encompassed in the action research from the early years. Thirty minutes was devoted specifically to developing aural skills in each class. The objectives were performance in percussion and vocal. This researcher's views concurred with Ernst that ensemble playing encouraged musical engagement and sustained motivation to learn (Ernst, 2001).

Collective methodologies

Class singing activities included: solfa and handsigns for echo-singing, learning solfa, singing intervals, tetrachords, singing from score with solfa, sight-reading, learning songs and singing in canon. Reflective of Kodály's philosophy, the voice was the chosen instrument in the pedagogical approach. The aim of using the voice for musicianship training for the adult learner was similar to that for teaching children - primarily to develop inner hearing. Singing skills were developed through practicing progressive exercises both in a class-based ensemble and for home practice.

Performance has the versatility to embraces many of the learning theories that were investigated in chapter four. The cognitivist theory orientates the student on how to learn singing/performance skills which also aligns with behaviourism where goals are realised and the student feels a sense of accomplishment. The latter is rooted in Knowles' humanistic psychology and andragogical approach, where the person is at the centre of their own learning in constructing meaning from their performance experience, which is reflective of constructivism. It may be concluded that musical learning encapsulates many theories and that the act of performance engages many learning faculties namely, planning, acting, interpreting and reflecting in action (Elliott, 1995).

The first five classes focused on echo-singing, learning melodic phrases in sol-fa with hand signs, singing 2-bar melodic phrases or a phrase from a song. In developing musical

memory echo-singing plays an important role; it requires good responses through listening, responding and singing (Houlihan & Tacka: 420).

The methodology for teaching echo-singing to adults was no different from teaching children who by nature, generally tend to be more spontaneous. Similar to teaching rhythm, singing in class and at home fostered competence and confidence amongst adults. Guidance on how to practice was an essential to this learning process: [37].
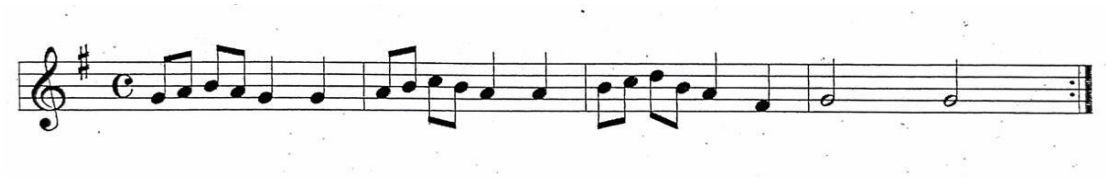


Figure 5.12. Early stages of sight singing: Allegro I
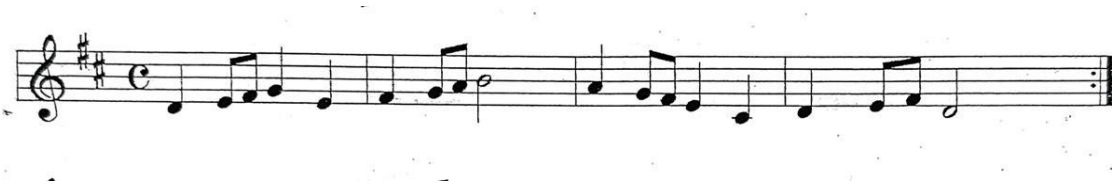


Figure 5.13. Mid-way stage of sight singing Allegro I
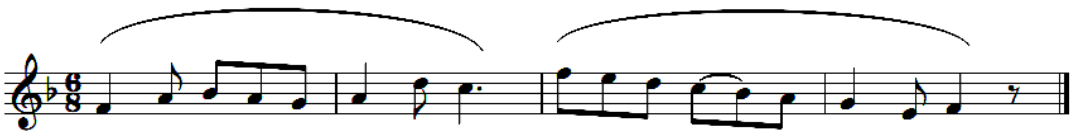


Figure 5.14. ***Later stage of sight singing: Allegro I***

[37] 5.12-5.15: McRory, M.
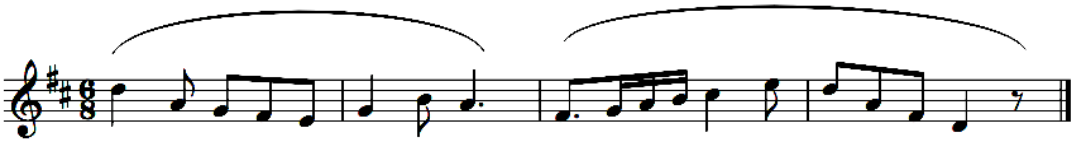


Figure 5.15. Early stage: Allegro II sight singing and composition[38]
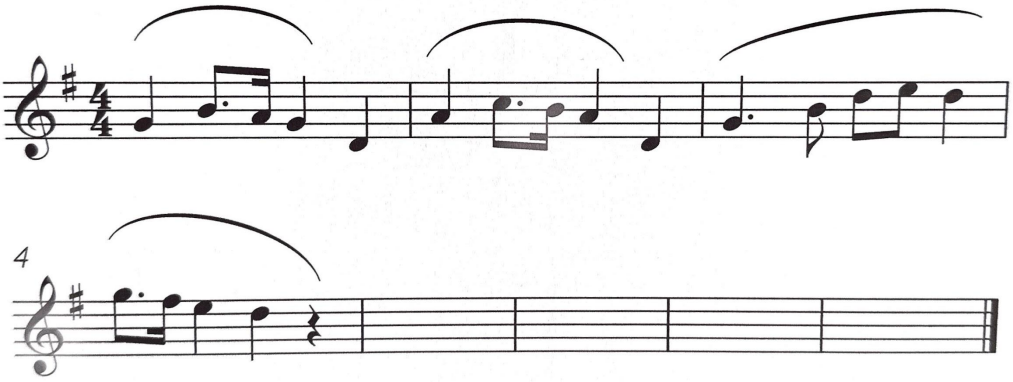


Figure 5.16. Mid-way stage singing and composition Allegro II
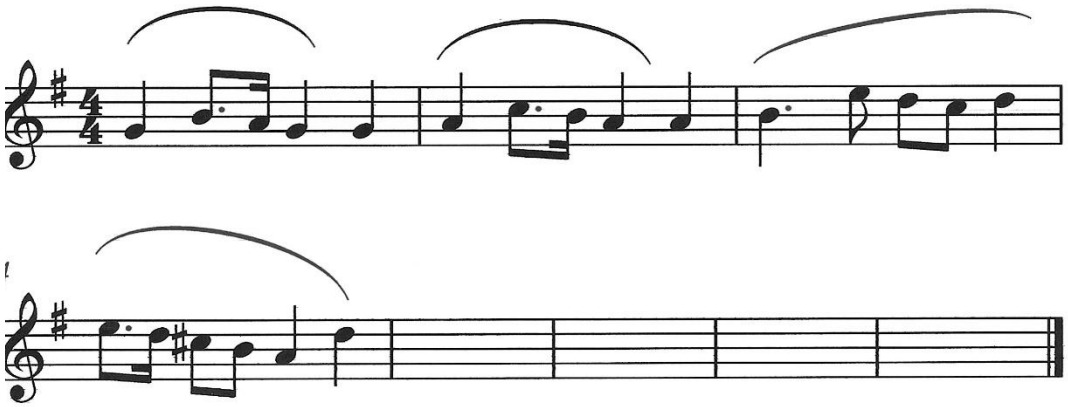


Figure 5.17. Later stage: Singing and composition with modulation to the dominant key Allegro II

[38] Figures 5.15-5.17 Ibid.

In contrast to piano playing, a musician can play a note without hearing it in advance, whereas singing requires the musician to hear the note mentally before they can produce it, through inner hearing. The combined skills of singing in solfa, hearing the sound in advance and using handsigns are key tools for developing aural proficiency.

In conjunction with verbal explanations, musical demonstrations were the most effective pedagogical approach. Singing four-bar melodic phrases in solfa, each in a different key, demonstrated how solfa can be used in any key, using the same pattern and contour regardless of key. The concept of relative solfa and the moveable 'doh' were also introduced; such discussions particularly suited to the adult learning environment. The Allegro adults progressed more effectively by understanding the rationale and meaning behind this approach for acquiring these musical skills. All the above were incorporated not only into the action research cycles but into the ethnographic methodology. The rate of progress between semesters was recorded and documented for the first and second stages of the research using the two research methodologies (chapter six).

Differences in pedagogical approach between children and adults

The understanding of hand signs in conveying the sol-fa sounds, the meaning behind each of the sol-fa names in terms of their visual value in showing the relative position for every pitch, informed the students of the importance of learning these skills in giving character to each pitch - for example the fist denotes doh and the open hand denotes soh. Similar to the discussions surrounding aspect of rhythm, adults seek greater knowledge about acquisition of singing skills. This in-depth analysis contrasted sharply with children's learning.

The pedagogical approach for teaching intervals was to use hand signs with solfa and pentatonic and diatonic were introduced simultaneously. The soh-me interval for singing

christian names and other intervals within the pentatonic scale were, based on my experience, a more suitable approach for young students. Kodály teachers have their own individual specialised approach but, as previously stated, Allegro was not a Kodály programme. The eclectic curriculum in Allegro aimed to adapt his principles for aural training and modified to fit for adult learners. Singing was core in both programmes and two-part songs from the Classical repertoire were included in Allegro II (Fig. 5.18)

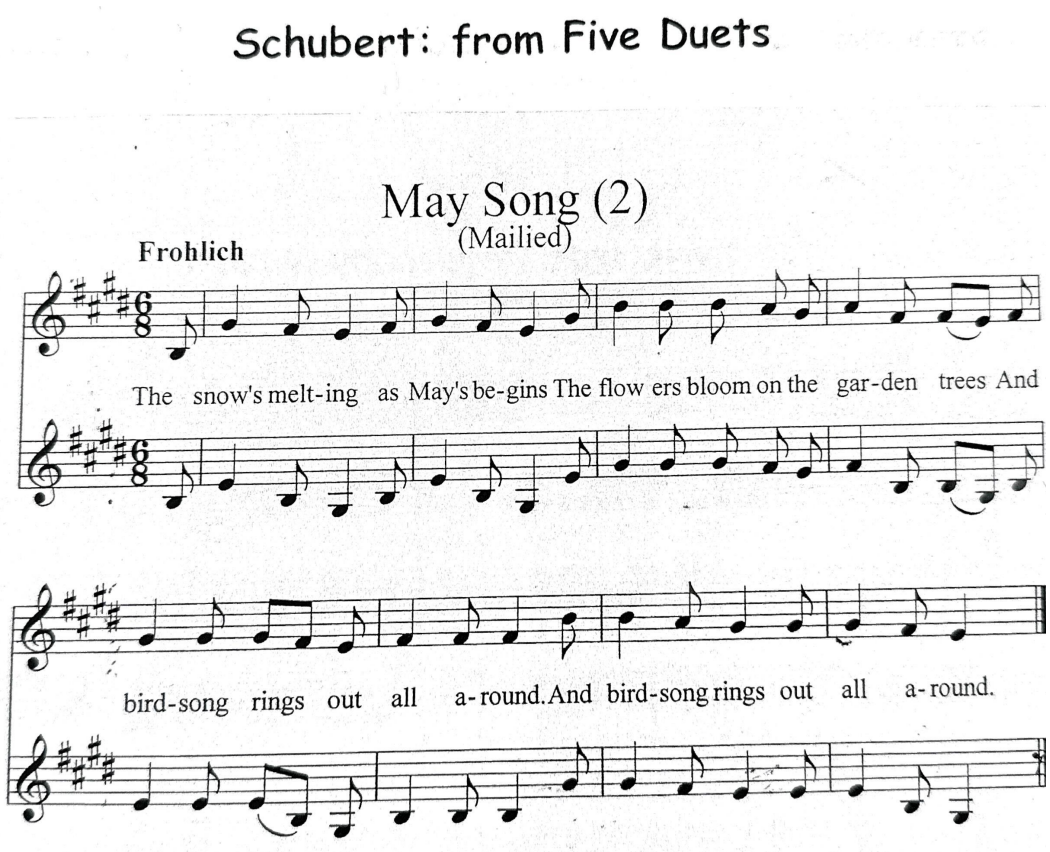


Figure 5.18. Two-part song for Allegro II[39]

Canon singing was also introduced while beating a pulse or ostinato to accompany a song or exercise. Half the class sang while the other half played the ostinato on percussion, followed by an exchange of parts. Development of the above skills set a foundation for

[39] No.2 of Two May Songs by Franz Schubert

learning how to compose, being able to feel rhythm and sing in advance of writing notation, cumulatively these skills develop inner hearing, essential for creativity and composition.

The learning outcomes

Encouragement to sing and listen were the key areas for meaningful learning outcomes. Developing the ability to sight sing, participating in group performance, understanding musical literacy and musical expression were important towards realising the learning outcomes. The acquisition of musical terminology, phrasing and form further informed musical choices for melodic composition, all of which fostered self-confidence in music.

5.8.4 Composition

Formal and informal aspects of learning were contained in this parameter. Building on the aural elements, an understanding of melodic contour, phrasing, style and musical expression formed and informed the basis of compositional skills. Folkenstad states,

> In the formal learning situation, the mind of both the teacher and the students are directed towards *learning how to play music (learning how to make music)*, whereas in the informal learning practice the mind is directed towards *playing music (making music*)' (Folkestad, 2006:138).

He identifies the practice of composing as formal in the sense that the mind is directed towards the creation of music, while the actual process of how to compose is informal. Saar (1999) in his empirical study of various forms of leisure time musical learning situations 'found that the formal and informal aspects were not static, but rather shifted continuously' (Ibid: 138). Composition is creative task that embodies an ebb and flow aspect and cannot by nature remain, but is rather a process of invention and reinvention.

Allegro I: Composition

The research data indicated that composition was a relatively new experience for students. As the programme progressed they learned how to compose rhythmic patterns, ostinato, melody writing, adding chords to a melody and writing a melody above the primary chords. Composition was introduced in the first three weeks for approximately ten to twenty minutes duration and aimed to develop creative responses while encouraging a sense of musical autonomy. (Figures 5.19 example of composition assignments).

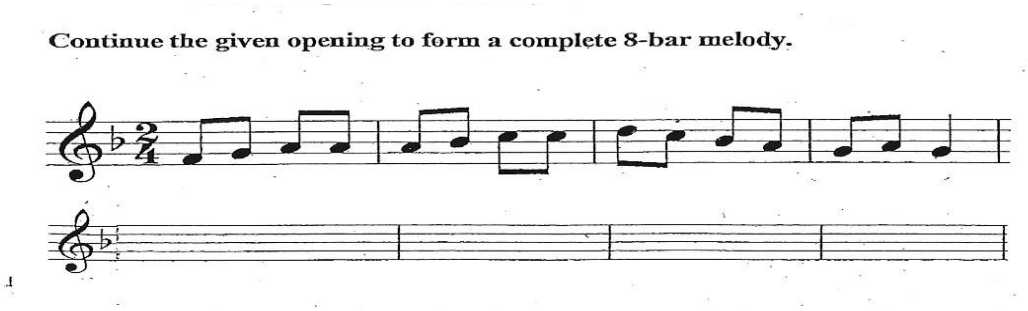


Figure 5.19. Early stage of composition Allegro I
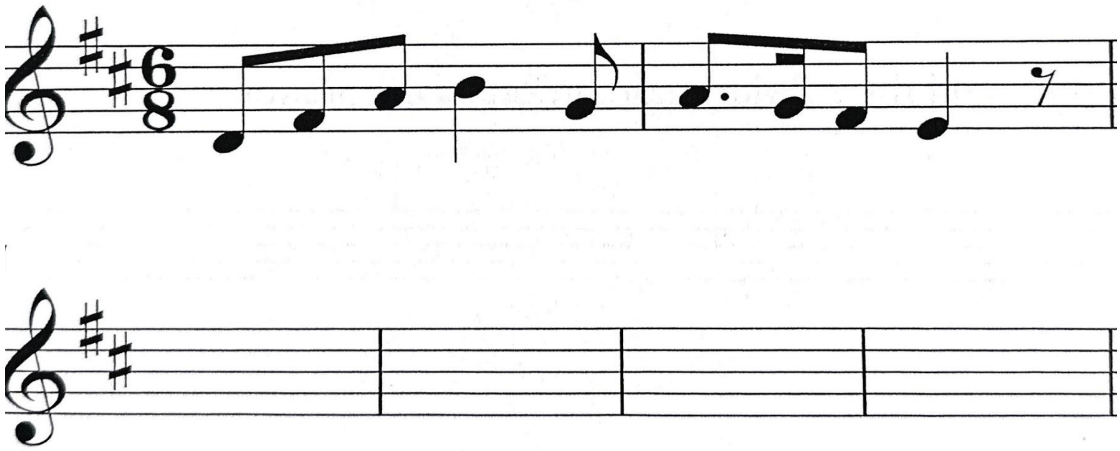


Figure 5.20. Midway stage of composition by adding four bars to the opening. Allegro I[40]

[40] Figures 5.19 and 5.20: Ibid.

Mid-point stages of learning (lessons 9-16)

During the mid-way point of learning reading notation was further developed. Students performing their individual melodies was the main objective. These activities were both class-based and also part of homework assignments. In class volunteers were encouraged to engage in singing solo, but the overall emphasis was on ensemble activities in class. and solo singing as homework. Compound time was introduced in this term (figure 5.20).

Singing the primary chords in solfa laid the foundations for hearing the sol-fa in both melody and chords, acting as a prelude to adding suitable chords to a given melody (figure 5.21)

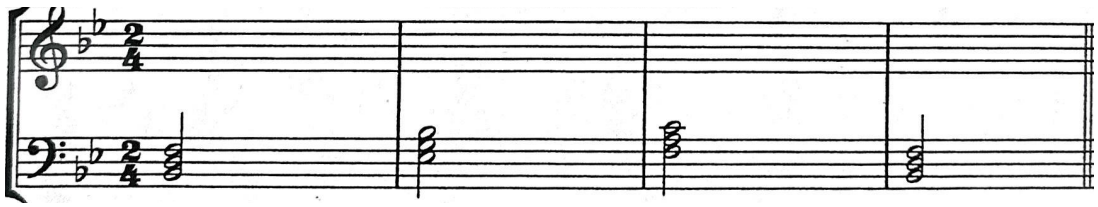


Figure 5.21. Allegro I: composing a melody above chords[41]

This began as a class-based activity in a collaborative effort to compose a melody above given chords. The teacher and the group teased out musical ideas with half the class singing the melody and half singing the bass line. In an adult class this could prove a useful tool for those who liked to experiment with accompaniment for choirs. All exercises were four bars long. The general consensus among students was that it could be a useful skill to possess in the future. In addition 'singing and playing part music are

[41] Figure 5.21: Ibid

important aspects of musical training. This enables the student to learn to hear several voices simultaneously (Folkestad, 2006: 432) through the process of composing.

Later stages of learning (lessons 17-24)

Throughout the later stage, students were encouraged to be aware of breathing while singing as a technique of choosing the best phrasing for a melody. Sight reading a given four melody in class, identifying rhythm names and solfa formed the basis for their composition technique. In order to encourage musical decision making, the teacher demonstrated performance at different tempi. Next, the class performed at different tempi prior to making a joint decision on their final choice. In this joint activity the students would suggest melodic ideas and the teacher assumed the role of facilitator. Making informed musical choices adults maintained their sense of autonomy which, in contrast to young students, was more attributed to self-directed learning which ultimately enabled them to assume some responsibility in the learning outcomes.

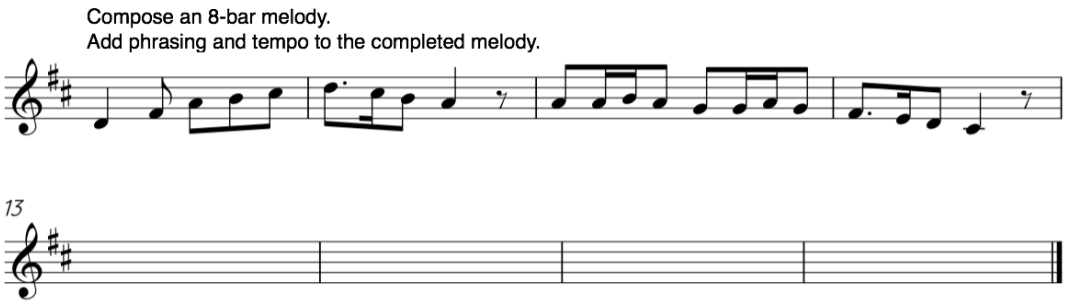


Figure 5.22. Later stage of composition: adding four more bars to complete an eight-bar melody. Allegro I[42]

Learning outcomes in composition involved acquiring the necessary skills to write the melody, to hear and perform it, to add phrasing and performance directions. The ultimate

[42] Ibid.

outcomes were their ability to listen, hear, compose, write and perform either in ensemble or solo performance.
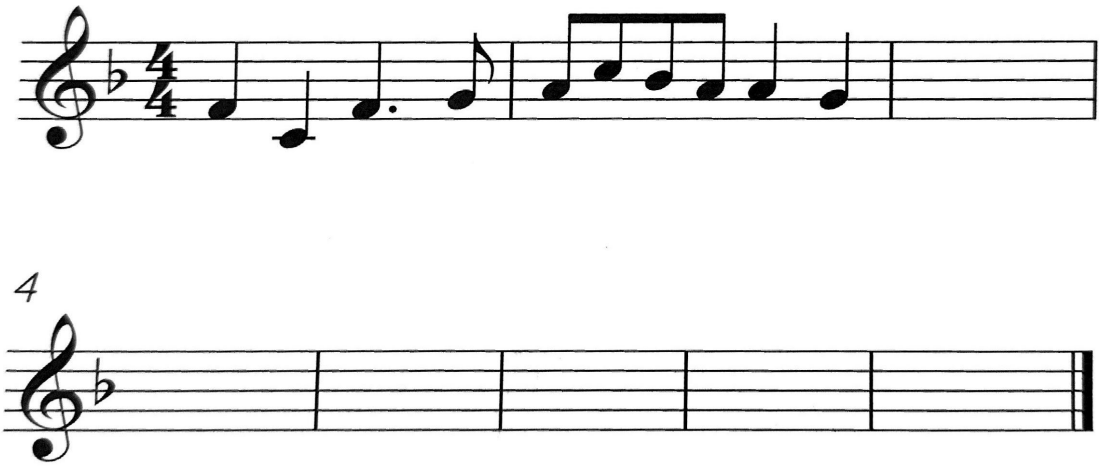


Figure 5.23. Later stages of composition Allegro I[43]

Assignment to compose an six-bar melody based on the opening, adding phrasing, tempo, articulation, dynamics and expression marks.

Differences in teaching composition

Melodic composition had a similar approach as rhythmic composition. The class sang given a melodic phrase in solfa followed by notation and phrasing. Intonation, reading, listening and performing combined to develop inner hearing. There was little difference between teaching adults and children in this context.

One difference was that the choice of solo performance was at the discretion of the individual for adults, whereas in teaching children the teacher may select a student, but volunteering can be an option for both. The data reflected that adults enjoyed group singing and all students were expected to participate in ensemble activities. In the

[43] Ibid.

pedagogical approach the teacher aimed to create an informal environment that encouraged the student to have the confidence to make musical suggestions which contributed to the musical outcomes in the composition class.

Allegro two: composition

The Allegro II curriculum covered melody writing with modulation, basic knowledge of SATB, figured bass with first inversions and dominant sevenths, plus piano accompaniment. Singing and melody composition, although identified in the curriculum as two parameters are inextricably linked and hence they are coupled together in the context of this parameter classification.

Composition encompasses many skills notably aural, performance and listening and is a creative a process. The act of composition reflects several learning orientations but constructivism is rooted in this parameter. Composing gives the person a sense of autonomy because they are constructing their own learning, acquiring knowledge and experience that will afford them the capacity to rely on their own constructs in musical composition (Fenwick in chapter four).

Collaborative rhythmic and melodic composition

The class activities included solo and group singing, literacy and aural exercises, two-part sight singing and songs. The opening bars of a melody were presented on a whiteboard for sight reading. Structure of a melody, form, cadential points, phrasing and style were discussed. The method was collaborative composition whereby students suggested the next phrase which was sung by all with several repetitions in order to agree on musical decisions in respect of phrasing or melodic patterns. This process had a reflective element and relates to the social/situational theory wherein students could share musical ideas in class, which was particularly beneficial in the adult context as it raised

question for discussion within the group. Issues relating to stylistic features and musical details were teased out in class which is another example of the constructivist approach; such collaborative activities fostered confidence in students to rely on their own musical constructs (Ibid). The final stage involved the completed melody being performed by the whole class. This practice offered the learner the tools to undertake composition as part of their individual assignments. Singing throughout the process reinforced the value of the sound before symbol pedagogy. Rhythmic composition was the first step, to emphasise the importance of rhythmic accuracy including correct grouping. This is followed by adding solfa, notation, phrasing, tempo and dynamics.

The extract below illustrates the stages of class-based composition and would have been emailed to students for completion as homework (Figure 5.24). This collaborative process aimed to equip students with the required technical skills for composing while developing their individual creativity. This was just one approach.

The later stages show the same process of continuing a given opening to a melodic phrase and but also include modulation (figures 5.25, 5.26). These stages focused on developing musical awareness, compositional techniques, notational skills, musical expression and creativity. Composition was part of all assignments on both Allegro programmes.

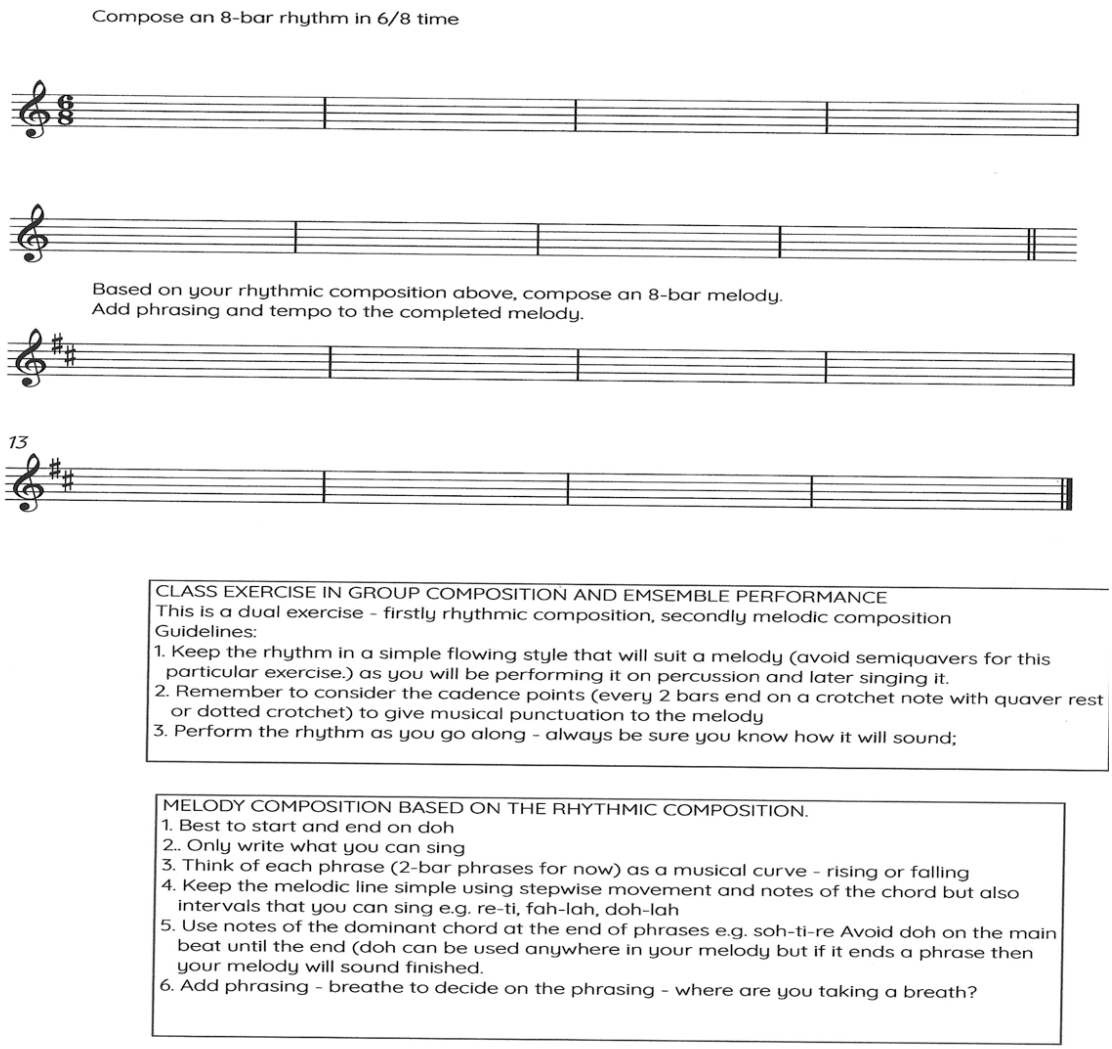


Figure 5.24. An approach to collaborative class composition, early stage.

Extract from lesson plan (no. 8) Allegro II[44]

[44] Ibid.
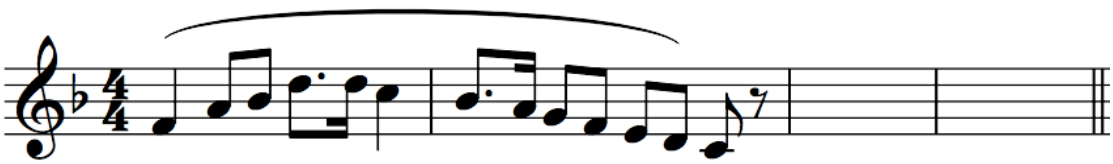


Figure 5.25. Melodic composition midway stage Allegro II[45]

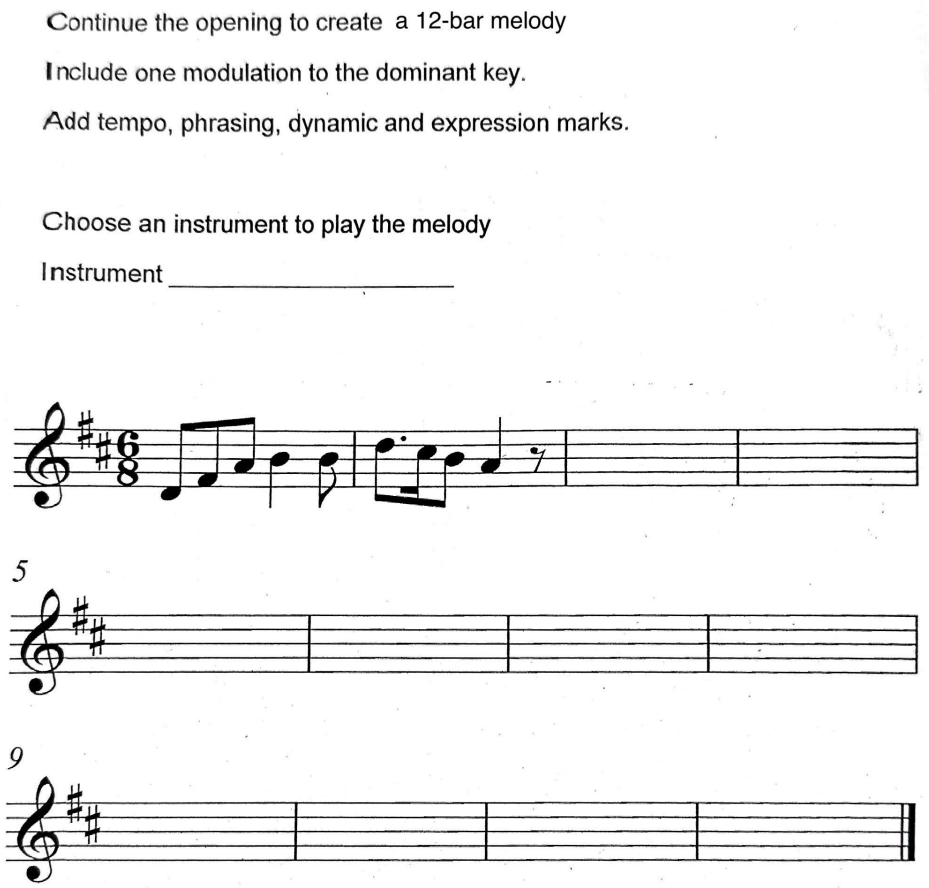


Figure 5.26. Composition: 12-bar melody with modulation Later stage Allegro II

Building on the curriculum content for composition, the methodology introduced the concept of pivot notes /chords to develop inner hearing for good intonation with modulation. Selected sight singing with modulation were part of the homework assignments, using the technique of substituting soh in the tonic for doh in the dominant proved a useful musical tool for developing this skill. This technique was encouraged for

[45] Figures: 5.25 & 5.26 Ibid.

composing and hearing modulations in the student's individual melodies for assignments. The basis of the collaborative approach agreed with Bauer's views, 'as composition, like other forms of musicianship, is an aural art, students need to listen to and discuss music to build an aural vocabulary' (Bauer, 2012: 61).

Despite criticism of classically trained teachers adapting the 'scaffolding' approach to composition, on the basis that it places constraints on creativity, the Allegro composition parameter followed structured guidelines. As both teacher and researcher I would concur with Hallam, that a scaffold can facilitate creativity by having options for students to make musical choices (Hallam, 2008). Experience of teaching composition to adults revealed their preference for guidelines, reflecting on each stage of the work, making revisions, discussing stylistic features during ensemble performance. Music-COMP; Music Composition Online Mentoring Program claims 'composition is one element of a well-rounded curriculum' (cited in Bauer: 60). When teaching composition using Sibelius software, several Allegro students expressed interest in purchasing the software, but there are free online software programmes, including MuseScore, which are very versatile. These resources could prove very valuable for composition and creativity for adult learners both now and into the future.

5.8.5 Harmony/figured bass/piano accompaniment

Introduction to harmony began by students learning how to add chords to a melody. The primary chords were sung in solfa, followed by the given melody. Choosing a chord to suit each bar of the melody was the aim and, as a starting point the lower bass line was sung against the soprano. Figure 5.27 presents a basic example.

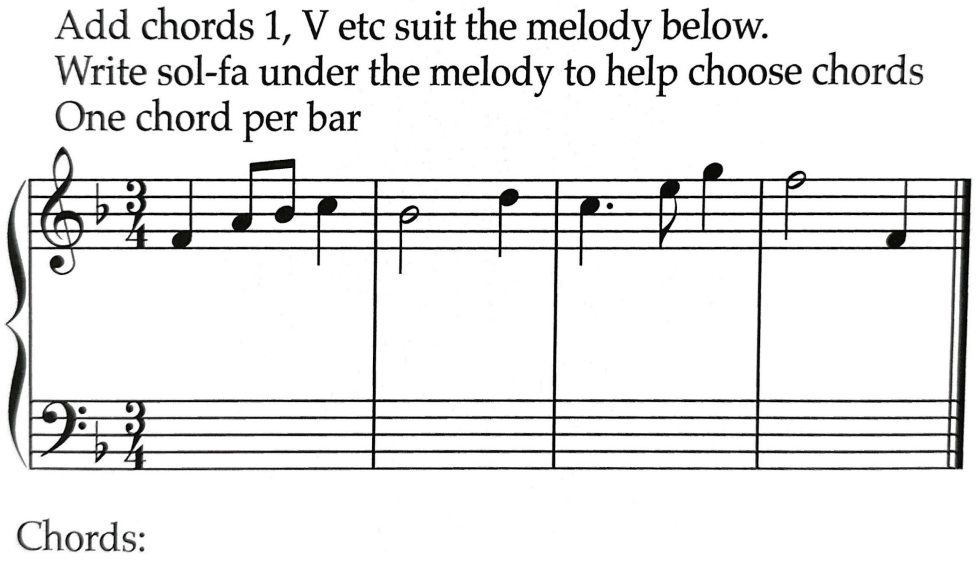


Figure 5.27. Introduction to harmony Allegro II[46]

The chorale style of SATB was presented as an introduction to four-part chords. Singing cadences introduced part-singing. Primary and secondary chords with inversions and the dominant seventh were added on a phased basis. These chords also formed the basis for learning figured bass. Keyboard style, which included the cadential 6/4, was presented and worked through in class as a collaborative effort, in order to facilitate discussion about chords and styles. The methodology necessitated much repetition. Initially singing activities included singing the bass line, composing and singing the melody and bass together for two-part singing; all are important aspects of musical training. The associated learning activities included listening, reading, singing the bass line, adding a melody line above a bass with the objective of eventually singing basic patterns in four-part harmony.

The chorale style formed the basis of learning harmony, figured bass and piano accompaniment. Curriculum included primary and secondary chords with root and first inversions, dominant 7th and the cadential six-four. Examples of figured bass exercises

[46] Ibid

are presented below (figures 5.28 and 5.29). A more advanced example was the optional element (figure 5.30) which depended upon on groups prior musical knowledge[47]

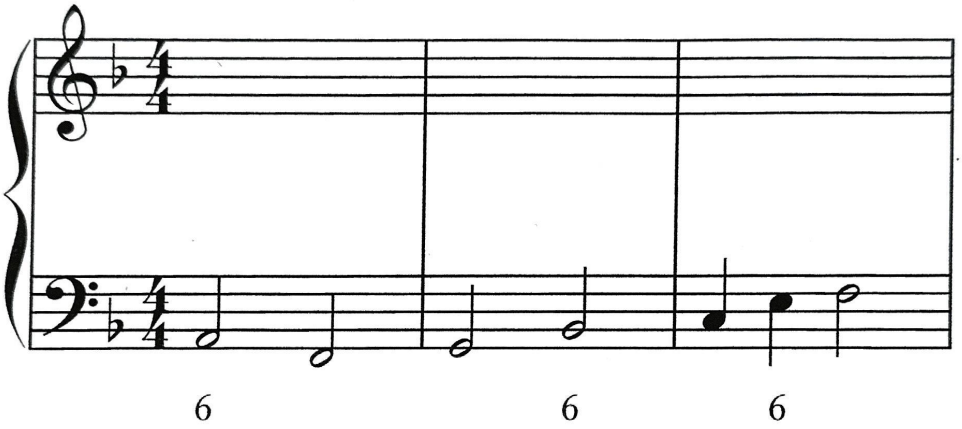


Figure 5.28. Early stages of figured bass Allegro II

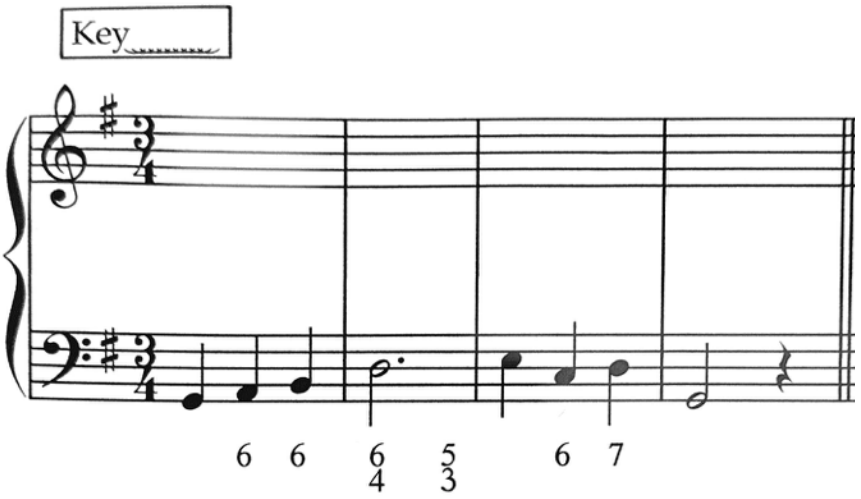


Figure 5.29. Figured Bass Mid-way to later stages of learning

[47] 5.28-5.30 Ibid.

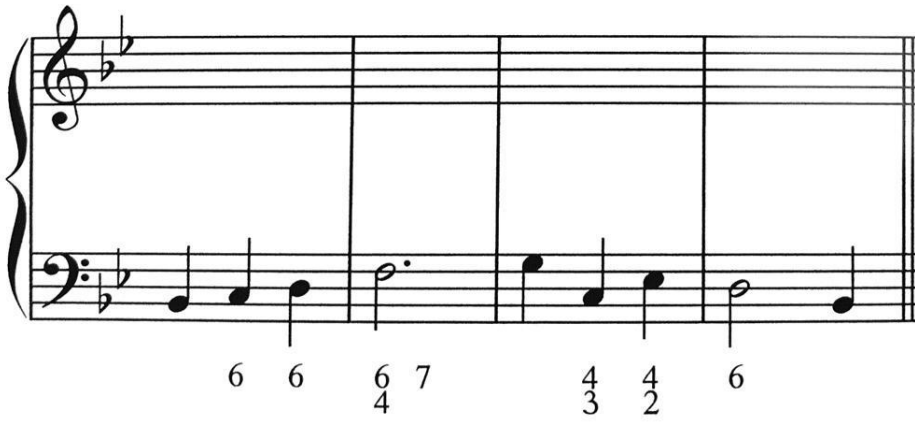


Figure 5.30. Figured Bass: Later stage of learning[48]

Learning how to add a stylish melody to a figured bass, with the inclusion of passing and auxiliary notes, helped develop greater proficiency in listening, singing and performing .

Piano accompaniment

Accompaniment in the Allegro curriculum offered greater diversity in composition and creativity. Chords in root position, first inversions, dominant sevenths and cadential were part of the harmonic structure. Keys ranged up to three sharps and flats, time signatures included simple and compound time (mostly 6/8). The pedagogical approach involved listening, sight reading the melodic line and group singing the bass and melodic lines to hear the outer harmonic structure. The accompaniment included block chords and arpeggiated styles (figure 5.31). Students were asked to sing the melody and suggest suitable harmonies. Stylistic features of the given opening were discussed with a view to continuing in a similar style. Class discussion gave students the opportunities to express their views and preferences. Throughout the process all demonstrations were played by the teacher to assist in developing critical musical awareness in pianistic styles.

[48] Figure 5.30: Ibid

Formal and informal learning were employed with both forms woven into the lesson (Saar, 2005). This is concurrent with both the constructivist and transformative approaches; in the latter, learning about piano accompaniment often inspired students to make enquiries about learning an instrument, piano and singing tended to be the preferred choices. They felt a 'need' to participate in more musical activities which is also indicative of the humanistic approach in developing the 'whole' person (Jarvis). These outcomes are valuable for making lifestyle changes to expand on their existing knowledge. Piano accompaniment class usually created a strong sense of collegiality as some disclosed their experiences of past instrumental learning. As participant-observer, I became aware that this sharing of life histories enriched relationships within the group. This will be discussed later in chapters six and seven in the context of the ethnographic methodology.

The three stages of learning for piano accompaniment styles are presented in figures 5.31, 5.32 and 5.33 [49].
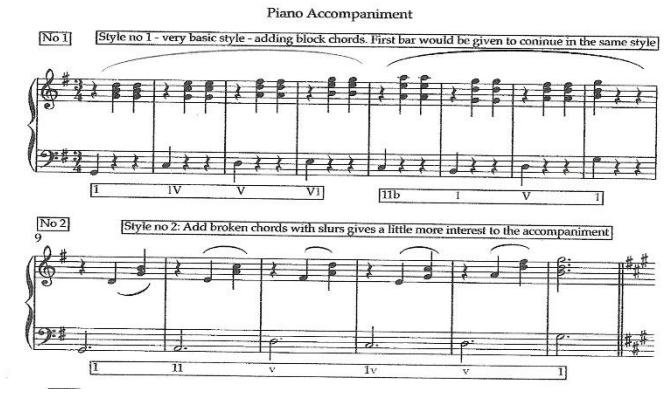


Figure 5.31. Early stages of piano accompaniment styles

[49] Ibid.
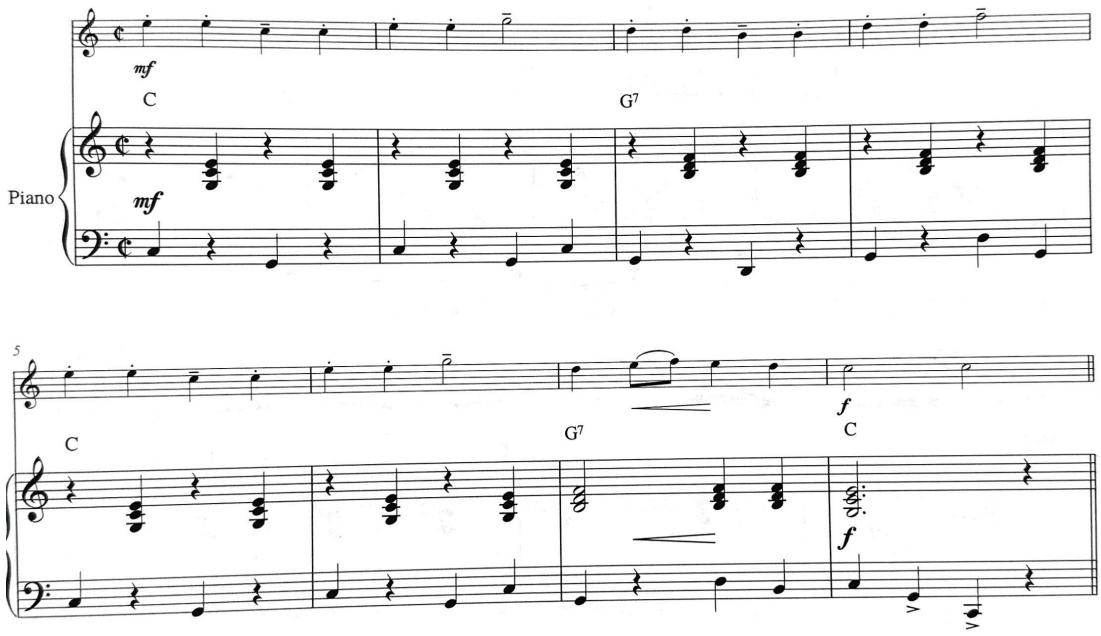


Figure 5.32. Mid-way stage of piano accompaniment (2 bars given in full, followed by melodic line only)
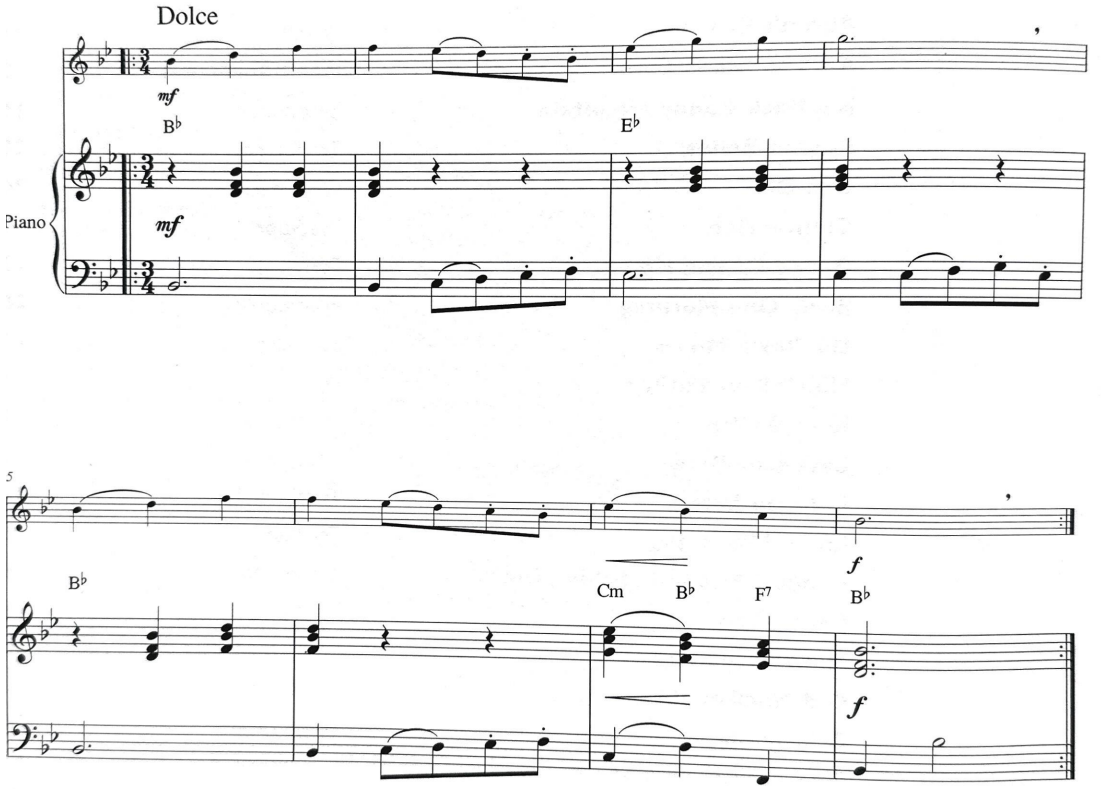


Figure 5.33. Later stage of piano accompaniment (same process as figure 5.31, but with inclusion of passing notes)[50].

[50] Three's a Crowd: Piano accompaniment (Chester Music)

Early stages of learning (lessons 1-8)

Class activities were of paramount importance as very few of the Allegro II students had experience of aural engagement, their prior knowledge tended to be in other areas, mostly instrumental. Melody was confined to eight-bars without modulation and required repeated singing practice every week, both inside and outside (homework) class. Chorale harmony was introduced as a foundational base, prior to introducing figured bass and piano accompaniment. Elements of harmony included doubling, spacing, voice ranges, cadences, root position and first inversions of primary and secondary chords.

Figured bass entailed singing chords in root positions and first inversions in solfa with an emphasis on hearing the intervals of thirds and sixths. Class activities included singing the bass line, recognition of chords, adding a melodic line to the bass and finally performing the outer voices facilitated hearing the general harmonic framework.

Midway stages of learning (lessons 9-16)

Modulation to the dominant key in melodic composition, developing aural awareness of cadential points at phrase endings and identification of chords within a melodic structure were introduced. These techniques were applied to SATB, figured bass and piano accompaniment.

The pedagogical approach for teaching figured bass began with chorale style and progressed later to keyboard style. The cadential six-four concept can be challenging for student but singing the four-parts in solfa emphasised the progression in each voice, both aurally and visually and aimed to simplify notational writing.

Piano accompaniment introduced basic styles of keyboard writing, beginning with chordal accompaniment and a single bass note. Varying the styles of the same extract gave insight into the possible techniques – for example lowest notes held with inner parts chordal or arpeggiated added. Below is an example of the teacher's journal of reflections on the three stages of learning (fig 5.34). These stages are similar to the three stages in action research methodology which the extract illustrates.

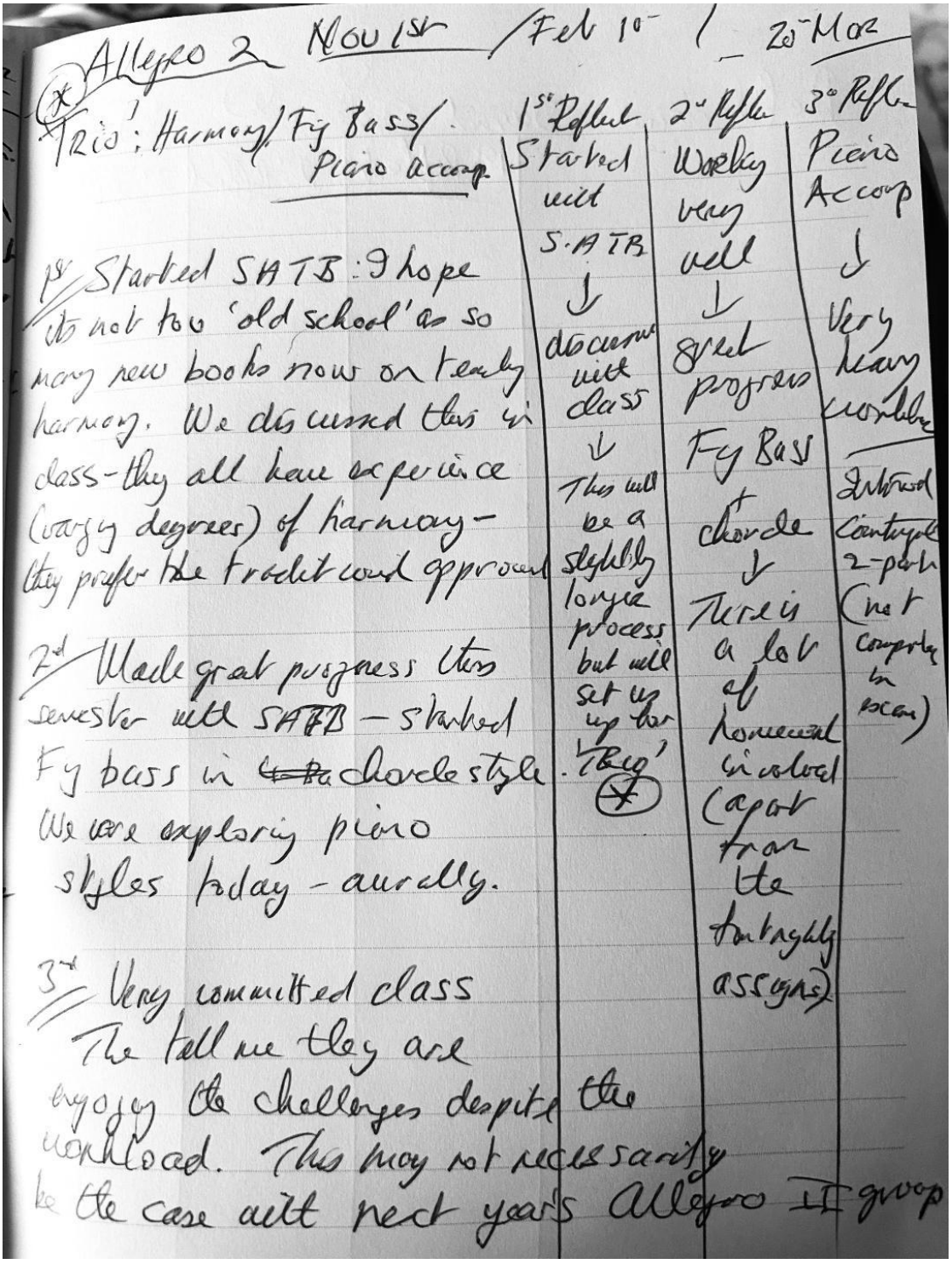


Figure 5.34. Extract from reflective journal on the three stages (cycles) of learning harmony, figured bass and piano accompaniment (Nov.1st, Feb.10th, March 20th: 2012-2013)

Later stages and learning outcomes (lessons 17-24)

The melodic composition was extended to twelve bars with modulation either to the dominant key or the relative minor. Ternary form A-B-A form was introduced for twelve-

bar composition; students had knowledge of ternary form in the listening parameter. The concept of modulating sequences was sometimes introduced, depending on students' prior musical experience and the rate of learning in the particular group.

Figured bass extended to six bars and included the dominant seventh and 1C-V7. Passing notes were introduced using known folk song material in order to enable students to sing and hear their use. Auxiliary notes were introduced as an option for students in the group who had greater musical experience, as optional to include them in their compositions.

In piano accompaniment, the pedagogical approach was to give the opening and the teacher played excerpts in different piano styles to encourage class discussion about style and musical preferences. No modulations were included in accompaniment and the technique involved mixing chords and arpeggios. Students would ultimately write an accompaniment of ten to twelve bars to a melody, the given first two bar were complete to indicate the style, thus informing the learning outcomes of these parameters.

The learning outcomes

The learning outcomes aimed to give students' practical insights into diverse forms of composition. This knowledge further informs aural, listening and written skills. An important objective was, as students endeavoured to create their own compositions they would gain a practical understanding and insight of scores and compositions by the great composers. This approach was comparable to an person learning to paint in order to heighten their appreciation of the artistic styles of great artists. In both music and art the appreciation stems from the 'doing', through engagement and participation.

Differences between teaching composition to adults and young students

Based on professional experience, the difference in teaching composition to adults, in contrast to children, is the need for detailed explanations of the reasons for every element of the learning (Knowles et al., 2005). Once they were made aware of the potential skills entailed in composition they became motivated to practice and improve (Ernst, 2001). Both formal and informal aspects of the learning shifted continuously in much the same way as the musical parameters crossed and re-crossed throughout the lesson. Nothing was static as this continuum of formal and informal was prevalent in all Allegro parameters including theory.

5.8.6 Theory

Prior knowledge of this parameter was essential prerequisite for Allegro II students. Those taking Allegro I had little or no knowledge of theory. The point of entry for both groups varied but the general starting point for Allegro I was an introduction to the basics. The Allegro II groups tended to have varying degrees of knowledge and consequently the first two or three classes were devoted to revision wherein the teacher could find an equilibrium with the group, as a basis for the learning to move forward.

In Allegro I twenty-thirty minutes per class was allocated each week to the theoretical parameter. This exceeded the twenty minutes given in Allegro II. Musical literacy was reason for this discrepancy – many students had never written music notation and in the initial stages of learning they needed time for practice during class, which enabled the teacher to check individual efforts.

In the early stages the Allegro I curriculum covered all notation, time and key signatures, major and minor scales, triads, intervals and performance terminology. During this early stage, Allegro II covered more advanced time and key signatures, four types of intervals,

more advanced scales in all clefs, score reading, chords and an introduction to harmony. The rate of progress was dependent on the class size and their prior theoretical knowledge. The pedagogical approach for children sharply contrasted with this speed of learning. In both Allegro programmes the accelerated rate of learning was not decided solely by the teacher but by the class dynamics – some groups were highly motivated and covered a lot of material, while other groups learned at a moderate rate. Unlike adults, children are not aware of time frames and it would be pedagogically unsound to engage in an accelerated method for them. The aim was to ensure quality over quantity of learning in the adult class.

The stages of theoretical learning in action research for the Allegro I programme.

The action research part of this study was represented in the cycles or stages of theoretical learning over the three-semester period as early, mid-way and later stages.

Early stage: included notation, rests, simple time signatures, grouping in simple time, six major scales up to three sharps and flats, triads, intervals within these scales, transposition and basic musical dynamics.

Mid-way stage: was extended to grouping combinations of semiquavers, minor scales (harmonic and melodic, related to the major from the early stage), basic compound time, minor triads, transposition, adding upper notes to intervals, dynamics and expression.

Later stage: building on the first two stages, major and minor scales were extended to four sharps and flats, triads in same keys, intervals (major and minor), primary chords, alto and tenor clefs, transposition, describing musical features in an unknown piece both aurally and visually.

The stages of theoretical learning in action research for the Allegro II programme.

Early stage: began with revision of time signatures and moved on to irregular times; major and relative minor scales in treble, bass and alto clefs (five sharps and flats); major, minor, diminished and augmented intervals; identification chords in a musical extract; transposing instruments and writing in open score.

Midway stage: major and relative minor scales in all clefs (up to six sharps and flats); compound interval in four clefs; writing in short and open score; writing chords to suit a folk-song melody; transposing instruments and extended musical terminology.

Later stage: All theoretical material was required at this point of learning. Major and relative minor scales in all key including the tenor clefs; all intervals including compound; writing in short score from an orchestral excerpt; identification of chords I, IV, V, II and VI in an extract; writing chords to suit a melody and recognition of the four cadences .

Combined theoretical and aural skills in both programmes

The methodology for combining these areas was the sound before symbol approach. Allegro I students sang the major scales prior writing them. This enabled more focused listening to differentiate the pitching of tones and semitones. The scale was then written with solfa and the class read and sang from the notation. A similar approach applied to Allegro II students – singing the harmonic and melodic scales before writing developed more accurate intonation and concentrated listening. The aural proceeding the written freed the student to apply hearing before visual. Levels of difficulty in the music elements was the only difference in the pedagogical approach for both Allegro I and II. This process works equally well with children, however the volume of material covered in the adult class exceeded that of a young cohort of students.

The same method was applied to teaching intervals and triads. In Allegro II, singing chords or singing a bass and soprano line enabled the student to hear one another and to hear what was written. The use of song material was fundamental in Kodály's philosophy and this influenced both Allegro programmes, in learning theory through a song.

Learning theory through a song

Performance was central to the learning, and included identification of time and key signatures, rhythmic elements, melodic line and meter. Adding phrasing was based on listening and feeling where the 'breaths' occurred in the music**.** The objectives were development of theoretical and kinaesthetic elements based on performance of the song. Children are very receptive to learning songs and, based on teaching experience, the methodology is easier with children. In contrast, the process was more teacher-led in an adult class, facilitating intermittent question-and-answer sessions. Adults often perceived singing as a judgement of the voice which may create feelings of insecurity. This considerably impacted the pedagogical approach as it necessitated the teacher's continuous reassurance, particularly in the early stages. The process for learning in this context enriched musical development as the experience of performance engaged the student's awareness of how the music works though collaborative participation. Based on my observations, singing as a group created greater confidence for performance.

Collective methodologies

Breathing is fundamental to singing as stated earlier. The activity of adding phrasing involved singing, observation of breathing, listening and making musical decisions. This demanded attention to the body's response to musical breathing. The sequence involved:

- Concentration of how the body is breathing, ascertains the musical punctuation as it synergises the breath and the melody.

- The written element was simply to add phrasing to the melody.
- They sang with an awareness how their singing and breathing reflected the musical phrasing.
- A brief discussion of their experiences followed varying activities.
- The whole song was performed firstly in solfa and then to words.
- Meter was played on percussion while singing to words.
- Another activity was singing in canon – different groups varied their entries with each repetition (example, The Evening Song)

Song repertoire were chosen for its appropriate level of difficulty for both programmes. The key objective was participation in ensemble performance with accuracy in rhythm, meter, good intonation, phrasing and expression. As the performance became more fluent, students were encouraged to listen to the 'performance as a whole'. Songs repertoire was changed for each academic year throughout the timeframe of this project.

Differences between teaching theory to adults and children

The pedagogical approach for teaching children sharply contrasted with this rate of learning. Children learn in a progressive style and have been taught all the elements that had gone before. Adults tend to be more self-conscious about singing and the methodology requires building up confidence through the more teacher-led approach, referred to earlier. In the context of adding phrasing to a song, the adult preference is for a more analytical approach; in contrast to children are more spontaneous about singing and may simply be asked where they need to take a breath.

In both Allegro programmes the accelerated rate of learning was not decided solely by the teacher but by the class dynamics – some groups were highly motivated and covered a lot of material, other groups learned at a less rapid rate. This type of learning is unsuited

to children who need a more progressive approach in acquiring theoretical knowledge, in this respect children's needs are different from those of adults.

Learning theoretical concepts is concerned with the cognitivist approach as the person *learns how to learn*. Processing musical theory gives the student the necessary tools and skills which form the basis for the development of their creativity in composition, aural and listening. The objective is to give the adult student a 'whole' musical learning experience; this may be considered as reflective of Mezirow's theory of transformative learning (chapters three and six).

Theory is a parameter that is well suited to acquiring a significant amount of knowledge in a relatively short timeframe. The pedagogical approach here was similar to that of the action research, the difference was the latter was being very closely monitored because it was a new programme and the researcher needed to plan, act, observe and reflect on each of the parameters. The ethnographic methodology complemented the action research in terms of the monitoring process. The blending of these two methodologies significantly informed the delivery of the programme for its duration up to 2022.

The learning outcomes

The overall outcomes aimed to encourage students to use theory as a basis to bring about an awareness of the relevance of theory for practical knowledge. In this way theory becomes integrated into the aural, literacy, performance, composition, score/analysis and listening parameters. These outcomes represented a sound knowledge base for real music learning and, based on the data, this level of competence endorsed confidence in musical participation (chapters five, six and seven).

5.8.7 Listening

Experiential learning and prior musical experience were the most evident in this parameter. Many adults had experience of listening to music both formally and informally. Some were concert-goers and others were well read in musical history; consequently these students had musical preferences in advance of signing up for the programme. Evidence from questionnaires indicated that listening and theory reflected the greatest level of prior knowledge amongst adults (appendix B). Listening crossed over into all parameters, however in this context the focus was on listening with score, listening to performances of musical works on YouTube and going to concerts.

Campbell provides a number of ideas for ways to have students respond to world music namely, through listening that ranged from the enactive (playing a rhythm ostinato while listening) to the creative (in encouraging composition) (cited in Abril, 2016: 14). This approach was adopted in the Allegro context to encourage engagement and participation in class.

Technological developments impacted on the adult class-based musical listening. During the early years of Allegro (2012-2014) CDs were compiled by this teacher to provide students a listening base of diverse musical periods. From 2015 and throughout the pre-pandemic years, YouTube became the norm as adults enjoyed observation of actual performances in the learning environment. Post pandemic and current practice increased the relevance of technology in teaching. Video links of performances were emailed to students to facilitate listening outside the classroom and with the arrival of music apps, mobile phones have greatly contributed to easy access to listening. Post pandemic technology has created a huge listening base, for older and younger adults alike, in accessing musical performances of their personal choices (chapter seven).

The selection of musical works on the programmes were reviewed each year. Choices for the listening programme for Allegro I was partly influenced by the group during conversations with the teacher. Informal listening, with discussion of a selected musical works played on YouTube helped ascertain students' musical preferences, which in turn, influenced the teacher's selection of set works for the curriculum. Scores were decided by the teacher. A broad overview of the pedagogical approach is outlined below in the three stages of learning for each programme.

Allegro I

The stages below also reflect the cycles of listening in action research:

The early stages of learning involved listening to short musical pieces from Baroque or Classical periods. Questions on musical features (tempo, meter, melodies, dynamics and instrumentation) encouraged directed listening and dialogue. Identification of instruments through pausing a performance at a 'solo' part, naming it, then replaying it. This was particularly useful with hearing individual woodwind, brass and percussion instruments.

The midway stages focused on listening to a diversity of works ranging from Baroque, Classical and also Romantic musical periods. Class-based discussion on comparing musical features and styles was encouraged. Listening also comprised of unknown works that aimed to stimulate aural awareness and critical listening.

The later stages combined the listening repertoire with written and aural skills. The learning outcomes aimed for students to be able to differentiate between the musical styles, to discuss instrumentation, themes and basic forms of set works. In the written examination, students wrote programme notes on two works of their choice from the listening parameter, reflecting knowledge of the composer and developments in a musical period. The outcome of the aural/listening was that students could identify set works when

played, giving the full title, composer and musical period of the work (Appendix C Allegro I aural exam paper).

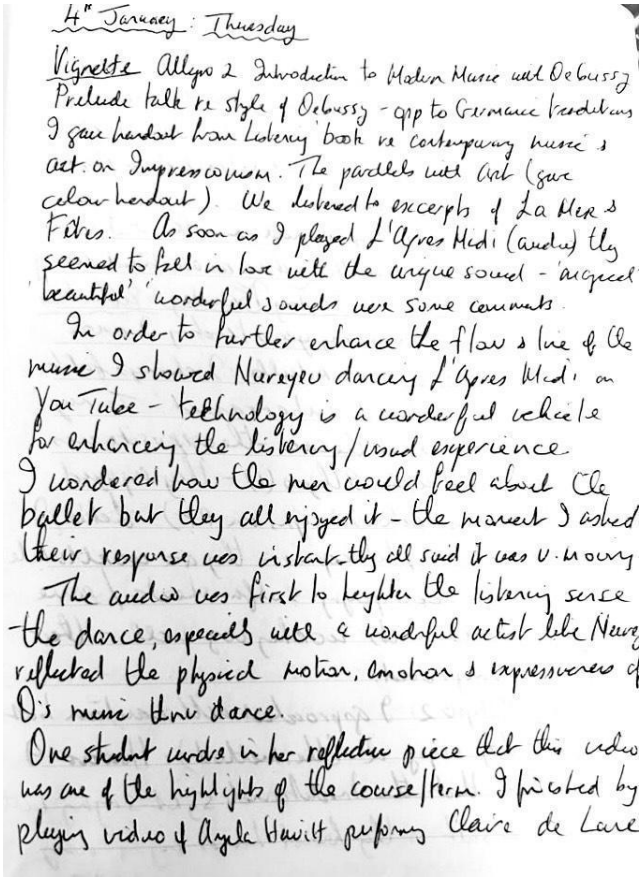
Allegro Two

The early stage ascertained the level of knowledge and listening experience of the group. Some had considerable knowledge based on reading, listening and attending concerts. The impressionist period was the starting point for this course, because its colour, harmonies and textures was less familiar to students and the objective was to appeal to their imagination. The introduction to impressionism opened up a new world of sound – an effective springboard for discussion about preferential styles of class members. The broader cultural context included developments in the world of art. Adults frequently visit galleries and museums when they travel abroad and this connectivity between art and music, at home and abroad, often evolved into a social discussion in class.

Midway stage was focused on twentieth century music. The approach was similar to the impressionism with score was presented digitally to combine listening and visual skills to enrich the learning experience. Technology supported the pedagogical approach, as reading from the screen, enhanced the process discussing orchestration, thematic development, texture and form, in contrast to getting the student getting lost with a hard-copied score. In this way, technology enhanced the learning process in aiming to make it more manageable and meaningful.

Later stage of learning offered an overview of the earlier musical periods. Discussions based on the five musical periods, famous composers, works and broad-based musical developments throughout formed the core of this parameter. The three stages of directed listening are reflective of the action research cycles in both programmes in 2012-2013.

The following extract was from my reflective journal which identifies the connectivity between the listening, history and analysis parameters for Allegro II (figure 5.35).



4th January: Thursday

Vignette Allegro 2 Introduction to Modern Music with Debussy
Prelude talk re style of Debussy - opp to Germanic traditions
I gave handout from Ledeney book re contemporary music & art on Impressionism. The parallels with Art (gave colour handout). We listened to excerpts of La Mer & Fêtes. As soon as I played L'Apres Midi (audio) they seemed to fall in love with the unique sound - 'magical' 'beautiful' 'wonderful sounds were some comments.
In order to further enhance the flow & line of the music I showed Nureyev dancing L'Apres Midi on You Tube - technology is a wonderful vehicle for enhancing the listening/visual experience.
I wondered how the men would feel about the ballet but they all enjoyed it - the moment I asked their response was instant - they all said it was v. moving.
The audio was first to heighten the listening sense - the dance, especially with a wonderful artist like Nureyev reflected the physical motion, emotion & expressiveness of D's music thru dance.
One student wrote in her reflective piece that this video was one of the highlights of the course/term. I finished by playing video of Angela Hewitt playing Claire de Lune

Figure 5.35. Extract from reflective journal Allegro II. Introduction to Modern Impressionism in music (2013).

Transcription: An introduction to modern music and Debussy. Short talk on Debussy's style and the Germanic traditions in Europe. I gave handout on 'contemporary music and art' (book chapter); handout was in colour to highlight the parallels with art and music in Impressionism. Class listened to excerpts from 'La Mer', 'Fetes' and L'Apres Midi d'une Faune and they seemed to fall in love with the sounds 'magical', 'beautiful', 'wonderful sounds' were amongst the responses.

In order to further enhance the flow and line in the music, Nureyev dancing to the work was shown on You Tube – technology is a wonderful vehicle for enhancing the listening experience. I wondered how the men would feel about the ballet, but they all enjoyed it. The audio was first to heighten the listening sense – the dance, especially with a wonderful artist like Nureyev, reflected the physical motion, emotion, and expression of Debussy's music through the body. I finished with Angela Hewett playing 'Claire de Lune'.

One student stated after the class 'this was one of the highlights of the course for me so far'. (January 2013).

Collective methodologies

The methodologies included formal, informal and self-directed learning, with the latter recognising the autonomy of adults to make creative choices in their learning. The informal was an important aspect adult learning; the teacher needed to assume the role of facilitator in order to give the optimum opportunity for student participation. The formal method offered insight into style, themes, instrumentation, texture, genre and mood of a piece of music. Baroque works were chosen at the start of term; the objective to choose short work could be played and discussed in its entirety. Musical excerpts were played from the Classical or Romantic periods before listening to entire works. Handouts of programme notes supported and enhanced the enjoyment of the work by broadening the knowledge about what inspired the composer, what influenced his compositions, followed by discussion of musical themes, instrumentation, orchestration and style.

Teaching adults and children what to listen for in music: contrasts and comparisons

There were significant differences in the pedagogical approach between children and adult classes. Concentration is always a significant factor with children, as depending on age, have considerably shorter concentration spans that adults. Age is an important consideration with children; as they mature their concentration levels become longer and are subject to the cognitive and musical ability of the child. Based on professional experience, listening for one or two minutes is adequate for very young children; longer pieces need to be more fun-based to sustain interest. Directed listening, where students are asked to listen to particular aspects of the music in advance of it being played, is essential for engagement in older children, in order to avoid boredom. Allegro beginners

engaged in similar directed listening to short pieces, but these were of longer durations than those played for children.

Children by nature have a vivid imaginations. Adults have a more intense approach to listening which does not necessarily diminish their enjoyment of music. Children, when asked questions about music played in class generally respond with spontaneity and eagerness to express themselves. In contrast, adults tend to have more reserved responses. From my experience of teaching all age groups, listening can be a very inspirational activity in both children and adults classes.

Language was a significant difference between teaching listening to adults and children. Teaching listening to children was different from adults as it was more activity-based. In contrast, adults embrace a more holistic approach to listening through reading about musical history and musical works, all of which supported their understanding and appreciation of listening. The data reflected that adults particularly enjoyed this parameter and embraced extra sources and resources to augment their knowledge. Children respond to listening intuitively and their responses are generally more spontaneous but the data here revealed that adults valued this parameter to expand their enjoyment and love of music. Listening is perceived as an enjoyment activity in children's classes, in contrast an the adult's more analytical approach. In terms of the differences between teaching listening to adults and children, the maturity of the Allegro participants offered a more thoughtful, appreciative and reflective response to music, that revealed a richness in terms of interest and insights; this was evidenced in the data (chapters three, six and seven).

The methodologies included formal and informal learning with the latter facilitating opportunity for discussion of musical works. A most significant difference between teaching children and adults was the ability of the latter to verbalise responses when listening. History in Allegro also encompassed other developments during a particular

musical period, namely historical, architectural, sociological and cultural. Supplemental references were given as an option for those who were interested in extra reading and research resources (chapter seven). The life experience and interests of the adult learner meant they had the capacity to embrace a broader palette when listening to music. Based on their prior knowledge combined with obtaining new learning, the Allegro programme (reflective of the behaviourist approach) endeavoured to give participants a sense of their own autonomy both personally and within the class (rooted in the constructivist approach). Attending concerts as an adult learning/social group enforced the idea of being part of a musical culture in the context of a social/situational orientation. The musical parameters in the programme alongside the orientations to learning come, according to this researcher, under the umbrella of transformative dimensions of learning (the data in chapter three identified these concepts and they will be discussed in further in chapters six and seven in relation to the ethnographic data).

The learning outcomes

The listening parameter opened up opportunities for self-expression in sharing musical ideas in an environment with like-minded people. The outcomes aimed to combine methods and artistic concepts to broaden the musical and cultural experiences of students. Informal class discussions were just as relevant as the curriculum content and it furthermore gave the teacher insights into how the group expressed their musical preferences and experiences. The listening parameter continuously evolved over the years and consequently, based on the sharing of ideas between the students and the teacher/facilitator both inside and outside the classroom, a consensus was sought to accommodate a selection of adults' musical preferences into the curriculum.

5.8.8 Score and Analysis

Listening, aural and theoretical were encompassed in this parameter. Score was studied intermittently for a duration of fifteen minutes for four-week periods. The pedagogical approach here was similar to the listening parameter. Initially a score was presented on You Tube or PowerPoint from which the teacher indicated the students how to read and follow the score. Music for shorter scores was distributed as handouts for Allegro I. Allegro II studied longer scores (movement from a quarter or symphony) from which they identified themes and other analytical aspects.

Allegro I

Class-based listening to short works improved listening and reading skills and included binary, ternary, rondo and variation forms. The aural/reading/listening activities of score reading included identification of tonic key signatures, time signatures, intervals, chords, cadences (full or half close) and dynamics.

Early stages of learning focused on Baroque style dances with emphasis on identifying musical features. Scores were single staves to facilitate ease in following the melodic line. Class activities sometimes included singing the main themes from the score.

Midway stage of learning progressed to an extract from a chamber score such as the second movement of Haydn's Emperor Quartet. Continuous monitoring in class, checking that each student could follow their own score and understand style and instrumentation was all part of the pedagogical process.

Later stage of learning involved more in-depth study of the full score with analysis of form, such as the third movement of Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik. Learning included identification of themes, intervals, chords and cadences, instrumentation, texture and form.

In the first cohort of action research with Allegro I students, involved a very basic introduction to score reading. This I cannot explain, except to mention that the attendance was inconsistent and the rate of learning was slower than I had anticipated. From 2014 onwards more score reading activities and based on my observations of students' enjoyment of score reading that it became part of the Allegro I curriculum. They found it both valuable and enjoyable as the interview data revealed (chapter six). I realised with hindsight that my misconceptions about score reading being too difficult at this level were mistaken and this parameter subsequently became a favourite on the Allegro I programme.

The learning outcomes

Students could present a written analysis of a section of this work was one of the key learning outcomes. In the aural examination, the learning outcomes involved identification of a section from the studied work and identification of themes. Questions on an unknown short score, played three times, aimed to assess the listening skill acquired on the programme (Appendix C, see Allegro I Aural Examination Paper for exam questions which reflect the proposed learning outcomes).

Allegro two

This parameter was relatively new to the majority of students, based on their prior musical experiences. Short scores were studied initially to ascertain students' level of musicianship. Two full scores, such as Mozart's Overture to the Marriage of Figaro or Tchaikovsky's Dance of the Swans, were listened to during the first semester to identify the general characteristics of the music, principal themes, modulations, chords, cadences, intervals, instrumentation, musical expression and form. In response to their expressed preferences, one work was chosen for more in-depth study for the remaining semesters.

The learning outcomes

Score reading is a very practical skill. It is a useful resource for adults to read and play in ensemble or sing in choir. These skills combined aural, listening, harmony and theoretical elements. Discussion in class about how and in what context, this area could prove resourceful for their musical participation while giving insight into its practical value (see Appendix C, Allegro II Aural exam paper, questions indicate the outcomes).

5.8.9 History

Every class throughout the programme included history and it also crossed into other parameters. Kodaly's contribution to music education and the significance of learning about Kodály's method to develop inner hearing through aural skills was included in this parameter. Harmony and figured bass were introduced from a historical evolution perspective. Score/analysis and the project could be synergised with the history parameter. Teaching methodology was the same in both programmes, the main differences were in curriculum content. Allegro II covered a broader spectrum of works and styles from Baroque to twentieth century. Allegro I introduced classical music to students and expanded their knowledge base in history through listening to works predominately from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods.

According to Seaton, music history ought to investigate musical experience and students need to transcend the notion of information-based learning to actual experience of musical engagement; 'students need to understand music as a living art; intended to carry meaningful ideas from active performers to active listeners in complex situations' (Seaton, 2010: 60). Listening to performances on You Tube and going to live concerts expanded and enriched students experiences of musical styles and history.

The history class began with an introduction to the topic followed by some discussion of the musical period and its composers. Handouts were distributed or emailed as PDFs in advance of the class as based on class conversations, many adults expressed a preference to know and read the literature in advance (chapters six and seven). Listening and observing performances on You Tube supports the literature and enhanced the enjoyment of history. The stages of learning below were broadly-based and the methodology was a mixture of formal and informal learning, and the teaching/learning process had an ebb and flow dimension. History combined with listening or score, lasted for a duration of 15-30 minutes, depending on the lesson content.

Early stage of learning

Both programmes commenced three general listening classes, followed by discussion of the styles and composers of the period. Allegro I focused on the styles of particular composers from the Baroque to Classical periods and Allegro II featured composers from later periods, their contemporaries and their role in musical development.

Mid-way stage of learning

Selected works and their composers were studied through listening and discussion in Allegro I. Composers from the musical periods were included in Allegro II to enrich students' knowledge and experience of the period. Historical developments, (such as the Industrial Revolution), artistic, cultural and sociological influences (the role of the piano in people's homes) were integrated into the history parameter.

Later stage of learning and learning outcomes

Allegro I students music from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods. The aims were that the student could name the principal composers from each period and develop

musical insight into some of the main musical developments in various genres. In conjunction with these three periods the curriculum for Allegro II extended to the Impressionist and modern periods. Students gained knowledge of how the periods evolved, their composers, contemporaries and developments in specific areas, including opera, the symphony and the concerto. A more detailed understanding of styles and genres was expected at this level.

The differences between teaching history to adults and children

A significant difference between teaching history to adults and children lies primarily in the volume of content. Adults can evaluate formal information and generally are more motivated to source extra recommended literature and resources. Maturity is the key difference. Electronic media is now part of our world as it challenges musical experiences and musical learning into the future (chapter seven). Seaton suggests rather than teaching music history comprehensively, to ask challenging questions such as 'why did a Russian ballet company want to leave Russia in the early twentieth century? (Ibid., 2010: 62-63) is more preferable. The history parameter in the Allegro class was closer to a lecture than the class teaching approach for children. As Seaton proposed the former facilitated discussion which motivated students and enriched the learning. Life experiences was a significant contributory factor amongst adults as they shared musical opinions from past and present with their like-minded peers.

The history parameter was often sourced as a research base by students for their project. Others chose topics that were influenced by their personal prior musical experiences – genres that they enjoyed in everyday life and now welcomed the opportunity to research the area and gain credits for their work. The value of going to concerts and experiencing live music created another platform for shared their ideas outside the classroom and this gave some students inspiration for their research project (chapter six).

5.8.10 Research Project

The significance of this parameter was to acknowledge and respect the autonomy of the adult learner in making personal learning choices. It encompassed several of the learning theories outlined earlier notably constructivism wherein they would construct their own project (chapter three). In this process, the person was enabled to construct meaning from both their life and musical experiences. This was reflective in the data (chapters three, six and seven) and it was also investigated from the perspectives of international research on the value of music participation in adulthood (chapter two). The research project offered the adult student complete autonomy in choosing their own topic, deciding on their research process (guidance was always made available by the teacher), investigating possible sources (literature, websites, graphics or others) and ultimately writing on their preferred topic. Humanism was at the core of this parameter as, despite the workload it entailed, the student had a real sense of accomplishment and a greater sense of embracing an exciting new musical culture in the form of completing a research topic of their personal choice.

Rationale

Identifying this as a separate parameter may be questioned or criticised for not being included in either the history or listening parameters. This was an exercise in making musical choices about a topic to research and write; its value was to recognise and acknowledge the individual's musical tastes prior to Allegro. The choice of topic was not necessarily related to the history parameter and many of the projects over the years have been based on other genres ranging from the history of jazz, modes in music, the development of the piano, the history of choral music to the music of Abba and Leonard Bernstein. Many students chose their topic from the listening and history parameters.

Alternatively a list of suggested topics was provided for those who preferred a more guided approach, but the choice factor was encouraged. The thinking behind its separateness became clear in the first two years of the programme. Many students spoke of the difficulties they experienced doing the project, necessitating the teacher to review the methodology, the outcome of which was that students required a more comprehensive overview of the writing aspects of the project. The writing style was non-academic but structure and layout challenged some students in terms of expressing their thoughts and compiling the project.

Preconceived assumptions by this teacher that the adult music student's primary concern would be choosing a topic and researching it had resulted in students often struggling with this task in the earlier years. The basis for this assumption was that the majority of participants had very good educational backgrounds, good jobs, many were professional, including retired professionals and would subsequently be able to undertake it without requiring too much direction or interference. This misjudgement was a learning curve for me as both teacher and researcher. One student, an English teacher, confided to me that although she taught students how to write essays, she herself had not written one in over twenty years. The culmination of these issues was a change in the teaching/learning process that resulted in the process being more teacher-led, offering greater support and guidance when required by students.

Process

The project was introduced towards the end of semester one to afford students the time to decide on a topic. Allegro I had a suggested word count of not less than 1200 words and Allegro II, not less than 2000 words. Although no footnotes were required, a short bibliography and/or webography were part of the criteria. Submissions were due towards the end of the academic year on a mutually agreed date. Students were at liberty to discuss

their choices with the teacher on a one-to-one basis, some needed help with content, some were seeking assistance on the next step while others required help with the overall structure. There were those who were content to work alone. Everyone choose their own pathway.

The task of working on the project was often raised by students at different stages throughout the year and the teacher would facilitate a question and answer forum, thus enabling them to express and share their views or concerns. The project was specifically suited to the adult learner as it gave them scope and autonomy to make musical choices, to research and to write. Despite the concerns expressed by students, the majority felt they gained a lot musically, educationally, and on a personal level it gave them a sense of achievement. It was an integral component on both programmes with a credit of 10% in the overall marking.

The stages of learning were not relevant to the project parameter as it is more a self-directed learning process. Encouragement and direction were available, as stated above, but the nature of the tasks highlighted its specific relevance to adult learning. Students were given an eighteen-week period to complete the project, hence making it an important part of their ongoing musical experiences throughout the programme.

5.8.11 Assessment

Lane states that music education for adults is in its 'relative infancy' as a formal field of study and hence there is understandably a lack of information about assessment in adult music learning contexts ((Lane, 2019: 722). The newness of CPD programmes for external music students in the Conservatoire made the decisions that underpinned assessment for Allegro a challenge for the author. Based on my professional experience of teaching adults a combination of continuous assessment and examinations was the most holistic assessment criteria. A detailed analysis of the assessment process for both

programmes was submitted approved by the college academic boards. The emphasis on continuous assessment gave adults the opportunity to continuously discover their musical capabilities through a series of progressive stages of learning in each parameter. Findings from the data reflected how adults valued this approach, many stated it gave them the confidence to enter the examination hall for the written exams (chapter six). They had developed an insight into their own musical capabilities. Aural exams were more informal and all performance areas were on a one-to-one basis with the teacher. The general listening questions on recognition of musical works and analysis were carried out in a class-based environment, post the individual performances at the same exam period.

5.9 Differences between learning in childhood and adulthood

Formal and informal learning have been discussed earlier and Green describes the two forms as 'extremes existing at two ends of a single pole' (Green, 2002: 6). There is another descriptor, 'nonformal' that Coffman (2002) links with the other two in relation to adult music education. Although nonformal is similar to formal in being 'both systematic and deliberate' for in-class learning, nonformal practices occur outside educational structures and are more responsive to a specific social action (Coffman, 2002: 200). Formal, informal and nonformal practices in lifelong music learning, intertwine, overlap, and/or may be on a continuum (Veblen, 2012: 246) which that formed a unique tapestry in the Allegro programmes. Meetings for masterclasses or concerts embodied the nonformal learning to enrich listening and musical social encounters.

Discussions relating to these contrasts between adult and child learning have outlined earlier specifically relating to each parameter. It seems pertinent at this point to augment the argument by identifying some of the broad-based differences in learning, not solely within music education but also in the field adult education. Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2007) point out that the configuration of the context, learner and process

make learning in childhood and learning in adulthood distinct in a number of ways: the learner, the context and the learning process (cited in Roulston, 2010: 344).

The Learner

The adult learner has a lifetime of experiences that informs their learning, in contrast to children whose learning experiences are frequently new due to their youth. The field of psychology identifies different life stages faced by children (trust, autonomy, initiative, industry and identity), as opposed to adults (intimacy, generativity and integrity) (Merriam et al., 2007: 423-426). Their research further identifies life events that characterise adulthood, such as divorce, career, marriage or retirement. Such life events were relevant to Allegro students but were not necessarily known to the teacher.

In the learning context teachers can capitalise on the adult learners' prior experience'. This awareness was essential when teaching Allegro; what Harris terms 'honing the antenna' by being watchful and attentive to student's responses in an empowering, non-controlling and non-judgmental way (Harris, 2014: 15; 60). Adults often aimed to discreetly seek attention, perhaps catching the teacher's eye, with a view to indicating they were unable to grasp a meaning. In general, adults dislike asking too many questions in class for fear of being the only person who doesn't understand what's being taught (chapter seven). Based on my experience of teaching children they generally have less reservations as they are used to asking questions and asking for help. Reflecting on my observations of music classes revealed that questioning was a generational issue for adults.

The context of learning

In contrast to young learners, adults are more independent learners and are not dependent on others to present them with opportunities to learn. Adults can make informed choices

as to what courses they will undertake or what preferences they have in terms of learning an instrument. In contrast to children, who engage in compulsory musical activities, adults can 'shop around' and engage in educational opportunities voluntarily (Ibid: 345) (chapter two). They are effectively self-directed learners and make informed choices for what they need or want to learn (Merriam et al: 427-431). Children by nature are dependent unlike the adult who engages in musical learning while also juggling work, family and the community. Although the learning context in Allegro was formal, it had informal connotations outside the classroom in creating informal events with friends, family and community.

The learning process

The learning process embodies the physiological changes that occur during adulthood, such as deterioration in hearing or sight. Adult music educators and researchers indicate adults' resilience in adapting to such life changes, for example accessing enlarged music scores or being placed in close proximity for hearing issues (Roulston: 345). From this teacher's perspective, the opportunity for self-directed learning and autonomy must be rooted in the teaching process in order to enrich the learning process.

Perspectives on teaching in action research

Acknowledging the three concepts above, learner, context and learning process, this teacher believes that another concept could be added at this point, namely the teaching processes involved in action research methodology. An example of teaching collaborative class composition being integrated into the cyclical nature of this method is presented below. Collaborative composition involves a class-based effort at composing an eight-bar melody through singing. Firstly, two bars were given to indicate the opening style which the class sings three times. Volunteers sang (or suggested) the next bar or two in

solfa which the teacher wrote on the whiteboard for all to sing. Other suggestions were considered for inclusion and performed for the class to choose which one they considered to be the best option. The same process was repeated until the full eight bars were composed and performed. This collaborative effort gave insight into how to compose by encompassing aural, listening, theoretical (time and key), performance and choices for musical expression. Throughout the activity each element was performed and the diagram below (based on Elliott's model) illustrates the cyclical integration of action research with collaborative composition (figure 5.36).

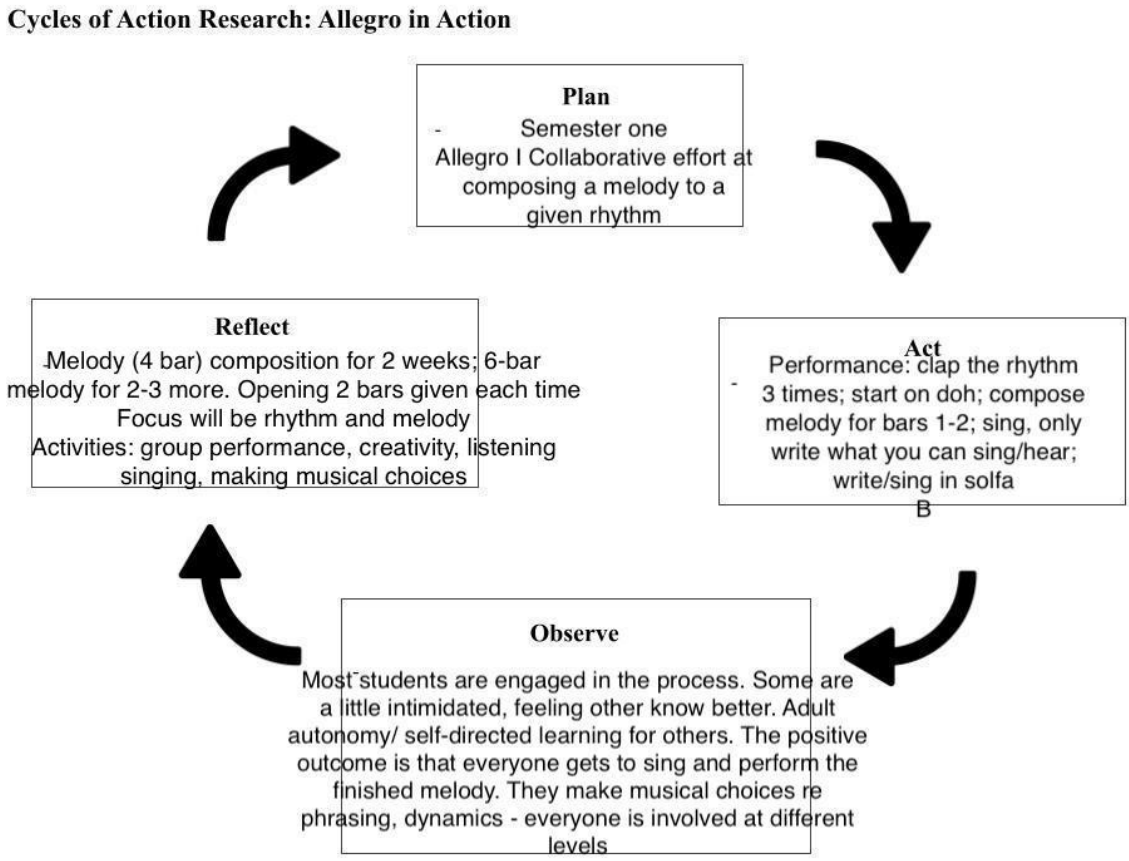


Figure 5.36. Second cycle teaching collaborative composition in action research

The Allegro I and II programmes were monitored over three semesters. This was further supported by the inclusion of extracts from the Allegro action research time-table in the second cycle of learning (figure 5.37) and from my reflective journal (figure 5.38).

Timetable of Allegro Action Research

Curriculum Content	*Activity*	*Monitoring*	*Comments*
RHYTHM/ SINGING CYCLE NO.2	Solo performance; Group performance; Instrumental on percussion. Kinaesthetic engagement: demonstrating meter. Singing in groups, echo and reading.	2nd Cycle: Class becoming more proficient in group singing. Gabrielle and Arthur are hesitant with rhythm and are finding playing a challenge. Most of the group are more at ease singing. It is more natural and less visible than rhythmic activities.	Need to slow down the pace a little for the rhythm. Singing is going well. The group participation is providing good support for those who are less confident – that fine, as they just need to feel comfortable in the group.
General Plan	Encourage participation and get the group to relax and enjoy their learning. Some discussion about difficulties	I will open up a discussion on the difficulties some are experiencing – will encourage students to share their individual experiences	No need to emphasise mistakes; for now, I am overlooking these issues; my main focus is to foster confidence in performance
Developing Action Steps	More teacher demonstration of percussion playing. Singing in smaller groups	Assist individuals in playing the percussion; some feeling rather rigid which is impeding their playing.	More handouts on exercises to practice at home. Prepared excerpts will be performed next week

Implementing Action Steps	Very basic two-part rhythms Singing accompanied on percussion – basic ostinato	Encourage independence from me so they will feel a sense of musical competence	Preparing the exercises should instil confidence, resulting in greater fluency in both activities.
Outcomes	The outcomes tend to be ebb and flow by nature; prepared work proficient overall; reflects the progressive steps for the next cycle. Outcomes positive overall.	Monitoring has been successful, although there are always some concerns – it's a process, rather than an outcome. The latter is to strive for fluency.	Definite improvement all round. Class discussions and shared experiences during the activities has abated some of the nervousness.

Figure 5.37. A sample of the second cycle of learning (Modification of Elliott's model 1990).

Below is a hand-written example from the researcher's reflective journal. The first cohort for taking Allegro I were very inconsistent with the learning, despite their enthusiasm for the programme, some were casual about practicing at home. Consequently progress in the performance was slow. Motivation was, in fairness, influenced by administration issues regarding costs. This was outside everybody's control.[51] The journal extract below outlines my concerns at the time; it dates from the start of second semester (2013); its

[51] The college couldn't agree on a fee; a capitation fee had been added to the advertised fee, which made the cost very expensive, and thus, impacted significantly on the stability of the course starting. Interestingly, this issue did not affect the Allegro II students. On a positive note, it was eventually resolved for the benefit of all concerned.

inclusion is to indicate the impact these administrative issues had on the Allegro I students' stability to stay on the programme.

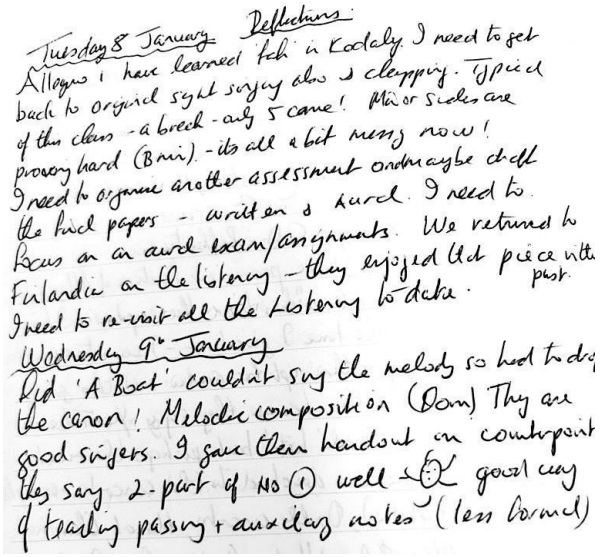

Tuesday 8 January Reflections:
Allegro I have learned 'fah' in Kodaly. I need to get back to organised sight singing also a clapping. Typical of this class - a break - only 5 came! Minor scales are proving hard (B min) - its all a bit messy now! I need to organise another assessment and maybe draft the written and aural papers for the exams and work towards these. Mostly I need to focus on an aural exam/assignments. We returned to Finlandia on the listening - they enjoyed that piece with past. I need to re-visit all the Listening to date.
Wednesday 9th January
Did 'A Boat' couldn't sing the melody so had to do the canon! Melodic composition (Dom) They are good singers. I gave them handout on counterpoint they sang 2-part of No (1) well + :D good way of teaching passing + auxiliary notes (less formal)

Figure 5.38. Journal extract

See transcript below.

Transcription: Allegro I students have learned 'fah' (Kodály handsigns). I need to get back to the more conventional sight singing, echo singing and clapping. Typical of this class, only five have attended after the Christmas break. Minor scales are proving difficult (b minor) – it's all a bit messy now (too inconsistent). I need to organise another assessment and maybe draft the written and aural paper for the exams and work towards these. Mostly I need to focus on the aural assignments. We returned to listening to Finlandia – they enjoyed that in the past term. I will also review the listening to date (8th January, 2013).

Allegro II They had prepared the song 'A Boat', but couldn't sing it (maybe due to Christmas break). We sang canons instead just to get singing again. They are strong singers – I gave them handouts on two-part singing and they performed well – this is also a good way of teaching passing and auxiliary notes in a less formal context (9th January, 2013).

The journal extract below outlines my reflections on the aural and listening parameters in Allegro II (figure 5.38: 23rd January 2013).

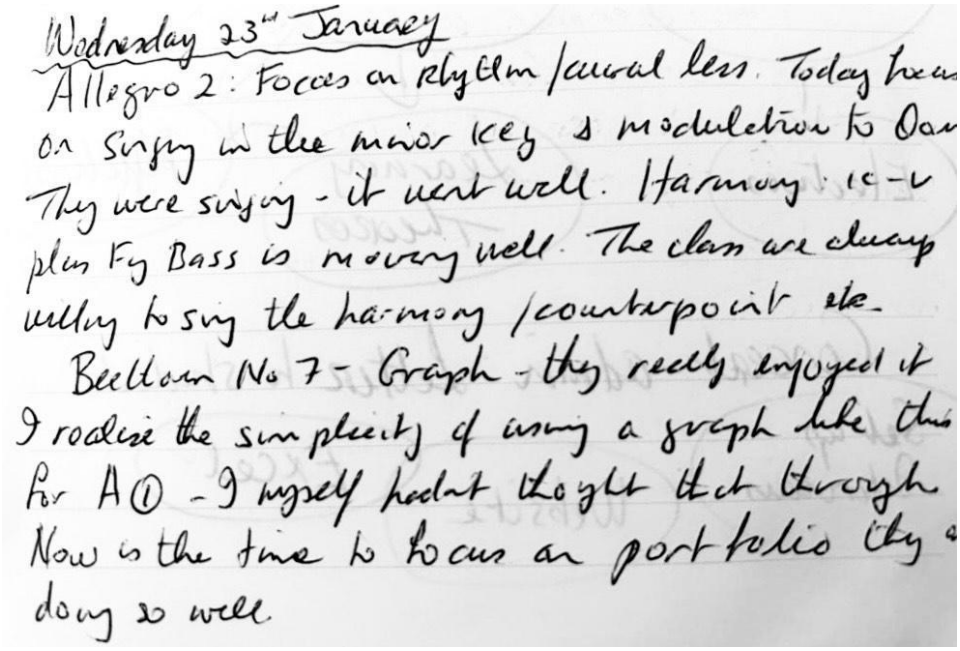


Figure 5.39. Journal extract. Reflections on progress in Allegro II (2nd semester).

See transcription below.

Transcription: Focus on rhythm less in the aural area; today's focus was on singing in the minor key and also extracts with modulation to the dominant key. Their singing was very good. Harmony and figured bass are making progress as the class are always willing to sing the parts in harmony and counterpoint. Beethoven's Symphony No. 7: listened to the second movement with a visual graph on YouTube. They really enjoyed this approach. I realised the simplicity of using a graph like this for Allegro I, but I hadn't thought it through in terms of its value for Allegro II. Now that they are doing so well, I will focus on the portfolios for the next class.

5.10 Findings from the action research project

In the summer schools the loosely-structured questionnaires were completed anonymously although some people included their names. The feedback from the data revealed that participants enjoyed the diversity in the week-end programme and the concert at the National Concert Hall was described as a special event for everyone.

Regarding the actual Allegro for Adults programme, the Allegro II students were very committed and had very good musical backgrounds. Their motivation was commendable.

They completed all aspects of the programme and the assessments to a very high standard. That particular year was very intensive in terms of the learning, the curriculum content, continuous assessments, portfolio, project and examinations in both written and aural. The composition included chorale style harmony, 12-bar melodic composition with modulation, two-part counterpoint and piano accompaniment. This was the only cohort who excelled to these standards during the decade but they were the only cohort who entered the programme with very good standards of music learning. Despite their previous musical knowledge none had completed an intense programme like Allegro in terms of its breadth of musical parameters. The aural components were a new experience for all the participants, singing songs with modulation and composing with modulation were all newly acquired creative skills.

The Allegro I cohort lost numbers during the year for various reasons including financial issues, grief, demands of work and family. Those who completed the programme achieved very good standards in aural performance, notation and literacy, composition (rhythm and aural) and they augmented their listening repertoire beyond the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods to some twentieth-century works. They had minimal or no experience of aural performance, but all completed the programme succeeded well in the continuous assessments and the final examinations.

5.11 Conclusion

International research, as investigated in chapter two, indicates that older adults continuously seek opportunities for engagement in music learning experiences (Lane, 2019). This chapter identified the role of formal class-based music education for adults by presenting the rationale and philosophy for the Allegro for Adults I and II programmes, the methodological and pedagogical approach, the learning outcomes and assessment criterion. The stages of learning in each parameter were outlined and the differences

between teaching adults and children in every context was presented, as these findings partly formed of the core of this research. The concept of a specifically designed progressive course, that encompassed the musical parameters recognised by experts in the field of music education and in international conservatoires of music, had aimed to broaden the knowledge and experience of music for adult learners.

The combination of the learner, context of learning, the learning process and the teaching process were intertwined in this chapter throughout the two methodologies, action research and ethnographic research. Both examined the musical parameters presented in the action research (2012-2013) and both had similar processes of data collection. Chapter six will present ethnographies of adult music learners and, in many respects, this also relates to the action research cohort as they, similar to other later cohorts, wrote reflections, completed questionnaires and participated in interviews. Ethnography offered an ease of access across the collected data, giving cohesion in presenting and interpreting it across the two methodologies.

The value of participation, the musical experiences, the opportunities for creativity, and the insights into what to listen for in music were equally, if not more valuable than some of the cognitive skills acquired on the programme. These involved the learner's autonomy for self-directed learning, thus enabling the individual to carry the outcomes acquired inside the classroom, to outside the classroom and into their future lives. Such values are intrinsic and contributed to the ultimate aim of the Allegro programme.

CHAPTER SIX

Ethnographies of Adult Music Learners

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the ethnographical methodology, the positionality of the researcher, the data collection and the interview processes that were employed for this research. Profiles of students in terms of age, gender and lifestyles are presented demographically. There is some discussion on the dichotomy between scholarship and practice in the field of adult music education. Themes that emerged from the data were informed by the researcher's interpretation of the interviews, questionnaires, reflective writings and ethnographies of participants. An overview of these themes is presented below:

Themes from the Research

- *Motivation: 'why music?'* was based on the person's love of music as a means of enriching their quality of life.
- *Embracing a new role in life:* by becoming a music learner in a university
- *Learning about music:* primarily influenced by adults' prior musical experiences that result in a need to learn the language of music and how it is put together. This learning can ultimately broaden an adult's current musical knowledge base through participation in educational musical activities.
- *Expanding social networks:* by expanding social life from a dual perspective of both inside and outside the classroom. Social circles grew

as past Allegro students met in casual settings where friendships developed, in such contexts as meeting for a coffee before or after a class or by attending concerts with an Allegro group to share their love of music. The aim for the latter was the bringing together of like-minded adults to enjoy the experience of live performance.

- *New directions and insights*: included musical learning, participation in group performance, sharing life and musical ideas with like-minded people; the culmination of which expanded thinking and developed self-competence in engaging with music. Self-knowledge is valuable as it fosters confidence to embark on new musical activities outside the learning environment. Data indicated that on completion of the programme approximately 60% embarked on learning a musical instrument which, from this researcher's perspective, is a positive outcome to their Allegro experience, as it paved the way for new musical pathways into their futures.

These five themes are reflective of the five themes in the data findings in chapter three which at that time, focused on interviews from the first cohort of students. These interviewees had participated in the action research methodology. The table below indicates the strong similarities in the five themes that emerged from the two methodologies: action research and ethnographic methodology

THEMES	ACTION RESEARCH	ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODOLOGY
THEME 1	Commitment	Motivation
THEME 2	Enjoyment	Embracing a new role in life
THEME 3	A desire to learn	Learning about music
THEME 4	Musical Identity	Expanding social networks
THEME 5	Social engagement	New directions and insights

Comparative overview of the emergent themes from the two methodologies

Although the order of themes may differ the ethos remains the same. The first theme is centred on the concepts of motivation and commitment which are interdependent in that, being motivated to do something necessitates a commitment to follow it through. The second theme suggests the pursuit a new role in life which often includes enjoyment - the person wanting to enrich their life. The love of music and love of learning define the third theme in both methodologies. A desire to learn may be linked to seeking competency-based education and is an example of the behaviourist approach. Theme four, musical identity suggests personal and social identities or the personal in the context of the social. Holistically developing a personal musical identity can lead the person to expand their social networks. The fourth and fifth themes in both methodologies are interconnected as musical identity, social networking and social engagement are rooted in the

social/situational orientation in the constructivist theory. A new dimension emerged from the fifth theme in the ethnographic methodology which this researcher believes reflects a shift in adults seeking musical participation. This shift underpins a changing attitude amongst adults who, based on the ethnographic data, are actively negotiating changes in their quality of life through participation in music, learning, artistic pursuits, social networking and achieving their music education goals. All these concepts cumulatively embrace constructivism theory as the individual develops the capacity to rely on their own constructs for the personal goals they choose to pursue (Fenwick, 2001).

Aside from the fifth theme in the ethnographic methodology, the themes here resonated with the themes from chapter three. These themes were collectively informed by the orientations to learning theories; constructivism, behaviourism, cognitivist and humanism (Merriam et al.). Cumulatively they contribute to the development of, what Jarvis terms the 'whole person' (Jarvis). Chapter eight will recapitulate on the overall findings through the combination of the two methodologies.

6.2 Positionality of the researcher in ethnographic methodology

The roles of researcher and teacher in the context of ethnographic methodology provide a sound foundation in the context of adult learning. Sirek describes the value of ethnography thus,

> Engaging in ethnography can give teachers the data to enable educational contexts in which student voice and experience is primary, learning is contextual, and students' musical and learning interests are privileged even if the teacher is not "expert" in a particular genre or learning style (Sirek, 2016: 18).

The adult music learning context of Allegro concurs with Sirek's research. Respect for adult autonomy is fundamental in the classroom, while interactive engagement with musical activities and curriculum enriches the contextual nature of the learning. The

ethnographic methodologies outlined by Sirek informed teaching practice, but they can also be employed in the context of reflection, also in the presentation and analysis of the data wherein the role of this researcher was participant-observer. Sirek identifies three areas in this role: observation, interviewing, and participant observation, which are outlined below:

1. *Observation:* This was not definitively applicable to the ethnographic approach for this study as teaching was the main task. Observation of the group was more like a subsidiary element; for example, their discussion about what music they liked or their shared past experiences was not merely observed but reciprocated by this researcher in sharing her ideas with the group. The process of open discussion had an informal approach, similar to an ebb and flow of shared ideas and experiences.
2. *Interviewing:* Semi-structured interviews offered insight into students' views on the curriculum and the teaching and learning style of the programme, which in turn informed the researcher of modifications that may have needed consideration or modification in the future. Reflective writings combined with interviews were designed to give the adult a voice that they may not otherwise have had in a class environment. Sirek offers a range of questions that this methodology may address, such as 'What are our students' ideas, perceptions and goals? What do they want to learn (music and otherwise)? What teaching works best for them? What curricula are meaningful for them? (Ibid: 18). The data from this work – reflective writings, questionnaires and interviews - encompassed these questions and the findings presented valuable insight into the adult music learner's thinking.
3. *Participant observation:* In this context the researcher maintained a dual membership role of observer and participant in the group. The intimacy of the

music classroom facilitated open discussion, people were more willing to share experiences within a smaller group. Part of the contextual ethos was getting to know the researcher in ways that would be less likely in a bigger setting. Relationships were also impacted by the contextual nature of the programme where exchange of ideas could be expressed not only inside the classroom and also outside at musical events; the teacher was present in both scenarios.

Interviewing and participant observation were the two methods employed. During the process of researching ethnography, the value of reflective narratives greatly influenced the choice of using ethnographic methodology as a means of interpreting the data and encapsulating musical developments in the programme throughout the decade 2012-2022. The research methodologies for ethnography and action research are very similar particularly in respect of data collection – interviews, reflective writings and questionnaires. These similarities were discussed previously where the complementary nature of action research into ethnographic research were examined (chapter three). Combining the two methodologies proved to be a perfect 'fit' for the ten-year timescale of this project. This combination of the two methodologies facilitated the opportunity to synergise the decade and endeavoured to bring cohesion to the work.

6.3 Data collection

The data included forty-one interviews that were conducted over the decade and interviewees were all participants from the Allegro I and Allegro II programmes. Approximately ninety percent wrote reflective narratives which were largely autobiographical in nature. Questionnaires were completed at the start of each academic year by all students. Interviews were conducted at the end of the academic year and

reflective writings were submitted at that time. Reflections of the researcher formed part of the findings from both action-research and ethnographic perspectives.

6.4 The Interview Process

The interview process was carried out in two stages and involved two cohorts of participants. Critical consideration was given to ensure the most authentic method for presentation. For clarification purposes, two cohorts were combined to form groups one from the initial and interim periods of 2012-2013 with 2014-2019. were all pre-pandemic Students who participated during and post Covid-19 (2020-2022) formed group two (teaching and learning during the pandemic will be discussed in chapter seven). Despite the gap in the actual research process in group one, I continued to teach Allegro[52]. During this period a percentage of participants expressed their desire to be part of the research project and their data is also included. It must be stated at this point, that the numbers of students recorded as attending the programme does not reflect the actual numbers over the decade as not everyone volunteered. The data collection and findings herein are strictly confined to those who participated in the research. To summarise the groups:

The first cohort (2012-2019) are identified as Group I (pre-pandemic)

The second cohort (2020-2022) are identified Group II (post-pandemic)

The rigour of the research re-commenced in 2019 with all participants being included in the data. The outcome resulted in two sets of interviews, carried out in two stages:

[52] All students who came on the programmes were informed of the research area, to promote adult music education in the university's Conservatoire. They were informed of the original Allegro cohort (action research 2012-2013) and the interviews and reflective writings that students contributed. This influenced others to volunteer for interviews and write their personal reflections. From the researcher's perspective, this was a welcome development as it was imperative to gather as much data as possible for future research as a means of contributing to adult music education in general. All the data remained confidential in the researcher's possession. All interviewees signed a consent form.

1. Participants from the initial cohort (2012-2013) were interviewed at which point the methodology was action-research. Although the teaching continued the outcome of this gap in research remained unresolved for the next period.
2. During the years 2014-2019 the programmes continued to be taught by the researcher. Data was collected on a voluntary basis (as stated above).
3. Re-commencement of data collection continued during the academic years 2019-2021. The data was rooted in the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on music education. Interview questions were based on the challenges of online learning for adult music learners on the programme.

In order to facilitate closure on the research, the two programmes were taught and researched from 2021-2022. The interview content was reflective of the educational changes that had occurred over the ten-year period [53]. Questions were influenced by more recent and diverse literature on the wide-ranging values of participation in music education as an integral part of the lifespan, plus the relevance of music education for adults in society. [54] Charts below present a profile of the age groups and working lifestyles of all Allegro students who completed the programmes and participated in the research (figures 6.1 and 6.2).

[53] All participants who engaged in the research completed a consent form (see appendix A).

[54] Data from the six-week pilot study was also a part of the concluding process from two standpoints; firstly, to investigate adults' musical and personal experiences of the study, and secondly, to investigate its possibilities for future modular-style programmes in the field.

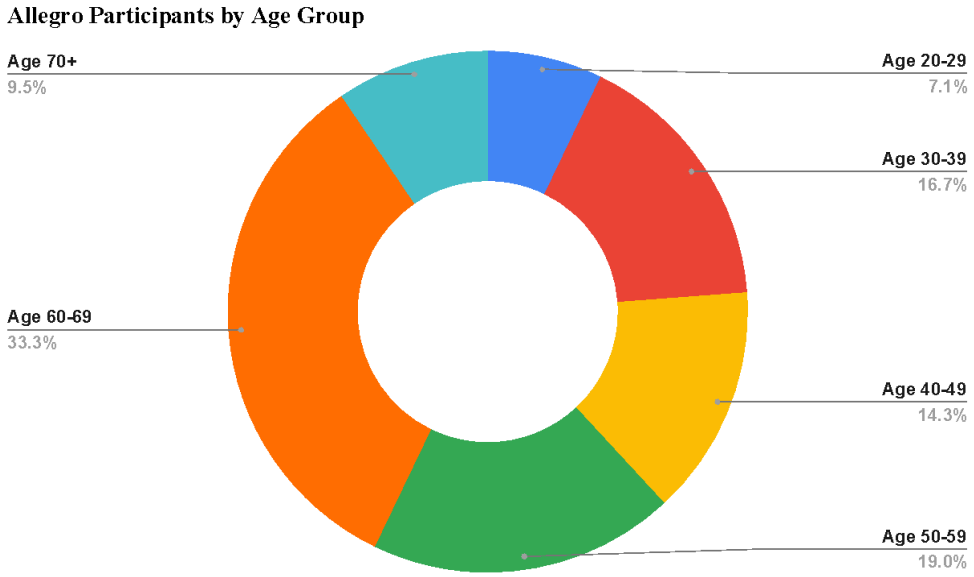


Figure 6.1. Profile of Allegro participants by age

Profile of Participants working lifestyles

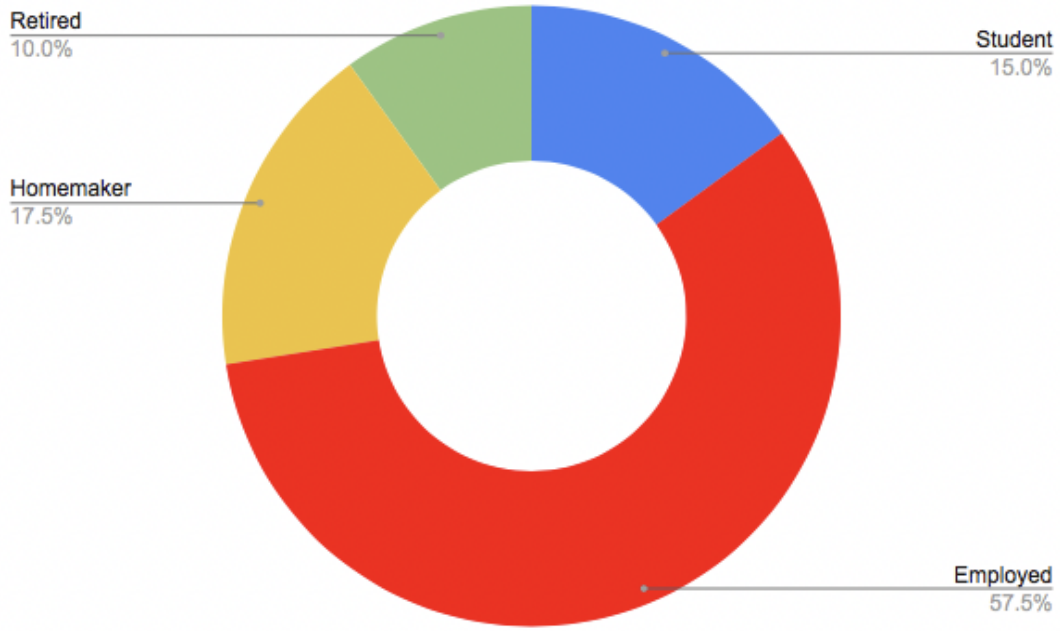


Figure 6.2 Profile of Allegro students working lifestyles

6.5 Process of Analysis

Themes were derived from the interview questions and reflective narratives. There was some overlap of questions from stages one and three, notably regarding motivation, learning experiences, sociological and psychological concepts and also participants' perspectives on the Allegro programmes. Questions concerning the challenges of online learning during the pandemic was informed by the data and offered valuable insights into the musical and personal values of participants. The purpose of the narratives was to present a holistic overview of the intrinsic and extrinsic value of music education for adult learners.

The influences of childhood are closely intertwined with adulthood and encouragement by the teacher (or lack of) can continue to impact into adulthood. Green (2012) identifies the need to investigate this through defining and interpreting adults' musical life histories. Themes from this data reflect the impact of music education on those who learned as children. Ethnographies in this chapter resonate with Green's view that experiences of education, life ambitions and social values – as well as their genetic material – shape children's expectations of school and teachers, all of which continues into adulthood. The findings in the data here concur with Green in respect of impact,

> the same children will look back on their school years with a mixture of gratitude, blame, or indifference, interpreting the intentions of their teachers, the attitudes of their peers, and their own behaviour in ways that make sense of their adult identities and destinations (Green, 2012: 4).

Approximately ninety percent of Allegro participants reflected on their childhood in the context of how they came to value music in adulthood. Julie, whose mother was a musician, loved music in school and played in the orchestra. Killian, Bryan, Hannah, Jack and Bill all loved music as children, learning informally from other family members which destined them to play in groups throughout adolescence and they have continued

playing into adulthood. They all stated their reasons for joining Allegro was to increase their formal learning and to engage with other music lovers. Margo was deprived of learning music despite her older siblings being sent to music lessons. She explains 'because I was the youngest, my parents were tired. I never really forgave them for not giving me the chance'. The data and supporting literature in this research revealed that opportunities given in childhood impacted on the choices made later in life.

6.5.1 Dichotomy between scholarship and practice.

Philosophical thinking regarding the curriculum, the role of the teacher and the value of what has been learned in school has been the basis of much discussion. In the United States, Reimer was critical of the skill-based instrumental training required to play in bands because such children approach adulthood with 'meagre musical sensitivity to the nature of the art in which they had been engaged'; this approach was mechanically orientated (Reimer, 1989: 183). Elliott (1995) is also critical of these traditional methods of training in pursuit of musical ends. Green identifies a similar dichotomy, saying philosophical theorising is relatively rare; she cites Swanwick's work (1979, 1999) as the exception rather than the norm. These debates are, in themselves, a philosophical act (Green: 21) as research tends to focus on reflective experiences of classroom practice.

According to Jorgensen, 'the philosopher's crucial role is in clarifying ideas and practices, interrogating commonplaces and suggesting applications to practice' (Jorgensen, 2003a: 212); this researcher identified with this philosophy for Allegro. I would concur with Elliott's philosophy (2005) that embraces the role of the teacher as both philosopher and practitioner, taking up a dual role of musicianship and educatorship. Lecturing on the philosophy of music education module on the B. Mus degree over the years, I witnessed a shift in the roles of lecturer and student as the autonomy of the undergraduates was acknowledged by encouraging them to make informed philosophical

and pedagogical choices based on the knowledge they acquired on the module[55]. The outcomes of the process endeavoured to empower them to create their own individual philosophy of music education for their future teaching careers. The concept of autonomy equally applies to these young adults, as to older adults, and from this perspective both come under the umbrella of adult music education philosophy and practice.

Teachers have a significant impact not on the student's sense of self-worth and confidence in childhood but the role of the teacher is crucial in how attitudes, behaviours and values are carried from childhood into adulthood (Green, 2012; Jorgensen, 2003a). Based on case studies of life histories of respondents' experiences Pitts' findings highlight 'how far the teacher's role goes beyond the demonstrations or imparting of music skills' (Pitts, 2005: 91). Similarly, Jorgensen acknowledges the critical role of the teacher and maintains that the teacher brings their own set of values and judgements into the classroom which directly impacts on students. I was aware of imposing my values and preferences on the adult groups and therefore identify with Jorgensen on this issue. She presents a cautionary note, adding that teachers need to cultivate qualities of tact and compassion, with a reminder that,

> Learning to teach well is a life-long process and we improve as we gradually construct the beliefs, habits, dispositions, skills, and practices that together comprise our teaching selves' (Jorgensen, 2008: 55. cited in Green, 2012: 91-92).

Throughout my teaching career, I have taught students of all age groups ranging from four to eighty year olds, and upon reflection of my own teaching approach, it is my belief that the teacher should engage the same compassion and tact to all students, regardless of age. Adults often harbour reservations about teachers and learning and Harry (aged 40s) and Alex (aged 50s) experiences support this finding[56] . Harry had a fear of being asked

[55] B.Mus. Bachelor of Music Degree

[56] It is a deliberate intention not to disclose actual ages, as despite the use of pseudonyms, I wish to ensure absolute confidentiality.

a question that he couldn't answer and at the end of the first semester of Allegro I he confided in me that 'my fear of exams means I go to pieces and I cannot think'. He was a very successful businessman who had an international clientele yet 'when I come into an educational setting, I revert to my childhood feelings'. Alex said 'I was shaking throughout the exam. I can't believe I passed Allegro I. All my life teachers have told me I'm stupid. I cannot believe that I can actually follow what you are teaching'. I reminded him that although I did the teaching, he had to do the learning and ultimately he must acknowledge and accept the credit he has earned and genuinely deserves for his success.

Teaching is a personal engagement, being aware of one's past educational experiences can impact later on the teacher's own attitude and behaviour; this is equally valid to teaching adults and children alike. It is not to suggest a compromise of professional standards regarding expectations from students to meet the required standards, but rather it indicates 'an ethic of care' (Sirek: 2016:17). This holistic and empathetic approach enables teachers to be professional in the teaching and learning environment, while acknowledging and valuing the student's musical expectations.

6.6 Themes from the data

Themes from data evolved from analysis of participants' interviews and ethnographies, the combination of which provided the basis for analysis. During the initial stages of analysis there seemed to be many themes, but following a more considered examination, five major themes emerged. Sub-themes were included in this analysis.

6.6.1 Theme I: Motivation

Merging two loves: love of music and love of learning

Taylor says, 'there is an instinctive drive among humans to make meaning of their daily lives (Taylor, 2008: 5). Music offers meaning to life but also contributes to physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing (chapter two). Based on the data findings, the love of music was evident from the tone of interviewees' voices and their written reflections. The concept of meaning is further developed by Taylor, who maintains,

> there are no enduring truths, and change is continuous, we cannot always be assured of what we know or believe. It therefore becomes imperative in adulthood that we develop a more critical worldview as we seek ways to better understand our world (Taylor, 2008: 5).

Amidst the themes that emerged, love of music was at the core. It nurtured other needs including the choice to engage in music learning, becoming part of the current music learning culture, to succeed, to explore creativity and to expand social networks as part of finding meaning and fulfilment in life. It is the embodiment of developing reliable beliefs and making informed decisions that are fundamental to the adult learning process (Ibid)[57]. Learning how to develop a more critical view of one's life and the world in general, involves learning how to develop a value system of beliefs, by negotiating and acting upon our 'own purposes, values, feelings and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others' (Mezirow et al, 2000: 8). Children may be told by teachers they are not musical and they carry this belief into adulthood which can deter them from re-entering into music learning.

Merriam (2008) identifies the major changes in adult learning theory since 2001. Spirituality, narrative learning and embodied learning were fast-growing dimensions in

[57] Edward W. Taylor's, arguments are centred on adult learning in general, particularly in respect to transformative learning, as advocated by Mezirow (1978). However, in the context of adult music learning, the concepts are equally valid because, as music is a personal experience, it perhaps holds greater truths.

this field; the former two have been discussed in the context of the value-system of musical engagement (chapter two). Transformational learning has been a constant dimension woven into the fabric of all three areas. The interview questions framed for this research considered these three developments in adult learning theory.

Findings from the data revealed that love of music combined with love of learning was a critical motivational drive for participants joining the programme. Love of music may have been realised during childhood or sometimes later, but the common denominator was a need to investigate opportunities for musical engagement with a view to participating in a new musical world of music education. The enjoyment and social factors evolved from the Allegro experience because it opened up new insights into other musical opportunities. The data revealed that the inclusion of music in adults' lives influenced their future choices for musical engagement.

The Data Findings

Complementing instrumental learning by providing a wider knowledge base was significant amongst thirty-four out of forty-two students. Some had previous experience of playing or singing, others were currently learning, while a minority of eight students had no instrumental background. Regardless of past musical experiences they all felt a need to expand their knowledge through playing or singing. Choral singing proved a popular choice for musical engagement which was evident from the interviews and ethnographies. Many of the Allegro students expressed concerns that they felt disadvantaged because they couldn't read music or understand rhythm and consequently they couldn't converse about music; the latter was a primary concern in the case of twenty-eight out of thirty-four of this group. Judging from the tone of interviewees on the subject, this communication was perceived as a barrier to their enjoyment of musical events because they were 'not able to hold a conversation about the performance at a

concert during the interval' (Gretta). Those who sang in choirs reiterated Ronan's sentiments, 'I have to follow others, copy them, but I would love to know how to read the music myself' They wanted to learn and felt an inherent 'need', both intrinsic and extrinsic, to participate and experience music in a personally meaningful way.

Data indicated that piano and guitar were two of the most popular choices for instrumental learning. Caroline stated, 'the main reason was that I wanted to learn more about music, not just the piano. I needed all this background theoretical information to help me understand how to play my pieces'. Michelle expressed similar reasons: 'Allegro to me was my music background to playing the flute and I also liked the theory aspect'. Roger explained, 'it was clear that I needed more work in practical musicianship areas and the Allegro course gave me a start in that area and opened my eyes to how much work was needed'.

Aside from those adults who pursued instrumental and choral learning there was a small cohort of five students had a very specific vision for embarking on the programme. They had aspirations to broaden their current musical knowledge with a view to studying music at third-level, as Nora recounted,

> I decided that I wanted to study more music. I went back to studying piano so I kind of needed a greater knowledge of music and I held in the back of my mind, an idea that I'd like to go further studying music in university.

Nora completed the two Allegro programmes and was accepted on a music degree programme in university, which she ultimately achieved and graduated. On successfully completing the Allegro programme Bertie said 'I sent in my CAO application and I have been accepted for the music degree in the university of my choice. I am so excited'.

Throughout the interviews people often referred to childhood or adolescent memories of learning music or wanting to learn; the latter expressed some regrets at having to wait

until they reached adulthood before getting the opportunity. Others felt the time was right at this stage in their lives because that it wouldn't have been possible when they younger.

Experience of primary school music was often referred to by participants while a minority had Leaving Certificate music from secondary school. There were others who had passed instrumental grade examinations. Engagement with folk, traditional Irish, jazz, pop and blues were also referred to throughout the data in both interviews and reflective writings. Listening to students sharing their experiences in class of playing these genres in musical groups was enriching for me as observer, in gaining insights into the rich diversity of musical preferences and experiences of class members. Some talked about their performance experiences as in the case of Lillian's description of her earlier musical studies:

> although I did theory in the college of music as a child, just for a couple of years and then throughout my teenage years started to join bands and then continued on with bands or singing like jazz songs of piano in pubs and stuff. And I've been doing that to date … it's just something I've always been interested in, but lacked in the theory side of things, so I wanted to go back to do that. That's why I joined Allegro.

Retirement was another dynamic amongst adult groups who were now focused on incorporating music into their current lifestyles. In planning his future Killian reflected,

> Having worked in the construction industry for many years, I came to realise I didn't want to continue in that until my retirement. So, with that in mind, I returned to adult education, which led to a teaching post … and within two years, I completed the Allegro I and Allegro II courses and later continued with some more advanced musicianship learning.

During the Allegro II programme he also started guitar and piano lessons.

6.6.2 Theme 2: Embracing a new role

Access and opportunity are factors that face anyone embarking on a new role. The literature debating opportunities for adults entering music education indicates a growing awareness of the need to provide opportunities for adults' engagement in music

(McCarthy, 2020; Myers, 2019; Lane 2019; Kerchner & Abril, 2019; Green, 2002; Pitts, 2005). Many adults have some experience of music education but don't know how to access what's available in their cities or communities. Access can directly impact on opportunity. Evidence from this data and from similar research, indicated there can be barriers or obstacles to gaining entry into desired music learning courses.

The concept of 'possible selves' is embedded in this domain, referring to the ideal of hoped-for selves, as opposed to the feared-for selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Creech et al., state that possible-selves are domain-specific in guiding actions towards what people want to include in their lives and what they want to abandon (Ibid., 2014: 5). Such thinking fits into the domain of altering lifestyles to facilitate new roles, such as becoming a mature music student; the concept of becoming a student again was addressed by Pitts (2005). Based on a diverse cohort, her study found that a sector involved in instrumental learning found their 'musical accomplishments brought them fresh sources of challenge and satisfaction' (Ibid: 143). Another cohort, who were 'ambitious for academic study were more often individually motivated' (Ibid: 144). Allegro participants belonged to both domains as is evident from the data; Celine's reflections offering an example:

> It was a journey of self-discovery … It has taught me to listen to music differently and I have great expectations for the future. I am very grateful to the teacher whose vision for an adult music class has provided me with an opportunity to realise and follow my dreams.

A psychological barrier to realising the possible-self in music is often that music learning has traditionally been associated with the younger generations, thus making it somewhat elitist in the minds of many adults. Comments such as 'I should have practiced when I was given the chance', 'none of my family have musical talent' and 'it's easy when you are young' have been expressed by many adults throughout my years of teaching. Over time I have witnessed a shift in this thinking, perhaps not in the sense that people no longer cling to these long-held beliefs being true, but rather that they feel they are entitled

to learn music as an adult. Pitts describes how beliefs about talent and giftedness can equally impact on young people,

> Gift and talent are problematic terms in music, since they bring with them the notion that while some children will be intrinsically musical, others will lack the ability to acquire such skills or interests (Ibid: 146).

In this context, young students perceive music as being specifically suited to those who have 'talent' or a 'gift', and such myths can create barriers to young people accessing music. Swanwick (1979) addressed how these beliefs impacted on adolescents' choices in taking music as a subject in school. The inclusion of these arguments here is to acknowledge how such thinking in childhood may be carried into adulthood, thus causing reservations about taking up music later in life.

6.6.3 Education as culture

The previous section identified debates about educational and musical backgrounds as becoming a springboard into new roles in adulthood. According to Bohla,

> We must recognise that adult education in all societies of the world, whether developed or developing, is first a culture, and then a sector. Within the adult education culture, adults educate other adults … on the other hand adult education establishments is made up of the adult education establishments …(Bhola,.1997a: 47; cited in Tuckett, 2021: 122).

Those who were somewhat marginalised in society never had access to music learning in childhood. Low-income groups or other less well-off sectors have less access into finding an entry point into the adult music education (Ernst, 2001; Tuckett, 2021).

6.6.4 Seeking an entry point into music learning

The first time this researcher heard terms such 'entry points' and 'exit points' to entering and finishing a course of learning was at a meeting about the NQF[58] for general music education. The outcome of investigating an entry for an artistic pursuits such as Allegro

[58] NQF: The National Qualifications Framework in Ireland. It categorized ten levels of learning ranging from level 1 (primary school) to level 10 (doctorate level).

placed the programme on a learning five level (Waldron et al, 2018: 291). Equally important was the exit point that gave closure to the programme of learning at the end of a one-year academic timeframe. However Allegro and other educational courses involve costs and may not be viable points of entry into music for certain sectors of the community.

The concept of learning festivals and adult learning festivals may alternatively offer some windows of opportunity for the wider community. In the United Kingdom, Adult Learners' Weeks (AWL) has been celebrated across four countries – England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This festival was extended to the Republic of Ireland in 2007 and as part of the event in Dublin,. I was invited to give a music workshop (2007 & 2008)[59] and , in agreement with TU Dublin, the class was held in the Conservatoire. It was open to the public and people from different backgrounds attended, many of whom had never experienced participating in a music class. The festival's premise was to celebrate existing adult learners in all their diversity, to stimulate others to participate and show how learning in adult life can transform lives and inspire others (Tuckett: 123). The value of this festival was it was open to the public, admission was free and people had the opportunity to attend events of their choosing. These festivals transcend such barriers as class or race and help to bring cohesion to society through a musical experience.

Migrants can experience barriers to finding ways into music education in a new culture. Jasmine's reflection describes how someone from a different culture can still find their niche, or entry point into a new culture in another society. She describes her experience:

> I didn't have any music knowledge and background. I found a music school and I studied there for two years to learn how to sing, to learn the skill. After two years, I felt I needed a lot more music knowledge. Then I started to research to look for a way to learn. I went to the DIT Music school building to make inquiries, got the application, and then I got a chance to come to the class.

[59] In England alone, the name was changed in 2015 to Festival of Learning (Tuckett, A, 2018: 122).

This ethnography reflects her resourcefulness in negotiating and finding new opportunities for learning in a foreign country. Interestingly Jasmine's was a footfall search, as opposed to an online search, as she went to the college in person to make her enquiries.

Tuckett states that festivals, like the ALW, highlight the relatively private process of group and individual learning and provid a platform for learners to help shape the debate about their needs and aspirations. The data from the Allegro ALW events and the summer schools supports Tuckett's findings that these festivals 'constitute both a framework for advocacy and a site of innovative learning' (Tuckett: 2018: 122-123).

6.6.5 Seeking a re-entry point

The vast majority of participants on the Allegro programmes (ninety-five percent) came from upper middle to higher socio-economic backgrounds. Many had private music lessons as children but the majority had discontinued. Instrumental private lessons provide a worthwhile opportunity whether entering the world of music learning for the first time or re-entering it. Private lessons are individualistic by nature, but what of those adults who wish to become part of a musical ensemble? Ernst states that most of those who learned music in school return to it as adults but he poses a pertinent question: 'what about all those who did not have a substantial music education at school? which, at the turn of the century constituted about ninety percent of the population in the United States (Ernst: 2001: 49). Although his study was carried out in 2001, it revealed that 'the point of entry can be a difficult process for this growing demographic (Ibid). In relation to Ireland, the data from this researcher's analysis is conclusive with Ernst's study from the perspective that people who have prior musical experience may return to private lessons with a view to future engagement in group participation. Primarily, they seek or need to engage in a musical activity. Community bands are often too advanced to serve as entry

points for novice ensemble players as auditions are required when openings occur thus opportunities are limited (Ibid: 48). In seeking musical activities through the Allegro programme Ross recounted that

> music has been an important part of my life. Serendipity played a part in my attendance, as I joined with a friend which was great. Indeed, the more we know, the more we realise what is still to be known'.

Notwithstanding their love of music, there were some participants who had little or no previous musical background yet were drawn towards seeking to learn about music. Harry summed up his position upon joining stating, 'I had no experience of music at all, but Allegro I seemed to be the sort of course that would be aimed at somebody like me and I was glad I did it'. This was a very different role for him but he took up the challenge and succeeded.

Those who had past musical experiences were drawn towards the arts-based activities and seeking a formal music course was a suitable option. Saidhbhe had considerable technological resources to investigate what was on offer and her description of her online search was reiterated by many other participants. She described her search, 'I looked at all the colleges, plus evening classes, but there is nothing really like Allegro; a musicianship general overall music course that gives you a flavour of a lot of different areas'.

The decision to find a new role that fitted into their lifestyles was the first step for participants and the second was to identify how they felt about becoming an adult learner. Many had been learning throughout their lives, had careers, worked in industry, were students, worked in the home or were retired. The data identified that becoming a mature student was of little no concern to participants as none of them expressed any concerns in this regard; these research findings here concur with those of Pitts. It was refreshing from a researcher's perspective to discover that becoming a mature student was not an

issue for adult music learners; this indicated a shift in attitudes among mature music education students (Pitts, 2005). Hannah's comments reflect this positive attitude:

> I had no reservations about returning as a mature student. I was open to that. I wanted to just have the experience but was a little bit intimidated, insofar as to wonder, was I going to be the oldest one there? But in actual fact, it was completely opposite. I found it great and I really enjoyed being around other adults learning, so it was great.

Charlotte reiterated similar sentiments,

> No, I didn't really have reservations about returning to the role of student because I had done college courses throughout my working career. That side of things was fine. But I had a few reservations in the sense that this was something I was doing specifically for myself to enjoy!

Ultimately Margo's sentiments resonated with this researcher when she dismissed any reservations about becoming a mature student, claiming 'no, I didn't, none at all. I love being a student. It's a great change from being a teacher'.

Aside from a love of music, a love of learning emerged as a significant motivation. Learning for many people is associated with achievement and success can promote personal profiles and self-confidence. Music learning augments this concept as it enriches life outside the learning context in terms of musical enjoyment and social involvement with like-minded people. This special role of music in the lives of adults offers a holistic experience throughout life, as Audrey describes,

> I always feel great to be a student whenever, even though I'm older … personally, learning can be in my life, my whole life, until the day I'm not able to learn. I want to be able to learn everything about music in a very short time even if I only improve a little.

Similar to most other participants on the programme Audrey was seeking to create a future where music would play a significant role in her life.

6.6.6 Campus life: becoming an adult music student in a university

An investigation into the literature on the role of universities in serving society and on the inclusivity of adult learners returning to learning, prompted this researcher to ask

participants ‘how did it feel being a music student in a university?’ (Boles & Jensen, 2012; Lines 2012; Hallam & Creech 2010; Field et al. 2016). From a research perspective, I felt this was an important aspect to examine as it is two-tiered – firstly the adult is a mature learner and secondly they are attending a university to undertake a music programme. In the words of Yvonne

> It made me feel very old when I saw how young everyone was. No, it was nice. I think it was a lovely atmosphere. The fact that it's a new university as well, added to it. So it was good.

University life was a new experience for Hannah,

> I had never been in university, so it was really cool to see the campus and how things happened there and it was just a great experience. And we just mixed with other adults who were also attending university or college for the first time, so it was great.

There were those who were indifferent about the location, like Julie who claimed, ‘I didn't really think about it. I was maybe in the moment of just enjoying the class and didn't really think of where I was, or the surroundings’.

Based on informal conversations before and after class, the majority of students expressed being happy that the class was held in the Conservatoire. Many said they enjoyed coming into the building and the atmosphere of being part of something unique. Elizabeth recounted,

> It was just lovely to be in the university and just being part of that and seeing all the activity… There was a lot of young people coming and going to different courses. A lot of time, I'd stop and we'd have a chat and that. Everybody was just so friendly. There was a lovely atmosphere. I really enjoyed that, to be honest with you.

There were those who had some reservations about their ability to study in a university, some felt a little intimidated but over time they expressed a change of attitude as becoming part of the group also meant for them, being part of the university. Any initial worries were dissolved, as was the case with Caroline,

> I didn’t think it was going to be possible to study in an academic environment. It gave me the opportunity to learn theory but also to do it in a class situation with other people, who had the same interest and love of music as I had.

6.6.7 The commitment factor

The process of the prospective adult student having the autonomy to choose their learning, research the possibilities and decide to return to learning as a mature student are the initial stages of the journey. Undertaking a formal music education programme demands allocation of time to attend the course, learn new musical skills (which requires practicing at home) and complete assignments and also prepare for examinations, impacts on the daily and weekly routines of the adult learner. Throughout this research, the commitment of students to meet the various criteria has been commendable from my perspective as teacher, researcher and observer.

During the first two years of the programme classes were held in the evenings. This changed in the second year as the college board requested the Allegro programme become a new module on the BACCI degree programme. The outcome meant that classes would be held during the day[60]. Traditionally I had taught adult classes in the evenings but the outcome was positive in terms of each person being able to fulfil their goal.[61]

Gender and age profiles of Allegro participants is presented below (figure 6.3). The next chapter presents further discussion on gender, particularly in the context of the challenges for women engaging in online music learning during COVID-19 (chapter seven).

[60] The BACCI degree in Bachelor of Arts in Creative and Cultural Industries, was a relatively new degree in TU Dublin which incorporated a broad range of modules from other schools. The researcher was approached about including Allegro programme, with some revisions and modifications, as a module for this degree.

[61] There were those who couldn't enrol and had communicated on email they could only attend in the evening time. This was due to other life commitments. Others made arrangements with employers to come during the day – most had to re-arrange their weekly schedule to attend.

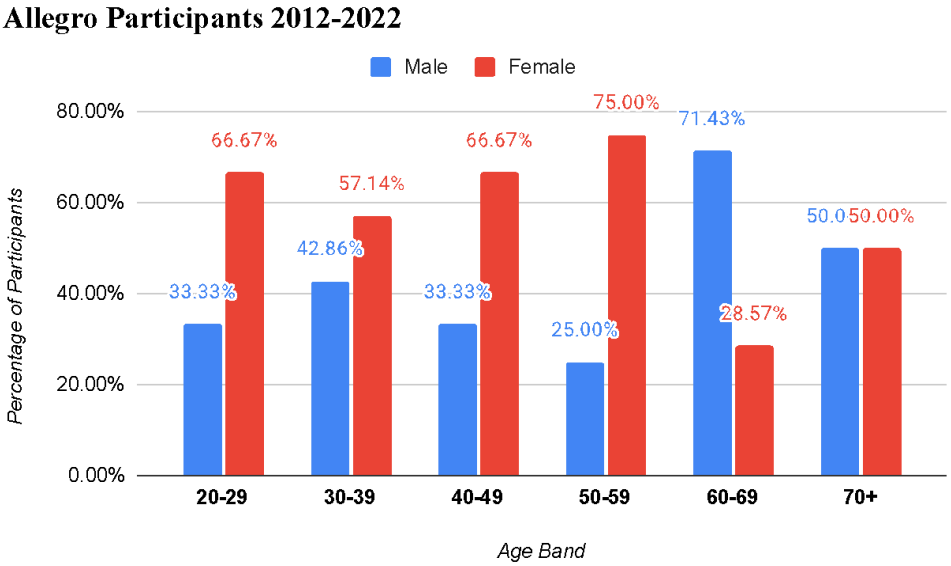


Figure 6.3. Percentage of participants: gender and age profiles

The question "how did you feel about the commitment of attending weekly classes, undertaking assignments, examinations and a research project?" was asked in all interviewees as it was pivotal to successful learning outcomes. Although responses varied, the ethos was uniform in terms of numbers of applicants. Some employers made concessions to enable employees to attend the programme as in John's case,

> that aspect of it was a bit of a challenge in general because I was working 9 to 5 during the whole course but I had a really understanding Manager in work who is more than obliging and really supportive and in terms of working the time off for me and fixing the so-called clock to make it happen. I liked doing it and it was lovely to get out of work for two hours.

Michael explained how he managed his time by devoting Tuesdays to music and art, his explanation reflects his position in having the professional autonomy to allocate time for the programme,

> I block out Tuesday at the start of the year now I've to find time to do the homework and all that. I do Allegro in the middle of the day and I go to Art on a Tuesday night and that was another part which was interesting, which you brought out well, and that was the relationship between music and painting in terms of the impressionist and also Baroque and all that sort of stuff - I mean that's fascinating.

Olivia, a college student found the attendance commitment difficult as she was studying for her final year in engineering. She had completed Allegro I last year but was now finding the time to meet the criteria for Allegro II challenging,

> it was fine last year (Allegro I) I think with the workload, but just that I've had so many other commitments in my degree you know with the thesis and stuff, that I found that I had less time to do Allegro II and would have liked to do more time on it.

These responses indicate that, regardless of age, commitment can be a pressurising factor in terms of creating space in a busy weekly schedule. Alex stated the time was a big commitment but in his view,

> if you are enjoying what you're doing you will be there on time and you won't let your class down and it's only an hour and a half out of your week and it's important to me.

Retirement for some people meant having time to commit to new activities, in Jonathan's case the commitment factor 'wasn't a problem at all as I'm retired'. Donnacha, also retired, travelled from Cork to Dublin every week to attend the course saying 'It was fine. The time of the day suited and it was grand'. The narratives varied. In contrast, Katerina had arranged to have her children collected from school and consequently it was 'no problem making space for my weekly music class'. She had a long-term goal to study for a music degree in university. She succeeded and graduated four years after completing the Allegro II programme.

These selected comments from data interviews are representative of a cross-section of the overall views of adults indicating the value of music in their lives. Some had learned music in childhood, others had dabbled in music sporadically and a few had relatively little prior engagement with music. What they all shared was a motivation to learn through musical participation and how to embrace music education as a means of enriching their lives (chapter two).

6.7 Theme 3: The need to learn about music

Research on the cognitive values of learning indicate that older people can learn music effectively (Taylor, 2011). Singing and playing facilitates physical and mental well-being (Kaufmann et al., 2009; Luakka, 2007; Ernst, 2001). It is the internal motivation that draws people into music. Enjoyment, a sense of identity, a sense of belonging, a need to engage in some form of musical participation and developing an awareness of spirituality are all embodied in the need to learn more about music (Rohwer, 2016; Taylor and Hallam, 2008; Boyce-Tillman, 2000). The combination of music and learning brings people together as emerged from the findings in this research. Evidence from the data also indicated that adults needed to feel their time is being utilised well; they wanted something meaningful in their lives in which music would be central. As teacher/researcher, I concur with the evidence the view that 'the common factor in successful programs for adults is group instruction' (Ernst, 2001: 49). In the Allegro programme the emphasis on performance had precedence in every class and this particular activity brought cohesion within the group. Performance activities naturally evolve into communication and interaction which break down barriers and help people become better acquainted.

The love of music leads to motivation to find out more about it, but learning cannot be merely skills-based as knowledge and understanding are key elements in learning music. Interview and reflective writing data indicated that many valued these elements of insightful knowledge and understanding as being part of the pedagogical approach, as Lisa explained in her reflective writing,

> I enjoyed the fact that the class was fast-tracked and gave me an overall view of the theory of music. This provided me with an opportunity to follow my dreams, which otherwise would not have been possible … As an adult, it requires a good commitment and good listening skills. Being in a class with adults is enjoyable, less pressured and extremely worthwhile. There is a sense that we were all in it together as adult learners.

The motivation to learn and the need to learn also encompassed commitment, which although discussed above is relevant here also. Commitments can significantly impact on the person's weekly regime and consequently there was an element of challenge for many in balancing work and family responsibilities. The prospect of pursuing music education that would be considered their personal space required the commitment to attend the class, to practice at home and to study. While acknowledging these obligations, the overall responses in interviews were very positive and reflected an acknowledgement by participants of what was needed in order to fulfil the programme requirements, as Michelle explained,

> I didn't find the commitment a problem at all, I actually really enjoyed doing assignments because it was a good way of revising and keeping it in your head so that when we broke for summer, I wasn't completely lost, coming back a couple of weeks after the summer; I think those continuous assessments help you keep it fresh in your brain for longer.

Tommy advocated action over procrastination when it came to getting the assignments completed. He explained his approach to the task:

> I found them well explained previous to doing the assignments, and I think the key to it would have been not to sit back and let the assignment grow on you and leave it there. I think the best way of doing it would be to get stuck in straight away. So, as soon as the class was over I would nearly be at home that evening back in the books trying to get the assignment done.

Continuous assessment offered time and space for learning as students were allocated a minimum of two weeks to complete an assignment. The prospect of sitting a formal written examination can be both challenging and stressful, as Alan found

> The exam was very challenging. But in the meantime, I loved to do it. I think it's important because it will reflect how much I have learned actually, and what exactly I can understand through the course.

Aidan expressed similar scepticism regarding the formal exam, finding it

> A bit daunting, you know, but again I mean with the support the teacher and class and in sitting the exam I found that I like to reflect on all of this. I mightn't even say it to anybody or whatever, but in my life they are still very big things. Well it was great to come out of there and come home and say you have done that.

All of the above narratives reflect a sense of achievement, a sense of self-competence and confidence, a will to succeed and a love of learning music.

The aspect of class performance was new to almost everyone who joined the programmes over the years. Those who were instrumental players understood how to play a rhythm, but very few had any experience of group performance; sight singing, song repertoire or singing compositions were an integral part of the class activities. The discussion so far has focused on the themes of motivation, embarking on a new role in life and engaging in musical learning; Aidan's reflective piece comprehensively encapsulated the views of adults as learners,

> I think as an adult learner in music encouragement and positivity are very important. Many people of my generation were told things which coloured belief systems. In particular the myth that without talent no matter how much practice you do you will never succeed. It in some ways promoted a sense of elitism in the arts and promoted an exclusivity for a chosen few. The truth is most of the greats worked hard at their craft to make it look so easy. As Michelangelo stated: 'If people only knew how hard I had to work to gain my mastery, it would not seem so wonderful at all'

6.8 Theme 4: Expanding social networks

This theme presents the observations of the sociological benefits for adults of music education from my observer-participant perspective (sociological issues were examined chapter two). In the context of my role as observer/participant/researcher I based my interpretation of the relationships within the group, on class observations, interviews and ethnographic writings of individuals. Conversations outside the classroom was another influence. The social dimension of expanding social networks will be discussed under three headings: forming friendships, attending concerts as a group and engaging in conversations that may inform their future music activities post Allegro.

Friendships

The value of class participation has been documented throughout this work (chapters two, four, five, six and seven). People join musical activities, including music education programmes, to make friends and to learn amidst like-minded people. This researcher has observed students forming friendships, communicating via social media and sometimes forming small study groups. Meeting for coffee in the university before or after class, discussing the programme and comparing progress in the different musical parameters were all part of the participant's learning experience. The social dimension was stronger among some cohorts than others but over the years many groups formed particular friendships that have subsequently endured. As researcher I can confidently make this statement as going to concerts together at regular intervals created bonds of friendship amongst music lovers, as Jean described 'the course was great for me and I liked the social element of the class, as I met like-minded people who shared my interest in music'.

Concerts

Concert going was central to the Allegro music culture. Social outings included visits to art galleries, concerts and small groups met for regular coffee and catch-ups, or for drinks before a concert and during the interval. When masterclasses were held in the university we would attend as a group in order to experience the masterclass together. Prior to the event, the class listened to the masterclass repertoire to video performances on You Tube, followed by discussion of the works, all of which aimed to make the live experience more insightful and enjoyable.

The subsequent feedback from students during class discussions strengthened relationships within the group while providing rich sources for the data. This researcher's considered observation was that the social connectedness empowered the learning

experience. It was the holistic development for, what Jarvis described earlier, the 'whole' person.

Musical activities

There was considerable valuable feedback regarding musical activities on the programme. Musical participation was a key component in enabling people to get to know one another both inside and outside the class. Saoirse recounts her experiences:

> I enjoyed the class every week, in particular the listening, and I loved the creative challenge in composition. The social aspect of the course was meeting other people and I loved going to concerts and to the opera.

Informal conversations before and after class, resulted in a sharing of ideas about performances events both in Ireland and abroad. During one class Tomás enquired 'who will be going to the Wexford Opera Festival this year? Saidhbhe replied 'I don't like their production choices as the operas are too unknown'. In contrast, others endeavoured to go to this opera event every year. My role as participant-observer afforded valuable insight into their individual tastes in music from these discussions. The outcomes included a few people collaborating to plan a visit the Wexford Opera Festival or for me to plan an opera night out in Dublin. The choice of opera would arise from a discussion of what operas were being produced during the particular season.

A sector of participants had travelled to operas in Vienna, Paris, Verona and New York. Conversations on international opera opened up interesting exchanges about music, travel and culture that evolved into rich conversations, not only among participants but it gave the researcher an opportunity to share her personal experiences of international musical travels. The outcomes included the realisation and awareness of the multiplicity of opportunities to enjoy the world of music in Ireland and abroad.

6.9 Theme 5: Future directions

Students who completed the programmes aspired to continue their musical activities. A popular question 'Is there life after Allegro?'; interestingly this was the exact wording of people who asked this particular question). Over the years many students expressed an interest in wanting to learn an instrument and asked how they could make enquires about finding a teacher. From a personal and professional perspective and as the author of the Allegro programme this was a very positive outcome to their music education experience. Bill said 'being in the class has inspired me to learn how to play' and this sentiment was expressed by over sixty percent of participants. This was a most valuable outcome to the programme as it gave students directions into future engagement with music.

In the year 2021-2022 there were significant outcomes to continued engagement with music; ten out of twenty-one students than took up instrumental or singing activities. Killian took up piano lessons as he wanted to understand the harmonic language of music, explaining 'I understand it in the class when you play it, but I would like to be able to play it myself'. Emily said 'in the past I wouldn't have the courage to join a choir but now I am in three choirs. It's a big commitment but I enjoy it so much'. Her experience was further enriched when fellow Allegro student joined one of the choirs with her. They said that it was an added bonus to be singing together and Emily added 'because of what we learned in Allegro we can now chat about the choir's choice of repertoire and musical issues with other members'.

6.10 Ethnographies of adult music students

There was a wealth of data provided throughout this research. Participants wrote reflective pieces on the musical backgrounds and their thoughts on the role of music in their lives. These ethnographies were also reflective of the interviews which commenced

with narratives of their childhoods, adolescence, education, adulthood, careers, family and hobbies. Throughout all of these ethnographies the value of music, in terms of their past and current experiences, was woven into the tapestries of their stories. I felt honoured that they shared their experiences through writing and interviews and I deeply appreciated their generosity in giving their time. The data greatly enriched this project and hopefully will make a significant contribution to future adult music learners and for future research into adult music education.

Presentation of this data will be presented in the form of selected excerpts from reflective narratives and interviews of Allegro students.

Elena's Story

> I suppose the main aspect of myself in this stage is my age. Why did I start to get interested in Allegro or whatever? Well, I spent my life working. I was teaching at one stage. I was interested in going back and studying music and learning all the things that I never knew about. While I had spent all my school years very involved in music, where we did very elaborate productions of the Gilbert and Sullivan, various musicals and I always had a leading part. I also was in the orchestra: they had a fantastic orchestra and I brought my harp.
>
> My mother was a national school teacher and she was the organist in the choir and she taught choirs. So, she was passionate about music always and entered the choirs. There was a big music background but it never developed. And my life has always been a bit of a rush. That's why when I heard about Allegro, I thought, this is what I need badly, hence my interest (transcript from interview)

Gretta's Story

> I had been out of formal education for several years, but I've always had an interest in music. I heard about the Allegro course through another friend of mine and decided that I would like enrol for the Allegro course. I found it very useful. We went from online to face-to-face teaching. I'm running a household now. They're all adults in the household, but I was able to carve out time for music classes (transcript from interview).

Michael's story

I retired 3 years I've been doing many different things ever since. We've five kids as you know and they were all here and they're all very musical and they're still very much involved with different areas of music and I suppose we were involved in different ways keep grinding them through the stuff. I was a workaholic so I was probably working 10 hours a day and I took over to some extent at weekends I did most of Sunday with Palestrina choir.

I got to like music more and more through some of the great events, lets say with the Palestrina choir, or whatever and even the lads all got excited about this so it was a great experience for me. I always said like half joking you know when I retire I'm going to learn about music and obviously knew nothing when I retired. I went through Grade 1 on the piano without a teacher which was probably a mistake but I'd a bit of a struggle but got through and now I have a teacher and I'm doing Grade 4 but 2 years ago I heard about Allegro, My wife told me about it from one of your colleagues, so here I am (excerpt from interview).

Bryan's Story

While not quite a child of the sixties I was just becoming a teenager in 1970 right at the end of this tumultuous decade. I turned thirteen in 1970 but always remembered the sixties as an era of change. My brother John particularly was a huge influence on me. When he was seventeen he played guitar in a band and owned a Stratocaster electric guitar.

Although I took a keen interest in listening to music from about age thirteen I saw it as the domain of people who were born with talent for it. One of the main stumbling blocks for me as an adult was that I believed that you had to born with the gift of music to become a musician. It was only years later that I read a paper by Anders Erickson (1991) the role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance that suggested that this was a myth. Yes, talent was important but you had to do a huge amount of practice to get good no matter what your natural ability was. This was a startling revelation for me. With this new belief in place I decided to re-start my music education. One of the areas that I had avoided was musicianship … I think musicianship is a key part of learning to be a good musician no matter what the instrument. Connecting what we hear to our instrument opens up a musical world. After years of believing that your ear cannot be trained I now believe that given patience and time it can develop. It's hard to put a time on it as all of us are different. I decided to do Allegro 1 as I wanted to refresh my memory and also, I felt that there is a significant gap between my aural ability and the intellectual working out of musical theory. My goal is to bring the deficit in aural ability in line with theoretical understanding.

As an art form, music has given me so much joy and solace. In all its different forms jazz, rock, folk or classical certain elements have connected with me both emotionally and spiritually (excerpt from reflective ethnography).

Harry's Story

> In my late 20's and 30's I did start to listen to quite a lot of classical music and opera slowly arrived on my musical listening horizon. When eventually the opportunity arose to help promote a local community orchestra I found it fascinating to be around the musicians at rehearsals & concerts. I also volunteered to be their librarian, filing the music scores and printing parts for the various musicians.
>
> My reason for enrolling in the Allegro courses was because I loved listening to orchestral music and reading music history yet I had no knowledge of what I was listening to. I knew I enjoyed what I was hearing but had no idea why it had the appeal it did. I had no framework around which to build my growing love of and intrigue with orchestral music. Working with the orchestra fired my interest in the musical language of notation which even the youngest members of the orchestra I worked with understood… yet was totally alien to me. I found both Allegro courses fascinating and was amazed how 'mathematical' the language of music is. It's like the input is precisely measured and organised and the output is inspiring and creative. It's rather like beauty in a machine. Precisely measured yet incredibly human (excerpt from reflective ethnography).

6.11 Conclusion

Ethnographic research has proved a valuable methodology in the context of this research affording an ease of transition from the action research methodology into ethnographic methodology. Krueger outlines its value in the music class environment:

> Educational ethnography has been defined as a mode of observation within the natural setting of music classrooms. By describing educational events, we may further interpret and understand the meaning and significance of classroom dynamics. Ethnographic research may provide new insight into educational events that occur in the music classroom (Krueger, 1987: 76).

The inclusion of this quote from 1987 is to highlight how ethnographic research has been valued for many decades in the field of music education. There is a myriad of issues in educational practice that can be explored through ethnography in the realms of music classrooms and these are identified by experts in the field as: society and culture, curriculum, and music teacher education (Berg, 2007; Bogden & Bilkin, 2007; LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). Although they may seem separate, they are all interconnected within the context of this research, just as the practical components (chapters two, four, five, and seven) are connected to the more technical components that follow.

The outcomes of the ethnographic process revealed the following (which are supported by those identified in chapter three).

- *Participants shared a love of music*
- *Enjoyed being with like-minded people*
- *Appreciated the learning taking place in the context of an adult learning environment.*
- *Enjoyed the learning process and enjoyed meeting the challenges of the programme requirements.*
- *Feedback from interviews revealed students liked the diversity of the curriculum.*
- *They valued being able to do something for themselves by taking time out to fulfil their individual musical goals.*

The range, diversity and breath of the data from the ethnographies and interviews gathered for this research provided a wealth of valuable insights into the thinking, values and personalities of the participants. The willingness and unreserved responses from students was very heartening and it was a privilege to witness and participate in their shared ideas and experiences. Despite taking time to be interviewed, to write reflective pieces, ethnographies and give feedback on the pilot module, most of them volunteered to contribute more. My experiences with all the Allegro participants is something I will always treasure on a personal level. On a professional level, the data reflected the findings from the literature, but it also indicated possible provisions and opportunities for adult music learners into the future. Aside from the Allegro programme, similar courses, such as the Allegro pilot module, could open up many more musical pathways down a previously less travelled road.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Challenges for Adult Music Learning during the Pandemic

7.1 Introduction

This chapter constructs an overview of the impact of the pandemic in Ireland during the years 2020-2022. The overall effects are discussed initially, followed by the challenges faced by the educational sectors with particular consideration being focused on music and adult music education. This chapter deals exclusively with how the process impacted on the teaching and learning of music online; this is further supported by the data that consisted of semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and reflective writings of participants.

The research identified four categories of Allegro students:

1. 2019-2020: Students who made the transition from face-to-face classroom learning to online learning.
2. 2020-2021: Students who enrolled as online students and remained online for the entire academic year.
3. 2021-2022: Students who returned from online learning to face-to-face learning.
4. 2020-2022: Students who discontinued owing to circumstances arising from the impact of the pandemic restrictions.

The findings from the data are addressed within the context of each category. Further consideration is given to age and gender and how these were affected by the process of

online learning. COVID-19 was challenging for students, teachers and management in all sectors of education. In the context of this research which investigated the pedagogical challenges of online music, this teacher's reflections will be addressed and themes that emerged from teaching and learning, on the digital platform, during the pandemic will be identified. The conclusion will present the findings and possibilities for the role of music technology in adult music education.

7.2 Overview of the pandemic in Ireland 2020-2022

A general overview of what was happening in the academic sectors particularly in relation to music and adult learning is relevant to this section. International policies, particularly those of Europe for the control of the spread of the virus were reflected in government policies in Ireland. It may be perceived that there were two fundamental aims; firstly, containment of COVID-19 for the protection of citizens and secondly, to maintain some aspects of normal life by adopting new forms of communication as was the case for education.

> In mid-February 2020, it was becoming increasingly clear from both events in China and Italy that COVID-10 was likely to become a global issue requiring both national and international action. Ireland recorded its first case on 29th February 2020 …The Republic's first case of the coronavirus at the weekend made it the 61st country in the world to succumb to a disease that is now present across the globe (Cullen. Paul, The Irish Times Health Editor; March 2nd 2020).

By the end of June 2020 the World Health Organisation reported 8.9 million people were infected worldwide with almost half a million deaths (486.000). As the world waited for a vaccine to emerge, countries worldwide enforced lockdown policies which quickly accelerated into a global phenomenon. Schools and colleges were among the first places to be come under, what became known as, 'lockdown'.

7.2.1 Language: a change in everyday vocabulary

Lockdown was to become a new 'norm' in everyday life. Language changed, even for children with terms such as 'mask wearing', 'lockdown', 'social distancing', '2-meter distance', 'hand-sanitisation', 'isolation', 'contagion' and 'Covid-19 symptoms' becoming part of people's everyday vocabulary. Laws were enforced to prevent people travelling, visiting, going to work or attending schools. Daily news bulletins reported the growing numbers of people becoming infected, being hospitalized in ICU units and the evening news identified the daily death statistics from the virus. Only essential services, including supermarkets and health care services could remain open. 'Working from home', 'online learning' and 'social distancing' became the new norms in societies around the world.

7.2.2 Solidarity in Educational Equality 2020-2021

In Ireland, The Irish Times reporter, O'Reilly questioned 'had COVID-19 widened the educational divide? [62] Despite the best efforts of adult learners, Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and community education organisations, her report revealed:

> As we take stock of the impact of the pandemic, it makes sense to fundamentally address systemic issues of educational inequality; the irrefutable benefits of adult learning are essential as we face into our new future. The option was an action-focused strategy that would meet the needs of all adult learners; to address the long-term impact of Covid-19 on engagement, retention and progression across tertiary education, with a specific focus on marginalised learners, and the community education and FET sector. (O'Reilly. Niamh, The Irish Times. May 13th 2021).

Music education has often been perceived as 'elitist' but the concerns identified above were more associated with 'digital poverty' and 'connectivity and belonging' to ensure

[62] O'Reilly, a journalist with The Irish Times, and also chief executive of AONAS (The National Adult Learning Organisation) stated that although there was immense solidarity concerning educational equality, at the start of the pandemic in 2020, her report questioned if there had been a shift in attitudes a year later.

the leveraging of collective efforts across the education system (Ibid). This equally impacted on both music education and adult education and the role of music in society.

7.2.3 The Role of Music in Society

Listening to music is free to all sectors of society. A qualitative study of adult learners in Northern Ireland identified the value of music listening for older adults during the Covid-19 pandemic from two perspectives: firstly music was an emotional resource and secondly music was a 'social surrogate'[63]. Arising from their data analysis, in the form of semi-structured interviews, the authors found 'that music acted as a social surrogate providing company and reminders of social relationships and experiences. Music listening was a valued behaviour during COVID-19' (Goarke et al, 2022: 37). Many older adults experienced isolation during the pandemic and music listening was central to their daily lives. Although the article above focused on music listening as a surrogate and emotional resource, this equally applied to the music listening parameter in the online Allegro programme. It tended to be a favourite aspect of the class as it provided a platform for participants to discuss their likes and dislikes and their preferred musical listening choices. Such discussions normally occurred at the end of an online class and, from my professional and personal perspective, it offered a sense of closure to the online communication.

Connecting adults online through shared musical listening experiences enhanced quality of life and engendered a sense of belonging which was essential to mental well-being (chapter two). The efforts by international journals of music education and adult education indicated a prompt response to facilitate and inform teachers and researchers in the respective fields by providing insights into new ways of learning online. Based on

[63] 'Listening was an Emotional Resource and Social Surrogate for Older Adults during the COVID-19 Pandemic' by Goarke, MacCormac, McKenna Plumley, Graham-Wisener.

personal observations, music lessons online were often a welcome event for learners during their week. Regardless of age, engagement with music could lift the spirits by introducing a completely different experience to the 'stay at home' lifestyle that became synonymous with the pandemic. The flexibility, creativity and adaptability of the response of music educators gradually enabled a 'digital turn' to become a reality. This will be explored later in this chapter.

7.3 Timeframe of Covid-19: 2020-2022

The pandemic encompassed a time frame of two calendar years but it impacted on three academic years (starting in 2019-2020). A breakdown of each year is presented below to offer insight into how society and education coped with the ever-changing challenges.

7.3.1 Academic Year 2019- 2020

On March 13th 2020 the Irish government ordered the closure of all schools and colleges. These closures were to remain until the end of the academic year. All teaching and learning would be carried out online. Ireland, in line with other countries worldwide was in 'lockdown'. Throughout the summer government ministers and health professionals (amongst other professional bodies) sought to implement changes for the start of the next academic year with the optimistic aim of re-opening schools and colleges.

In her article, 'Twelve things Covid-19 as taught us about education and schooling', McGillicuddy reported that school is not just a physical building but rather a fulcrum which draws us together on a daily basis[64] She identified very mixed feelings within communities about schools and teachers; some people were critical of schools not doing enough while others felt they doing too much. Interestingly, there appeared to be a new-found appreciation for the role of teachers.

[64] Source: McGillicuddy, Deirdre. The Irish Times, June 30th 2020.

The academic year of 2020 had ended in lockdown but the public were expecting schools to re-open for the next academic year. By August, the reality of schools and colleges re-opening was fading as any location where people could congregate remained restricted by Government and social distancing was paramount for control of the virus. There was some optimism that the country would open September 2020 due largely to the possibility of a vaccine. Despite the optimism during the summer period the predictions were a disappointment for 2021.

7.3.2 Academic Year 2020-2021: The Vaccine Rollout

Mask wearing was compulsory for all Conservatoire students, regardless of age (despite schools not requiring primary school students to wear masks). Handouts or the transferring of books or any other objects was not permitted. Perplex screens were placed in every teaching room in accordance with the 2-meter social distance required between teacher and student

The Irish government issued a 'Return to Work Safely' protocol (published on 8th May 2020). In response and in collaboration with staff and social partners, TU Dublin issued a document stating: The guidelines for the curtailment of the virus would be continuously monitored to keep in line with the ever-changing Government regulations[65]. In September 2020 enrolment for online teaching took place in TU Dublin and Allegro applicants had to enrol and attend the programmes online.

The Conservatoire set up a regime that enabled individual instrumental tuition, with one week of face-to-face teaching alternating with one week of online teaching. In terms of music classes and lectures, some of the classes in the Conservatoire were small enough to be held face to face (numbers of 4-8 depending on the room size). The primary focus

[65] TU Document was entitled 'Towards a new way of working', which identified its obligations for the health and safety of staff, students and all campus users.

was that students sat the required '2-meter distance' apart while adhering to mandatory mask wearing and all other Government and HSE (Health Service Executive) guidelines. Towards the end of this semester some Allegro classes were possible in person. Students who attended these classes have recounted their experiences during interviews and in writing their reflections; the data will be presented later in this chapter.

A downturn followed in December and by Christmas 2020 the numbers of people infected soared in Ireland and the country returned to complete 'lockdown'. By January 2021 all classes reverted to the online platform. This policy was to remain until April. The vaccination rollout in Ireland was extending to more age groups by February 2021 but the rate of the rollout was slower than the public had anticipated. The Allegro programme remained online for the remainder of the academic year and subsequently students took their examinations online in May, 2021. Throughout the summer period the numbers of people infected had noticeably decreased and the prospects of a return to campus was gradually becoming a reality.

7.3.3 Academic year 2021-2022: A Return to Campus

By September 2021 there was sufficient reassurance from the HSE to permit the opening of schools and colleges as normal. Safety guidelines were still in place but, as the year progressed, there was a slackening in terms of mask wearing. Allegro students choose to wear masks throughout the academic year as did many third level and junior students (a small number took the option of not wearing one). Entertainment venues, theatres and concert halls had been re-opened with compulsory mask wearing; initially this sector had been severely impacted since the onset of the pandemic.

7.4 Impact of COVID-19 on Music Education

The COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted music education across the world. Amidst the chaos surrounding the education sectors, the question of how to communicate with

students became crucial in an effort to sustain connectivity between teachers and their students. The question was, 'how to do this?'. The 'digital poverty' referred to earlier in this chapter also applied to music learners. There was a sector of music students, from primary to tertiary students, who experienced issues regarding accessibility to iPads and laptops – crucial for being able to connect digitally to online lessons. Some students had to gain access by phone, thus a digital divide emerged. According to Ó Caollaí, the 'inequitable access to technology and broadband highlighted a digital divide that disproportionately affects low-income and rural students'[66] McGillicuddy's report (2020) had highlighted similar views but Ó Caollaí (2022) stated the divide was becoming more prominent.

Many younger music students came from diverse ethnic groups whose parents were predominately working in such areas as hospitality, retail and transport; all these jobs were severely impacted and many families had to apply for the PUP allowance [67]. Teachers were aware of the challenges amongst families and endeavoured to exercise flexibility and support for their students. At this stage music teaching and music education research focused on the digital platform as its primary resource for seeking an alternative pathway.

7.4.1 The Digital 'Turn' in Music Education

To address this need, The British Journal of Music Education were amongst the journals whose editors invited educators and researchers to contribute articles describing their experiences and methodologies for coping with the pedagogical challenges for online music education. The aim was to give educators valuable insight into what was happening

[66] Ó Caollaí. Éanna, The Irish Times June 28th 2022

[67] PUP (Pandemic unemployment payment) was issued to those who became unemployed as a result of the pandemic. It aimed to help families who were struggling economically.

to the music sector worldwide. Such critical thinking from differing perspectives provided a more-informed knowledge base for educators as a means of going forward.

In their editorial to 'The digital 'turn' in music education', Camlin and Lisboa, claimed 'the pandemic resulted in radical changes to the field of practice, accelerating a 'turn' toward online digital experiences' (Ibid., 2021: 129). This insight recognised the demands on music educators to re-invent their pedagogical approaches. Despite the acknowledgement that technology was an invaluable resource initially, it undeniably presented huge challenges for both educators and students. Teachers had to learn new skills, not just technological, but they had to develop creative alternative musical approaches that would communicate effectively online. Students were forced to work without the personal support of the teacher being present in the classroom. In his editorial 'Music-making continues during the pandemic', Fautley describes the role of technology in the music learning environment stating,

> (o)ne of the big things we have seen is the rise of the technological solution. For teachers, academics and researchers, on-line meetings have become the norm, with the webcam and micro-phone of the laptop computer being not just nice-to-have add-ons, but essential to the conduct of day-to-day work now. But it is not just the meeting that has changed, for many music educators and their pupils, music teaching and learning is now taking place remotely, with the computer forming the centrepiece of this interaction (Fautley, BJME 2020: 193).

In conjunction with teaching musical concepts the learning environment traditionally provided answers to questions, reassurance, personal help, motivation and a sense of belonging for the learner. The loss of this sense of belonging was compounded because students were isolated from each other – a factor that impacted on all students, from primary to tertiary to further education, including Allegro students. There were those who had never actually met anyone in person from their classes. Dissertation students frequently reiterated their experience of isolation as being intolerable at times, resulting

in feelings of loneliness and insecurity. Adults returning to education and participating in the Allegro programme often expressed similar sentiments (outlined later in this chapter).

In essence, the demands were considerable for all concerned as everyone struggled to find a 'new norm' within their particular sector. Effectively starting with a blank canvas, each teacher had to find their own specific level of communication. This was a difficult task as music, by its very nature, is a practical subject which needs personal involvement and communication. This researcher would concur with Fautley's view that,

> (m)usic-making, musi(k)ing, and creating, are all words which have something in common – they are active, they involve activity, they are 'doing' words, and they are what music education involves in many schools and colleges throughout the world. (Fautley, 2020: 193)

Setting up a zoom class required a new skill set, requiring imagination and creativity on the part of the music educator. The ultimate goal was the quality of learning for the student. During this period I was teaching young students, adolescents and adults. Personal observations and reflections revealed that approach of teaching and learning was similar among all age groups and that age was not a significant factor for learning music online. Many Allegro students were comfortable with laptops whereas younger adults and children would have difficulties in this domain needing the assistance of parents (who were encouraged to attend the virtual classroom). Online learning gradually became valued as a source that sustained communication for education.

7.4.2 The traumatic shift from class learning to online learning

The suddenness of the onset of the pandemic disarmed teachers, parents and students which resulted in educational administrations struggling to find ways to support their teaching staff. Many conservatoire class teachers faced the challenge of meeting students on zoom while trying to maintain professional standards by upskilling their technological proficiency. Teachers communicated with each other, learning from one another, sharing

their new software findings in a bid to find authentic pedagogical approaches, new platforms and new skill sets for 'teaching music musically' (Swanwick, 2011). This transition was also true for the Allegro programme.

The Teacher's Perspective

During the initial few weeks, the 'trial and error' syndrome was prevalent as music educators sought to research the best approaches for their students. The academic studies staff in the TU Dublin Conservatoire communicated regularly by email to share knowledge of online resources and links to relevant websites that would assist in maintaining authentic music pedagogy through digital learning. This approach was reflective of a study of Swedish music educators teaching on Facebook, which found the importance of 'teacher collegiality' within their particular group was a means of developing professional resilience (Thorgersen & Mars, 2021: 199). Despite the disruption to practice, the authors claimed that a common theme amongst professionals was 'the extent to which addressing the challenges of emergency remote teaching involved turning to others for practical, psychological, familial, peer and/or collegiate support' (Ibid: 196).

The concept of 'teacher collegiality' was prevalent in the Conservatoire and, although the Allegro programme was somewhat separate from the mainstream musicianship programme, the sharing of technology was a personal and professional lifeline for me. Research pertaining to the pandemic and the efforts of college staff to make the transition was not always successful. The research by McRichie et al. from Sheffield University presented a contrasting study that found there were a sector of lecturers from mainstream (non-music) colleges who had to delay or cancel lectures. This, they found, was due to either lecturers were not knowledgeable on how to us online platforms or the links they needed were not available the day before the lectures. Similar to this researcher's

experience in the conservatoire, they found the majority of lecturers transitioned effectively and this would be reflective of the findings here. The amalgamation of these research areas highlighted some of the challenges from the teacher/lecturer perspective.

The Student's Perspective

The student's perspective was not dissimilar to that of the teacher. Both were now alone, learning perhaps at the kitchen table or in the living room while their only source of support was sitting at a laptop and trying to communicate from a screen. The Allegro students were in a similar situation, although in 2020 they would have known other class members for almost two semesters, having commenced the course in September 2019. This interaction proved invaluable in the transition to online learning and it was one of the areas discussed in detail during the interviews - the value of colleagues and like-minded people being together in the class. Mary, like others missed out on this interaction

> I feel there's huge learning from a group situation and people are much more inclined to enter into discussions, they look at one another, you can ask a question with your eyes, lift an eyebrow, all of that. So it's a better learning experience for certain aspects. The stuff that has to be learned, the theoretical and all the rest, I think is very well suited to online learning.

Colm commented that the online learning made him feel more isolated and despite doing previous online courses he had certain reservations about learning music online:

> If there isn't that interactive dimension to it, if it's just an online lecture, it seems to be fine. But when there's an interactive dimension to it, as is the case in music, and there's a need for some sort of feedback and some sort of engagement. I was a bit concerned that doing it online, wouldn't be as successful for me, anyway, as actually doing it face-to-face. I really enjoyed being in the classroom.

Eye contact with each other and the unspoken interaction was mentioned by other interviewees. They felt a shared understanding of how the 'live' class worked. Another important factor was the idea of sharing ideas through discussion. This was less viable on Zoom, according to the majority of interviewees, because as only one person at a time

can speak online, others have to wait before speaking so there is no conversational flow in the dialogue.

One of the first steps taken to keep Allegro connected was to set up a WhatsApp for both Allegro groups. The ultimate aim was to sustain connectivity within each group. This created a fun dimension, because with the constant variety of online videos and cartoons many students shared amazing performances by musicians (classical, jazz and folk genres were the most popular) and they could 'chat' about them via the app. There were some parallels between Allegro online teaching and the study of Swedish educators' teaching on Facebook (as mentioned earlier) as both were based on the sharing and discussion of musical concepts relating to formal and informal learning among adult music students.

7.4.3 Dichotomy between online learning versus emergency remote teaching

Arising from to the rapid onset of COVID-19 'emergency remote teaching' had to be adapted initially. The concept of 'emergency' receded as teachers found their particular niche and learning over a network became more manageable. 'Online learning' began to take the place of 'emergency remote teaching' in the educational spectrum which included music education and the Allegro programme. It may be useful at this stage to outline the categories of distant learning in order to put adult music learning into context, as a means of identifying the difference between what measures music educators had to adopt at the start COVID-19 and the changes that evolved after that initial crisis. Three categories of learning gradually became synonymous with online learning: synchronous learning, asynchronous learning and blended learning:

1. Synchronous learning

This area involves musicians learning at different geographical locations over a network, which facilitates teaching, learning, rehearsing or performing at the same time. Students connected to the zoom classes for Allegro from various locations around the country.

2. Asynchronous learning

This suggests learning at different times and can take place through diverse platforms. An example would involve a class being recorded or videoed to be heard or watched at a later time. This may have been conducive to the Allegro class, but it was not embraced during the pandemic as the classes were conducted on the Zoom platform. Listening extracts or aural activities were e-mailed to students and these aspects could be listened to at a time that suited the learner, after class.

3. Blended or *Hybrid learning*

Blended learning involves both of the above approaches wherein the teaching and learning is conducted in a structured mixture of both. On a positive note for online music learning, some research highlighted the positive contribution of music education to family life during lockdown because 'social isolation is a distressing experience when it is externally imposed' (Diego Calderon-Garrido et al, cited in Camlin & Lisboa, 2021: 130). Blended learning has a more humanistic approach, in recognising the position of the learner having to learn in isolation, the social isolation was one of the biggest challenges for learners and this was evident in the data from the Allegro students.

Allegro in the context of synchronous, asynchronous and blended/hybrid learning

The programme sought to adapt the third concept as aural skills and listening were introduced online (synchronous learning) and PowerPoints could be played anytime

during the week, enabling students to listen to musical performances of video links sent by email (asynchronous learning)**.** Blended learning was the general platform for Allegro as the class was more designed for attendance rather than recording. The professional challenge was to structure and communicate the programme online while ensuring students could grasp and understand the musical parameters being presented each week. The process for both students and educators was like a shift from 'offline worlds to online worlds' (Gibson, 2021:130). Such 'worlds' were certainly a reality in the world of the adult music learner.

7.4.4 Impact of the pandemic on adult education.

Gibson maintains a shift in thinking is needed to successfully re-frame offline worlds in an online setting (Ibid:130). Her referral to online and offline worlds has parallels to the adult music learner's experiences; both the life and musical experiences that the perspective Allegro learner brings into the class is synonymous with their offline world, while the technical learning environment is synonymous with their online world. The offline learning is at the heart of meaningful musical learning. The human connectivity in the class context is essential to the cognitive, psychological and sociological well-being of the adult learner, similar to younger students.

In March 2021, an AONTAS report stated that although staff in colleges did tremendous work to make the abrupt switch to virtual learning as smooth as possible, it was no substitute for the real thing. Although the report focused on 22-year old students, the findings are not dissimilar to those experienced by other adult groups. The Allegro programme had students from this age group in 2020 and 2021[68]. In a poll conducted by the annual Irish Survey of Student Engagement of almost 50,000 students the results

[68] As a module on the BACCI degree course, Allegro now included students in their twenties and early thirties.

> showed a dramatic decline in the number of students who felt they had quality interactions with staff. Students reported fewer social opportunities; fewer chances to collaborate with peers; and a widespread sense that there was less engagement generally than in previous years. (The Irish Times, March 2021).

Social isolation is an unnatural phenomenon with negative connotations such as those identified in this report. COVID-19 was disrupting societies throughout the world and in its pathway it was impacting on the traditional values that people hold, notably the need to connect with others. This connectivity is fundamental to the individual in society.

7.4.5 Collegiality: A resource for music educators

Researchers and journal articles published during the pandemic often referred to the lack of support for staff by school and college administrations (Fautley, 2020; Camlin & Lisboa, 2021). The implications for educators became clear as commencement dates for online courses were announced by schools and colleges and teachers were faced with meeting these deadlines. Schiavio et al. state that in order for teachers to be able to adapt and continue to be 'integral to students' ongoing development they as educators, needed

> to adapt pedagogical approaches fluently and efficiently in response to unfamiliar and disruptive circumstances, and this also requires institutions to mobilise the necessary resources and training for their workforce to support them to be able to respond most effectively (Schiavio, Biasuttui & Phillipe, 2021: 131).

Similar to the worlds of science and medicine, educational institutions were themselves endeavouring to find coping mechanisms to stabilise their particular schools, colleges and conservatoires. According to Dawn & Lennox, the importance of narrative enquiry as a methodological approach (Clandinin, 2013) can create a theme of collegiality amongst staff whereby teachers telling and re-telling their lived experiences helped one another in finding new ways of addressing the challenges in their individual practices within these narratives (Dawn & Lennox, 2021). Collegiality amongst academic staff was the critical support which, for me personally, greatly fostered confidence in facing the challenges of teaching Allegro online. Throughout the pandemic four categories of students were identified in the context of the data findings for this research.

7.5 Four Categories of Allegro Students across the pandemic

1. Students who changed from face-to-face to online learning
2. Students who did the full academic year Allegro programme online
3. Students who changed from online to face-to-face learning
4. Students who discontinued Allegro online due to the impact of the pandemic on their lives.

Identification of each of these categories is imperative in relation to presenting the views expressed by each cohort in interviews. It should be noted that all interviewees were very explicit about their experiences both in terms of the programme, the online platform and their preferences about learning music online in the future. The interviews enriched the data findings in offering valuable insight into the experiences of learners in each category.

1. Adults who changed from face-to-face learning to online learning (March 2020)

These were students who were mid-stream on the Allegro programme when the pandemic struck Ireland[69]. Schools and colleges closed in March and it wasn't envisaged at that stage that the academic year would end under the cloud of Covid-19 and, in line with other education sectors, all examination and assessment processes needed to be re-structured. Modifications to the Allegro examinations were also necessary.

2. Adults who were exclusively online learners (2020-2021)

The academic year (2020-2021) began with the Irish Government's restrictions on group and class learning remaining in force. Students in this group enrolled online in September 2020 and, as lockdowns and restrictions lasted the entire academic year, teaching was

[69] This group started in September 2019, had competed the first term and half of the second semester face-to-face before the lockdown in March 13th 2020.

conducted exclusively online. The severity of the pandemic developed the concept of social distancing, which was gradually to become the norm in all group gatherings.

Pedagogical approaches had to be re-invented as teaching and learning was totally shifted to online. The digital platform posed difficulties particularly in the area of aural skills. Slight inconsistencies in transmission, such as time delays on zoom, impacted on the quality of sound and subsequently impacted on aural and listening activities. Most significantly, students in this category did not have the opportunity to meet other Allegro students in person or to discuss the programme or to express their opinions or concerns. They were denied the opportunity to share their musical experiences, the Allegro programme and their life experiences; interviews from the data highlight these difficulties. Based on personal observation, online learning inadvertently caused a sense of isolation and possibly insecurity of the person's own perception of their ability to learn and pass examinations. Online learning denied adults the opportunity to discuss how they felt about returning to music or embarking on it for the first time. This essential social aspect of adult learning in sharing the life experiences (jobs, hobbies, lifestyles, musical histories and musical preferences) requires a live exchange of ideas rather than an online platform.

3. Adults who changed from online learning to face-to-face learning (2021-22).

In September 2021 schools and colleges began to cautiously accommodate class teaching and adults enrolled for the Allegro programme. Owing to the smaller numbers in music classes, the conservatoire could re-commence by maintaining a level of social distancing and mask wearing was not mandatory. Masks inhibited singing and made teaching and communication more challenging. They also cover facial identity which impacts on the social aspect of the adult learning environment. Despite these issues the

vast majority favoured maintaining these former restrictions; caution was key until the classroom experience could return to normal.

The change from online to face-to-face was very welcomed by students as it re-introduced a sense of normality and connectedness. Of the three groups outlined so far, this group were particularly delighted to be in class and surrounded by like-minded adult students. Personally, the return to face-to-face teaching was a wonderful feeling as the musical activities presented each week in class could be taught in a more supportive and meaningful way. After the pandemic challenges teaching and learning could revert to the musically holistic experience of pre-pandemic, the latter had been the core aim of the original Allegro vision.

4. Adults who discontinued Allegro during the pandemic (2020-2021)

There were those who found learning online too demanding, approximately 50% discontinued by October 2020. They reported a sense of disconnectedness as being the main reason for leaving. It should be noted that in the second year of COVID-19 people were feeling disorientated after the lockdowns and some confided to me that they found it difficult to cope with the absence of a normal class. The concept of more online activities at home created a feeling of overload, as often other family members were working online from home and/or children were attending school online. These reasons, plus health issues were among main factors responsible for people leaving the programme. This information was personally related to me by Allegro students in interviews or online conversations where they communicated their reasons for leaving.

It is relevant to note that those who were struggling were faced with the choice of staying or leaving (around 10%). I offered some individual online teaching to a few students as some adults just needed the support of listening to their learning concerns and difficulties.

There were five who decided they would enrol when 'normality returned', three of whom returned the following year.

7.6 The transitional pathway from 'face-to-face learning' to 'emergency response learning' to 'online learning'

Allegro commenced in 2012 and throughout the decade the majority of participants had demonstrated their understanding of negotiating the internet (seeking sources for projects, essays and music performances). In the case of those who were unfamiliar with technology, peer mentoring was sometimes offered by those in the class who were very knowledgeable in this area. Based on my professional observations, adult learners were generally very keen to embrace the new challenges that online learning presented and their reservations and apprehensions were no greater than those of other learners.

The arts, including music, have traditionally been a preference for adult learners and the role of the digital platform has been a significant contributory factor (chapter two). In the United States, a Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (2008) noted a decline in adult participation in the arts from 2002-2008. One explanation was that from 2008 onwards adults were discovering new ways of participation namely on the internet. Roulston stated that the survey found that of the 70% of adults in the USA who go online once a day, almost 40% use online venues to view, listen to, or post artworks and performances (National Endowment of the Arts, 2009: 7. Cited in Roulston, 2010: 342). The survey also found a significant number of adults participated in adult music learning classes.

This concurs with the research data here that identified technology and the arts as two key areas of interest for the adult learner. The way forward in using digital technology had some familiar horizons for many Allegro students during the pandemic. Data from the interviews revealed that the majority had good technical skills and that the biggest

issue was being social isolated from other class members and the teacher. The process for presenting Allegro online was set out in a series of stages as the challenges varied in terms of difficulties for both student and teacher. It is evident from international research how music education survived during on the pandemic – by all sectors and parties including Allegro participants endeavouring to rise to the challenges.

7.6.1 Stage One: A basis for communication: social media

In response to the fear of change that assailed everyone at the onset of the pandemic, the first step was to set up a WhatsApp for each of the Allegro groups. Aside from their contact with the teacher the app enabled them to communicate with one another. The class of 2019/2020 knew each other as stated earlier. Students in the following year were less fortunate as they never met personally for the entire duration of the programme. This was a significant shortfall for adult learners as the sociological aspect of the learning environment is an integral of the group dynamics.

The App, while providing an alternative to face-to-face communication, created a different type of cohesion within the groups by replacing for one-to-one chats. I was aware that my continuous presence on the screen prevented the 'normal' interactions in which two people could naturally engage. Nevertheless, upon reflection people did get to know each other even if the platform may be perceived by many as 'artificial'.

The Conservatoire allowed small groups of learners attend the college in the first semester of 2020/2021. This ideal opportunity which was not to be missed and I arranged that two groups of four students could attend two classes; four was the maximum number allowed owing to small room sizes. In contrast to normal classes there were no physical exchanges such as distribution of handouts or percussion instruments. However, as the student numbers were small I distributed some instruments (sanitized) that students could keep.

I had a surplus of these and was happy to pass them on to encourage students to practice rhythmic exercises at home.

Continuity became an issue as people who had signed up for Allegro found themselves struggling to attend which affected approximately 40% of participants. Allegro students, who were also parents, were sometimes under pressure to keep up with their children's education online. These parents discontinued the programme as they felt the needs of their children had to be given precedence, which was understandable as young students were also trying to cope with the new norm of learning online.

In the first semester of 2020 I had two senior musicianship classes which, because of large numbers, had to remain online. The Allegro classes were small due to the issue of people discontinuing and hence it worked reasonably well[70].

7.6.2 Stage Two: Supporting students transition to online learning

Following on from stage one the next step was that students needed to be informed how to connect with zoom. Much 'trial and error' followed from both sides, yet after a few weeks an equilibrium gradually evolved in line with a new technological pedagogy. It's reasonable to say that many people were now becoming familiar with Zoom as schools were operating from this and similar platforms. The basic processes of how to connect and come online was crucial in allowing Allegro students to 'see' the both teacher and each other, in order to set the stage for a new music learning environment. It became necessary to navigate the course using a different pathways, which were as unfamiliar to the teacher as they were to the student.

[70] Classes had only four students which was particularly low compared to previous years.

7.6.3 Stage Three: Delivering Allegro Online

Resources included in each lesson:

- *Technical* – Navigation of online platforms, laptop, software, microphones, earphones.
- *PowerPoint* – Presentation of class content online, which was emailed to students after the class.
- *Resources* – worksheets for the development of aural skills were emailed to students in advance of the lesson.
- *Sibelius* – musical examples of rhythm, melody, composition presented online and played on Sibelius. Attachments were emailed to students or sent via WhatsApp in advance of the class.
- *MSWord*: Documents on musical styles, history, programme notes, background to musical works and composers were sent in place of handouts and emailed in advance of the class in PDF format.
- *You Tube:* Performances of musical works on the courses were played on You Tube with forwarded links
- *Assignments:* Presented initially on PowerPoint for discussion. These were emailed to students after the class in PDF format.
- *Examinations:* A format to combine the duality of musical and digital areas, plus modifications, were needed for online examinations.

Timing was an important consideration in the shift to online teaching, as critical consideration needed to be given to resources and class materials. Some data was sent in advance of the lesson and some after the lesson which allowed students to be introduced to a parameter either prior to, or during the learning process. Timing was crucial as sending certain material in advance could potentially worry some students who may be

feeling isolated and fearful of being unable to keep up with the curriculum content. Such sentiments had been expressed by students during informal chats before or after the class. Each week as students entered the online forum they expressed their views about online music classes and were able to share their own music learning experiences at home and online.

7.7 Challenges of presenting musical parameters online

By March 2020 Allegro had been running for eight years but owing to the pandemic, now the musical concepts that had been meaningfully communicated in the live classroom now necessitated review and re-structuring for online teaching. Development of aural skills was fundamental to the practicalities of learning the musical parameters but learning online had issues regarding sound transmission which impacted on the quality of group aural work online.

Group performance of rhythmic patterns required students to use the 'mute' while clapping or playing rhythms, sometimes without mutes for smaller groups. Pedagogically, it was very difficult to evaluate how students were performing, whether with rhythms or singing, due to the sound discrepancies. A compromise was needed and, in my judgement, the best option was for the teacher to demonstrate how to perform both rhythms and singing in order to foster confidence in motivating students to practice themselves at home. I suggested they could record their playing/singing and listen afterwards – this was an option that several choose. To set them up for home practice, midi recordings of rhythmic and singing exercises that were played and recorded on Sibelius which were emailed to students after the class. Printed versions of the same exercises were also sent on WhatsApp, to afford students greater flexibility and choice as to when and where they could practice offline, including on their phones. The aural parameters proved the most challenging for all concerned.

7.7.1 Rhythm

In the face-to-face Allegro class rhythmic exercises would normally be performed as an ensemble (chapter five). This was very challenging online owing to the delay in sound transmission because, despite the use of mutes students became distracted; findings from the data indicated that most interviewees claimed they would normally be aware of everyone's efforts and their tendency was to observe and listen to one another rather than to participate. Some stated they wanted to see if others were coping with the musical task. The lack of physical interaction in 'feeling the beat' and 'feeling the pulse of the melody' was only possible in the classroom context – this was the consensus of the majority according to data findings. Mary summed up her opinion of all aural work online stating, 'anything to do with the aural, I prefer in person. I just think there's maybe delays or there's distortions and the sound isn't good enough I think for that'. Vivian spoke of the solidarity as being 'isolated online in the sitting room or in the bedroom while you're trying to tap out a rhythm'. They felt performance of rhythm online was too much of a challenge and it certainly denied them the enjoyment factor. Siobhan offered a positive note saying she enjoyed it because 'even if we can only have a good laugh at our efforts, having mucked it all up!". All these participants had experienced Allegro in the live class. Playing rhythm on percussion instruments for was almost impossible on Zoom due to the echo effect. This teacher was reassured when a colleague, a percussion teacher, who told me he couldn't teach percussion instruments online. The challenges were ever- present for everyone.

7.7.2 Singing

There were similar sentiments expressed regarding singing and pitching. Overall, Allegro students didn't mind using the mute and singing alone although some of the men said they disliked the sound of their voice online. Comparable with rhythm, Conal said 'singing individually was fine, I didn't mind that, but singing as a group was too

distracting due to the technical issues in sound as we just were not singing together' (this was true). Siobhan shared her choral experiences with the class, stating that 'the singing for our choir practice online was the same; it was boring learning and singing your own melody but singing together just did not work, it simply is not possible musically on zoom'. Conor, whose career was sound manager, explained to the class and later during his interview, that two different platforms were needed for zoom – audio and visual but 'the problem is that it cannot support the two platforms, nor can it handle frequency … 'this is why zoom tends to have a telephonic sound'. When asked what he felt he may have missed out on in the zoom class Patrick replied,

> Perhaps singing was harder due to sound interruptions and poor sound quality. The sense of being on your own and your voice seems louder because there's an echo effect happening. Also with time delays, you think you're singing out of time with everyone else. So it's very disconcerting.

Pedagogically two-part singing online was compromised as playing such extracts on Sibelius loses the musical nuances that exist in the human voice. This was also a factor that impeded the quality of singing a bass and soprano in figured bass or singing a modulating melody. The necessary alternatives of the teacher singing and demonstrating made the session even more 'teacher-led'; singing a song and echo-singing a phrase or a modulation was, from a professional perspective, a limited alternative. On the positive side, students were encouraged to participate in music performance through the medium of these demonstrations/recordings.

During the interviews students spoke about practicing themselves at home. Adult students realised the limitations and consequently, in my view, we worked well as a group in facilitating the learning of performing aural tasks. Patrick, Conor, Vivian and Siobhan all said they understood the technical shortcomings but Vicky reminded the group 'we just have to get on with it as best we can.' Their motivation was commendable. Jack explained

> I knew the limitations of zoom from my work but I still felt we were managing and I was learning – that is what I wanted'; 'These were the technical hurdles and nobody could solve them. For me, I was glad to be able to complete Allegro II although I missed the great interaction we had in Allegro I.

The above comments about online learning indicate positive and negative attitudes. The ethos of the Allegro participants aspired to become a joint collaboration that could meet the challenges of online learning despite the obvious limitations. Mary offered her summary of the aural parameters of Allegro online:

> The sound nearly drove me mad – it was awful. Singing was better than performing rhythm, I felt singing was more manageable than rhythm because the sound quality was worse with rhythm.

Learning resources: handouts, links, recordings, musical examples from Sibelius

I harboured reservations about the validity of the my pedagogical approach on the zoom platform. The interviews partly addressed these concerns as students maintained that having the learning materials emailed and covered in the online class gave them the confidence to work alone and to use some of their own initiatives to seek further knowledge to build upon. Callum recalled

> the references we were given were very good as they allowed me to, not only work on what was being covered, but the references were great because the enabled me to seek further information on a specific topic or musical task.

In relation to learning resources Mary said 'I found it fantastically helpful and I really appreciated the work that went it in advance of getting them to us. I just thought it was fantastic, really great'. The data reaffirmed the value of such resources for online music learning.

7.7.3 Composition

In the face-to-face interaction in the classroom composition can be great fun, engaging in trial and error, making decisions regarding rhythm, pitch, phrasing and style but most

importantly, composition was a participatory process. Pat described his experience of composition in class and online,

> I found the composition good online because you played it on Sibelius and showed other alternatives to the melodies. However, in class we were singing as we composed – you could hear what was happening and we had the support of the class. All that was missing online which made it less engaging and enjoyable.

Siobhan's described her experience of composition,

> you would write the opening on the board and, although you played it on the piano online, in the class we could actually sing it together; then we could suggest what would be good to follow based on in the style of the opening, but most importantly we were always singing it, so at home I could sing what I was writing – this was one of the reasons I came on the course.

Conal maintained a neutral stance on composition being taught online or in class,

> Even in the class environment, I'd find it difficult just because of the fact that I haven't got the musical background. I could sit down and do composition fine, but I'd have to do it offline and sit down and hum it out to myself and write it out myself in a rather slow process. But nothing to do with being online or offline, particularly.

The challenges encountered by adult music students were not dissimilar to those in other sectors. In 2022 a qualitative research study from Malta investigated the experiences of mature students (non-music) switching from face-to-face to online lectures. The research identified three top issues listed below:

> 1) technical problems; 2) limited interaction with fellow students and 3) lecturer related problems. Some experienced a combination of these factors. Technical problems topped the list of problems encountered by students when they shifted to online lectures. (Fiorini, Borg & Debono, Journal of Adult and Continuing Education, 2022: 364).

This survey is comparable to adult music education and although there were technical issues amongst some adult music students, the interview data reflected that sociological issues were the primary concern with technological rating second in importance. The study found the exclusivity of online lectures limited interaction between the students. In some cases students noted that this hampered the possibility to discuss their difficulties with their colleagues and Allegro interviewees expressed similar difficulties. Overall,

face-to-face questioning and discussing experiences and difficulties with colleagues was a significant shortcoming on the digital platform and posed a challenge (Ibid: 366).

Interviewees Colman and Saoirse identified the lack of communication with other class members was their main criticism. Prior to the pandemic, they regularly met for coffee when attending Allegro I (a morning class) and met for lunch while attending Allegro II (an afternoon class) for the first two semesters prior to the arrival of COVID-19. These social encounters provided an informal setting where they could discuss the class, identify difficulties in assignments and projects, and engage in some 'banter' about some of their efforts at performance. Saoirse also stated that in the class she could observe other students to see if they were grasping musical concepts because it was possible to 'feel' the music in the room in terms of singing or playing rhythms. She said this was totally absent online, and as Colman reiterated 'it was impossible to gauge these things on a screen'. The third issue referred to lecturer related matters, mostly concerning non-attendance and missed lectures. This was known as a concern among some lecturers but was not relevant to the context of this research.

Despite the challenges of performing rhythms and melodies, the fun factor was maintained or as Vivian termed it 'the craic'. This was frequently referred to during the interviews. Despite the 'banter' and 'craic' my personal observations identified an underlying determination of adults to master musical skills. Performance, interspersed with questions and comments on the strengths and weaknesses of individual capabilities, was the ethos of the class.

The area of composition was considered less effective online for some including Pat, Vivian, Conal, Colman and Saoirse claimed that learning to compose in the classroom enabled them to sing, whereas on zoom they relied on Sibelius playing the melodies or

the teacher singing or playing piano. They felt they missed out on this particular creative aspect of composition. Joyce explained:

> when we were together, we would sing as you wrote on the board and tease out the reasons for particular musical choices – this encouraged us to sing when composing at home. Deciding on phrasing, tempo and dynamics – making musical decisions – worked best in the class environment as one can hear the nuances online.

The compromise for online pedagogy, was to play on Sibelius and make changes accordingly asking, what Jorgensen terms 'this or that' approach; this usually involved students head-nodding 'yes' or 'no' or using text boxes (Ibid., 1997, 2003a). The key point here was made by Joyce, 'playing on Sibelius was great but you couldn't make comments as it would cause disruption'.

7.7.4 Theoretical

The data found that the majority of participants maintained the theoretical elements worked well online. Notation, scales, time and key signatures, intervals, transposition and chords are factually-based and are more effectively communicated online than aural. The opportunity to ask questions is essential to all learning, including theory as adult learners need to know the reason for learning something and to understand the point of an theoretical exercise. Questions are an integral part of the teaching/learning process as shared views created cohesion in the group (discussed in chapters three, five and six.)

7.7.5 A Trio: Harmony, Figured Bass and Piano Accompaniment

The data showed a general agreement amongst the students that the musical parameters of harmony, figured bass and even piano accompaniment worked well online. Pat said 'the piano sounded different online but it helped to hear you play the accompaniment; playing harmony on Sibelius and sending us the musical handouts were a big help for me'. Conal stated, 'the emailed attachments were terrific for helping to recap on what we covered in class'. Colm said the value of online learning was 'the great references that

were sent on PowerPoint and PDFs which enabled me to work at my own pace' According to Marie,

> the PowerPoints were a terrific help; they allowed me to reflect on these areas of the lesson content and take things more slowly; however, the harmony, history, analysis and theoretical worked very well online, just as good as the class situation.

These viewpoints indicated the necessary modifications in the pedagogical approach for teaching these three areas online (chapter five presented the in-person class approach which contrasts to the online approach).

7.7.6 Listening

Playing performances on You Tube which was so valuable in class became less enjoyable online. Listening to musical works, despite added technical equipment attached to the teacher's device, became compromised. An alternative was to send a link of the actual performance to students supported by other references in order to limit the online listening to shorter excerpts. Most students concurred that they could only hear parts of the work clearly due to continuous sound disruptions (which also depended on the listener's location and internet connection). The joy of watching and discussing aspects of a performance was considerably curtailed. Despite these issues I felt the music listening should remain an important activity for every class. The outcome of group discussions resulted in a joint agreement to listen to the performances on their laptops or phones so that each person could enjoy the music during the week in their own time and a discussion would follow at the next class.

Technical shortcoming in relation to breaks in transmission, connectivity and sound quality had been quickly identified amongst music teachers and researchers, followed by exhaustive research publications concerning the impact of teaching a subject like music on a digital platform. In his research article in *Music Education* (August 2021) Mlynczak claimed that music education was arguably the subject that was hardest hit during the

pandemic and 'certainly broken down from where it was in February of 2020' (Ibid:28).[71] Similar publications in journal articles, music magazines and media sources throughout 2020-2022 concurred with the findings of music researchers, teachers, lecturers and students. The term 'broken down' was an apt description of teaching Allegro online as I endeavoured to break down the musical parameters in a way that would be compatible with an online approach while remaining musically meaningful for students online learning. I would agree with the reality of Mlynczak's statement that music education was the hardest hit, as sound quality is of the essence in musical sounds and listening.

7.7.7 History

The general consensus from the interview data indicated that Allegro students felt the quality of learning worked equally well with history online or face-to-face. Pedagogically this may be viable but with the online platform the opportunity for discussion of a specific work, composers or developments in music history had some shortcomings. History by its very nature opens a pathway for discussion that adults generally valued and enjoyed in the Allegro programme. Prior to COVID-19 social outings to concerts was encapsulated in the history parameter. Similar to the listening area more emphasis was placed on handouts with links to relevant performances on You Tube sent by email during the pandemic. The combined history and listening parameters created a holistic environment in the adult music learning class by providing a palette for musical conversations and social cohesion. This approach needed modification for online communication but all the challenges, although modified, were realised (based on the data).

[71] Source: Mlynczak, School Band & Orchestra Magazine, March 2021

7.7.8 Musical Analysis

Musical analysis was not discussed in much detail by interviewees, as the data reflected that listening and history were foremost in the minds of students. Pat maintained that following the score with the cursor worked well in the online class 'however you would do this anyway in class on You Tube, but it did work online', but Colm added a note of caution to remind everyone, 'except of course, for the sound quality'.

In respect to the online platform for musical analysis, Patrick maintained.

> I didn't gain a good understanding of this in terms of how to describe what's going on in a piece of music. I feel the face to face classes give deeper learning and better class interaction. And other students talking in class about what's happening in a piece of music, something you wouldn't have even thought about and now suddenly you're gaining a bit more knowledge.

Based on personal and practical experience analysis generally worked well on Zoom. The cursor enabled the student to follow the musical lines on the screen with relevant stopping to facilitate identification and discussion of musical concepts. This researcher found analysis of the orchestral score was suited to a virtual classroom.

7.7.9 The Research Project

The concept of this parameter was to recognise the autonomy of the adult learner (chapter two) and to enable each student to explore and research their preferred musical genre (chapters one and five). This was similar to delivering a lecture online as, from a teaching perspective, it was information- based interspersed with limited discussion.

Siobhan said

> I found this difficult online. Last year when we did Allegro I our coffee meetings would be the opportunity for us to chat about our choices for the project. We would discuss sources and websites. Also we could compare ideas on how we were going to approach writing it; although you had covered this in class we could discuss it from our own individual perspectives and share ideas.'

Saoirse agreed with Siobhan

> I welcomed the opportunity to research a topic of n were my own choice. Although it was more challenging that I had anticipated, there was a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment when I completed it'.

7.8 Themes arising from the research

There were common themes that emerged from the data involving COVID-19 in the semi-structured interviews and reflective writings of participants. This research identified the lack of social interaction as being the most significant negative factor in conducting the Allegro class online. The opportunity to ask questions and have class interaction was restricted was another theme that arose. Issues involving gender was an unexpected theme by this researcher. Notably, it was women who discontinued the programme whereas no men discontinued. Commitments at home took precedence over women's goals for their own personal pursuit of music; they had previously made the decision to enrol on a music programme of their choice from which they now had to withdraw owing to family responsibilities. The age factor was another emergent theme but based on this research it was not concerning factor for online learning. In this educational context both adults students and young students needed support and reassurance from the teacher to develop their musical skills and creativity on this new platform. Adaptability was a key finding as every student, regardless of age, needed to adapt to a new approach to learning music online.

All participants were of white ethnicity and in the age bracket of 22-78 years. Some were working in jobs, many were professionals, some were students from other colleges and others were retired (a sector of the latter were semi-retired).

7.8.1 Social Concepts

Based on the research outlined here and the views of Allegro students the lack of social interaction seems to have been the biggest factor in conducting a class online. Some classes were streamed but the feeling was a 'dual-experience'; those in class felt separated from those online. The pedagogical approach when streaming had its challenges and, from my professional perspective, it felt like teaching two separate groups. Comments in interviews included 'I missed the social contact'(Mary); 'the biggest problem was we were not seeing each other anymore' (Colman). Interestingly, these sentiments were expressed by all interviewees.

This sociological theme reflects a sense of pragmatism from the ontological stance as discussed in chapter three. During the pandemic people were focused on what was happening in the world. Weekly online classes afforded people the opportunity to voice their opinions about the global situation, but also they could share the concerns for themselves and one another in terms of lifestyle changes and social isolation.

There was a general sense of reflection about life, our society, the world and the future. The question of 'how would the world change after Covid-19?' was a frequent topic of conversation before or after the online class. If, as Rescher argues, the essence of reality is change, the changes in the aftermath of the pandemic had yet to be realised. Teaching during the pandemic revealed that people were in a reflective mode and as Pierce's concept of pragmatism suggests, these reflective processes were to search for clarity.

The second most prominent view was the lack of spontaneity that the classroom provided. 'You could comment on another person's view and at times we could share our views as a group – this wasn't possible online' (Marie). This led to another important aspect of adult musical learning – the opportunity to share opinions with like-minded people in a 'live' class environment.

7.8.2 Group Interaction and Questioning

The research data revealed there was a general consensus among participants that online teaching impeded the opportunity to ask questions as Vicky explained,

> You felt if you asked a question, you would stop the class. When another voice is heard, other that the teacher's, there is a reaction of "who said that?" and this destroys the flow of the class; therefore, you are not inclined to ask a question because of the effect it will have'.
>
> I was very reluctant to ask a question because it would cause too much disruption and I felt my question might sound stupid online. When we ask a question in class, someone else might join in and it could become a group discussion with the teacher. This was not possible on zoom (Siobhan).

These arguments concur with the research from the University of Sheffield which maintained,

> Many participants found it more difficult to ask a question in the online learning setting, particularly when other people were talking; participants felt they needed to wait longer for their turn to interact with the teacher, and consequently, much more concentration was required for online classes. (McRichie et al: 12)

Throughout this work, the provision of an environment for of sharing of ideas has been recognised as vital for adult learners. Often one person asked a question that others were hoping would be asked. This sharing helped develop collaboration with the class teacher by creating an informal atmosphere wherein Allegro students could inadvertently get to know one another's musical perspectives and preferences. In the context of the adult music learning environment, such concepts could be interpreted as being a form of 'student collegiality', similar to 'teacher collegiality', as both are rooted in the sharing of ideas and information in order to provide support and confidence for moving forward.

7.8.3 Gender Factors.

The research revealed issued regarding gender and the changing roles of men and women in the 'stay at home' restrictions arising from the pandemic. Mira commenced on the Allegro I programme for two semesters but had to discontinue in the final semester. She completed all assignments for the first term and almost all the second term for which she

achieved good marks. She related there were a number of family issues that influenced her decision, 'My husband decided we should go paperless this year (he had decided on this course of action for his business) but I was constantly struggling with the technology'. I had noticed Mira was writing with a digital pen on tablets which seemed to be slowing her down considerably in her efforts to take notes for herself; not only was she facing the challenges of learning music for the first time but she was struggling to facilitate a 'paperless trail'. She further stated in her interview

> My daughter is doing her Leaving Certificate and my son is in college, and there is too much technology in use in our house. I feel by doing the course I am not giving them the time and space they need so I will stay to finish the course but will not do any further homework or assessments, if you are okay with that decision?'.

Jenn had two primary school children and I became aware that she had discontinued submitting homework or assignments after a few weeks. Similar to Mira, she stated

> the kids were on the laptop and my husband was working online also. It was too much for me to fully engage in the course in terms of assignments. I was learning and I was enjoying myself being there, which was my reason for staying for the full academic year; I just liked being part of the class'.

Gender inequality was an unexpected finding from this researcher's perspective. Fatima described her experience as a working mother during the pandemic,

> despite having 'high-powered business careers' some employers could be indifferent to the predicament of women having the children at home, stating 'they don't want to know anything about women's role as mothers – they expect the children to be out of sight, is not always possible.

She felt that professional women were 'being stereotyped during the pandemic' (2021). Some parents had a roster-type arrangement for being present at the music class; taking turns to free the other person's time for work or other commitments. This was not a feminist perspective but rather a gender-equality perspective.

Despite September 2020 being the first year of the pandemic, as they year progressed things were gradually becoming more manageable in terms of the technology. However, with the passage of time there was much pressure on wi-fi systems as everyone seemed

to be online, but maintaining continuity in children's' education needed to be of paramount importance. As family members were working from home, the house could became a very busy and somewhat claustrophobic environment. The above data from participants highlights the realities of family life and the impact on women in coping with the 'stay-at-home' policy.

7.8.4 Age Factors

Age was not a significant concern in the teaching music online as the issues of communication and reassurance were comparable among all age groups. Adult learners also needed assurance by being informed about the direction of their learning. The educational environment is part of the daily life of young students and they rely on their teachers' supporting them. This security shifted during the pandemic and young students had to re-adjust but equally, adults felt more vulnerable. It must be nonetheless be acknowledged that the online music class had good attributes for all learners regardless of age.

A study of three hundred Spanish teachers investigated the important contribution music education made to students learning remotely and how it brought a positive experience into family life (Calderon-Garrido, 2021). Some Allegro students said it was the most important and worthwhile activity of their week and having assignments and listening as homework gave their week a sense of structure. At times, other family members, even adolescents, were listening in to the more informal parts of the class which, for me was a joy to witness. Enjoyment seemed to be their motivation, perhaps arising from their curiosity. The relevance of this research from Spain was in its findings, namely that the music class coming into the home often enriched life for all family members. Similar to Irish traditional musicians, all musical engagement has an intergenerational dimension and has the power to transcend age – this is reflective of the above research.

7.9 Teacher's reflections on the challenges of online music learning for adults

The study revealed adaptability as a key finding. Although stated earlier that most Allegro students had technical ability but this was not the case with learning music. Adapting to music learning was a challenge for teachers but the person on the other side of the screen had less advantage; they did not know what would be expected from them musically and were uncertain at times if they would be able to succeed educationally.

It is not unusual for older people to think that young people are naturally adept with technology. They shared views online regarding the limitations of the digital platform for learning music and the challenges it presented - some were very accomplished with technology and I greatly valued their input as they generously shared their expertise. These conversations fostered a sense of 'community' and 'friendship' among the groups. Lisa's reflective narrative embodies many of the challenges that adults learners experienced during the pandemic:

Vignette

I want to thank you most sincerely for the great Programme , Allegro II that you shared with your students this year. None of us knew when we started that the year would be so challenging and , I must say, that you 'steered the ship' with the utmost of professionalism and calm. You certainly got us back to safety 'on land' all the more knowledgeable and grateful.

I really enjoyed the programme. The new challenges of more advanced composition, listening and technical music theory was a great step forward to me. It has given me so much that I now use in my piano learning. I am attempting to play in new keys and am listening to a greater array of classical music. I loved getting to know Beethoven's 7th Symphony. As you know my essay was on Mozart and studying 'the Marriage of Figaro' drew me in to his work and genius.

Well! When the 'lockdown' came I was very isolated up a mountain in east Clare. I must say that your Zoom lessons were a lifeline to me and put a structure on my week. I so looked forward to hearing your interesting lectures and this was so well backed up with PPT slides and live You Tube performances of classical pieces. You handled the transition with so much grace and calm, many thanks. It was lovely to keep in touch

with the class and we had some great discussions. It was no mean feat and you rose to the challenge.

I think that Allegro II is a wonderful step into deeper understanding of music theory and the fact that it is so practical it gives students confidence in areas of interest. I must say that I really enjoyed the composition element of the course and it gives me confidence going forward.

The lack of contact was a significant issue with adult learners. Like-mindedness seems to generate friendship and collegiality which is a joy to experience, to become an observer and listener rather than always leading the class. Observing the individuals who entered the programme developing into a musically active group was another significant finding from this researcher's perspective. The pandemic unfortunately impacted on the quality of communication but, upon reflection students who did the whole programme online still managed to get to know one another. When theatres re-opened all the students came on a social night out at the opera in The Gaiety where they could meet in person (with masks).

There are some good outcomes to educational practice arising from the pandemic. The use of technology as a future resource is not only on the horizon but may rather well be a serious contender in future educational practices. Online teaching revealed weakness in the digital platform, particularly concerning sound transmission. This is concerning for a subject like music where aural and listening are key areas of learning. New methodologies and more creative technology are essential for providing real support and resources for aural teaching and training into the future. Many institutions are now considering how to teach aural training online such challenges (Fleet 2021: 14).

7.10 Conclusion

Arising from the literature written about the pandemic, there seems yet another divide in the educational sector. Some maintain that online music teaching works well and just needs to be modified and perfected. Other researchers and educators (including the

interview participants for this study) maintain that music education online is, without doubt, not as effective as face-to-face learning.

> As the pandemic progressed questions are already being asked in the press about the need for face-to-face meetings in distant cities, when we are able to do this from our own homes, without contributing to global warming, and without the concomitant wear and tear on us as people. But what of music education? (Fautley, 2020: 196).

Findings in the Allegro interview data identified that people preferred the face-to-face learning. Patrick stated that he felt the face-to-face offered 'deeper learning and better class interaction'. This viewpoint has been criticised, particularly in terms of music colleges and conservatoires, which some claim have allowed teachers to become too comfortable in their traditional environment (Gibson, 2021). However, in their article, *Reassessing the benefits of lifelong learning in light of the COVID-19 pandemic*, Waller et al. resonate the views of Allegro students,

> the recent shift across much of the developed world in particular to online 'delivery' of many traditionally face-to-face taught courses as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasised to practitioners and participants alike the importance of the interpersonal aspects of adult learning (cited in Waller et al, 2021: 435).

The argument presented by the authors concurred with the findings in this study, namely that the 'switch to online learning was because of a global health pandemic; resulting in crisis-response migration' and 'emergency remote teaching' (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). According to Waller, most educators and researchers would be aware of the less 'humane' aspect of online learning, which lacks the 'depth', 'colour' and texture of the face-to-face traditional pedagogy. For those working in adult education it was a poor substitute for the actual classroom teaching (Ibid: 436). Larissa reiterated these views,

> In future, no, please God, we won't have another pandemic, please God. If it was the choice of nothing or online, I would do online. But my absolute preference is face-to-face; I just think it works better.

Colman offered a visual image of online learning with in usual drole sense of humour:

> anything you can do in your pyjamas probably isn't worth doing. You can actually just sit in your bedroom. I have friends of mine who do Zoom to work, and they say, "I just have

> a jacket on. I don't even have shoes on!". That's something to think about, that it's isolating. It's not as disciplined as I probably would like it to be'.

What of the future? A common answer to the question 'what were the benefits of online learning?' was 'not having to travel' that, in turn, reduces carbon in the atmosphere and also online learning saves time - undeniable two very positive attributes. However, the isolation of remote learning may impact seriously on social interaction even on children as they will not to make friends with online schooling. There are endless challenges ahead with climate change needing to be factored into government policies throughout the world. It seems compromise will be necessary, possibly in the form of some face-to-face learning in conjunction with online learning. Whatever the way forward, there will be no escaping the 'elephant in the room'(Fautley, 2020: 193) as the computer seems set to form the possible centrepiece of all learning, including music education and adult education. According to Schwartz Reichi & Spang[72], education has always reflected the needs of society and music continued to meet a societal need throughout the pandemic, More than five decades after the Tanglewood Symposium (July 23rd, 1978) had

> addressed basic and critical issues of professional competency, examined music education as a curricular subject and placed an urgent emphasis on the cultural and technological revolution that was impacting education at that time in American history,

the authors here ask the questions: if we could be at the dawn of a new educational era – a new societal appreciation and a modern reorganization and reprioritizing of educational outcomes and could music be at the forefront of meeting these priorities? (Schwartz et al., 2021). Although their report focuses on school curricula, it encompasses the sociological, musical and educational values that are pivotal in adult music education which could be indicative of the dawn of a new educational era in this unique field.

[72] Schwartz Reichi & Spang 'Now is the Time! Music Education "Challenges" Core Curricula for First Chair' (NAfME The National Association for Music Education is an American association, 2021 publication).

CHAPTER EIGHT

Research summary and conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This research was undertaken to investigate the field of adult music education during the decade 2012-2022. A vision to create two new programmes of formal music education derived from the research, entitled Allegro for Adults I and Allegro for Adults II. The research process evolved over the decade, commencing as an action research methodology and transforming into an ethnographic methodology. The latter informed the overall research process for its adaptability to interpret and analyse the data over the timescale.

Action research was a valuable method for combining theory and practice in the field (chapters one, three and five). Although the genesis of the research was initially driven by a need to change practice, knowledge of theoretical and methodological research that would support and inform practice were essential components to turn this research into a viable doctoral project. Action research enabled me to start the programme in my own learning environment, observing and reflecting upon its progress, monitoring rates of learning for each parameter in the curriculum and evaluating assessment criterion. Despite the validation of the Allegro for Adults programmes by the university, from a professional standpoint I could not predict how it would work in practice or how participants would engage with this new approach to adult music learning. The Allegro programmes were not only new to students but their delivery was equally new me as practitioner/researcher/observer. Reflective journaling revealed the implementation of

the pedagogical approach and its outcomes which are further supported in the findings of the research data.

Chapter two investigated the value of music throughout the lifespan. It addressed the concepts of access and opportunity for adults to seeking engagement with music. The stages of adulthood across the lifespan were identified (Hallam, 2008; Hallam et al. 2000). Values in life and values in music are primary motivations for music learning. Most participants had varying degrees of musical experience, mostly in instrumental learning and many had learned at school. Findings from the research were sourced from anthropological, medical, psychological, gerontological, health, music education, holistic and spiritual fields of study.

This chapter, similar to chapter six, had a specific literature that investigated the multidimensional nature of musical participation in developing the cognitive, musical, physical and overall well-being of adults. Learning to be a person in society or as Illeris states 'learning to be me' (2017) offers a broader perspective to look at the person in society and understand the process of learning as they endeavour to develop identity in relation to the surrounding environment (Jarvis, 2017: cited in Illeris: 35). Illeris maintains that identity development is a very central issue in relation to learning[73] The three major adult learning theories of Illeris (2017), Jarvis (2012) and Wenger (2014) encapsulates the ethos of the Allegro philosophy as it required participants to adjust to a new physical, social and educational environment (Burland & Pitts, 2007: 289). The Housewright Symposium definitively identified the important, critical role of music

[73] Illeris developed a learning triangle that identified how all learning included three fundamental dimensions of content, incentive and interaction respectively (Illeris, 2009b: 10). Jarvis' approach (2016) is more holistic because it recognizes the person to be seen as a whole. This, according to Illeris, reflects Jarvis' philosophical existentialist position on learning. Illeris, with his concepts of content-incentive-interaction can relate equally well to the music learning context, as to learning in general. Wenger's approach is more social, presenting his understanding of 'a social theory of learning'; his 'landscapes of practice' (Wenger, 2009 & 2014) can also apply to the sociological aspects of the Allegro programmes.

education in adulthood which included the sociological aspects. This chapter outlined the important role and contribution of universities in making provision for adult music students with a view to future educational developments for this sector of society.

Chapter three outlined the research methodology which, although commenced as an action-research methodology, evolved into a more social research approach by transitioning into ethnographic methodology. The combined methodologies complemented each other. The progression of the research methodology started with the summer schools (2011 & 2012) followed by the implementation and delivery of the CPD Allegro for Adults I and II programmes (2012-2013), to the final stages (2019-2022) when the ethnography transpired as the primary methodology for the project. The initiatives behind the summer schools were:

- to highlight adult music education in the public domain
- to recruit prospective candidates for the Allegro programmes
- to act as a springboard for the two new programmes (with promotional presentation)
- to test the inclusion of other arts in a music-based educational context
- to include similar diversity of the arts in the form of extra-curricular activities on the Allegro programme.

A positive outcome of the summer schools resulted in five recruits enrolling for Allegro programmes the following academic year. Another positive outcome, that emerged from the data, found that participants valued all the events and embraced the diversity of the other arts. The data further indicated that those who attended the summer schools believed that more adults should be made aware of such opportunities through promotional advertising. Overall, the primary aim of these events was to heighten public awareness of the opportunities to participate in adult music education (Tuckett, 2018). The Allegro

programmes became known throughout the university and staff from other faculties signed up for the classes. BACCI students enrolled in 2014 and as a result of taking the social media route for advertising from 2016 onwards, outside interest in Allegro was boosted significantly.

Chapter four explored the literature from a three-lens perspective: adult education, music education and adult music education. Researching the literature was a revelation as I discovered the wealth of research sources which, over the duration of this research, had expanded considerably both in breadth and depth (chapters two, four, six and seven included augmented literature in research fields). By using the descriptor 'adult music education', the term 'education' implied a more formal approach in the Allegro programmes; in contrast, the term 'adult music learning' which could be interpreted as a more informal style of learning[74]. The first lens, adult education encapsulated formal, informal, experiential, self-directed and transformative styles of learning, all of which were embodied in this adult music programme. The chapter further explored curriculum theory (Duckworth & Timmons. 2010), Fenwick's critiques on experiential learning in the context of both learner and educator (2000, 2001) and the orientations to learning in adulthood (Merriam et al., 2007 & 2014).

A discussion of the philosophies and practice of music education informed the second lens through the literature research of music education philosophers including (Swanwick, 1979, 1988, 1994, 1999; Elliott, 1990, 1991, 1995; Reimer, 1970, 2009; Jorgensen, 1997, 2003(a), 2003(b), 2010, and the Kodály method (1965). Philosophy in music education which included the aesthetic and praxial dimensions, cumulatively translated into practice in the classroom and formed the core of this research. The

[74] The use of the terms 'adult music education' and 'adult music learning' have been used interchangeably throughout this research.

suitability of the Allegro programmes was contextualised within adult learning theories, including Knowles concept of andragogy (Knowles, 1968, 1996: McGrath, 2009), formal and informal learning (Merriam, 2008; 2001) and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991). There still remain unresolved issues surrounding transformational learning that were addressed in this chapter which included criticism by Cranton (2002) and Lamb (2003). However a review of empirical studies by Taylor (2000b) identified the value of Mezirow's conditions for 'fostering transformative learning … promoting autonomy and collaboration … in promoting value-laden course content' (Ibid: 10, cited in Merriam et al., 2007: 155); the latter supported the philosophical underpinnings of Allegro for Adults. Although informal, experiential and self-directed learning have always been part of the landscape in adult education, no other area has witnessed as much attention as transformational learning (Merriam, 2001: 1).

Chapter five examined the teaching and learning practices in both the Allegro I and II programmes. The eclectic curriculum was presented in the context of the programme's philosophy, curriculum, pedagogical approaches and learning outcomes. A model for Allegro was presented that identified the musical parameters in each of the two programmes; this was partially informed by Swanwick's C(L)A(S)P model, Kodály's principles of aural development and the sound-to-symbol approach was reflected in the pedagogical. Adults enter into a learning experience with one of three orientations to learning: task-centred, problem-centred or life-centred, but whatever the orientation, adults will learn content with the intention of using it once there is clarification from the educator about *why, what* and *how* to learn musical elements (Craig, 1996: 2). These questions were also addressed throughout this chapter.

An examination of the philosophical underpinnings of Allegro I and II in conjunction with adult education methodologies was presented. Each musical parameter was

discussed in the context of content, curriculum, performance activities and learning outcomes and concluded with a description of the differences and similarities between teaching each parameter to children and adults The importance of class-based learning and its role in adult music education, was the motivational factor for developing a music programme specifically designed for the adult learner. Its philosophy was rooted in the concepts of understanding, knowledge and musical participation. The educational environment was formal but embodied diverse styles of learning all of which aspired to foster both a love of music and a love of learning. The ultimate aim was to enable adults to aspire towards new identities of music learning that would fulfil their musical goals into the future.

Chapter six identified the themes from the findings which were derived from the data; these comprised of questionnaires, interviews and reflective narratives of participants. The role of the researcher as participant/observer provided valuable insights into the class culture. Themes were informed by the literature, action research and ethnographic methodologies and from the rich data contributed by Allegro participants. Themes from the data were identified as:

- Motivation: attitudes to learning
- Negotiating a new learning identity
- Establishing a learning network[75]
- Expanding social networks
- Planning future directions

The first theme centred on motivation that grew from a love of music; this was often influenced by childhood musical experiences that resulted in a desire to return to music.

[75] Themes numbers 1,2,3 were informed by the article 'Becoming a Music Student', 2007. Burland, Karen and Pitts Stephanie. Concepts rooted in identities are also prevalent in adult learning theories, Jarvis 2016.

Many of the Allegro students were frequent concert goers, although the data found a significant number enjoyed other genres and others had limited experience of classical performances. A finding from a researcher's perspective revealed that those who previously never went to concerts enjoyed the experience and looked forward to going to future performances. This was particularly true of going to a night at the opera.

The motivations towards music were based on both the intrinsic and extrinsic needs of adults and interpretation of the data revealed the value of music education in fulfilling their needs. Music is a very personal form of expression and is closely aligned to emotions and spirituality, all of which are intrinsic motivations. The opportunity to develop musical skills tends to be more extrinsically motivated through educational and sociological factors, such as learning amidst like-minded people. My observations over the years revealed that participants made connections and formed friendships that have lasted beyond the programme.

The literature was further strengthened by the ethnographies of the Allegro participants, who generously took time to submit written reflections, to participate in interviews and openly shared their opinions of the programme. Their experiences of being in Conservatoire in the university, the knowledge they had acquired, the skills they had developed and the social benefits that emerged on their holistic learning experience amidst like-minded people were all encompassed in the interview questions. The journey they had undertaken and their experiences, musical, educational, social and personal were found in their reflective writings.

Chapter seven presented an overview of the challenges posed by the pandemic during the years 2020-2022. The impact of COVID-19 permeated every aspect of people's lives - from home and family, through the community, the country and globally. The impact on educational sectors was traumatic as online learning replaced the face-to-face interaction

of the classroom; consequently students, parents and teachers needed to adjust to a new norm.

This chapter also included media sources relevant to the educational sectors and international empirical studies, all of which reflected the difficulties of teaching music online. There was a very quick response from music education researchers (2020) as a significant number of articles were published on the role of technology for online teaching, while revealing how music educators were encountering the same problems around the world. These responses from journal editors, researchers, media and newspaper articles didn't just offer professional assistance but also provided moral support for the educational sectors. This research examined their contribution and how it specifically impacted adult music education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

My reflections identified themes that arose from the challenges of teaching music during the pandemic. Digital platforms, despite technical limitations in supporting audio and visual, assumed a very crucial role for learning by sustaining communication in education among families and communities. The chapter presented its own unique literature in the context of the impact of the pandemic on the education sectors, with the specific emphasis on adult music education. The findings identified the challenges of teaching and learning online, the re-invention of pedagogical methodologies, limitations in the delivery of the curriculum and modifications in the assessment and examination processes. The overall outcomes were positive, as essentially technology alone had enabled the lines of communication to remain open. It offered a new digital learning environment where teachers and students could communicate to sustain their educational environment. that offered support and reassurance to all learners regardless of age.

8.2 Summarising the findings

One of the primary outcomes of the research was in discovering adults' motivation for musical participation. In many cases they had waited years before reconnecting with music. Despite having varying degrees of prior musical knowledge, they all shared a common desire to reconnect with music. Some had considerable background knowledge, which they shared with other class members about classical music or music from diverse genres. The sharing of this depth of knowledge during the listening part of the classes and observing the interest of other class members was an enlightening and moving experience, from both a personal and professional perspective. Embracing the role of participant/observer I initiated conversations about musical venues abroad. This inevitably led to students sharing their travel experiences to opera houses, great concert halls in capital cities and international musical events in other genres; such exchanges focused on how these experienced enriched their trips abroad. During these conversations I recounted my experiences of going to musical events abroad and this sharing of ideas strengthened the relationship between the observer and participants. These discussions opened up a forum that enriched the social dimension of the programme.

The enjoyment and value of being with like-minded people was a significant finding. During interviews, aside from verbal commentaries, the interviewer was aware of the change in attitudes of many of the respondents; 'It was great to be with other like-minded people, and you could have a chat with them either end of the class time' (Emily) and 'I really appreciate being among people who love music as I do; we can enjoy the course as well as work hard to do well' (Bryan). Such responses were inspirational for the researcher. Many of the participants had professional background and this, according to Burland and Pitts, would have facilitated a smoother transition into a university-programme; 'it is certainly true that prior experience of university-style learning would

be beneficial' to newcomers (2007: 29). Their experience was not just about the music, or about being a mature student in a university or even about the programme; it was about having time in their lives to pursue music and share their musical interests.

The data reflected the most significant value they all shared was their love of music learning. They needed to know more about this wonderful phenomenon with its power to move and raise the spirit; the motivations for participation were on both intrinsic and extrinsic levels. This need to negotiate a learning identity at which music was core, created a personal role for the individual in finding their niche in the artistic world.

The overall findings may be summarised as follows:

- Participants shared a love of music
- Enjoyed being with like-minded people
- Appreciated the learning taking place in the context of an adult learning environment.
- Enjoyed the learning process and enjoyed meeting the challenges of the course requirements.
- Feedback from interviews revealed they enjoyed the diversity of the programme
- They valued being able to do something for themselves, taking time out to fulfil their individual musical goals and aspirations.

These findings reflected the value of music amongst like-minded individuals. Other courses run in institutions and colleges which have their own particular set of policies and values but, as an educator and creator of a new music programme for adults and its implications for adult music education and research, I would concur with Jorgensen's view that

> the challenge for educators in the present century is to find ways to work together across these varying and sometimes conflicting institutional and personal perspectives and practices to collectively realise the best of their benefits and avoid the worst of their pitfalls (Jorgensen, 2021: 13-14).

Negotiating the value of the Allegro programme with the university, in acquiring CPD approval, quality assurance recognition, accreditation and certification standards, created a synergy that aspired to enrich adult music education.

8.3 Implications of the research methodologies

Research and teaching were entwined in the duality of the two methodologies, from which emerged the need to investigate the questions of why? what? and how? adults participate in music learning. Upon reflection the overall methodology was a rich experience both professionally and personally. The rich exchange of thoughts and experiences between participants and observer/researcher was made possible through the ethnographic methodology, thus keeping within the qualitative research domain. It provided a framework in which participants and researcher could share concepts from a multiplicity of aspects, including musical, educational, personal and sociological (Sirek, 2016). It expanded the contextual elements by including other subdivisions of these dimensions including well-being and spirituality.

Another implication of the research occurred in the summer schools and launch events. It provided an opportunity for adult instrumental performance. An adult cello trio played at the reception for the first summer school; a classical guitarist and violinist played duets for the second summer school and for the launch of the Allegro for Adults programme a former student brought along his barber shop group. The ethos is inclusivity as adult instrumental players can have access to performance at such event and festivals and can chat with other music lovers as they mingle at receptions.

Inclusivity, involving both participants and researcher, was a holistic component of ethnography. Data was collected in my reflective journal relating to class activities, questionnaires administered to students at the start of the year, reflective writings of

participants and interviews conducted at the end. This data yielded rich insights into the participants' prior experiences, their musical values and ambitions for the inclusion of music in their future lives.

8.4 Contributions to Research

This research presented a formally structured music programme as a tool for research into adult music education. Its ethos reflected class-based musicianship programmes that could taught in conservatoires and university departments. Diversity was an important consideration in terms of the musical parameters. Although the learning was accelerated in nature, gaining knowledge and understanding underpinned the skills-based, notational, compositional, aural, listening and creative areas of the two Allegro programmes.

Based on my professional experience adults do not seek an 'easy' modified programme of learning. The opposite would be true in the context of this research, as Allegro students aspired to rise to the musical challenges, to acquire musical knowledge, participate in performance, to practice, meet the curricular requirements and the assessment criterion in order to achieve a successful outcome.

Chapter two investigated research into the relevance of music participation for well-being in adulthood. The literature from international studies reflected the breadth of research areas that are focused on adulthood and adult education. This research examined these studies from the adult's participation in music and how this, based on empirical studies, contributes to wellbeing in adulthood. The findings in the data showed that most participants had experience of music learning in childhood. Although many felt their music lessons 'didn't take' (Levetin), from the perspective of neuroscience research revealed that

> cognitive neuroscientists have found otherwise in their laboratories. Even a small exposure to music lessons as a child creates neutral circuits for music processing that are enhanced and more efficient than for those who lack training. Music lessons teach us to listen better, and they accelerate our ability to discern structure and form in music, making it easier for us to tell what music we like and what we don't like (Levetin, 2006: 194).

This chapter identified the value of music for the physical, psychological, cognitive, creative, social and spiritual development of the person throughout adulthood and was supported by data from the relevant specialised fields of research. Recognition of the value of music by these researchers endeavoured to embrace their research, within the context of this research, as a holistically-based contribution to adult music education.

A unique aspect of the research was being set up in Dublin, Ireland and was carried out in a conservatoire within the TU Dublin University. Researching the diverse fields, revealed that much of the literature came from the United States. The research explored studies in other countries, but did not find a similar style programmes to Allegro. Many studies relating to adult music participation emerged from choral, community or private lessons. Class-based was predominantly instrumental in the research field. There may be similar programmes for adult learners, but my search did not yield a similar formal music education programme that was specifically designed for adult learners and taught in a university. In keeping with the 'changing landscape of universities' **(**Finn, 2008**)** there is a need for more provision for adult music education programmes that are tailored to meet the busy lifestyles of adults. This 'landscape' should present a dual aspect from the university and the adult learner's perspectives; universities need to restructure time-tabling to cater for the needs of adults, thus, greater provision for access can be offered to adult music education. The outcomes of such provision may provide educationally holistic programmes, similar to Allegro for Adults, in other university departments in Ireland and abroad.

Another unique aspect of this research is the investigation into the challenges encountered by the music education profession during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022). Chapter seven presented a detailed examination of how the Allegro I and II programmes were taught online. The practical nature of the subject intensified the pedagogical and communicative challenges. Data in the form of questionnaires, interviews and reflective ethnographies of participants, contributed to the unique nature of this research area and supported the findings. The participants gave very insightful interviews and wrote revealing reflective pieces on their experiences of online music learning during the pandemic. The research on the pandemic, supported by the data, detailed the pedagogical approach of how an adult music education programme, like Allegro for Adults, could be delivered on a digital platform.

The communicative aspect of the Allegro programme was a personal inspiration; it was so refreshing to have such interest in the project with participants wanting to contribute in any way they could. Many expressed a desire to 'pave the way' for future adult music learners and as the motivating factor for their contributions to this research. All ethical considerations were honoured on the part of the researcher, despite so many respondents expressing such sentiments as, they 'didn't care about anonymity' and 'use my voices in any way required'. In line with the rigour of scholarship in pursuit of a doctorate, such generous considerations were never an option, but it was both a joy and a privilege to hear such support and generosity of spirit.

To re-enforce this spirit, the formation of an Allegro society could give strength to its mission of inclusivity in adult music education and offer social cohesion amongst like-minded music lovers. On a wider spectrum, a programme similar to Allegro for Adults could be modified and extended into community-based projects. Over the years I have witnessed friendships forming both inside and outside the classroom. When I organised

concert nights out, former students from as far back as 2012 often came to enjoy the music, as Deirdre described 'I love going to the concerts and particularly meeting everyone, but I particularly enjoy meeting former Allegro people and sharing our experiences'. The Allegro programmes aimed to communicate a broad knowledge base, that would ultimately enable adults to seek further opportunities for musical engagement by broadening musical, educational, personal, spiritual and social horizons in the future. Music has the unique power to enrich life in adulthood through musical participation.

8.5 Possible future research for adult music education

Future research could include the Allegro programmes being introduced into university departments, continuing education institutions and the communities. Implications regarding accreditation would need to be addressed particularly within the universities. Higher education institutions need to play their part in offering credited courses that can be taught externally. It is a service to society and, as the research in this study found, adults are in pursuit of such opportunities to serve their needs both musically and educationally. The value of learning and music participation for wellbeing in adulthood has been internationally researched in many fields and is now recognised for its multiplicity of values for enriching people's lives. It is a unique experience for mature students to come to the conservatoire in a university, to share the environment with like-minded adults and music students of all ages. This could be developed effectively and realistically with further collaborative research.

Similar programmes could also amalgamate with other arts sectors, as was the case in Allegro for Adults summer schools which had a strong artistic ethos with music as the core art form. Professionals from other artistic fields could give lectures or workshops at intervals throughout an event or programme. In order to make a vision become a reality,

I engaged experts in literature, art, design and dance to conduct workshops or deliver lectures in the summer schools.

Another contribution that could arise from this research would be the promotion of adult music learning through organised festivals being held in other venues throughout Ireland. Ultimately, these enterprises could inform adult music education and music education research. Most importantly they could extend access to music education for adults, which could ultimately benefit their communities throughout the country.

An international collaboration for a comparative study in Ireland with other countries could inform future research, both academically and musically, in the field of adult music education. These possibilities for future research outlined in this chapter could, through launch events or festivals of adult music education, enable music lovers and prospective music students to negotiate their learning identities for their future musical horizons.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consent form for participants

Researcher's Name: (use block capitals)**MARIAN MCRORY**	**Title:**
Faculty/School/Department: **DIT CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AND DRAMA**	
Title of Study: **Adult Music Education: Negotiating New Musical Identities in Adulthood**	
To be completed by the: **Subject/ Participant *(delete as necessary)***	

3.1 Have you been fully informed/read the information sheet about this study?
YES/NO

3.2 Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?
YES/NO

3.3. Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions?
YES/NO

3.4 Have you received enough information about this study and any associated health and
safety implications if applicable?
YES/NO

3.5 Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from this study?

- at any time
- without giving a reason for withdrawing
- without affecting your future relationship with the Institute

YES/NO

3.6 Do you agree to take part in this study the results of which are likely to be published?

YES/NO

3.7 Have you been informed that this consent form shall be kept in the confidence of the researcher?

YES/NO

Signed_____ Date _____

Name in Block Letters

_____

Signature of Researcher **_Marian McRory**

Appendix B: Sample of Questionnaire for Allegro I and Allegro II

(same question asked for both programmes)

Course Code Allegro 2 CRN 23195/6



Questionnaire

1. **Name** _____

2. **Where did you hear about Allegro courses?** Please tick your answer.
DIT website □ Flyer advertisement □ Current DIT Student □ Through a friend □ Radio □ Other _____

3. **What is the nature of your musical experience?** Please tick your answer.
Playing an instrument □ Name the instrument _____ Singing in a choir □ Formal music learning in school □ Music theory □ Playing in a band □ Playing in an orchestra □ Other _____

4. **What are your reasons for taking the course?** Tick as many as you wish.
To attain a more advanced level of musicianship □ To develop your aural skills □ To learn compositional techniques □
To support instrumental learning □ To support vocal studies □ To develop a deeper understanding of listening to music □
To understand musical styles □ To pass a music exam □ Other _____

5. **Are you currently learning an instrument?** Yes □ No □ If "Yes" please give details:
Nature of the learning individual □ *or* group tuition □ self-taught
Number of years studying _____
Grade or level of achievement _____
Examination board (if relevant) _____
Any other information you wish to impart
_____

6. **Have you ever studied theory of music/ musicianship?** Yes □ No □ If "Yes" please state:
Where did you study _____
Number of years studying _____
Grade or level achieved _____
Examination board _____

7. **What are your musical preferences?** (classical, pop, jazz etc)
_____
_____

8. What would you hope to be able to do when the course is completed?

(a) Undertake a more advanced course of study Yes □ No □ If "Yes" please give details:

_____

(b) Use it to support your instrumental playing or vocal studies Yes □ No □ If "Yes" give details:

_____

(c) To further develop your compositional techniques Yes □ No □ If "Yes" please state in what capacity

e.g. apply for a diploma, degree course, etc.

_____

(d) Develop your sense of musical creativity □

(e) Enjoy listening to a wider variety of musical styles □

(f) Attend more concerts and musical events □

9. Write briefly on your expectations in taking this course.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Describe your musical experience to date

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

This questionnaire is part of a PhD research project by Marian McRory.

All information given is highly confidential and anonymity is strictly guaranteed.

Thank you for your cooperation in taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Marian McRory

Signature of consent _____

Interview Question for participants

ALLEGRO FOR ADULTS

Interview Questions

Question 1

Please can you tell me a little about yourself and what motivated you to choose the Allegro for Adults music programme?

Question 2

Did you explore other options for participating in a music education programme?

Question 3

Did you have any reservations about returning to the role of student?

How did you feel about being an adult music student in a university?

Question 4

What was your experience of acquiring new knowledge and skills in Allegro, in the main areas of:

1. Aural / Performance
2. Composition
3. Listening

Question 5

How did you feel about the time commitment of attending weekly class, doing assignments, examinations and a research project?

What was your experience of taking a formal exam at the end of the year?

Question 6

Was accreditation a factor in choosing an Allegro programme?

Question 7 What did you think of the social aspect of the course?

Would you have liked more social events outside the class in terms of concerts or other arts events?

Question 8

Did you enjoy the programme?

Question 9

Did the Allegro programme meet your expectations?

Reflective questions

- Was there anything you would have liked to learn more about in the programme?
- Is there anything else you would like to include in this interview?

Thank you most sincerely for agreeing to participate in this research, and for agreeing to have the interview recorded for transcription.
Your contribution is both appreciated and valued.

Marian McRory
The interview is part of the data for this PhD. Identities of all participants are confidential.

Signature of consent _____

Covid-19 pandemic: interview questions for online learning for participants.

The Challenges of Music Learning online during the Pandemic

Interview questions

- Please tell me a little about yourself?

- This survey involves 3 categories of learners from the pandemic period:
  1.Those who went from class learning to online learning (2020)
  2. Those who had to do the whole course online (2020-2021)
  3. Those who went from online learning to class learning (2021-2022)
  Please identify to which category 1, 2 or 3, do you belong?

- When the pandemic came, how did you feel about the prospect of online learning? (category one)

- What motivated you to enroll for Allegro online? (category two)

- What, in your experience, were the challenges shifting from face-to-face learning to online learning? Which elements did you enjoy? Which elements did you struggle with?

- How did you find logging in to the course? Did the links work well? Were the sent in sufficient time to log in?

- How did you find the presentation of the course online in terms of slides, handouts and listening?

- What did you feel you gained from the online course?

- Were there aspects you felt you missed out on? Why?

- Did you normally take notes in class? Did you find you tended to take more notes when learning online or less notes?

- In terms of pitching/singing online, what did you enjoy? what did you find difficult?

1

- How did you experience performing rhythmic patterns online?
- How did you find learning composition online?
- Based on your experience, do you think theoretical elements can be effectively learned online? Are they more compatible with online learning that the aural or listening parts of the course?
- There can be technical issues with sound quality when listening to musical performance on You Tube? Did this impact on your enjoyment of listening?
- How did you find doing the examinations online? Do you think it made the experience more difficult?
- Downloading class PowerPoints and handouts were part of the weekly regime for accessing learning material, did you find this helpful or demanding?
- What was your experience of being in a group setting online? Did you feel you missed out on the social aspects of the class or did you feel it didn't particularly impact on your social experience?
- Did you miss the interaction with other class members?
- How did you feel about asking questions online? Was this more difficult than in the face-to-face context?
- Are there any particular challenges or opportunities you would like to discuss in relation to learning Allegro online?
- In the future, would you attend other music courses online or would your preference be to attend a class personally.

****

Interview is part of data for PhD research. Identities of all participants will be confidential.

Signature of consent _____

Reflective writing guidelines for participants

Allegro for Adults

Personal reflections on your musical life history

This is a free-style piece of writing.
Below are some suggestions which may help with writing your reflections.
Feel free to include all, some, or none of them at your own discretion.

- Length 500-1000 words but this is flexible depending on individual preferences.
- Describe what kind of music was going on, both at home and in school, when you were younger and how this influenced your interest in music.
- Who had been most influential in your musical development, at different stages of your life? (e.g. people, musical activities, opportunities, other).
- What have been the highlights of your musical life history to date
- Mention any regrets about missed opportunities with music (if relevant to you).
- Describe what motivated you to enroll on the Allegro for Adults music course, state whether you did Allegro One or Allegro Two.

****

This reflective piece is part of a PhD research project by Marian McRory.
All information given is highly confidential and anonymity is guaranteed.
Thank you for volunteering to participate in the project; your time and contribution is greatly appreciated as an invaluable resource to the research.

Marian McRory

Application form for Allegro programmes

Allegro 1 CRN 23195/ Allegro 2 CRN 23196

APPLICATION FORM

FIRST NAME: _____ SURNAME: _____



ADDRESS:_____

_____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ PPS NUMBER:

_____

PLEASE TICK: MALE □ FEMALE □ NATIONALITY:

_____

HOME TELEPHONE: _____ MOBILE: _____

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT A DAYTIME CONTACTABLE PHONE NUMBER IS PROVIDED ON THE FORM

E-MAIL: _____ OCCUPATION:

_____

QUALIFICATIONS (if any): _____

WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT ALLEGRO MUSIC COURSES? (Please tick appropriate box)

DIT Website □ Current DIT Student □ Events/Concerts □ Other □: _____

WHICH COURSE ARE YOU APPLYING FOR? (Please tick appropriate box)

ALLEGRO 1 CRN 23195 □ **ALLEGRO 2 CRN23196** □

HAVE YOU PREVIOUSLY STUDIED MUSIC? (Please tick appropriate box) YES □ NO □

If "yes" please give details:

_____

_____

SIGNED: _____ **DATE**:

Questionnaire for Allegro Summer School Participants



JUNE 2012

Questionnaire on Aspects of the summer school you most enjoyed

Musicianship workshop: what aspects did you most like in the class? Give a reason for you choices.

- Singing ----------
- Rhythmic work ----------
- Performing ----------
- Listening ----------
- Other _____

What did you most enjoy about the trip to The Irish Museum of Modern Art? Give reasons for your choice.

- The modern artworks ☐
- Sculpture ☐
- The Installation ☐
- The Anri Sala film ☐
- Experiencing link between art and music ☐
- Personal observations _____

Composition workshop - what did you enjoy the most?

- Creating rhythmic patterns ☐
- Working with ostinato ☐
- Composing melody☐
- Using percussion instruments☐
- Making musical choices – tempo, dynamics phrasing ☐
- Performing ☐

Questionnaire – page 2

Did you feel the reception with live music added to the social aspect of the event?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Write your personal comments if you wish

_____
_____
_____

Did you enjoy the symphony concert? Yes ☐ No ☐

Which work did you enjoy the most? Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto no 3☐

Tchaikovsky's Pathetique Symphony☐

Give Reason(s) for your choice

_____
_____

Any other comments on concert
experience_____
_____
_____

Would you like to offer any further suggestions for next year's Allegro Summer School ?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix C: Class Plans

Lesson plan for Allegro I: class number 6

Programme: Allegro I	**Lesson Plan LPI/6**	
Class No. 6 **Overall aims and objectives**	Introduction: present an overview of the content of today's class structure	Presentation gives students' Overview aural, composition Listening for the class
Learning Objectives:	**Curriculum**	**Class Activities**
Aural: Rhythm: to develop fluency aurally and visually	Rhythm: Crotchets, quaver, semiquavers, minims, dotted minims, semibreves	Aural response: echo rhythms; group and individual on percussion. Practice at home
Melody: Warm-ups: soh-me, me-doh and similar with handsigns Sight singing- scalic style but with some variety of rhythm	C, G, F majors	Group performance with handsigns Group and solo singing
Written/literacy	Scales/triads: C,G,D and F majors. Intervals: introduction Time: 2/4, 3/4 4/4/	Worksheets on scales, intervals, triads: started in class, check literacy for each individual, then write on board. Complete remaining exercises at home.
Song	Ode to Joy: Beethoven	Group performance in solfa/words
Assignment no 3	Identify musical elements in all questions	Discussion of questions
Listening	Beethoven's Ode to Joy: You Tube performance of last movt of Choral Symphony	Discussion of Beethoven's style, orchestration, instrumentation.

Handouts

Aural worksheets and for written and rhythm performance in class

Practice exercises for homework – sight singing and rhythm exercises

Life of Beethoven and his musical style. Characteristics of the Classical and Romantic in relation to Beethoven's music.

Homework: Assignment no 3 for next week. Read through the history handouts.

Aural practice worksheets. Listen to Ode to Joy (you tube link) and also to first movt. Symphony no. 5

Lesson plan for class no. 6 Allegro II

Course Title Allegro II

Class no. 7	Present an overview of today's lesson content. This offers students' insight into the pace and structure of the class	
Learning Objectives:	**Curriculum**	**Class Activities**
Aural performance	6/8 rhythm (dotted quavers)	Percussion performance – 4-6 bars
	2-part rhythm	2-part worksheet for performance
	Group/solo	Melody with leaps of V7 chord
	Listening/literacy	
	8-bar melodic composition – include leaps of V7. Opening 2 bars given, to continue in the stylistic effects. Handouts on guidelines.	Composition in collaboration to make musical decisions on dynamics and expression by singing different options/suggestions
Write/Literacy	Scales/intervals: Emaj, C#min, intervals.	
Assignment 4	Identify all musical elements in the questions.	Discuss each question with demonstration on intervals, chords)
Listening	Mozart: Overture to the Marriage of Figaro – You Tube	Visual score on You Tube – class following score Discussion on the style and orchestration.

Handouts Assignment no 4

Aural- worksheets for reading rhythms and sight- singing. Practice material for homework. Guidelines on melody composition – examples from Sibelius software

Worksheets on scales E major, C# minor. Intervals – four types of intervals written above the same lower note.

Handouts on Mozart and the Overture as a form.

Allegro I: Theory parameter

Music Parameter	Mode of Activity	Curriculum Content	Assessment
Theoretical ALLEGRO I	A synthesis of the theoretical elements is developed through: • Singing • Listening • Writing • Homework • Fortnightly assignments incorporating: • All forms of notation • Scales, • Triads, • Intervals,	▪ All note names and values ▪ Accidentals ▪ Treble, bass and alto clefs ▪ **Scales** : ▪ C, G, D, A, E majors (sharp keys) ▪ A, E, B, F#, C# (relative minors to the above sharp keys) ▪ F, B flat, E flat, A flat majors (flat keys) ▪ D, G, C, F (relative minors of the above flat keys) ▪ Triads in the above keys ▪ Technical names of the degrees of the scale ▪ Intervals: major and minor. ▪ Primary chords ▪ Performance directions.	**Written exam includes:** ▪ Scales: major and minor (both forms) up to 4 #s and 4 flats. ▪ Triads ▪ Intervals: Identifying in a musical extract Adding upper notes to named intervals ▪ Transposing melodies in treble, alto and bass clefs ▪ Adding chords to a melody (1,1V,V) ▪ Composing a melody over given chords ▪ Identifying technical names of notes.

Allegro I Listening parameter

Music Parameter	Mode of Activity	Curriculum Content	Assessment
Listening CD You Tube links ***ALLEGRO ONE***	• Listening • Responding • Verbalising • Class discussion of the musical styles, instrumentation, orchestration • Listening/observing performances on You Tube. • Listening at home: WhatsApp/links	• A general study of Baroque, Classical, Romantic & Modern periods of musical history. • Brief historical background ▪ Biographies of composers ▪ Programme notes	**Written:** Write an essay on a topic chosen or based on works listened to at a concert event. ***Aural:*** Identifying three works from the music listened to during the year: musical period/characteristics of the work.

Allegro I: Analysis parameter

Music Parameter	Mode of Activity	Curriculum Content	Assessment
Analysis	Class-based listening to works in some of the shorter forms. Music scores distributed in class	Basics forms: Binary Ternary Rondo Variation	***Aural/Listening*** A short piece from the curriculum content is played and students complete questions on form, key, chords, intervals.
	Study of selected movement from full score Directed listening of themes, keys, instrumentation, musical features and style	Study of one of the following: Haydn's Surprise Symphony (2nd movement) or Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (3rd Movement) is the selected major score analysis.	***Written exam*** Extract of score provided. Questions on themes, keys, stylistic features and instrumentation.

Allegro II Singing and melody composition
Overview of pedagogical approach

Music Parameter	Mode of Activity	Curriculum Content	Leaning outcomes /Assessment
SINGING and MELODY COMPOSITION • Although these may appear as two parameters, they are inextricably linked, hence they are coupled together in the context of parameter classification.	• Singing: • Solo • Group ensemble • Class: sight singing: • Literacy and Aural skills • Two-part singing exercises (songs)	• Understanding all grouping of notes within beats in both simple and compound times • Simple & compound • Focus is on the major keys with modulation • Learning songs which modulation to the dominant key (Ash Grove) • Concept of pivot notes/chords for purpose of singing a modulation effectively.	• Sight singing: 8-bar extract with modulation. • Singing extract of song studied during the year (modulation) • Composing a 12-bar melody with a modulation to the dominant key and returning to the tonic key. • Demonstrate an understanding of creative melody composition: structure, form phrasing, dynamic and expression, choosing an instrument for the melody.

Allegro II Overview of the harmony parameter

Music Parameter	Mode of Activity	Curriculum Content	Assessment
HARMONY Figured Bass	• Basis for all harmonic development: • Listening • Writing • Singing • Group singing in 2, 3 & 4-parts • Singing bass and soprano in cadences, • Singing 4-part cadences	• 5/3, 6/3, V7 (root position) • cadential 6/4-5/3 progression (later adding 7th) • Adding a stylish melody to figured bass (including passing notes)	• Realising a figured bass (4-6 bars) • Composition should demonstrate a recognition of chords and an understanding of style in the melodic line • No modulations
Piano accompaniment	• Class-based activities include: • Listening • Literacy • Group singing	• Chords in root position and first inversions. • Accompaniments limited to block chords and arpeggiated styles • Singing the melodic lines and identifying chords to suit the melody • Dominant 7th in root position. • Cadential 6/4 • Keys: up to 3 sharps and 3 flats • Time signatures: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 & 6/8	• Create a piano accompaniment in the opening style (1-2 bars given) without modulation. • Composition should demonstrate a knowledge of piano stylistic elements, adding phrasing and tempo.

Allegro II: Project

Music Parameter	Mode of Activity	Curriculum Content	Assessment
Project	• Discussion of wide range of topics • Research • Critical thinking • Writing • Non-academic writing style • Discussion of how to structure the project – samples are distributed to give a sense of direction.	• Resources for history • composer • musical genres • own choice: student may have a preferred topic, that they would like to research and write about.	• Time-frame of 12-14 weeks prior to submission • Date mutually agreement.

Allegro I written exam paper

NAME _____

OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
DUBLIN
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

ALLEGRO ONE FOR ADULTS

Written Paper: Time allowed 2 hours 30 minutes
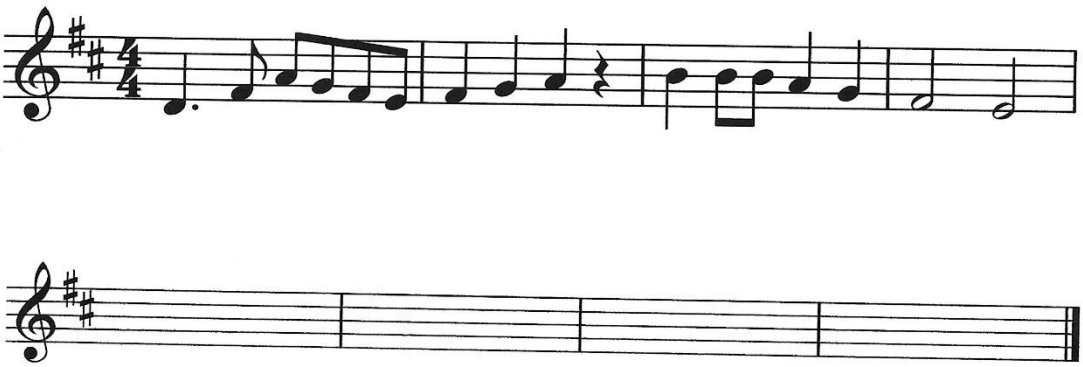
May 2022

Questions	Marks	Marks obtained
Question 1. Melody composition	18	
Question 2. Chords and SATB	14	
Question 3 Score: Eine Kleine Nachtmusik	15	
Question 4. Scales	16	
Question 5. Triads & Intervals	15	
Question 6. Chords	10	
History Assignment (submitted at the exam)	12	
TOTAL	100	

Allegro for Adults

QUESTION 1 COMPOSING A MELODY

Continue in the style of the opening to create a complete 8-bar melody. Add phrasing, tempo, dynamics and expression marks to the completed melody



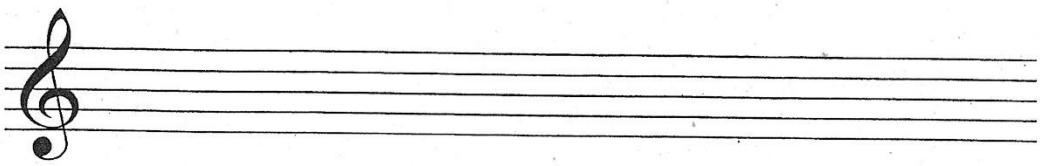
Choose an instrument to play your melody

Instrument: _____

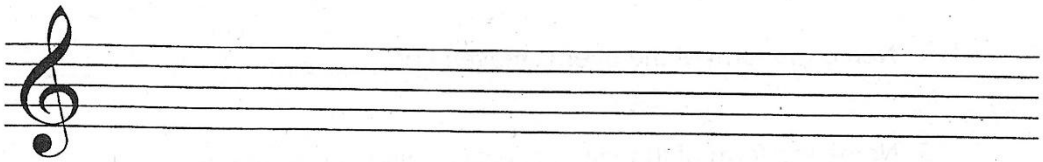
Question 2 Rhythmic pattern with ostinato **15 marks**

Create a four-bar rhythmic pattern in 6/8 time.
Add a one-bar ostinato under every bar.
Suggest percussion instruments to play both parts

Rhythm



Ostinato



Rhythm: instrument _____

Ostinato: instrument _____

Question 3: Musical Score

Eine Kleine Nachtmusik

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Examine the attached score and answer the following questions

1. In which musical period was work written? _____

2. Based on your listening to this music in class, name the instruments that play this work?

_____

_____

3. Name the key of the minuet _____

4. Name the key of the trio _____

5. Explain the following terms:

   Crescendo (bar 12) _____

   Menuetto da capo (bars 35-36)

   _____

   _____

   F (bar 1) _____

   Name the ornament in bar 6 (tr,,) _____

6. Name the form of the minuet _____
7. Name the form of the trio _____
8. What is the overall form of the work _____
9. Draw a simple diagram to show the overall form of the work and include some bar numbers.

10. Mention those aspects of the music that appealed to you

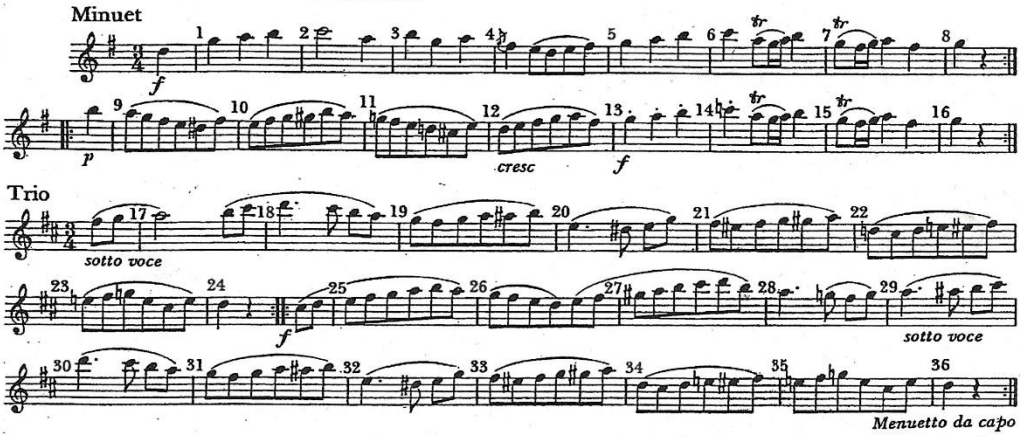
    _____

    _____

    _____

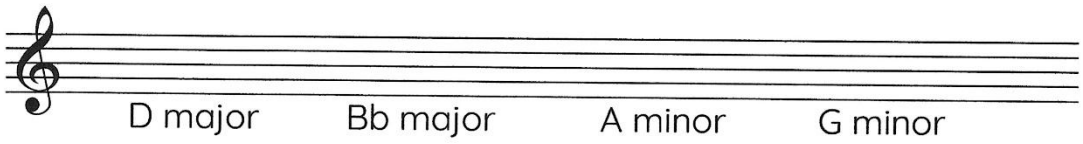
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Third Movement from *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* *Mozart (1756-1791)*
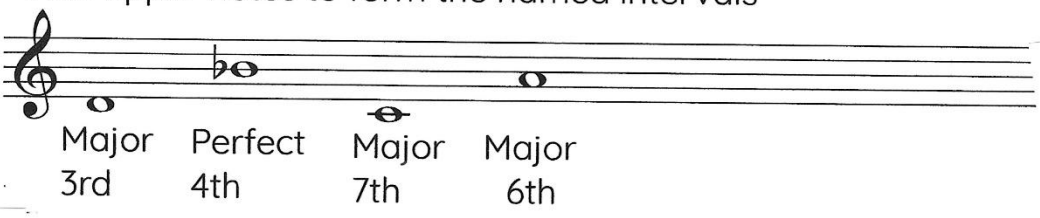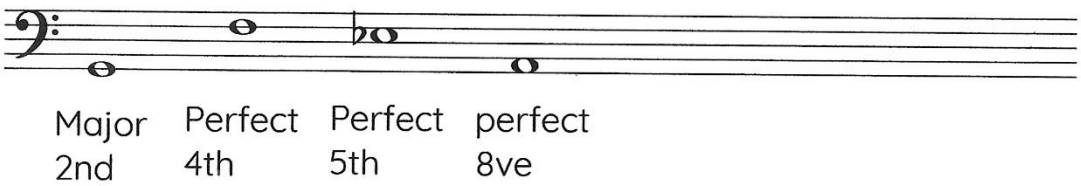


Question 5 Triads and Intervals

Write these triads with key signatures
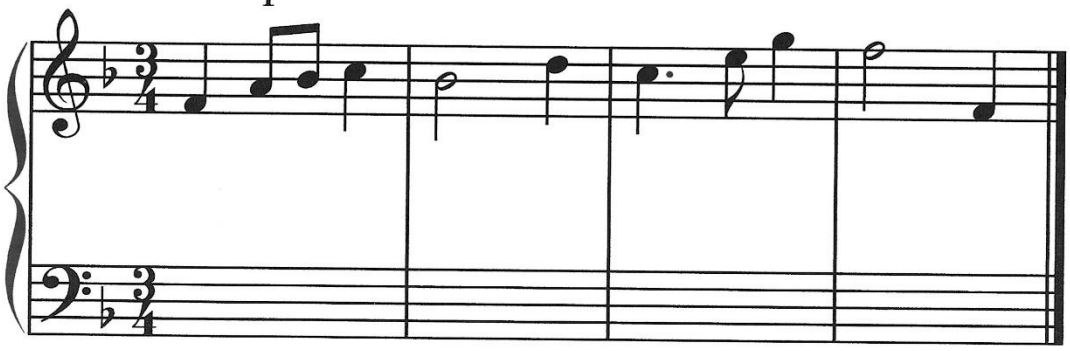


Add upper notes to form the named intervals





Question 6 Chords

Add chords 1, V etc suit the melody below.
Write sol-fa under the melody to help choose chords
One chord per bar



Chords:

Question 7: History Assignment

Allegro II written examination paper

NAME _____

OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
DUBLIN
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

ALLEGRO 2 FOR ADULTS
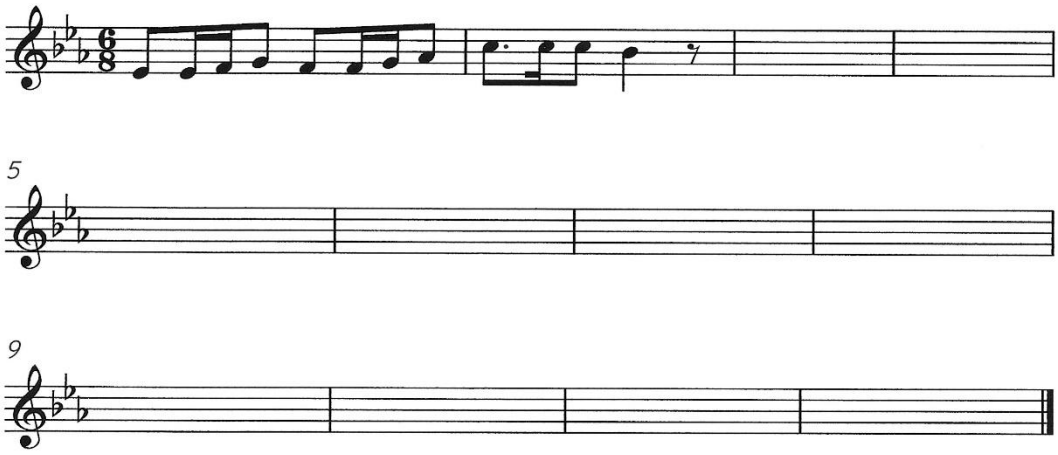
Written Paper: Time allowed 3 hours

May 2022

Questions	Marks	Marks obtained
Question 1. Melody composition	15	
Question 2. Chords and SATB	15	
Question 3 Figured Bass or piano accompaniment	20	
Question 4. Theoretical	15	
Question 5. Score: Beethoven's Symphony No 7, second movement	20	
History Assignment (submitted at the exam)	15	
TOTAL	100	

Allegro for Adults

Question One: Melody Composition
Continue the given opening to create a 12-bar melody
Include one modulation to the dominant key
Add phrasing, tempo, dynamics and expression marks to the score

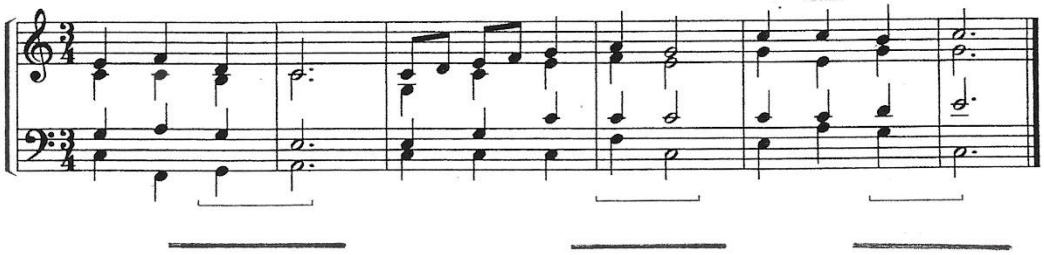


Choose an instrument to play the melody _____
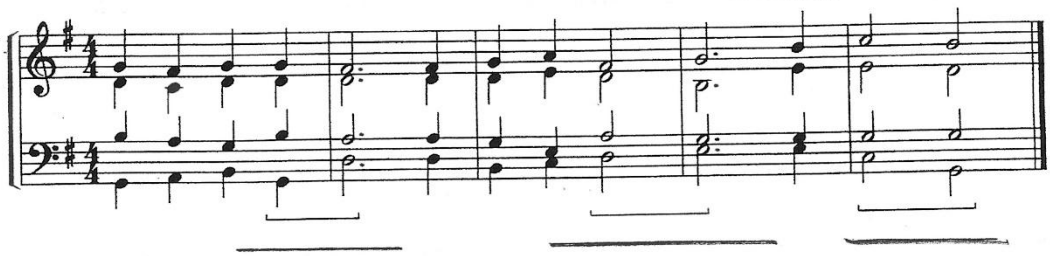
Question 2 **Answer A and B** **Chords and cadences**

A Identify the cadences in each of the extracts below

a)

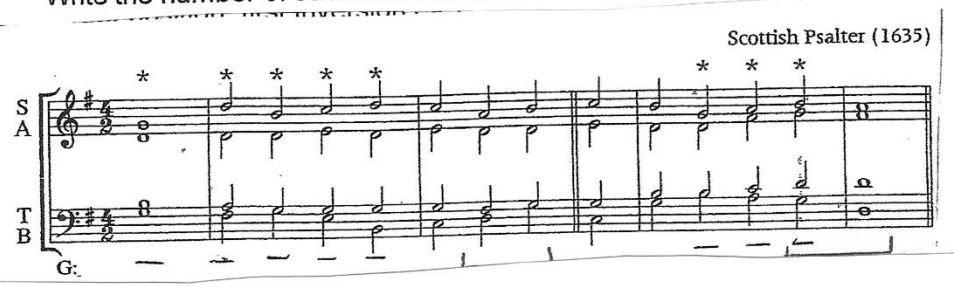


b)



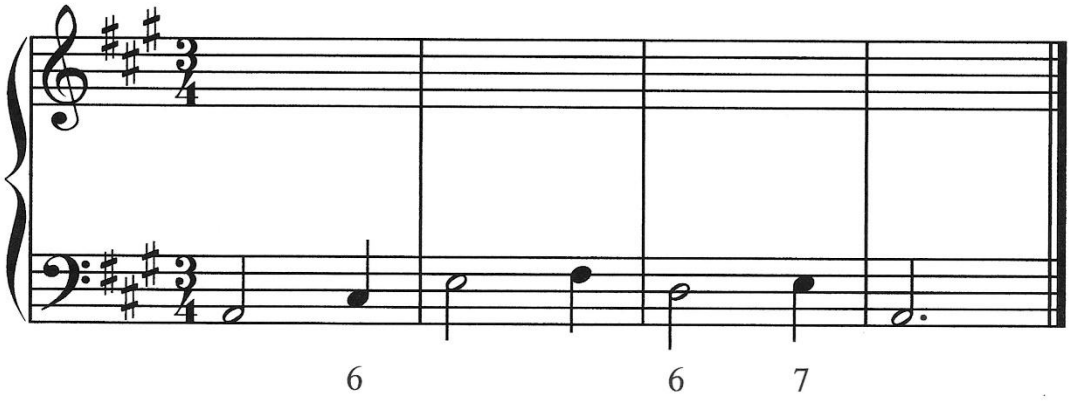
B. Name the chords below that are marked with *

Write the number of each chord underneath



QUESTION 3 Complete A or B

A: FIGURED BASS
Identify the chords in the figured bass
Complete the extract below in keyboard style
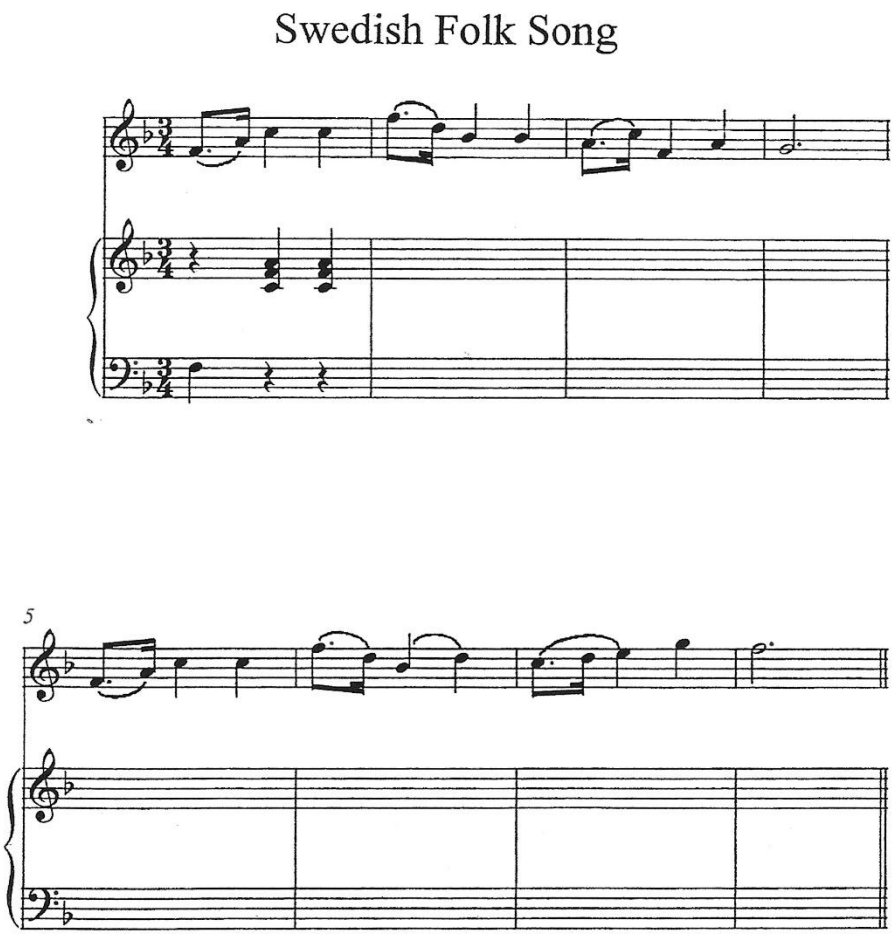


Name the key:_____

Identify the final cadence _____

B Piano accompaniment

Create a piano accompaniment for this melody. Continue in the opening style. Add phrasing, tempo and dynamics to the piece.

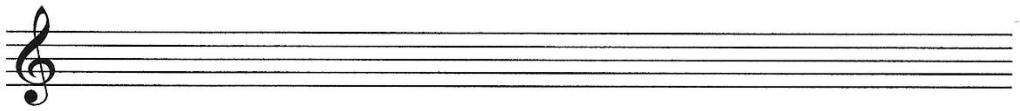


Question 4: Scales

Write the following scales, ascending and descending

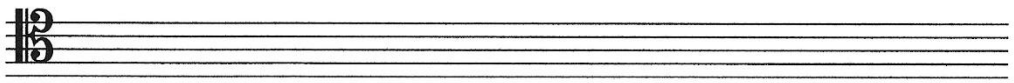
Mark the semitones in each scale

1. Scale of G# harmonic minor in the treble clef with the key signature



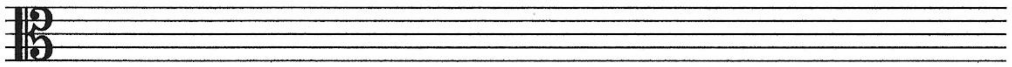
2. Scale of Ab major in the tenor clef without key signature

5



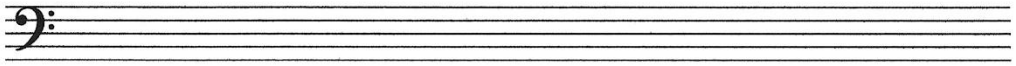
3. Scale of F melodic minor in the alto clef with key signature

9
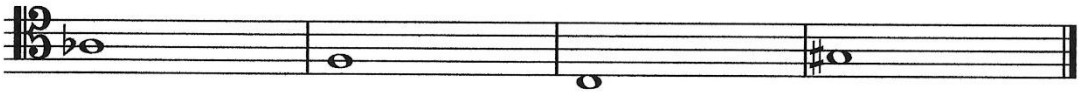


4. Scale C# harmonic minor without key signature

13



INTERVALS

Add upper notes to the intervals below



Compound Major 3rd

Minor 6th

Compound Augmented 4th

Diminished 8ve

Question 5 SCORE

Beethoven: Symphony no 7 second movement

Examine the score of the 2nd movement of Beethoven's symphony no 7 and answer the following questions:

1. In which musical period was the work written _____

2. Name the tonic key _____

3. Describe the overall form of this movement

_____

_____

_____

4 Identify each section of the movement giving bar numbers. Also describe the tonality.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5 Write a general analysis of the first 100 bars of the movement. Describe how Beethoven builds up the section as it reaches its climax and comment on the instrumentation, orchestration, texture and style or any other features you choose. Use some bar numbers for reference where appropriate.

History Assignment: Submitted on the day of written examination

Overview of Allegro I aural exam paper

NAME _____

OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

ALLEGRO ONE FOR ADULTS

Aural Paper Time: 1 hour

May 2022

Questions	Mark Marks obtained
Question 1.Rhythm Performance	12
Question 2. Melody: sight singing	14
Question 3 Kodaly hand signs	10
Question 4. Portfolio: Rhythm Performance	18
Question 5. Portfolio: Melody performance	20
Question 6. Score analysis	14
Question 7 Listening: Identification of set work	12
TOTAL	100

Overview of Allegro II aural exam paper

NAME _____

OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
DUBLIN
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

ALLEGRO TWO FOR ADULTS

Aural Paper: Time allowed 1 hours

May 2022

Questions	Mark Marks obtained
Question 1.Rhythmic performance	10
Question 2. Sight singing	10
Question 3 Kodaly hand signs Song: Ashgrove or May Song	12
Question 4. Score: Lark Quartet	16
Question 5. Listening: set work from various musical periods	12
Portfolio – Rhythmic composition for performance Melody composition for performance	40
TOTAL	100

Appendix D: Marketing data

Application form for summer school

Conservatory of Music & Drama

Allegro for Adults Music Summer School

APPLICATION FORM

(Please **PRINT** name and address in block capitals)

FIRST NAME: _____

SURNAME:_____

ADDRESS:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PLEASE TICK: MALE □ FEMALE □

NATIONALITY:_____

HOME TELEPHONE: _____

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT A DAYTIME CONTACTABLE PHONE NUMBER IS PROVIDED ON THE FORM

EMAIL:_____**OCCUPATIOn**__

_____

_____

QUALIFICATIONS

(optional) _____

Where did you hear about Allegro Music Courses? (Please tick appropriate box)

DIT Website □ Current DIT Student □Events/Concerts □ Other □_____

Summer School: Promotional material and events



Music Summer School

16th, 17th, 18th June 2011

Variety of class-based music education programmes .

Workshops in aural skills (learning to read music, develop an understanding of rhythm through singing)

Creative workshops in writing melodies, composition using percus sion instruments, creating rhythmic patterns, how to write chords to melody.

Listening: How do we listen to music? Listening will cover a variety of musical periods and styles – Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist and Modern – with a view to developing an understanding and appreciation of musical genres

Workshops will also be held in art and music , aspects of design and music,, music in the literature of James Joyce, music and movement (Dalcroze eurhythmics) and observation of adult chamber music ensemble.

Key element of the project is to integrate the arts from an educational perspective.

Certificate of attendance will be given to participants.

- **3 Day Summer School**
- **Open to anyone over 18**
- **No musical experience required**
- **Dates & Times:**

16th: 5.30pm - 8.30pm
17th: 2.00pm - 4.30pm
6.00pm - 10.00pm
18th: 10.00am - 4.00pm

- **Cost: €110***

*early bird rates available up to 3rd June 2011. Limited Availability

Summer school events: Day I

Agenda

Day 1

LOCATION: DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama. 5.00 – 8.30pm.

- 5.00pm: REGISTRATION
- 5.30pm: WELCOME

  -Introduction on *Allegro for Adults Music Summer School.*

  -Outline of the programme of events

  -The role of music in lifelong learning.

- PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

A Musical Experience

A class-based programme incorporating the various elements of musical learning: rhythm, melody, singing and notation. An introduction musical history and the characteristics of the music from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern periods. A selection of some of the wonderful music from each era will form the basis of listening programme.
Marian McRory

Music and Literature

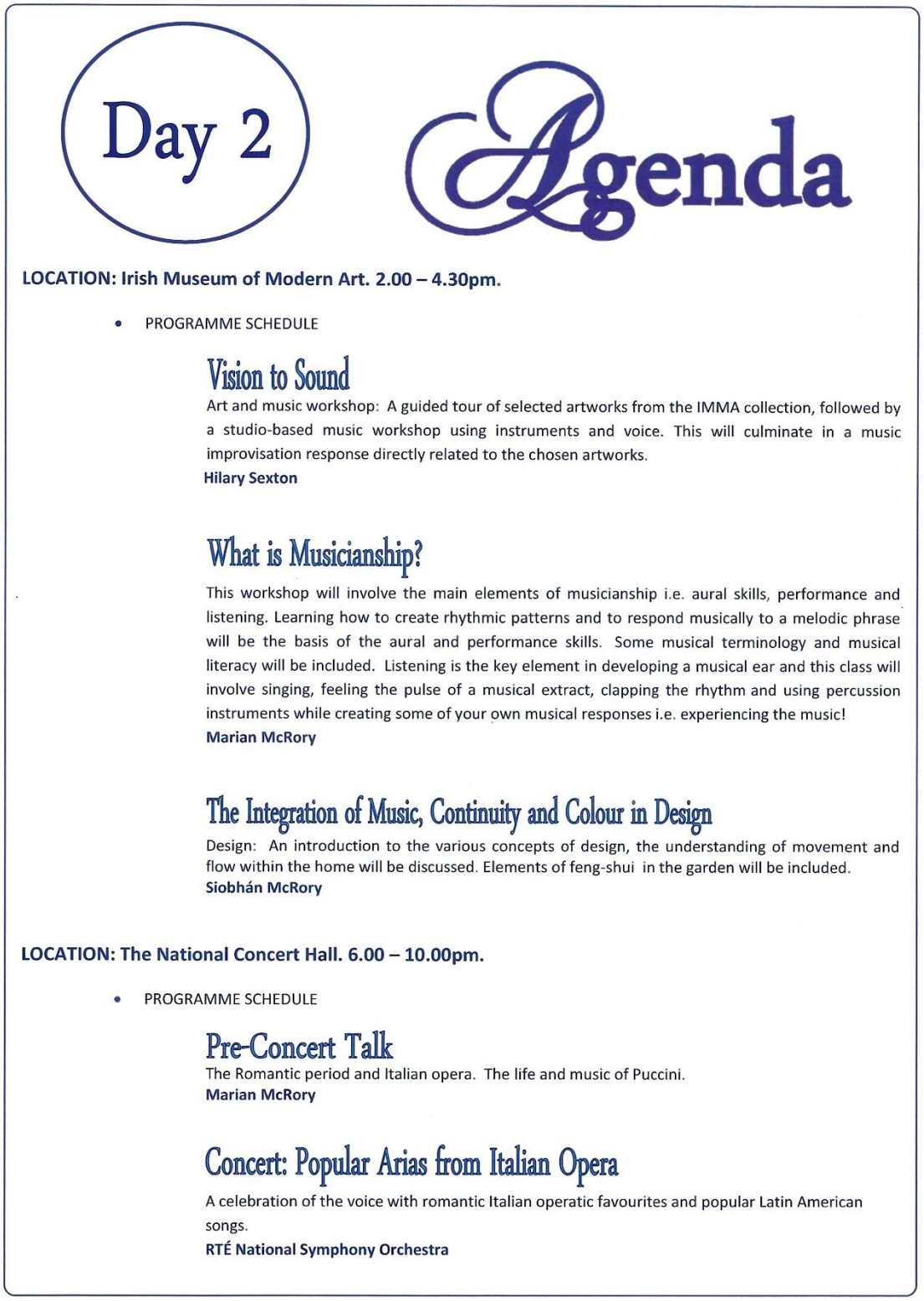
James Joyce: Siren Songs: Opera, Sex and Politics in *Ulysses.*
Caroline Elbay

Cello Chamber Music

"What's in a tune? - A study on a theme by Sergei Rachmaninov" The participants will be introduced to concepts of phrase and voicing and will examine the different dynamics behind the performing of a master composer's musical idea.
Árun Rao

- DRINKS RECEPTION

Summer school events: Day II



Day 2

Agenda

LOCATION: Irish Museum of Modern Art. 2.00 – 4.30pm.

- PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

Vision to Sound

Art and music workshop: A guided tour of selected artworks from the IMMA collection, followed by a studio-based music workshop using instruments and voice. This will culminate in a music improvisation response directly related to the chosen artworks.

Hilary Sexton

What is Musicianship?

This workshop will involve the main elements of musicianship i.e. aural skills, performance and listening. Learning how to create rhythmic patterns and to respond musically to a melodic phrase will be the basis of the aural and performance skills. Some musical terminology and musical literacy will be included. Listening is the key element in developing a musical ear and this class will involve singing, feeling the pulse of a musical extract, clapping the rhythm and using percussion instruments while creating some of your own musical responses i.e. experiencing the music!

Marian McRory

The Integration of Music, Continuity and Colour in Design

Design: An introduction to the various concepts of design, the understanding of movement and flow within the home will be discussed. Elements of feng-shui in the garden will be included.

Siobhán McRory

LOCATION: The National Concert Hall. 6.00 – 10.00pm.

- PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

Pre-Concert Talk

The Romantic period and Italian opera. The life and music of Puccini.

Marian McRory

Concert: Popular Arias from Italian Opera

A celebration of the voice with romantic Italian operatic favourites and popular Latin American songs.

RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra

Summer school events: Day III

Agenda

Day 3

LOCATION: DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama. 10.00am – 12.30pm.

- PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

Composition Techniques

Class-based workshop culminating in the rhythmic and melodic concepts learned in the previous workshop. This class will include singing triads and chords and creating some basic harmonies using voices, learning to compose a melody, adding chords to melody, creating ostanati using percussion instruments, and for some added enjoyment we will be singing simple two-part tunes and rounds.

Marian McRory

Contemporary Music Listening Workshop

Hilary Sexton

Design: Designing a Music Room

Siobhán McRory

Dance Workshop: Anyone can Dance

Edel & Ann Trimble

LOCATION: National Concert Hall. 2.00 – 4.00pm.

- PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

Structure and Form of Music

How is music composed? It is based on the composer's inspiration? How is music structured? Does it have a form or structure or does the composer merely create continuously until it reaches a conclusion? Can only the musically educated understand great musical works? This lecture will address these questions by listening to a selected work from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic period in addition to following the music on the score as it is being played. This workshop promises to be a mixture of work and fun!

Marian McRory

Open Forum

Staff & Participants

Allegro for Adults

Certificate of Attendance

Music Summer School

This is to certify that

_____

Completed

Allegro for Adults Music Summer School

on 16th, 17th & 18th of June 2011

_____

Signed by Marian McRory M.Ed., B.A., H. Dip in Education, L.T.C.L, L.L.C.M

Conservatory of Music & Drama

1991–2011

THE NATIONAL CONCERT HALL
AN CEOLÁRAS NÁISIÚNTA

Summer school 2012



Summer school 2012: calendar of events

TIMETABLE

THURSDAY 21 JUNE

Time	Lecture	Speaker	Venue
10.00am	Registration	Marian McRory	DIT, Chatham Row
10.15am	**Welcome:** Introduction to Allegro Music Summer School The role of music in lifelong learning	Marian McRory	DIT, Chatham Row
10.30 – 11.30am	**Rhythm:** Musical Time & Melody: Musical Line Workshop: Exploring Rhythmical patterns & singing in solfa.	Marian McRory	DIT, Chatham Row
11.30am – 12.00pm	BREAK		
12.00 – 1.00pm	**Music & Design:** Harmonizing your Home & Garden with Feng Shui: An introduction to the various concepts of design will be outlined. Understanding movement and flow within the home and how music, continuity and colour can be integrated.	Siobhán McRory	DIT, Chatham Row
1.00 – 2.00pm	LUNCH		
2.00 – 3.00pm	**The Enjoyment of Music : An Introduction to Perceptive Listening:** Take a journey through the wonderful musical sounds of the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist & Modern periods. Can only the musically educated understand great musical works? Great music was composed for everybody, not for an elite few.	Marian McRory	Education Room IMMA, Earlsfort Terrace
3.00 – 3.30pm	BREAK		
3.30 – 6.00pm	**Art & Music:** IMMA@NCH Art & Music Guided Tour & Workshop	Hilary Sexton	Education Room IMMA, Earlsfort Terrace

THURSDAY EVENING FREE OPTIONAL EVENTS:

Time	Event	Venue
6.00 – 8.00pm	Exhibition Opening - Garrett Phelan. Drinks Reception.	IMMA, Kilmainham New Galleries
9.00 – 9.20pm	Garrett Phelan – NEW FAITH LOVE SONG. Live sound performance between bell-ringers of St. Patrick's & Christ Church Cathedrals in association with IMMA.	Nicholas Street, Dublin 8 (Recommended listening location between venues.)

FRIDAY 22 JUNE

Time	Lecture	Speaker	Venue
10.00 – 11.30am	**Workshop**: Exploring Composition: Class-based workshop that explores the rhythmic and melodic elements introduced in the musicianship workshop. The class will use the voice and percussion instruments to create simple compositions.	Marian McRory	DIT, Chatham Row
11.30am – 12.00pm	BREAK		
12.00 – 1.00	**Music & Literature** The Joyce of Music	Terence Killeen	DIT, Chatham Row
1.00 – 2.00pm	LUNCH		
2.00 – 4.00pm	**Art & Music** Art & Music Workshop and talk centred on the importance of music in the Anri Sala film, *1395 Days Without Red* (2011), followed by screening of film.	Hilary Sexton	Education Room IMMA, Earlsfort Terrace
4.00 – 5.30pm	**Drinks Reception** With live Spanish & South American Music by Kazemi, Sandoval y Cia		DIT, Chatham Row

FRIDAY EVENING OPTIONAL EVENTS (Supplementary fee: tickets from €10)

Time	Event	Venue
7.00 – 7.30pm	**Pre-Concert Talk** The Concerto In the Romantic Period: The Music of Rachmaninoff & Tchaikovsky - Marian McRory	Carolan Room National Concert Hall, Earlsfort Terrace
8.00 – 10.30pm	RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra - Rachmaninov & Tchaikovsky *Performance of *Pathétique* Symphony, a work integral to Anri Sala film at IMMA.	National Concert Hall, Earlsfort Terrace

"Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life." - Ludwig van Beethoven

Excerpt from lesson plan on composition in the pentatonic

Composing a melody in the pentatonic major

- Many of the folk song used by Kodaly in his teaching repertoire were in the pentatonic
- It was the more natural key for the voice
- Songs could be in pentatonic major or minor
- The minor consisted of the natural 7th (as opposed to the raised 7th is the diatonic minor scale).
- See SIBELIUS handout for a musical example of a pentatonic melody
- OPTIONAL HOMEWORK: compose a 4-bar melody using only notes from the major pentatonic
- Include phrasing and sing the melody

Excerpt from lesson plan: warm up vocal exercises
(Distributed to class as handout for home practice)



Warm-up exercises for singing
Songs- Scarborough Fair, May Song, Greensleeves
Echo singing

- 'Humming; this is a gentle way of warming up. e.g hum your favorite song is a great way to warm up.
- Descending scales passages e.g. 5 notes soh – doh to different vowel sounds
- Singing ascending rising thirds – d-m, r-f, m-s, f-l, s-t, l-d', t-r, doh
- Descending falling thirds – m'-d', r'-t, d'-l, t-s, l-f, s-m, f-r, doh
- Singing: Echo singing – class work: musical phrase played twice, sing back
- Key chord will be played – sing back the chord to get correct intonation - pitch 'doh-me-soh

Vignette Action Research

Topic: Aural training combined with literacy.

Observational notes: First step: The aim is to introduce Kodaly concepts through practical aspect. The written aspect is not usually introduced yet, but there is a real motivation to write down the rhythm, which surprised me and meant I had to devote considerable time to this. Observing how engrossed they were in this formal style learning, I changed the balance of the pedagogy and they really enjoyed the whole process. I was very taken aback, as I would have thought it a tedious and rather uncreative aspect of the learning. They continuously asked questions as I passed amongst them and shared their ideas with each other.

Reconnaissance – I have misjudged, possibly undermined, their capabilities – reflexive in terms of my values/expectations. Perhaps I was imposing my values on them? Personally, I welcome any 'surprise', as this educates me and requires further critical thinking in terms of the group dynamic, as well as the pedagogical approach.

Methodological note 2nd step – creates new material to assimilate both practical application and manageable written material – this time I allocate time for them to do some written work and interact with each other in the process. In this session, they composed rhythms and felt the need to 'get it right'; once again, interaction was a strong motivational element.

Theoretical reflection Learning theories identified: Piaget assimilation (step 2 builds on material from step 1), accommodation (this allows for new material to be introduced effortlessly) - and equilibrium (the first two allow for the student to be more creative with rhythm – to create their own rhythms in a relatively short time after learning. They can put it into practice (Dewey). Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978) is relevant here, in terms of the socio-cultural classroom context, where students engage in dialogue. Development is relevant in terms of sharing of ideas both in the context of learning the rhythmic aspects.

Allegro for Adults I Course Module Descriptor

Module author: Marian McRory

Module Description: This course creates a new approach for adults learning music that would provide a future model in the DIT Conservatory of Music & Drama. Unlike the mainstream approach, the pedagogy would be intensive in nature, getting away from the current "one grade a year" system while addressing issues appropriate for adults learning music.

On completion of this course students would be eligible to enter the Transitional-Advanced Level. Alternatively, they would have the necessary breadth of knowledge and skills to apply for an access course to a music degree programme, e.g. The Foundation Certificate DT527 in the Conservatory of Music and Drama which is a validated level 6 on the NQF.

The course provides a comprehensive programme in the principle areas of music education- composition, performance and informed listening. The module and course content are in keeping with modern pedagogical approaches in music education while taking into consideration current and well researched models of adult learning.

Module aim

The course offers a comprehensive programme of adult learning in musicianship at the Conservatory of Music and Drama. It covers from beginner to intermediate level. Its purpose would be to promote an independent course offering the adult learner an opportunity to study music on a part-time basis over a one-year period.

Adult musicianship courses have been running in the Conservatory of Music for over 25 years. The Conservatory's current policy is to offer all students and instrumental lesson and musicianship class on the basis of success in an audition. However, due to cutbacks, fewer adults are being offered instrumental places and a new profiled CPD course would offer adults the opportunity to engage with music in a programme specifically designed for the adult learner.

At present it takes six years to complete a full musicianship training programme and approximately three years to reach an intermediate level of competence. The proposed CPD would take the student one year to attain the same level of competency.

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of the module the student should be able to understand intellectually and in sound

- The musical stave and the use of treble, bass, alto and tenor clefs
- The length of musical notes (proportion of beats to each other and within a bar structure) including dotted notes, rests, duplets and triplets
- All time signatures including simple and compound time.
- Irregular time signatures including 5/4, 7/4, 5/8, 7/8
- Technical names of the degrees of the scale
- The formation of the chromatic scale.
- The concept of intervals – major, minor, diminished and augmented and recognition of compound intervals.
- The significance of accidentals and their effect on pitch, including double sharps and double flats.
- Key signatures up to four sharps and four flats.

Furthermore the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to

- Create an rhythmic pattern in any of the times above
- To compose a melody in response to a given phrase
- To add phrasing, tempo and dynamics to a melody
- To suggest suitable chords to a given melody
- To compose a melody over chords
- To add chords to a given musical extract
- To understand the characteristics of selected musical periods
- To write a melodic dictation.
- To write a rhythmic dictation.
- To identify intervals aurally.
- To identify chords and cadences au rally
- To clap a rhythm at sight.
- To sight-sing a four-bar melody
- To write a brief overview of the musical characteristics of selected musical works.

Learning and Teaching Methods:

Teaching and Learning Methods

The approach will be class based learning experience with interactive participation which will include song singing, canons, clapping rhythms, solfege, aural training, recognition of orchestral instruments, study of set works from orchestral works, creative writing of rhythms and melodies.

The core subjects – composition, performance and listening - are essential to the all-round musical development of every musicianship student and are now recognised as the core elements of all authentic music education programmes.

Module content:

An integrated approach of the core subjects would be the basis of this module.

Performance: Performance would be mostly taught through singing and the use of percussion instruments as both are particularly suited to group/class learning. Literacy skills would be developed to the appropriate standard.

Composition: Music is primarily a practical subject and aural development is central to composition as it encourages students to engage in the music by enabling them to hear and sing what they are composing. Learning to sight-sing is important as it engages the student in active music making. Theoretical aspects are essential to give students the knowledge they need to develop their skills in this area. These include music notation, clefs, time signature, grouping of notes, scales, keys, intervals, triads, chords, dynamics and articulation.

Listening: Directed listening develops the critical ear which contributes significantly to the student's own performance of music and composition. Knowledge of different styles helps develop an appreciation of musical periods. A general study of the Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern periods of musical history will be covered with a view to developing an understanding of selected works by some of the great composers.

Module Assessment

Continuous Assessment: 40% **End of Year Examination: 60%**

Continuous Assessment:

Class-based assessments 20% ***Independent Assignments 20%***

The class-based assessments will be held in each of the two semesters.

Semester one: 10% Semester two: 10%

There will be two assignments which will be completed independently and submitted at the end of each semester. Topics will be chosen by each student in consultation with the lecturer.

End of Year Examinations

Two examination papers – written paper and aural paper.

Written paper 30%

Written paper will include writing of scales, triads, intervals, recognition of chords, writing cadences, composing melodies, describing musical form, musical history, and writing about musical characteristics and styles of musical/orchestral masterpieces.

Aural paper 30%

Aural paper will include writing rhythms and melodies from memory, recognition of chords and cadences, identifying set works and their composers, singing at sight, clapping an unknown rhythm, identifying musical features played in an unknown work.

Recommended Reading:

Bennett, Roy (2002) Form and Design, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Bennett, Roy (2001) History of Music, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Bennett, Roy (1988) Score Reading: Cambridge Assignments in Music, Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
Bennett, Roy (1986) Enjoying Music: Book 1 and Book 2, Longman Group Ltd., UK.
Bennett, Roy (1984) General Musicianship, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Gramophone Classical Music Guide 2011, (2010) Gramophone, Harrow.
Norton Anthology of Western Music (2010) W.W. Norton, New York.

Taylor, Eric (2008) Music Theory in Practice, Associated Board of the Royal Schools
. (Publishing Ltd) London.
Warburton, Annie (1990) Score Reading, Form and History, Longman Group, U.K.
Winters, Goeffrey (1992) Listen, Compose, Perform, Longman Group, UK Ltd, U.K.
Yandell, Naomi (2007) Theory of music workbook Grade 5, Trinity College London.

Other materials

Aural materials will be taken from a variety of sources and provided as handouts.
. throughout the course.
CDs for selected listening will also be provided.
References from *YouTube* and *ITunes* will be included as sources.

Further Details: Continuing Professional Development Course of 100 hours duration over two semesters.
Lectures: 1.5 hours per week. Independent study: 2.5 hours per week.

Date of Academic Council approval …….

Allegro for Adults II Course Module Descriptor

Module author: Marian McRory

Module Description: This course creates a new approach for adults learning music that would provide a future model in the DIT Conservatory of Music & Drama. Unlike the mainstream approach, the pedagogy would be intensive in nature, getting away from the current "one grade a year" system while addressing issues appropriate for adults learning music.

On completion of this course students would have the necessary breadth of knowledge and skills to apply for a music degree programme, such as The Bachelor of Music Degree or The B.Mus. Ed Degree in the Conservatory of Music and Drama or other third-level institution.

The course will provide a comprehensive programme in the principle areas of music education – composition, performance and listening. The module and course content would in keeping with modern pedagogical approaches in music education while taking into consideration current and well researched models of adult learning.

Module aim

The aim of the module is to encourage musical awareness through the development of performing, composing and listening skills to an advanced level.

The course offers a comprehensive course of adult learning in musicianship at the Conservatory of Music and Drama. It is suited to those who have a minimum of three years musical experience or who have successfully completed the Foundation-Intermediate CPD course. Its purpose is to promote an independent course offering the adult learner an opportunity to study music on a part-time basis over a one-year period.

At present it takes those with three year's musical experience in musicianship, a further three years to reach an advanced level of competence. The proposed CPD would take the student one year to attain the same level of competency due to the intensive nature of the this100-hour programme.

Learning Outcomes:

- Interpret and understand a musical score
- Display a knowledge of all musical notation
- Write music in open and short score
- Harmonise a melody in chorale
- Realise a figured bass in SATB style or keyboard style
- Compose a piano accompaniment
- Create a melody in two-part counterpoint
- Modulate to closely related keys in a melody or harmonic context
- Compose a melody to words – e.g. poetry verse

- Write a critical analysis of selected musical works
- Research and write about the developments in musical history and the contributions of some of the great composers from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist and Modern periods in musical history

Learning and Teaching Methods:

Class-based learning experience with interactive participation to develop critical awareness in the areas of composition, aural development and listening will be the approach. Integration of these elements through experience will be central to the learning. The critical area will be the development of the student's own creativity having acquired the necessary know-how to develop their own style.

Module content:

- **Score reading** and notation based on a set score e.g. a classical symphony or chamber piece. This will include recognition of key, key relationships, cadences, form and transposing instruments.
- **Creative writing** – continuing a melody for 16 bars to include modulations to related keys.
- Composition of a **piano accompaniment** to a short melody
- **Harmonisation** of a melody in SATB style with modulation. All chords in root, first and second inversions, dominant seventh and secondary sevenths.
- **Counterpoint** – writing in two –part which reflects an understanding of style. All passing and auxiliary and chromatic notes included.
- Realise a **figured bass** with use of suspensions.
- Developing an understanding of musical **form, style** and instrumentation in respect to the works being studied on the course
- **Sight-singing** in two and three parts.
- Recognition of **modulation** to related keys aurally.
- Aural identification of **intervals and triads**.
- Recognition of all **cadences** in major or minor keys.
- Melodic dictations.
- To describe the musical features in an unfamiliar musical extract.

Module Assessment

Continuous Assessment: 50% **End of Year Examination: 50%**

Continuous Assessment: 50%

Class-based assessments 20% ***Portfolios/Assignments 30%***

The class-based assessments will be held in each of the two semesters.
Semester one: 10% **Semester two: 10%**

Portfolios 30%
Semester one: 15% ***Semester two: 15%***

There will be two portfolios which will be developed by students to demonstrate evidence of learning and research throughout the course. Primarily the first portfolios will contain a selection of musical compositions which will reflect a knowledge and understanding of compositional techniques studied on the course and the second will be based on a research topic of the student's own choice which will demonstrate their own creative thinking on a musical work, a musical genre or historical period.

End of Year Examinations 50%

Written paper - 25% **Aural paper – 25%**

` **Written paper** will include melodic composition with modulation, harmony, figured bass, counterpoint, piano accompaniment. Analysis of a musical score (known and unknown) of instrumental/orchestral masterpieces; musical forms and history of music.

Aural paper will include writing rhythms and melodies from memory, recognition of chords ,recognition modulations to closely related keys, identification of set works and their composers, singing at sight, clapping an unknown rhythm, identifying features played in an unknown musical work.

Recommended Reading:

Bennett, Roy (2002) New Assignments and Practice Score, Cambridge University Press,Cambridge.
Butterworth, Anna (2008) Harmony in Practice, Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (Publishing) Ltd., London.
Butterworth, Anna (1992) Stylistic Harmony, Oxford University Press, UK.
Campbell, Laura (1997) Sketches for Improvisation, Stainer & Bell, UK.
Campbell, Laura (1994) Sketches for Further Harmony and Improvisation, Stainer & Bell, UK.
Forney, Kristine (2010) The Enjoyment of Music, WW Norton & Co, New York.
Grout, Donald J and Palisca A,(2002) A History of Western Music, Norton & Co, New York.
Lewin, David (2007) Musical Form and Transformation: Four Analytic Essays, Oxford University Press, New York.
Pope, R and Stent, K (1989) Musicianship Perception Composition, Trinity College of Music,London.
Schonberg, Harold (2003) The Lives of the Great Composers, Abacus, UK.
Taylor, Eric (2008) Music Theory in Practice, Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music(Publishing) Ltd., London.

Supplemental Reading/References

Musical Scores

Two scores from Edition Eulenburg editions, Ernst Eulenburg Ltd, London;
Beethoven, Symphony No.6.
Debussy, L'Après Midi d'une Faune

Other materials/references

Aural materials will be provided from a variety of sources for the duration of the module.

CDs with specially selected will be provided at the start of the course.
References: *YouTube* and *ITunes.*

Further Details Continuing Professional Development Course of 100 hours over 2 semesters.
Contact hours: 1.5 hour lecture weekly and 2.5 hours independent study.

Date of Academic Council approval …….