

**Submission  
No 61**

**INQUIRY INTO ARTS AND MUSIC EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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Submission to  
the Inquiry into  
Arts and Music  
Education and  
Training in NSW

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# Table of Contents

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00

Terms of  
Reference

01

Group  
Introductory  
Statement

02

Insights from  
Dr Paul Gardiner

03

Insights from  
Pete Hewitt

04

Insights from  
Dr Claire Rogerson

05

Insights from  
Ass. Prof. Noelene  
Weatherby-Fell

06

References

# 00 Terms of Reference

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## Terms of Reference provided by the Joint Select Committee on Arts and Music Education and Training in New South Wales (13 June, 2024)

The following terms apply for (a) The Arts and Creative Industries and (b) Music Education, and refer to the quality and effectiveness of the education, including:

- (i) progress towards a long-term goal of quality education
- (ii) the present level and status of formal education across all levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary levels
- (iii) robust and evidence-based education in initial teacher education courses in the tertiary sector
- (iv) the role of arts organisations and creative professionals in education and the development of creative skills across the arts
- (v) the contribution of the national performing arts training organisations in New South Wales and the adequacy of the support they receive
- (vi) the efficacy of the current primary and secondary school curriculum in delivering learning outcomes in related subjects
- (vii) the availability of support for teachers and principals in delivering quality arts education, and ensuring that an inclusive approach is taken towards resource allocation for regional schools across New South Wales
- (viii) the most effective approach for the arts, music, culture, and creative industries to co-ordinate with the education system to support the development of creative skills
- (ix) ways that students can learn entrepreneurial skills and gain industry experience to ensure they are job-ready
- (x) measures of success in arts education
- (xi) factors influencing student decisions to pursue further arts education, including but not limited to course choice, course location and the method of study
- (xii) notable approaches to arts, music and creative industries education in other jurisdictions

These Terms of Reference (ToR) have been used throughout the following submission for ease of review. However, there are also factors missing and requiring further consideration which have been addressed here such as the **significance of Early Years settings and experiences, support from leadership and other people in power and the voice of Country.**

# 01 Group Introductory Statement

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\*ToR a(i, ii); b (i, ii) +

This group response has been compiled by four academics from the School of Education within one NSW University. Each of us wears many hats (such as Executives of Student Wellbeing, Academic Program Directors, Indigenous Education Leaders, University transition and support and qualitative researchers), but hold strong ties and relationships with the Creative Arts pedagogies in the range of subjects we deliver in Initial Teacher Education courses. While some group ideas are offered, our individual perspectives have also been included for consideration which explore these various contexts.

## The general 'state of play' for Arts educators

Creativity is an essential life capacity for future success and well-being. It is a national and international imperative (Department of Education Skills and Employment, 2019; OECD, 2024). Creativity is a requirement of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (A New Approach, 2019) and an increasingly essential long-term workplace skill (Vincent-Lancrin et al., 2019).

Creativity and creative thinking are widely pursued core goals of 21st century teaching and learning. The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Declaration argues that young Australians need 'flexibility, resilience, creativity' to navigate the 21st Century, with a core goal for education being that young Australians become 'creative and confident'(Department of Education Skills and Employment, 2019). Reflecting the international importance of creativity as a competence, the world's creative thinking skills were recently reported upon in the PISA Creative Thinking Test. The question is no longer 'should we do it?', but 'how do we do it'? (Lucas, 2022).

While not restricted to the Creative Arts, creativity and creative practices are readily addressed and developed in the artforms currently included in NSW syllabi. However, despite this national and international focus, the place of the arts seems to need continual justification and advocacy to protect its position in the teaching and learning landscape. The research on the benefits and unique learning experiences intrinsic in engagement with the Arts (See precise examples below).

# 01 Group Introductory Statement

\*ToR a(i, ii); b (i, ii) +

Until policy and practice align and Arts pedagogy and arts participation are valued in ECE, Primary and Secondary education, the right of all children to authentic and enriching arts education will not be met. The United Nations Rights of the Child include the requirement that states 'respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life' (Article 31). A marginalised and undervalued Creative Arts education in primary schools does not adequately provide our young people with the rich and authentic arts experience which is their right.

As academics involved in the preparation of our next generations of teachers, providing them with adequate preparation and exposure to the arts is essential to ensuring they develop the skills and confidence to incorporate authentic arts learning in their future classrooms, and according the Arts the equal importance as other KLA's.

The Arts seems to need to advocate for itself on an ongoing basis far more than other subjects are asked to do.; to prove and justify its place or risk being overtaken by other "more important" knowledge bases.

We no longer need to argue for the place and status of language literacies, or why we explore mathematics and scientific concepts with children to help them understand and make sense of the world around them. But these more abstract human constructs move away from the fundamental human activities that represent the way we have engaged and interacted with the world and its ancient knowledge systems for thousands of years. In this way, The Arts create spaces to explore sound, colour, shape, feeling, texture, tone, expression, movement, variation, pace, change, contrast, rhythm and balance (amongst a myriad of other things) that provide the building blocks to all other types of learning. These are more than simply "nice" or "fun" to include, but underpin the way we initially and continually draw meaning from our surroundings.

It is hoped we can at some point reach the end of the advocacy conversation in The Arts and progress towards discussions of utility, pedagogy, impact, literacy and the unique range of skills and perspectives it can foster, as we've been able to achieve in other subjects with similar 'fundamental' status.

A strong understanding and acknowledgement of this is needed from all stakeholders at all levels, just as has been achieved with the rhetoric around literacy and numeracy skills. If these are seen as essential tools to read the world, then so should the foundational skills and processes that allow children to regulate, collaborate, cooperate, negotiate and communicate.

## 02 Insights from Dr Paul Gardiner

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, viii, x) +

Students in initial teacher education (ITE) degrees arrive with a variety of personal experiences of the Arts, based on the particular culture of their school or commitment of individual teachers.

Due to the history and persistent marginalising of the Arts in primary schools (iv), students often have negative or insufficient experience of the Arts making it difficult for them to see their value as being equal to that of other KLAs.

This inequality is tacitly reinforced by the limited time allocated to arts education in ITE courses - with the four artforms in NSW receiving less total time than other KLAs. In a four year degree, it is not unusual for students to receive as little as 6 hours preparation in any one artform - compared to 102 hours of Mathematics. Further, the legacy of stunted Arts education means ITE students engage in professional experience placements where again the quality of Arts education depends on the drive of the individual teacher and school culture.

Unlike their expectations of other subjects (like Mathematics or Literacy), students are unsure of their opportunities or responsibilities for Arts education once they arrive in schools. The inclusion of Arts specialists in Primary schools is often relied upon to meet the school's Creative Arts needs. However, while students know they will 'have' to be excellent Mathematics and literacy teachers, and that this will be valued and emphasised, they are not certain of whether they will therefore even need to teach the arts in their future career. Students' voice (often reinforced by their professional experience placements) an expectation that they may not need to teach any Arts or, at most, that they will provide limited one off Visual Art lessons as a reward for 'real work'. These experiences and assumptions are widespread and reflected in current research in arts education in primary schools (See Dinham, 2017, and Sinclair et al., 2019).

This discrepancy produces teachers lacking in confidence in their ability to teach the arts. As the specialist teachers address the symptom, changes to priorities and opportunities for Arts education in ITE courses are needed to address the cause. Fundamentally, ITE students need to see that the Arts are valued in education, both at tertiary level - by offering more than one 6 credit point subject for all four Artforms and in compulsory education.

## 02 Insights from Dr Paul Gardiner

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\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, viii, x) +

The continued mandating of only Visual Arts and Music in the primary classroom also needs revision as the K-6 Syllabus includes four equal artforms.

This will ensure early career teachers are more confident in their Arts pedagogies and they will provide more engaging and rigorous art learning for their students. This in turn will improve primary students' experiences of the Arts, encouraging further engagement with formal arts learning in secondary and possibly tertiary contexts, to further enrich the cultural life and arts engagement of our society and feed the creative industries.

Firstly, the philosophy of arts education can embrace the shift in emphasis toward authentic and accessible arts education. To create a culture of 'arts for all', we need to leave behind the remnants of elitist notions of and focus on 'Performance', such as music needing traditional instruments and drama requiring text based performances. The renewed K-6 syllabus documents will support this shift with its continued emphasis on the many practices of Arts - including making and performing.

A renewed emphasis on the Arts as modes of thinking, expressing and being, with unique opportunities to embrace diversity and student voice, will empower ITE students. As generalist teachers, just like all other areas, they will create engaging arts experiences across all art forms and develop their confidence. This is not a reduction in academic rigor but a recognition that equity and diversity require a redefinition of 'what' arts content we focus upon. Broadening and levelling chosen content can provide culturally and stylistically inclusive experiences that meet outcomes and engage students.

As Thomson (2024) reports, the arts are significant in culturally responsive pedagogies - allowing a larger percentage of students to use their cultural knowledge to engage in school.

As we know from Australian and international research, the cultural and creative industries are classed, gendered and raced (Thomson, 2024). Universal exposure to authentic and engaging arts learning in the primary years (and even earlier in the Early years) will counteract the divide currently existing in arts experiences found in Independent schools compared to government schools. Arts learning experiences, like Mathematics and literacy, should not be dependent upon the wealth and locale of your school.



## 02 Insights from Dr Paul Gardiner

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\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, viii, x) +

The inclusion of Arts education for all students, responds to the needs of our young people now - as well as a preparation for their future citizenry - and recognises that 'schools should be about the whole person and provide a balanced education which values young people's present experience as well as their future employability'. The Arts provide opportunities for learning activities in dance, drama, music and visual arts that are joyful and authentic, creative and robust, offering students opportunities for expression and achievement.

To respond to this, the approach to initial teacher education in The Arts in our University has adopted a focus on process, student (ITE and future primary students) engagement and confidence, as well as exploring the affordances arts integration. By removing the emphasis on silos and hierarchies of the Arts, we ensure our students plan for opportunities across all (current) four art forms. In finding ways to appropriately and authentically combine and integrate them ensure effective learning progression. This will emphasise and model for their future primary students that learning in the Arts is important and valued.

The approach also focuses on returning ITE students to a sense of wonder and play, to reinforce the student-centered nature of learning in the Arts and that they can feel engaged and excited to teach the arts as a non-specialist. The students engage in and learn artform-specific workshop structures that use creative pedagogies to model learning for collaboration and process-driven generation of knowledge skills and understanding. Performances then become demonstrations of learning rather than stressful and stand-alone events, until students' skills and confidence make those performances appropriate and reflective of a safe learning environment.

Students in our program have responded positively to the approach, often specifically mentioning the subject's approach actively 'healing' the trauma of past negative experiences in the arts. Student comments in subject evaluations noted that time for immersion in the pedagogy generated specific artform knowledge, provided key insights into future pedagogy and increased their confidence in teaching the arts in their future classrooms.

The following page contains selections of student feedback gathered in evaluations of these ITE courses in 2023 and 2024.

## 02 Insights from Dr Paul Gardiner

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, viii, x) +

**I enjoyed the immersive workshops, blended learning (mix of experiential and theoretical experiences) and course readings which truly contextualised what we were doing and why.**

**Workshops were engaging and very thorough. Teachers were excited and knowledgeable. Very supportive environment. We could not teach the arts without this subject**

**The workshops were incredibly fun and created relationships with peers and the teacher which created a safe and comfortable environment to explore the arts in.**

**The workshops for this subject... provided real-life examples/practical experiences that not only consolidated our understanding of the Arts but which could also be implemented in our future classrooms.**

**The workshops was super insightful and helpful in experiencing and better understanding the arts. I came out feeling better equipped in how to teach future students, and engage them in meaningful experiences. It also allowed for a build in confidence, which I know will result in a more creative and engaging future lessons I plan.**

**The workshops were enjoyable and provided lots of practical activities I will be able to take into the classroom. It showed me that teaching all artforms is possible and not as hard as we were led to believe by prior experiences.**

**The workshops really helped me with putting my theory knowledge into practice. It allowed me to become a kid again and just have fun with it while also learning how to teach it.**

## 03 Insights from Pete Hewitt

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii); b(ii, ii, iii, vii) +

As general practitioners, primary teachers can bring along many students in their learning through diverse teaching and learning practices. Developing a comprehensive pedagogy, inclusive of the arts, provides a platform to engage and work with a diverse range of students.

For example, as a Lecturer in Aboriginal Education (and former Head Teacher of Creative Arts in the Department of Education Schools) pre-service teachers, I use music as a literacy to invite pre-service teachers to step into a two-way approach to understanding Country's role in Aboriginal education. Music is used as a multidisciplinary methodology/communication tool for sharing self-expression - sharing and reflecting on their connection to Country. Music provides a platform for pre-service teachers to give voice to their learning (through song or sound) about Country in Aboriginal education. I raise this because by limiting access to Music pedagogy in ITE, we potentially limit the repertoire of pedagogy our future teachers can use to connect intelligences for our kids.

Generalist teachers with a greater understanding of the arts can support students transitioning from Primary to Secondary education (Stage 3 to Stage 4). Students with access to generalist teachers with a quality skill set in the arts are likely to have primary school experiences in music and other arts. When entering Year 7 high school arts programs, students from feeder schools (Community of Schools) often have a diverse skill set, usually dependent on their primary school's focus or available teacher expertise. Quality arts experiences in ITE for generalist teachers can help mitigate this learning gap. Simply put, teachers who are confident in teaching the arts are more likely to implement arts education effectively. This approach also helps students understand the importance of arts as a form of literacy and communication beyond performance or art creation – arts for art's sake.

In high schools, teachers could be more informed of the arts as Year Advisors, Head Teachers and Deputy Principals all shape student pathways. For example, teachers without quality arts training may be less informed when guiding students in subject selection, sometimes discouraging them from choosing Stage 6 Category A arts-based subjects due to 'negative scaling' or encouraging 'more rigorous' academic subjects such as English, Mathematics and Science. As opposed to selecting a subject they are passionate about, engaged in, and likely to succeed in. This negative view of the arts in mainstream culture has implications for leadership decision-making and resource allocation. Consequently, quality experience in arts pedagogy for generalist teachers is necessary to shift this mindset.

## 04 Insights from Dr Claire Rogerson

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, x, xi); b(ii, ii, iii, vii, x, xi) +

### Where did the Creative Arts subject come from?

Plato emphasised that the development of an aesthetic self could impact the development of character and enhance the soul's capacity for 'good'. This idea is still evident in today's curriculum, which focuses on producing meaningful, constructive members of society. The Renaissance period valued music education for its supposed ability to train the mind in abstract thinking and problem solving. During this time, philosophers such as Comenius and Pestalozzi began to appreciate the moral impact that music could have on individuals, with English philosopher Spencer (1820-1903) noting pleasurable functions of music that affect the development of emotions. Prominent American educator John Dewey also bridged this gap with his support of Plato's view that education should produce 'good', rational people, and emphasised the significant role of The Arts in education which he saw not as luxuries, but what made education worthwhile. Dewey's perspectives saw a great increase in the value placed on arts education, and its alignment with the purpose of generalised schooling overall, paving the way for much of the modern pedagogies and justifications to the inclusion of music in the curriculum. This extrinsic, utilitarian philosophy dominated the way people perceived music education through to the 1950s, justified through the satisfaction of social, moral, religious, political and emotional needs of students. But during the 1950s, consideration began moving towards the aesthetic value of education, rather than purely focusing on instrumental outcomes.

The intrinsic purpose was first proposed by Britton in 1958, within the Basic Concepts in Music Education publication, which saw inherent value in participating in music purely for its own sake. Seen as aesthetic education, the intrinsic perspective valued music not for its ancillary outcomes, but for the inherent benefit of participating. This was supported by other music education writers, such as Leonard (1965, 1972), Reimer (1970) and Swanwick (1979, 1988) who saw value stemming from the inherent value of music itself. Reimer (1970) believed music education programs had a dual societal obligation; to foster those who are musically gifted, and develop 'aesthetic sensitivity' to music of all people no matter their innate talent, to support their perception and response to various qualities of musical expression. Leonard (1965) also emphasised that extrinsic purpose arguments were often used by educators to convince stakeholders of the place of music education, as many lacked understanding or their own aesthetic appreciation for the subject. However, to advocate for music merely on extrinsic grounds risks the integrity of the subject itself, and denies the unique qualities and skills it contains. Temmerman (1991) suggests that "to highlight the weaknesses of the intrinsic argument is to highlight the strengths attributed to the extrinsic argument" (p.153); neither can be viewed in isolation. It is the tension between the two perspectives that creates the space in which music finds its justification – as a subject that imparts specific skills, knowledges and understandings and as a unique form of self-expression whose purpose is for its own sake.

## 04 Insights from Dr Claire Rogerson

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, x, xi); b(ii, ii, iii, vii, x, xi) +

There has been debate and tension within the Arts pedagogical fields about the philosophical reasoning for this type of learning, either for its own sake or for the direct benefits and transferability of skills it brings to other areas.

Siding with one argument risks losing the perspective and insight afforded by the other. It is the nexus or 'sweet spot' between these two which needs further and more widespread advocacy.

### Enrolment statistics

Enrollment in 'The Arts' suite of subjects has been steadily declining for decades, both in Australia and globally (Jacobs & Eccles, 2000; McPherson, 2013; McPherson et al., 2015; McPherson & O'Neill, 2010; Mendolia & Walker, 2014; Neel, 2015; Warton, 1997; Waters et al., 2014).

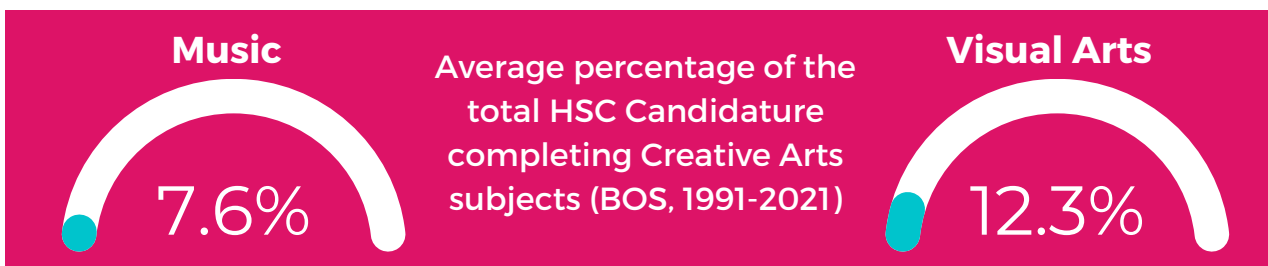
The data and statistics presented below have been generated from the recorded and publicly reported enrolment/completion data by the NSW Board of Studies/NESA (between 1991-2021, depending on subject and data availability).

#### Music

Between the Stage 4 (mandatory) to Stage 5 (elective) transition, we **lose approximately 85% of students in Music Education** alone. On average, approximately **5500 students (4000 in Music 1, 700 in Music 2 and 400 in Music Ext** since its introduction in 2001) complete one of the Music courses for their final HSC study, which is an **average of 7.6% of the total HSC candidature** (2006-2021).

#### Visual Arts

On average, there are slightly more students who choose to enroll in Visual Arts in Stage 5 than those who are recorded as undertaking Music for 100 or 200 level study. In preliminary HSC courses, on **average there are approximately 11 800 students** who take Visual Arts; nearly double the enrolments for Music courses at the same level. Approximately **9000 students complete VA for the HSC**, which is an average of **12.3% of the total HSC candidature** (2006-2021).



## 04 Insights from Dr Claire Rogerson

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, x, xi); b(ii, ii, iii, vii, x, xi) +

### What do Music and The Arts provide?

Learning in the Arts supports essential skills to be developed in a range of accessible, engaging, inviting, safe, collaborative, social, supportive contexts. Creative Arts classrooms are like no others - there is a freedom of expression, a choice in outcome, ownership over output and a development to a deeper, inner sense of self than is possible in other KLA classrooms. Consider the well-rounded development of skills such as;

- Turn-taking
- Listening/auditory skills
- Regulation
- Collaboration (no matter the group)
- Developing connections with peers outside of the regular social group
- Self-expression of identity
- Contrast
- Comparison
- Tension & resolution
- Improvisation
- Presentation & performance
- Creative innovation

What is 'essential' in our contemporary and ever-changing society is helping people figure out how to interact with and 'be' in their worlds. Giving students access to authentic experiences in the Arts allows for them to develop their own understanding and approaches to build on fundamental human practices.

From birth, we are required to make sounds, gestures, expressions, symbols and movements to express our needs and capture the attention of caregivers. Although these are inherent processing systems in the brain (Strickland, 2022; Vullimier & Trost, 2015), we are not born with this knowledge, and are required to be creative until this understanding can be established more fully. But, we are making large assumptions about prior knowledge, exposure and capability if we jump straight into teaching abstract concepts of language and numeracy.

- Literacy and language is fed by a clear understanding of other (creative) concepts such as shape, line, colour, symbol, positioning, proximity, dynamics, tone, pitch, rhythm, expression, inflexion, repetition, mimicking/imitation, and auditory memory, recognition and processing.
- Numeracy and mathematics require foundational understandings of patterns, relationships, timing, comparison, highs and lows, repetition, rhythm, pace, balance, visual subitising, even and odd.

## 04 Insights from Dr Claire Rogerson

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, x, xi); b(ii, ii, iii, vii, x, xi) +

### The Arts and Music Education supports students to learn how to 'be' in an everchanging world

- Music can be conceptualised as many things. Merriam's (1964) triadic perspective developed from ethnomusicology studies describes music as a (1) system of sounds, (2) a group of ideas and concepts and (3) a human activity. This emphasises the foundational, fundamental nature of music as a way of interpreting, interacting and understanding. McFerran's (2011) investigation into the role of music in the lives of adolescents suggests that it can be seen as either a mirror or stage. Music preferences, instrumental skills and performance abilities can be used to view and construct a self-image, allowing for modification and redefinition. They can also be used as a way to be seen by others, to present a sense of self to connect and communicate with like-minded peers.
- No matter the perspective or definition, it is clear that music is a lens through which humans express their understanding of the world and their place within it. It is therefore vital that all humans are given appropriate access and education that equips them with this knowledge. Research tells us that the earlier and more consistently this happens, the greater the benefits for the individual in an ongoing way (Cohen, 2009; Rogenmoser et al., 2018; Sachs et al., 2015; Strickland, 2002; Vuilleumier & Trost, 2015).
- In a time where student anxiety and apathy are increasing and attitudes towards school attendance and engagement are dropping dramatically, there is a need to provide them with experiences which help them regulate, connect and engage in authentic ways. The Arts boosts attendance; many students credit these subjects as as "the only reason they come to school". Research demonstrates that Arts-based experiences encourage and support ongoing attendance, as students are motivated to play, experiment, challenge, connect and make noise/colour/movement (Crawford, 2019; McFerran, 2011; Neel, 2015).
- There is both an Australian and global body of research that indicates teachers lack the confidence, support, resources, time and space (physically and otherwise) to deliver Arts education in primary schools (Capaldo et al., 2014; Goodson et al., 2015; Mills, 1989; Russell-Bowie, 1993, 2009, 2010, 2013). There is 'too much' else to do, therefore leaving the subjects which teachers themselves often have poor or very limited experiences in (such as Music, Dance, Drama and Visual Arts) relegated to 'if/when' there is time (which we know is already scarce in schools and busy classroom days).

## 04 Insights from Dr Claire Rogerson

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, x, xi); b(ii, ii, iii, vii, x, xi) +

- The long-term goal should be to improve the foundational experiences provided to students as early as possible in their education careers for the greatest (and most holistic) impact. Not only does this benefit students currently engaged in education, but prepares the 'next generation' of teachers. We have students entering the profession who do not have adequate, appropriate or quality exposure themselves so how can we expect them to 'draw on' these previous experiences in meaningful ways, as they would with other KLA subjects? This means focusing on generalist teacher education, rather than specialising further as this approach has already resulted in creating a divide between those who can access or have been afforded the provisions for 'expertise' and those who cannot. By taking this stance, it also sends the message that "only those who are capable" are able to teach the subject, rather than demonstrating its universality.
- ITE programs are constrained by the programs they sit within, and require large amounts of focus on other pedagogical areas (such as literacy and numeracy) which have been deemed 'essential' by leadership, executive management and broader government agendas to meet student learning targets. We are often met with the argument that these other priorities are more important, so need to pull back on other learning to focus in. So, has doing this improved the bottom-line? Students seem to be failing and falling behind at increasing rates (as evidenced by NAPLAN scores and federal government-level strategies), and while this is most likely due to a multitude of reasons, a core factor that must be considered is the 'cutting back' on other learning in favour of a single-minded priority. The benefits that these other ways of learning have been consistently shown in research to support, extend, enrich and elaborate what has become an intense focus on product rather than process.
- Our words and actions hold power. If leaders and those in power continue to feed into rhetoric that devalues these skills, then the job of those 'on the ground' becomes exponentially more difficult
  - When students leave a class to have private instrument tuition, a teacher rolling their eyes, asking them to complete extra work or using an exasperated tone can send the message that there are other things that student should be doing than learning their instrument. This is exemplified even further when students (the same or otherwise) may leave for other reasons, such as sport training, extension courses or additional subject support which often have different teacher responses and send messages that these may be more 'acceptable' or more important reasons.
  - When teachers ask for training or support to understand/deliver authentic Arts education, a principal who asks teachers to "do in their own time", questions "if we really need this" or suggests that "this is nice, but maybe as a one-off" sends the message that the broader educational community isn't interested and that their efforts are better spent on other topics.
  - It also sends the message to those advocating and pushing in the space that we may just be 'wasting our time'



## 04 Insights from Dr Claire Rogerson

\*ToR a(i, ii, iii, vii, x, xi); b(ii, ii, iii, vii, x, xi) +

### Some student experiences and perspectives on Music Education

*Ever since I was a little kid, it's like the one thing that I've just loved and I literally can't do without it cause I'm like...like whenever I'm doing something there's just music, you know what I mean? I'm always singing, I love to sing. Obviously, like want to do something with it later on in life and it's like, if I didn't have a singing voice, I don't know what I'd do. Like literally, no idea.*

-Year 11 Student

*I like that there's not really any limit to music...there's no stopping anywhere. You haven't got these summs, there's not this small thing like with all of the other subject...there's all these different things and you're not stopped anywhere.*

-Year 9 Student

*You can do piano as well cause it's at school. But if we didn't do it at school, you have to pay for piano lessons, and we've got too much to do.*

-Year 8 Student

*I kinda started liking it, got more into singing and then I met the girls and we started like a band and that and I really, really loved it cause like, I never did anything apart from choir so like I've never done singing lessons or anything outside of that. My parents and my sister and my brother and that. They don't come from a musical background. I'm like the only person.*

-Year 11 Student

*It was hard because I had never picked up an instrument and being a vocalist in Year 7 ... there's nothing based on singing ... it's all guitar or keyboard [indicating two options with hands outspread]. So, that was a struggle, but I did learn quite quickly, which was easy ... I do think that some things are harder than others just because if you haven't had exposure to them ... like the viva voce, I've never done anything like that before.*

-Year 11 Student

*I have no idea what I want to do after school, but if I do become a teacher, there's always these back up things. Even if it's primary school, I can always teach them Music. And it's just something that I know I can use later in life, especially if I don't know what I want to do*

-Year 11 Student

*I started singing when I was in Year 3 actually. So, when I started choir, that's when I was like 'Oh, I actually enjoy this. Let's continue this!'*

-Year 11 Student

*Sometimes if I had a bad day leading up to music, I'll cut myself off and Miss will see it...*

*Miss always picks it up from the moment I walk in the door [but] I'm always excited for music.*

-Year 9 Student

*I feel like the type of music I listen to depends on what mood I'm in. So like, if I'm in a really upset mood, listening to sad music actually like, helps. It just helps you release everything and if you're getting ready to go out, I feel like listening to really 'hype' music makes you feel really hyped up so it can change the way your mood and that really helps with stuff.*

-Year 9 Student

01

### Uses & Applications of Music in Education

Blasco-Magraner, J.S., Bernabe-Valero, G., Marín-Liébana, P., & Moret-Tatay C.(2021). Effects of the Educational Use of Music on 3- to 12-Year-Old Children's Emotional Development: A Systematic Review. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 18(7):3668. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18073668.

- John Dewey pointed out the importance of the social and emotional nature of the classroom and the relationship between social processes and learning (Cefai & Cooper, 2009).
- 424 studies independently evaluated (identified in MEDLINE, Psycinfo, and CINAHL databases) with 26 articles selected for review. The results suggest several beneficial effects of music on children's development, such as greater emotional intelligence, academic performance, and prosocial skills.
- It can therefore be concluded that music should be used in school settings, not only as an important subject in itself, but also as an educational tool within other subjects.
- In recent years, music education has gained special relevance as part of the curricula of compulsory education in most Western countries [Carrillo et al, 2017)], both for its learning benefits in itself (Hernandez-Bravo et al., 2016; Hogenes et al., 2016; Jorgensen, 2003), as well as for its ability to promote the learning of other disciplines (Johnson & Memmott, 2006; Rockard et.al., 2010). Music has a remarkable capacity to express, transmit, and evoke various emotions and affections in human beings (Flores-Gutiérrez & Diaz, 2009; Thompson & Quinto, 2011), regardless of their nationality or culture (Balkwill & Thompson, 1999).

02

### Importance of music in the lives of young people

'The arts are important in the lives of Australian children and young people', Australian Government Report , May 2014 Factsheet. <https://creative.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/fact-sheets-children-final-5487eaef11c5b.pdf>

- Study by U.Syd and Australia Council for the Arts: engagement in the arts benefits students in the classroom AND in life.
- Fact Sheet produced by the Australia Council for the Arts as part of their research project: Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts.
- Significant (noteworthy) is that data is presented of views of the population (e.g. 2/3 Australians think that the arts have a big impact on the development of children; 89% agree the arts are an important part of the education of each Australian; Children who were taken to arts events at least once a year are 23% more likely to participate as adults than those who were never taken).

03

### Impact of Music in Schools

Australian Children's Music Foundation: SUBMISSION REVIEW TO INFORM A BETTER AND FAIRER EDUCATION SYSTEM (1 August 2023)

<https://www.education.gov.au/system/files/consultations/Australian%20Childrens%20Music%20Foundation.pdf>

- It is interesting that this is a recent document (seems to be related to supporting STEAM, as opposed to STEM) within the National Curriculum.
- Extract: *'In recent years, music education has gained special relevance as part of the curriculum of compulsory education in most developed countries, both for its learning benefits and for its ability to promote the learning of other disciplines.'* *'Music also has the capacity to express, transmit, and evoke various emotions and affections in human beings regardless of their backgrounds'* *The link between music and emotions has also 'contributed to the value of music as a discipline that can be implemented in formal education to develop students' emotional competence.'* *One of the other advantages of musical activities is that they can require collective participation, which 'requires cooperation and coordination on the part of the members of a group, making them useful tools for the advancement of socio-emotional development. In addition, the social interactions required for music-making offer many opportunities for students to develop their abilities to evaluate their own feelings and at the same time try to relate to the feelings of others. Music education thus 'has a strong impact on children and young people's intellectual, social, and personal development and therefore on their psychological well-being.'*

04

### Benefits to youth wellbeing

Frontiers in Psychology: Music education benefits youth wellbeing, Title: Musical participation and positive youth development in middle school by Beatriz Ilari and Eun Cho

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2023/01/230118195730.htm>

- They found that students who started music education before age 8 were more hopeful about the future, and younger students receiving musical training scored higher in key measures of positive youth development.
- The study looked at the "five Cs," key areas of PYD (Positive Youth Development): competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring/compassion. It also examined school connectedness (SC) and hopeful future expectations (HFE).
- This study did seem to focus on extra-curricular music opportunities - but without exposure in school, where do children and young people develop a wish, desire, want to do this?
- Introduction comments to this paper: "Music is central in the lives of adolescents. While listening is usually the most common form of engagement, many adolescents also learn music formally by participating in school-based and extracurricular programs".

05

### Realising potential through The Arts

Ewing, R. (2010). Australian Education Review: The Arts and Australian Education: Realising potential.

<https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1020&context=aer>

- Extract: *The publication is timely, appearing at a unique point in the uneasy history in our society of the relationship between the Arts and education. It is a golden moment of opportunity for both, though a few might still see it as a threat. For the first time since European settlement, there is about to be a national curriculum for all Australia, and one which, for the first time, mandates the Arts of dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts as a basic entitlement for all Australians. This new arts curriculum is being shaped to re-assert some of those key principles which were embedded in the beginning of the fairytale: that experiencing the Arts is natural and necessary for all children and young people as part of their learning; that through the Arts they gain access to the real world and to other possible imaginative worlds, and make coherent meaning and order for themselves out of the welter of impressions and sensations bombarding them, from inside and out, before and from birth. The 2010 Shape Paper for this new arts curriculum further asserts that by firstly apprehending artistic experience through their bodily senses, their brains and their emotions, and bringing critical, cultural, social, technical, historical and other lenses in order to thoroughly comprehend the experience, students come to a special understanding – aesthetic knowledge – of the three worlds of perception: the world of themselves ('me'), their world of relationships and their society ('us' and 'you'), and the world beyond ('it' and 'them'). The curriculum stipulates that all the five arts are to be provided: dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts have equal but distinct offerings to make to students' education, separately and collectively, and therefore all children will be equally entitled at the very least, to an introduction to all of them. (pp. iv-v)*
- Extract: *How different it is nowadays, when creativity has become one of the most desperately sought-after qualities for young people, both for the present and in the future. Professor Ewing's review paper comprehensively demonstrates that creativity is core business for the Arts. (p. v)*

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