

**TRINITY LABAN CONSERVATOIRE
OF MUSIC & DANCE**

Research Plan 2020-2025

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Research Plan 2021-2025

1. Update on Research Plan 2015-2020

The previous iteration of the Research Plan covered the years 2015 to 2020, during a period of consolidation of research activity at Trinity Laban. Below are the key objectives from this previous strategic document, together with a brief commentary on outcomes and where appropriate, the inclusion of updated data.

1.1. Appointment of additional early career researchers (ECRs)

This objective from the Research Plan was an intended response to the dedicated section of the REF 2014 Institutional Environment statement (Section **c(i)**), which highlighted relatively low levels of Early Career Researchers for an institution of the size of Trinity Laban.¹ Whilst there was some initial improvement in this situation in the period immediately following the REF 2014 exercise, this was relatively short-lived. A number of individuals, most notably in academic musicology, dance science, and participatory arts, were appointed by Trinity Laban, but all but one of these researchers left the institution relatively shortly after their start date, often to larger multi-faculty universities. At the time of writing, only one staff member with 'research-active' status currently qualifies as an ECR (namely the Research Fellow in Arts and Health) and this remains a concern moving into REF 2021, as relatively little progress can be reported on this objective. Changing the situation long-term at Trinity Laban would necessitate a more blanket policy on the recruitment of ECRs being implemented through standard Human Resources processes which are beyond the remit of this plan, coupled with greater involvement of the Research Department in staff recruitment processes.

1.2. Improvements to infrastructural and other support for individual, collaborative and interdisciplinary research

Since 2015, this has been mainly actioned through the formation of the Trinity Laban Research Hub, which provides a physical and administrative focus for all research activity at Trinity Laban. A portal for this activity is now on the TL website at: -

<http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/research/research-seminars-events.aspx>

There have been a number of measurable improvements in this area, including

¹ For REF 2021 purposes, and 'Early Career Researcher' is defined as an academic member of staff in receipt of their doctorate within the last five years, and in their first academic position.

- During 2015-2020, the TL Research Department have hosted a number of focussed symposia, including: a one-day event ran in conjunction with Studio McGregor entitled 'Imagery and Creativity in the Performing Arts'; the 'Opera and Politics' Symposium, now in its fourth year, which has featured contributions from Holland Park Opera, Royal Opera House, Opera North, Opera Studio; a one-day workshop on Britten's 'Billy Budd', organized with the research department at Royal Holloway, University of London, and the National Maritime Museum; other internal symposia in Dance Science and Choreology. A Choreography Symposium is planned for February 2020.
- A long-term goal during the period of the last Research Plan was on-going planning towards an inaugural Trinity Laban International Screen Dance Festival, the first iteration of which was held in September 2019. This festival, curated by Charles Linehan, Reader in Choreography featured 24 films from 5 continents, including 5 World Premieres from the UK, France and Australia and European Premieres from the UK, Korea, USA and Cuba. In terms of participant representation, this event, along with the Opera and Politics event, are amongst the most diverse events run at Trinity Laban, matching a renewed commitment to diversity in the Trinity Laban *Strategic Plan 2018-2020*.
- Collaborative research has been augmented by the creation of a Sound and Music Research Group, led by Prof Sam Hayden, which provides a forum for staff practice-based research on the music and movement interface. The creation of a new Trinity Laban Research Centre in Thinking Through Practice is an important goal of the current Research Plan 2020-2025 (see Section 3.1).
- The Research Hub has also added new events to its schedule during 2015-2020 that caters for a diverse population of researchers, from staff to doctoral students, to a growing cohort of Dance MFA students. Central to this is a new *Researcher Development Series*, first run in 2018-19, which is closely aligned to National Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) researcher development criteria, including sessions on Understanding your research networks; Planning your research project- setting milestones and objectives; Managing your research project; Collaborating and co-authoring- Disseminating your research - traditional and new digital communication platforms.
- The Research Department continues to host occasional Research Seminars, listed at:
<http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/research/research-seminars-events.aspx>

1.3. Consolidation and augmentation of the RDP Programme

As well as changes to the RDP Programme itemised elsewhere in this document, it is worth highlighting here preparation by the Institution for an application to HM Privy Council for Research Degree Awarding Powers in the coming years, which forms a key objective of the Research Plan 2020-2025 (see Section 3.2). Other developments since 2015 at doctoral level include:

- An extended **Professional Development Series** for both MFA, RDP and, (depending on topic) TL staff researchers, particularly ECRs, or those new to doing research, has been created. Topics covered during the last few years include:
 - Preparing for your MPhil to PhD Upgrade
 - Conferences: How to Choose, How to Submit
 - Thesis Formatting and Viva-Voce Examination Preparation
 - Project-based Work in the Performing Arts
 - Academic Jobs and Academic Job Interviews
 - Diversity and the Arts
 - Academic and Non-Academic writing
 - Material from this series, and a new archive covering topics offered in previous years, has also been uploaded to a new portal on the RDP Moodle page.
- Researchers in *creative practice* often have different needs to those working in text-based disciplines, with the result that standard Researcher Developer frameworks can appear somewhat generic. For this reason, **the Parallax Series** for both RDP and staff researchers was developed. Dedicated to the dissemination in various site-specific contexts of *new* work in music and dance by Trinity Laban students and staff, which is now in its 11th iteration, including two large events planned in partnership with the *Institute for Contemporary Arts (ICA)*, London.
 - <https://www.ica.art/whats-on/parallax-05-trinity-laban-composers-ica>
- Trinity Laban continues to offer *Preparing to Teach*, a support programme for RDP students who are interested in teaching in higher education. Until April 2017, this was a participation-only programme, with no formal outcome of completion. Participants who engaged with this programme could undertake additional mentoring to apply for recognition via direct application to the HEA Fellowship Scheme. Three RDP students took this opportunity and successfully gained full Fellowship of the HEA. Subsequently, this programme was

accredited by the HEA in April 2017 as part of *TL: Augment*, our HE teacher development suite matched to Descriptors One, Two and Three of the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF), the benchmark for learning and teaching activity in UK Higher Education. The pathways focus on promoting links between teachers' established artistic practices and creativity in teaching, underpinned by pedagogic research and scholarly activity. The HEA noted that the *'provision has been designed to suit the context of this specialist institution' and that its focus on 'equality and diversity ... promotes an inclusive approach to suit the needs of a diverse student population'*. Preparing to Teach is Pathway One of this accredited provision. This pathway builds on the non-accredited programme previously available to RDP students since 2012, but with a reconfigured assessment process for those seeking HEA recognition against Descriptor One of the UKPSF (Associate Fellow).

1.4. To increase the number of staff designated as research-active and enhance the arrangements for the mentoring and support of such staff

The number of TL staff designated as 'research-active' has fluctuated during the period 2015-2020 between **11** and **15** FTE, but at the time of writing, and due to some staff departures, there has only been a modest increase (**11.6** FTE in REF 2014 to **12.4** FTE, projected for submission to REF 2021). Cuts to the core funding of the institution have necessitated the tightening of faculty budgets, and although it is estimated that are currently at least (further) **8-10** staff whose research outputs, as monitored through the Trinity Laban Research Board, already meet the standard of REF eligibility, these individuals are not currently supported by Trinity Laban in terms of research time in their workload designation. A consequence of this is that institutional KPIs in this area should be treated as aspirational, rather than as currently pragmatic, whilst the number of research-active staff remains in its current 'steady state'. As a direct consequence of this, arrangements to support staff without research-active status who are nevertheless producing quality research, is an important objective of the current Research Plan 2015-2020 (see Section **3.4**).

1.5. Further integration of research with knowledge exchange and public engagement activity

Some developments in the interface between the Research Department and areas of public engagement and knowledge exchange during 2015-2020 include the introduction of a dedicated post, funded through the TL HEIF allocation, of a Research Fellowship in interdisciplinary collaboration, arts and health, performing arts in the museum/gallery,

and digital methods across the music and dance faculties This post has become the focus of a number of developments that including a forthcoming Trinity Laban REF 2021 Impact Case Study. This case study highlights a programme of research that focuses on Trinity Laban's work in arts and health and for older adults. Trinity Laban's research provides academic credibility and legitimacy to forms of cultural practice that can often be marginalised – notably arts practice with older people and in other participatory settings where people's creativity is sometimes assumed impaired. The research thus transforms public understanding and contributes to dispelling stereotypes around a perceived decrease in the creative capacities of certain population groups, including people with acquired brain injury. Raising awareness across the sector as to the value of facilitatory practices that focus primarily on participants' creative agency has impact on industry practice and advocates for non-reductive and more nuanced approaches of evaluation and assessing impact. There have been a number of notable publications in this area, one of which was cited in a King's College Report on *Research Impact*.²

Further work in the area includes the collaboration *Dancing for Health*, a collaborative research pilot study undertaken in 2017 between Trinity Laban and Dr Claire White, Reader in Physiotherapy at King's College London. Funded by the King's Cultural Institute as part of the Arts in Health and Wellbeing initiative, the research explored the impact of a weekly creative dance programme for adults with an acquired brain injury. In 2015, longitudinal research focused on *Dancing Ahead*, a dance class for children and young people ages 10-16 at risk of low resilience. A more long-term project involves collaborative work with the University of Exeter, with funding from the Wellcome Trust.

1.6. Augmentation of Levels of Research Income within the Institution

The outlook on objective 1.6 has remained mixed during 2015-2020. The undoubted highlight is the award of first dedicated, and recurrent research funding (QR) to Trinity Laban, which provides annual support for research at Trinity Laban amounting to **£260k** p.a. A small fraction of this income has been recycled into Research Department initiatives, primarily a **£7.5k** p.a. allocation of REF 2021 Seed Funding, which has already provided important capital funding to a number of practice-based projects that will form the core of the TL REF 2021 submission. In addition to this, annual monitoring of research active staff

² Wakeling and Clark (2015) cited in *The Creative Role of Research: Understanding research impact in the creative and cultural sector* (2017) written by Kings College London.

has revealed some successes in what are currently compulsory annual research bids for such staff, including from the ACE, PRS and Hinrichsen Foundation.

As a corollary to this, income from conventional Research Council (AHRC, ESRC etc.) as dropped in the current cycle from previous levels, perhaps reflecting a collapse in success rates for such schemes nationally. Further work is clearly required in this area, but it is worth noting that without large institutional partnerships currently possessed by competitor institutions (Imperial College, Barbican Centre) this will be difficult.

2. The Trinity Laban Research Degree Programme (RDP)

At the heart of any research community is a thriving doctoral programme, and in fact the two are importantly correlated- recurrent QR funding awarded through REF for the research community at large depends on there being a currently running doctoral or RDP Programme. This means that maintenance of the most significant area of TL research funding (see 1.6 above) depends on the maintenance of a high-quality RDP Programme, and the following therefore highlights some data from the period 2015-2020.

2.1 New admissions

The following figures indicate new admissions in each academic year since the revalidation in 2013, together with relevant affiliations/ degree descriptors:

Academic Year	Number of new enrolments
2018/19	5 students (5 x Creative Practice Music)
2017/18	4 students (2 x Creative Practice, Music, 1 x Dance Science, 1 x Music Science)
2016/17	1 student (1 x Creative Practice, Music)
2015/16	6 students (5 x Creative Practice, Music, 1 x PhD by Prior Publication, Music)

2014/15	4 students (2 x Creative Practice, Music, 1 x Dance Science, 1 x Music Science)
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The current RDP population at Trinity Laban is **18** students. Students in study suspension have undertaken this course of action due to either inability to pay fees, the withdrawal of external funding or visa sponsorship. A complete list of current students, supervisors and research topics is included at URL here:

2.2 Completion Rates

There have been **twenty-three** completions to date on the 'new' RDP since 2008 (up from **two** at the last revalidation before the Research Plan 2015-2020, in 2013); **three** more are scheduled for AY 2018/2019. There have also been **three** completions at MPhil level (2 as 'standalone' MPhils and 1 as a PhD to MPhil conversion). Drop out rates remain low in comparison with the rest of the sector. Historic completions from two separate validation periods by City University and an earlier period with the CNAA now total more than the **thirty** completions required as a pre-requisite for an rDAP application. More plausibly, if only the City University validation periods are considered, this total is likely to be also exceeded within the next year.

2.3 Career Destinations

The Head of Research conducted a review of career destinations during AY 16-17, primarily of the fifteen students above that have completed their doctorates. This revealed a tripartite classification of popular career destinations comprising:

- *Academic or Postdoctoral Posts in Higher Education Institutions:* Graduates from the programme are currently, or have been previous employed at the following HEIs: University of Kent; University of Bedfordshire; University of Cumbria; University of Chichester; Anglia Ruskin University; University of Coventry; Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance; University of Colarado (Denver).
- *Working as Professional Artists or Artist-Academics.* Notable examples here include:
 - London-based choreographer Nicola Conibere:
 - <http://www.nicolaconibere.com/about/>
 - Slovenian choreographer Mateja Bucar: <http://www.dum->

club.si/mateja/intro.htm

- Berlin-based concert pianist and artist João Lima
Duque:<http://limaduque.com>
 - Movement artist Jaimie Henthorn, based in
USA:<https://www.jaimiehenthorn.com>
 - Greek pianist, educator and researcher Ann-Kristin Sofrinou:
<https://www.kristinsofroniou.com>
 - Composer and Glyndebourne Resident-Artist Luke Styles:
<http://www.lukestyles.com/>
 - Will Dutta, composer and co-founder of 'Nonclassical':
<https://www.nonclassical.co.uk>
 - Ailie Robertson, multi-award winning Scottish composer:
<https://www.ailierobertson.com>
- A smaller group of graduates have found professional work in the arts and cultural sector, including the BBC and gallery spaces in London and Seoul;
 - A fourth group of students combine already existing careers as artists with PhD study, such: as the conductor Alexander Walker (recent winner of the Elgar Medal).

2.4 Student Finance

A particular achievement of the TL RDP thus far has been successful bids for postgraduate studentships. To date, **nine** registered students have received or are receiving financial assistance towards their studies, in all cases including both fees and maintenance awards. Awarding bodies have included the Leverhulme Trust (x2), Arts and Humanities Research Council (x2), Emerton Christie Charity, National Portrait Gallery, FTC Portugal, EU Government sources in Spain and Greece. It remains the case however that the majority of students, like many others in the creative and performing arts, self-fund their doctoral studies, and often combine this with working part-time, which represents particular challenges for the Institution (see notes on this in Section 10).

3. Research Objectives 2020-2025

Summary

The Research Plan 2020-2025 has four objectives:

3.1 Creation of a new Trinity Laban Research Centre

3.2 Application for Research-Degree Awarding Powers, and Visibility of the RDP Programme

3.3 Sustaining Quality-Related Research Income Through REF 2021 and Beyond

3.4 Arrangements for a 'Spectrum' of Research Active Status Across the Institution

This is the fourth long-term Research Plan for Trinity Laban. The research objectives follow from strategic objectives derived from discussions at the Trinity Laban Research Board, the institution as a whole, and reflect changes in the sector more widely. There are **four** main objectives that each relate to 'world-leading' REF 2014 areas of research activity at Trinity Laban, which in the last exercise were: composition; choreography; musical performance; aesthetics; music psychology, and couple these with strong existing areas of research in the institution, which include; performance science (more broadly); pedagogical and educational research in music and dance; musicology; dance studies; somatics; choreology; research into arts and public engagement. Taken together, these research groupings constitute the entirety of TL's research activity. The **four** objectives are outlined below.

3.1 Creation of a new Trinity Laban New Research Centre

During AY 18/19 a specific action from the Trinity Laban Research Board was the catalyst for the creation of an institutional 'Leverhulme Working Group' which brought together a voluntary core of research-active staff interested in the pragmatics of a new Trinity Laban Research Centre, which would form a home to the many diverse areas of research within the institution mentioned above. This group was chaired by Prof Helen Thomas, and met regularly as a group or sub-groups to discuss various points of connection and congruence between areas of research activity that arise from several quite separate groupings- from empirical science through to disciplines more aligned with the humanities, and through to creative practice.

Whilst discussions are still ongoing, some conclusions have been reached about the nature of the research centre, and a title arrived at- 'Thinking Through Practice'. The centre would also align with new institutional imperatives regarding diversity, and one way of approaching the importance of this issue is to use performance as a lens through which wider social issues can be addressed. Some questions that the Research Centre could address itself to are:

- How does making and thinking about performances provide a mechanism for wider societal commentary?

- What are the limits of this procedure?
- How can working through the lens of art-making provide value and benefit?
- How can performance-making contribute to disputes and questions in wider disciplinary areas in the sciences and humanities?

As a result it is not anticipated that the centre is either focused solely on practice outcomes, nor just thinking about practice, but thinking *through* practice about wider cultural and societal issues, like diversity, wellbeing, cohesion, community, and so forth. Hence the centre would satisfy the necessary criteria of multidisciplinary, and could form a research centre for Trinity Laban through a process that could house its other existing groups, like the Sound and Movement Research Group. The Centre would form annual events that would address certain themes at the intersection of its research areas. An initial idea was to have, in the first year, a focus on the whole idea and practice of 'somatics' and 'embodiment' in both disciplines of music and dance.

The first objective of the Research Plan 2020-2025:

- Is to inaugurate the Research Centre within Trinity Laban, with a launch event in Summer Term of AY 19/20;
- Create a Steering Committee for the Project;
- Create a web and social media presence for the Research Centre;
- Agree the first series of themes for the centre in the AYs from 2020, and form plans for events and symposia etc.
- Actions: Head of Research; RDP Committee (nomination of Steering Group and themes); Trinity Laban MarComms (dedicated website for the Centre).

3.2 Application for Research-Degree Awarding Powers, and Visibility of the RDP Programme

The institution is now entering the middle stages of a validation agreement with City University of its doctoral (RDP) programme, and with City unwilling to remain a validating institution for much longer, there remains the urgent question of how to continue with what has been immensely successful RDP provision at Trinity Laban, which is perhaps leading in the Conservatoire sector.

The second objective of the Research Plan 2020-2025 reflects a two-fold approach to the TL RDP Programme comprising a) the acquisition of institutionally autonomous 'research-degree awarding powers' (known as 'rDAP'), and b) increasing the visibility of the success of

TL RDP, both nationally and internationally. To take rDAP first, the following presents the case for these degree-awarding powers:

3.2.1 Further institutional autonomy

The case for Trinity Laban to apply for rDAP is increasingly strong from the point of view of consolidating, post-tDAP the institution's status as an officially recognized Higher Education Institution, with the capacity to validate its own degrees. rDAP would strengthen the autonomy, sustainability and reputation of the Institution, and in addition, complete this autonomous degree-awarding status at all levels of provision, from Level 3 through to Level 8 awards. The external recognition would also confirm, post-tDAP, the Institution's capacity to direct its own longer-term development through sound structures and systems for corporate governance and academic quality and standards.

3.2.2 Risks of dependence on a validating partner

Without rDAP, the Institution remains dependent on a good relationship with a validating university in order to offer research degrees. We are now into the second year of the current cycle, following the validation of the latest iteration of the RDP Programme in 2018. While the institution has an excellent record of successful outcomes to doctoral validation, the process remains burdensome, creating an additional layer of accountability on top of already rigorous internal procedures. In addition, conversations with our current validating partner indicate that there are more pressing strategic aims for City than furthering another period of RDP validation, making it likely that TL would have to seek an entirely new validating partner from a small pool of such, which would increase the accounting burden still further. Adding this together means that our flexibility for academic planning at research degree level is currently constrained by the extent of the University's strategic interest in our research degree programmes, coupled with the practicality of locating an alternative validation provider in a shrinking pool of such HEIs.

3.2.3 Competitor Institutions

Historically, many other competing Institutions already have rDAP or have ongoing validation partners and Trinity Laban will face reputational risks in comparison to other institutions if it does not acquire this status. As examples, The Royal College of Music has long held rDAP, and also offers DMus degrees. The Royal Academy of Music has a stable partnership with the University of

London; the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, also validated by City University, is currently pursuing its own plan to acquire rDAP, as is the Royal Northern College of Music, who plan to acquire rDAP during AY 19/20.

3.2.4 Growth Strategy

During the last few years, TL has instigated a plan to grow student numbers across a variety of levels in order to mitigate financial pressures on the institution. Central to this strategy was the planned introduction of programmes attracting a lower unit of resource. The acquisition of rDAP would further augment this strategy. Current RDP numbers have fluctuated between 15 and 25 students, but given the recent augmentation of the numbers of research-active staff and the introduction of a Professorial recognition scheme in 2016, these numbers could substantially rise to ca. 40 students, given the ability of the institution to introduce a more flexible provision for degrees at Level 8 than is currently possible with City University, coupled with the 'uncapping' of student numbers (currently set at 25). Such an extended offer, which would appeal to a changing demographic of student who need to study in combination with part-time working, will include: 'low-residency' MPhil/PhD programmes that are available to external students, supported by online learning; DMus programmes for specialist performers; one-year Level 8 ISP programmes; PhDs by Publication/Prior Output and Professional Doctorates, available to students beyond the UK. In addition, the flexibility of offer afforded by rDAP will enhance progression and retention routes through the institution, for example by offering research degrees that incorporate a year of MFA study (currently an area of investment by the institution at Level 7), as well as extending exit awards at an early stage of PhD study.

3.2.5. Institutional brand and reputation

The award of rDAP will help Trinity Laban with the consolidation of its Institutional brand, building on an already strong identity in music, dance and musical theatre. The acquisition of rDAP would complete the profile of the institutional brand to incorporate degree-awarding provision at the highest level of study. In addition, an application for rDAP would demonstrate the sustainability of both the research culture and on-going quality assurance mechanisms in the institution in a post-rDAP environment, important for example in demonstrating research-led teaching initiatives that are important for other institutional audits, such as TEF.

The second objective of the Research Plan 2020-2025 is therefore:

- To build upon an 'expression of interest' for acquiring rDAP, sent to the HM Privy Council in October 2018, by;
- Finalising Executive and Governor approval;
- Forming a Trinity Laban rDAP Project Team with a nominated Lead, which would perhaps build on the core staff who delivered tDAP to Trinity Laban, and who will form an rDAP Working Group;
- **Completing the rDAP Project in the Academic Years 20/21- 21/22.**
- Actions: Trinity Laban Principal and Executive; Executive Lead for Research; Head of Research; rDAP Project Lead; rDAP Working Group.

In addition to this, an additional objective relating to the doctoral programme relates to its *visibility* within the sector, and there are a number of action points here, namely:

- Trinity Laban's RDP Programme has grown from a position of obscurity in 2008 to being arguably the most successful programme within Conservatoires UK (an a measure of this, completions have risen from **two** in 2014/15 to **twenty-three** in 2019/20, giving us a total number of completions that exceeds the requirement for rDAP);
- Despite this, the RDP programme has a relatively low profile, both within TL itself, and also nationally and internationally;
- TL has also established itself a home for *practice-based doctorates* that have been completed with the help of a core group of specialists at TL, operating under a similar method. These type of doctorates give rise to much debate within the higher educational sector, and institutions are often under-confident at delivering them. However TL has, to the contrary, grown in confidence in its ability to specialise in doctorates of this type, and in the diverse areas of: composition; sound art; choreography; musical performance; choreography; choreology; photography; performance art and dance theatre.
- It is an objective therefore during 2020-2025 that visibility of this important work is raised, through a process whereby:
- Trinity Laban supervisors become more outward facing about methodologies: at CUK; NAMHE, and at international fora like ELIA and AEC.
- The RDP Programme is more aggressively marketed within the institution, as arguably its 'flagship' programme, and plays a much more active role in its social media output.

- TL becomes better known as a specialist training centre in practice-based doctorates, and its expertise is sought as a confident provider by third parties.
- Actions; Head of Research and RDP Supervisors; Trinity Laban MarComms.

3.3 Sustaining Quality-Related Research Income Through REF 2021 and Beyond

Whilst the first two objectives are large-scale and may see the majority of research focus in the next five years, the next two are smaller and more local. The first relates to the arrangements for REF 2021. At the time of writing, Trinity Laban is entering into the 'Selecting Outputs' stage of the REF 2021 strategy outlined in its institutional REF 2021 Code of Practice. Work has been submitted by all research active staff and has been pre-screened internally. It is now in the hands of the two External Advisors for grading, and once this process is complete, provisional decisions will be made on the research outputs the institution will focus on for REF 2021.

The next iteration of REF is likely to be tougher than the last in at least two important respects a) the 'cap' of outputs to 2.5 x FTE will lead to a large reduction in the total number that will be assessed by the exercise, and this reduction is likely to lead to 'grade inflation', particularly in the 4* ('world-leading') area, and b) the new requirements for evidencing impact case studies, likely to be much more stringent than in REF 2014.

In addition to this, we have seen earlier how the majority of annual research income to TL is likely to continue to derive mostly from the QR recurrent funding associated with REF outcomes, and coupling this with the more challenging research environment set out above, a sensible objective would not be *growth* (there has been little growth in research active FTE since the last exercise) but *sustainability* of core research funding. Whilst REF outcomes largely depend on the quality of work submitted by individual researchers, there are some tangible procedures that can be carried out institutionally to maximise chances of success in this key final year leading to REF, namely:

- Once outputs are selected, careful focus on their professional presentation, including wherever possible, professionally made recordings, films and other fixed media with labelling, especially for the large majority of creative practice outputs likely to be selected. At the moment we lack a central mechanism to create an archive of such fixed media, and this needs to be addressed. Meetings with relevant groups, such as the Composition Department, need to be arranged.
- Once impact case studies have been reduced from the current **four** to **two**, renewed effort needs to be made to ensure that these case studies: have an

appropriate and extensive range of both quantitative and qualitative evidencing; are corroborated through a diverse range of sources; are professionally presented and have been through several stages of critical readership.

- Actions: Head of Research Trinity Laban REF 2021 Panel; Research Administrator; Research Champions in Faculties.

3.4 Arrangements for a 'Spectrum' of Research Active Status Across the Institution

As mentioned several times previously in this document, the category of officially designated 'research-active staff' at Trinity Laban as remained fairly static (**11.6** FTE in REF 2014 to **12.4** in REF 2021). Despite this, there are nevertheless a good deal of individuals working within the institution who, if not 'officially' research-active are nevertheless pragmatically 'research-active', often at research quality levels that match their 'official' counterparts. Whilst it would be desirable to confer official research active status on all such individuals (this would have greatly enhanced the FTE pool for REF 2021, and along with it, the likely result) this has not proved possible for financial reasons within the institution and for reasons that are outside of the control of the Research Department.

Nevertheless, these individuals need to be provided with support, mentoring, and recognition to their contribution to the institution, whether this is through official status of research active or not. The final objective of the Research Plan 2020-2025 therefore proposes:

- To create a 'spectrum' of research active status at Trinity Laban. Whilst some will be on research active contracts necessary for REF, there are ways of mobilizing the workload allocation for any member of staff for 'Staff Development' and where line manager approval has been secured, routing this towards research activity, with adequate annual monitoring.³ This will necessitate more connection between the annual appraisal mechanism and research outcomes for such staff;
- To create a 'buddying' system whereby members of the research active pool are assigned mentees within the larger pool. Whilst this happens already at TL to a certain extent, the next Research Plan would see this objective made much more systematic, and would also involve the 'research champions' within each Faculty;
- To create more suitable fora for the dissemination of the work of a wider pool of research staff. At the recent meeting of the Trinity Laban Music Research Working Group, it was suggested that TL inaugurate a 'TL Innovators Series' for such staff,

³ The procedure for apportioning staff development time is described in the *Trinity Laban Staff Development Policy*. 5% time?

that would combine in innovative ways, both performance and research dissemination, and would sit alongside existing for a, like the Research Seminar and Parallax series of RDP/Research Staff events.

- Actions: Executive Lead for Research; Head of Research; TL Heads of Department; TL Music Research Working Group; TL 'Research-Active' Staff.

4. Links to Trinity Laban Strategic Plan 2018-2028

This plan is designed to be read in conjunction with the new ten-year Trinity Laban Strategic Plan 2018-2028 and shares its core values, enumerated as: Artistically Ambitious and Experimental; Progressive; Ethical and Inclusive; Socially engaged; Collaborative. This Research Plan, particularly the objective regarding the new Trinity Laban Research Centre (see Section 3.1) is consistent with the relevant Core Aims within the Strategic Plan, particularly Core Aim 2: which states:

To undertake and disseminate research that advances artistic practice in music and dance, creates new and original work in our art forms, and uses our world-leading performance science expertise to improve health and well-being among professional artists and wider society

5. Timeline

The drafting of the TL Research Plan 2020-2025 has been developed through the following timeline:

- Initial presentation of draft research objectives and associated activities to the TL Research Board in Autumn and (if necessary) Spring Term of 19/20;
- Submission to Academic Board (November 2019);
- Submission of document to PMG (thereafter);