

The Teaching Musician LEARNING MENTOR Student Handbook 2020

“For me personally, perhaps due to my upbringing and educational background, critical thinking as a tool for knowledge development is a concept that I only came across after being initiated into this academic course.

*To **push myself to think from many different angles** and to delve into a situation is not something I do automatically. This module has **really brought the importance of critical thinking to my notice**. I now realise how much faster learning takes place when we think critically.” (student reflection on module)*

*“Working with X as their mentor was a pleasure and a great learning experience for me. I have not mentored like this before and **the feeling I had was that we were on an adventure together**. I found the process enlightening for both parties, and wish I could have had access to similar schemes at certain points in my own career.” (mentor reflections on module)*

Introduction

Welcome to the Learning Mentor Module

This module presents an opportunity for you to use reflective dialogue as a tool for your professional and personal development. In doing so, we hope that you will also learn about the power and impact of different approaches to learning, in order to broaden the possible scope of your own pedagogical practice.

The Learning Mentor module has two principal inter-connected aims:

1. To support your development in a self-identified area of your professional practice, and
2. To support you to reflect on the process of learning.

Working with an experienced mentor around learning goals which you identify, you will reflect on your progress in relation to those goals. At the same time, you will also reflect on how the teacher-learner relationship influences and shapes that development. This requires a sophisticated level of reflective skill, both on your part and that of your mentor, as you will not only be learning how to develop an aspect of your practice, you will also be reflecting on the *process* of that learning (meta-learning).

A principle of mentoring and coaching in general is that 'everyone has the resources to make their own decisions' (Annie Murray 2007). Both you and your mentor need to agree on the kind of learning you want to undertake, and it is your *joint* responsibility to make it happen. Although your mentor may have more experience in the area of learning identified, it is your *joint* responsibility to ensure that the *process* of learning is the most appropriate for both of you.

The following pages include some important information about the component and how it works and is assessed, as well as guidance for how you should manage your relationship with your learning mentor to ensure that you gain the maximum possible benefit from the scheme and succeed with the assessment tasks.

Do get in touch with me at any time if you have queries or concerns. I hope you find the module stimulating and rewarding, and I look forward to hearing about your experiences.

Dr. Dave Camlin

Module Leader

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Overview and FAQs

What is mentoring?

“A *critical friend* can be defined as a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work.”¹

“**Mentors** fulfil a similar role to that of a critical friend, but are usually more experienced. Mentors provide expertise to less experienced individuals to help them advance their career, enhance their education and build their networks. Mentoring entails informal communication over a sustained period of time, usually face-to-face, although it can take other forms.”²

Mentoring may follow a range of different models:

- **The cloning model** – where the mentor tries to produce a copy of himself or herself
- **The nurturing model** - where the mentor becomes a parent figure, creating a safe environment in which the ‘mentee’ can learn and experiment for himself or herself
- **The friendship model** - which involves peers working together; this model lacks a hierarchical element
- **The apprenticeship model** - which focuses on professional relationships.³

What activities does/can the Learning Mentor module involve?

The precise form of your mentoring relationship is something for you and your mentor to negotiate, but it should include two elements:

1. Action i.e. doing something, ideally together
2. Reflection-on-action i.e. reflecting on it afterwards

At its simplest level, this might be:

1. Having an instrumental / vocal lesson, or observing each others’ teaching practice, and
2. Having a ‘reflective dialogue’ about it afterwards, where questions about the process of learning can be addressed, assumptions unpicked or challenged, and insights about learning uncovered.

You could also interpret the relationship in more creative ways i.e. you might go for a walk together, or improvise together, visit an art gallery, go to a concert, or participate in another learning activity together as the ‘action’ which you subsequently reflect on. It’s up to both of you to decide what feels most beneficial to promote reflective learning.

¹ A. Costa and B. Kallick, ‘Through the Lens of a Critical Friend’, *Educational Leadership* 51, no. 2 (1993): 49–51.

² Susan Hallam and Helena Gaunt, *Preparing for Success: A Practical Guide for Young Musicians* (Institute of Education Publications, 2012), 266.

³ C. Buell, ‘Models of Mentoring in Communication’, *Communication Review* 53, no. 1 (2004): 56–73; Hallam and Gaunt, *Preparing for Success*, 267.

Who chooses my mentor?

Ideally, mentoring relationships evolve naturally within existing ‘communities of practice’⁴, where more experienced practitioners provide advice, support and guidance to emerging ones. For many musicians, however, ‘communities of practice’ may be small or non-existent, and the range of possible mentors limited. If the focus of your mentoring is likely to be around the development of instrumental or vocal skills Trinity Laban may be able to assist in suggesting some possible mentors although the final choice of mentor remains your responsibility. You may already have someone in mind who you think you could learn from / with, and would like to be mentored by. Your opinions about a possible mentor are important, although we cannot guarantee the availability of any specific mentor. If you don’t have a particular view on who your mentor might be, the Module Leader and Programme Leader will suggest possible mentors.

How do we structure the mentoring relationship?

Again, this is down to the pair of you to negotiate, but to ensure clarity in the relationship, we suggest you agree two things in your first meeting:

1. **WHAT** is it that you, the student, want to learn / develop / improve? i.e. what is / are your learning goal/s?
2. **HOW** are you going to accomplish that together?

This very minimal contract will keep you both focused on the purpose of the relationship. If either of you feel that it isn’t working for whatever reason, you should draw each other’s attention back to these two points as a starting place for reflective dialogue. If you can’t resolve any concerns or issues *between* you, you should contact the module leader for advice / guidance / support.

What kind of learning relationship is this?

There are a great many different kinds of 1:1 learning relationship (see fig. 1). We suggest that a good starting point for your reflective discussions is to have a reflective dialogue about the different kinds of learning relationships you’ve both had, what you’ve each found useful and not so useful, and therefore what kind of learning relationship you’re both hoping for from this opportunity. If you find there are big discrepancies in your expectations of the learning relationship, you should resolve these before doing anything else. If it feels too challenging to discuss as a pair, involve the module leader in the discussion.

As these diagrams suggest, there are a range of possible learning approaches / pedagogies available to you, and we encourage you to discuss this together first. You may find David Price’s classification of teaching-learning approaches helps you to discuss this more explicitly:

“In **pedagogy**, the learner is led to a conclusion determined by the teacher, informed by the teacher’s knowledge and beliefs – it could be termed ‘instructional learning’. In **andragogy**, though the destination may be decided by the tutor, the route involves greater learner involvement, acknowledging the importance of relevance, motivation and problem-solving. Although andragogy is a term open to many interpretations, let’s use it here to denote ‘self-directed learning. In **heutagogy**, there is not necessarily a defined destination, nor a prescribed route – it is ‘self-determined learning’.”⁵

⁴ Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*, New Ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁵ David Price, *Open: How We’ll Work, Live and Learn in the Future* (England: Crux Publishing Ltd, 2013), 212.

Images of 1:1 relationships
 Jamie Wignall
 from 'Preparing for Success'
 (Hallam & Gaunt 2012)



fig. 1 – Images of 1:1 relationships

Remember, the focus of the module isn't just on the learning being undertaken; it's also about the *process* of learning. Crucially, it's also about how you take that understanding of learning into your own practice as a teaching musician. Therefore, you will find it helpful if you are also continually thinking about how any insights you develop through the experience can influence your own practice.

What are the pitfalls involved in mentoring and how can we avoid them?

It's important to acknowledge that this kind of 1:1 learning isn't without its challenges. It relies on people's previous experience of similar situations to maintain a healthy and positive learning environment, and mentors are learners too! If people have different expectations, experiences or backgrounds, that can lead to confusion, uncertainty or anxiety, which is why it's important to agree beforehand what you both expect from the process. As Susan Hallam and Helena Gaunt note:

“Asking for feedback from your colleagues or from someone who acts as a mentor may not be easy for either party. Being honestly critical requires particular skills, which offer support while suggesting ways in which improvements can be made. Receiving criticism, even when it is constructive, can be difficult and can engender emotional responses that need to be managed. Any such relationship therefore requires trust and respect between the two parties involved.”⁶

Keep talking with each other – maintain open lines of communication, and if you feel like you need more support, ask for it from the module leader.

When / where should mentoring meetings take place?

You can decide this by mutual agreement. The amount of time that your mentor is able to commit to this project is 10 hours. How you use those hours is up to the two of you to negotiate. You may want a regular fortnightly meeting for 20 weeks, or a more intensive 'workshop' and reflective dialogue 3 or 4 times over the course of the module. It's up to you.

Is a payment offered to the mentor?

Yes, we are offering professional mentors an honorarium payment for their time, which is why it's important to put clear boundaries around how you use that time. It is your responsibility to communicate to the mentor that this honorarium payment is available. They will have the opportunity to accept or decline this payment when completing the 'Learning Mentor Agreement Form'. At the end of the component, Trinity Laban will send a short report/feedback form to your mentor. Once completed and returned, Trinity Laban will send a Purchase Order (PO) number to be included on their invoice. Once Trinity Laban receive the invoice, it will be processed and paid at the earliest opportunity.

How long does the mentoring relationship last?

This is a fixed-term mentoring agreement which only lasts for the duration of this module, and for the amount of time specified. Although some mentoring relationships really thrive, and you may both be tempted to commit to a longer-term arrangement, you shouldn't give in to that temptation, as you will lose the contractual clarity and professional boundaries which this module structure provides. As teachers, it's important to maintain clear professional boundaries, so it's far better to mark the end of your mentoring relationship with a special moment somehow – a formal goodbye celebrating what you've achieved together, or an informal celebration somewhere suitable.

⁶ Hallam and Gaunt, *Preparing for Success*, 266.

How do we have a ‘reflective dialogue’?

There are lots of ways of doing this, but the best way is to do what feels natural and easy for both of you. In previous similar projects, we’ve found some simple ways to make this process easier ⁷, and there are some good models out there to help structure a ‘focused conversation’, including the Institute for Cultural Affairs’ ORID model ⁸:

Type of question	Purpose	Example
Objective	Begin with data, facts, external reality	“What did you actually see, hear or read?”
Reflective	Evoke immediate personal reactions, internal responses, sometimes emotions or feelings, hidden images, and associations with the facts	“What was your gut level reaction?”
Interpretive	Draw out meaning, values, significance, implications	“What new insight did you get from this?”
Decisional	Bring the conversation to a close, eliciting resolution and enabling the group to make a decision about the future	“What do you think we should do?”

What if I don’t get on with my mentor?

We hope that won’t happen! In truth, it rarely does, although sometimes both mentor and student may need to ‘re-frame’ the experience as a ‘learning opportunity’. Every situation has opportunities for learning within it, and we hope that you will both use any challenges which may arise as an opportunity to deepen your skills of critical reflection. If something doesn’t feel like it’s working, talk to each other about it if you can. If you can’t, then talk to me as the module leader. Don’t keep any discomfort or concerns to yourself. While we’ll make every effort to resolve any challenges, if you’re *really* not getting on, your capacity for learning is probably taking a nose-dive as well, and we can discuss other solutions.

How do I keep track of my learning?

Again, this is up to you, but the final submission for this module is a 4,000 word reflective evaluation of the process of learning with a mentor. To accomplish this well, you need to be able to reflect critically on all parts of the process, and identify significant or ‘critical’ moments in the process, and their impact on your learning. You simply can’t do this terribly well if you’re having to dredge those key moments from your memory, so we ask you to keep a reflective journal throughout the whole process. How you do this is up to you – some people like to keep a written diary, or an online Google doc that you can share with your mentor and / or other critical friends or the module leader. Some people prefer to keep a ‘visual’ diary – drawings, photos and illustrations which facilitate memory retrieval. You could keep an audio diary, or any other form of journaling activity that will help you remember the key moments and

⁷ David A. Camlin, ‘Reflective Dialogue’, Music Lab, January 2014, <http://davecamlin.com/music-lab>.

⁸ R. Brian Stanfield, *The Art of Focused Conversation: 100 Ways to Access Group Wisdom in the Workplace* (New Society Publishers, 2000).

their emotional content. People often find this part of the process extremely rewarding, as it helps them to contextualise their rich experiences in creatively fulfilling ways.

There are also two forum assignments for this module, where you are required to share your experiences with your peers online. The first forum assignment comes immediately after your first meeting with your mentor when you discuss those initial meetings with your peers, and the second part-way through the process, to reflect with your peers on your collective progress.

In addition to these assignments, we encourage you to keep as detailed a record as you can of whatever emerges from the learning process. If you are developing a particular musical technique, keep a video diary of your progress. If your learning involves improvisation or composition, keep audio / video recordings of these as well. If your learning involves the development of teaching materials, include these as well. Check with your mentor whether they're okay to record your reflective conversations so that you can listen back to them afterwards. You could use transcription software to transcribe those conversations and include the transcripts as appendices in your learning portfolio.

What other support is available?

Each student also receives an hour of supervision with the module leader. You can use this hour in whatever way is most useful. You may want to check in with me at the start of the process to make sure you're getting off on the right lines, or you may want to use the time to help resolve any challenges that may arise, or use them as a reflective sounding board to help sharpen your own learning.

Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

The Student

The student's role is to:

- Contact your assigned mentor (list on Moodle) and agree a date for the first meeting;
- Prepare for the first meeting by sending your mentor a copy of your current CV, and by thinking beforehand about what they want to get from the opportunity (learning goals);
- Complete the 'Learning Mentor Agreement Form (Student)' (form links available on Moodle) after your first meeting about WHAT and HOW you are going to learn, and the schedule of future meetings.
- Send the 'Learning Mentor Agreement Form' and the 'Notes to Mentors' to your mentor
- Communicate to the mentor that there is an honorarium payment available
- Make the most of the learning opportunity and commit to a culture of reflective learning;
- Maintain ongoing communication with your mentor, especially if alternative arrangements need to be made to pre-arranged meeting times. Please note: Trinity Laban is not responsible for travel costs to mentor meetings on this programme, and students are encouraged to consider such costs when agreeing to meeting locations. Students are also encouraged to consider your own safety when travelling.
- Reflect upon your experiences in the form of a learning portfolio, submitted at the end of the component.

Trinity Laban:

It is Trinity Laban's role to:

- Ensure the student has an appropriate learning mentor;
- Support the student with their mentoring relationship;
- The module leader (Dave Camlin) is responsible for overseeing the mentoring relationships and ensuring the overall quality of the Learning Mentor module. He will also brief students prior to the mentoring process commencing, and lead the module teaching.
- The module leader will be the point of contact between mentors and students where appropriate, and the Learning and Participation team will provide administrative support for the learning experience.
- The module leader will be available to respond to issues as they arise and act, as appropriate, to resolve them.
- The Learning & Participation team at Trinity Laban holds responsibility for monitoring attendance of placements and gaining feedback from the mentor.
- The Learning & Participation team Trinity Laban holds responsibility for organising honorarium payment to the mentors.

The Learning Mentor:

Placement hosts can expect the student to adhere to agreed arrangements and conduct themselves in a completely professional manner at all times. In the case of any problems the mentor should contact the module leader at Trinity Laban. The mentor is kindly asked to:

- Facilitate a first meeting with the student, where the parameters of learning can be agreed:
 - Agree a basic learning contract:
 - **WHAT** is it that the student wants to learn / develop / improve? i.e. what is / are their learning goal/s?
 - **HOW** are you going to do that together?

- o Agree a schedule for future meetings with the student (10 hours in total, *including* the first meeting)
- Make the most of the learning opportunity and commit to a culture of reflective learning;
- Recognise the student as the main point of contact for the mentoring experience but to make a note of the contact details of the module leader at Trinity Laban if they have further queries.
- Provide a safe and appropriate learning environment for the duration of the mentoring relationship
- Complete the 'Learning Mentor Agreement Form'
- Confirm the student's attendance at all agreed sessions and offer feedback and reflect upon the engagement (through a short formal feedback form) to Trinity Laban.
- If applicable, await a PO number from Trinity Laban for the honorarium payment and invoice Trinity Laban quoting this PO number.

If the mentor is no longer able to offer the opportunity or if they have any kind of problem or complaint concerning your conduct then they can address the issue with the module leader who will address the issue immediately and meet with the mentor if appropriate to resolve the matter.

Component Descriptions

This document provides an outline of the component with details of arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment, as well as the basic list of reading and resources. It is important that you read this carefully.

The deadlines for submission of assessed work is independently negotiated.

KEY FACTS

Module:	Learning Mentor
Module Code:	MTL717
Teaching Institution:	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
Delivery location:	King Charles Court, Greenwich, London
UK Credits:	20
ECTS:	10
Level:	7

OUTLINE

Summary description

In this module, you will engage in a professional learning dialogue with one or more experienced practitioners in your field (learning mentor/s) to facilitate critical reflection on your development as a teaching musician. Following an initial dialogue with the module leader, you will set yourself individual learning goals in relation to your ongoing development, and together you will identify other key practitioner/s who can act as learning mentors to provide you with further opportunities to reflect critically on your development, practice, knowledge and skills, and support the realisation of your learning goals.

You will maintain a learning journal in relation to this development in the pursuit of your learning goals, and will use the opportunity to reflect critically on the process of your learning, thereby deriving insights into this process which you can then apply in your professional practice as a teaching musician.

The module aims to give you direct experience of the benefits of learning through a dialogic approach, and hopes thereby to inform and refine your own pedagogical approach to the teacher-student relationship.

What will I be expected to achieve?

Knowledge and understanding: on successful completion of this module, a student will be able to demonstrate:

A comprehensive and critical understanding of:

- A range of different approaches to teaching-learning situations, and the teacher-student relationship;
- A range of social, political, philosophical and relational perspectives on teaching-learning situations;
- The role and value of dialogue in facilitating critically reflective practice in relation to individual learning;

Skills: on successful completion of this module, a student will be able to:

- set realistic and ambitious learning goals for their own development as a teaching musician;
- reflect critically on the process of their own learning;
- transfer the learning derived from critical reflection onto their own learning process in their practice as a teaching musician;

Values and attitudes: on successful completion of this module, a student will have:

- An approach to teaching and learning which recognises the role and value of dialogue as a tool for facilitating critical reflection and personal / individual development.

How will I learn?

Students will learn through a combination of the following learning and teaching methods:

- Group seminars covering a range of topics including dialogic pedagogy and reflective practice,
- A series of bespoke critically reflective learning dialogues with a learning mentor, or mentors;
- Observations of practice (e.g. observing other music professionals in musical and/or educational settings, having your own musical / educational practice observed and used as the basis for reflective dialogue etc.)
- Self-directed study;
- Personal practice, listening, reading, and reflection.
- Peer-peer dialogue and forums

Much of the learning in this module is self-directed, but will be informed by a series of ongoing dialogues with the module leader, other tutors where appropriate, and one or more practitioners/learning mentors whose practice, knowledge and skills will facilitate your progression toward achieving the specific learning goals you have set for your development as a teaching musician. The nature and type of these learning dialogues will vary from individual to individual, to suit individual learning needs and approaches. By way of example, these may be informed by any / all of the following activities:

- Spoken dialogues on matters of mutual professional interest;
- Observation of musical or teaching practice (led by either the student or the learning mentor);
- Musical exchange / dialogue;
- 1:1 instrumental / vocal tuition;

- visits to cultural / educational events / situations;
- other forms of dialogue which you and/or the learning mentor identify as potentially facilitating your development. In every instance, all activities observed or undertaken should be followed by well-structured, critically reflective dialogue with the learning mentor, in order to derive the maximum amount of learning from them.

Module teaching pattern

Teaching Component	Type	Contact Hours	Self-directed Study Hours	Total Student Learning Hours
Seminar		3	27	30
Mentor-led Reflective Dialogues		10	150	160
Supervision		1	9	10
	Totals	14	186	200

How will I be assessed?

Overview

You will be assessed on the submission of a learning portfolio, consisting of:

1. a 4,000 word **critical evaluation** of the process of reflective learning undertaken within the module;
2. a set of appendices which provide further evidence of the learning referred to in the critical evaluation, which may include any / all of the following:
 - a Learning Journal consisting of reflections made at each stage of the learning process;
 - Full – or partial - transcripts of dialogues undertaken as part of the learning process;
 - Any musical, teaching or other materials generated in the course of the learning process;
 - Any other relevant materials– e.g. MP3 recordings, short videos, other materials – which illustrate or illuminate some of the learning referred to in the critical evaluation.

Module Assessment

Assessment Component	Assessment Type	Weighting	Pass Mark
Learning Portfolio	Written submission	100%	50%

What do I have to do to pass?

You need to achieve a pass mark of 50% overall in order to pass this module. You are expected to be able to demonstrate (as appropriate):

- musical, musicological, technological and pedagogical authority;
- originality of thought and research, and an understanding of the symbiotic relationship between theory and practice;
- insightful reflective practice
- sophisticated, appropriate and coherent interpretative, critical, contextual and/or analytical knowledge;
- an ability to communicate data clearly, accurately and articulately and with imagination and creativity;
- excellent skills in organisation, presentation, and communication.

Where a student fails to achieve a pass mark for the module of 50%, it may be necessary to resit the module. The final decision on resit arrangements is made by the Assessment Board.

How and when will I get feedback on my assessments?

Students are responsible for undertaking assessments in accordance with the dates published at the beginning of each year. Feedback is normally issued by the tutor in accordance with the dates published at the beginning of the academic year – normally within 21 working days. Feedback is normally provided on a *pro forma* and where appropriate, tutors may annotate scripts. This report will also indicate a level of achievement (a 'grade') which will not be finalised until after the MA Assessment Board. Formative feedback may be issued either individually or to seminar groups as appropriate.

READING LIST

Core Reading:

Camlin, David A. 'This Is My Truth, Tell Me Yours: Emphasising Dialogue within Participatory Music'. *International Journal of Community Music* 8, no. 3 (December 2015): 233–57. doi:10.1386/ijcm.8.3.233_1.

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Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 2Rev Ed. Penguin, 1970.

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Wegerif, Rupert. *Dialogic: Education for the Internet Age*. Routledge, 2012.

Dialogic Pedagogy

Alexander, R. J. *Towards Dialogic Teaching: Rethinking Classroom Talk*. 3rd Revised edition. Dialogos, 2006.

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Wegerif, Rupert. 'Dialogic or Dialectic? The Significance of Ontological Assumptions in Research on Educational Dialogue.' *British Educational Research Journal* 34(3) 347-361, 2008.

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Wenger, Etienne. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. New Ed. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Reflective Practice

Beaty, Liz. *Developing Your Teaching Through Reflective Practice*. SEDA, 1997.

Bolton, Gillie E J. *Reflective Practice: Writing and Professional Development*. Third Edition. Sage Publications Ltd, 2010.

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