



UCL iMerc Newsletter — Vol. 22, January 2026

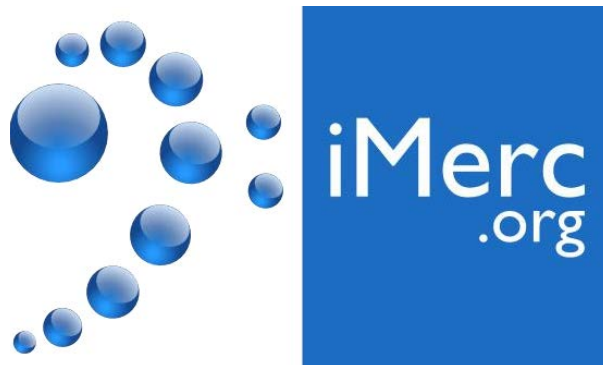
About us

Over the past 20 years, we have been developing the International Music Education Research Centre (iMerc) at the UCL Institute of Education to celebrate and disseminate our extensive research in the field of music education, broadly conceived, and to hear about new research from colleagues elsewhere in the world. In the beginning, we often held our research seminars over several days, such as in different European cities to allow our doctoral students to have more intensive support as a community, to listen to local researchers, and to share their ongoing research journeys. These 'Travelling Research Seminars' visited Ireland (Limerick), Spain (Barcelona), Italy (Bologna) and Sweden (Malmö) and helped us to establish our international profile and sense of community. With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, we have been meeting more regularly, both online and in person, to continue to share new research and insights related to diverse topics in music education. We are a group of researchers at doctoral and post-doctoral levels, as well as senior researchers, with a shared curiosity and interest in advancing basic and applied research. In line with our mission, the monthly seminars continue to foster a sense of shared endeavour amongst colleagues who are based in the UK, across mainland Europe (such as Portugal, Germany, Greece, Skandinavia), Asia (China, including Hong Kong), Latin America, USA and Australia. Opportunity is taken each month to be informed of research

news and various current research projects, including opportunities to listen to the latest research from our invited speakers. If you would like to know more or to join us, please contact us.

Our upcoming UCL iMerc Research Seminar will take place on **Wednesday, 21 January 2026**, 11am-1pm GMT via Zoom and in room 938 at the IOE. We are pleased to invite you to join us online [HERE](#) or in person. Everyone is welcome!

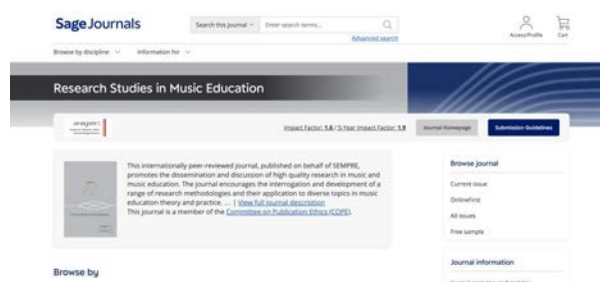
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1 - Credit: iMerc

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New Articles Online: Research Studies in Music Education

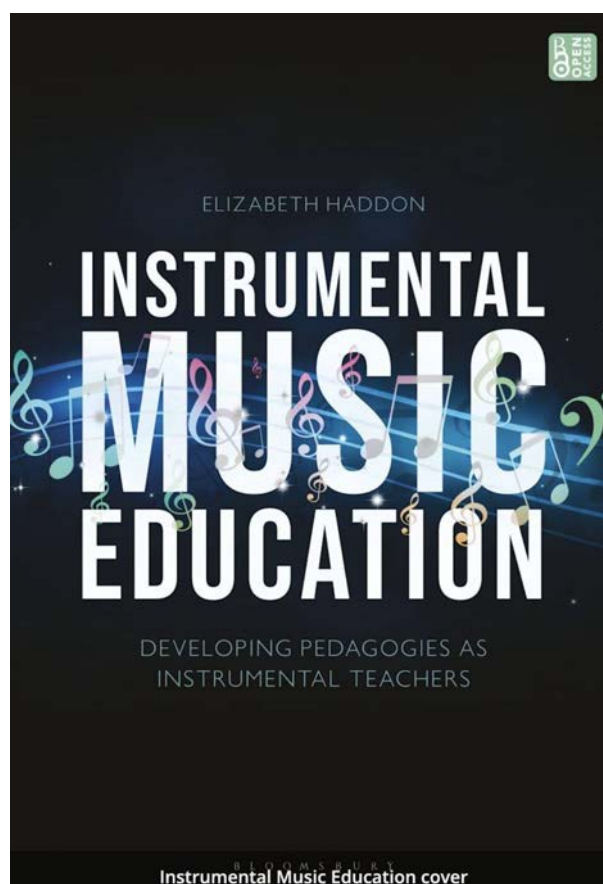


2 - Credit: Research Studies in Music Education

New research is now available from *Research Studies in Music Education*. The latest articles highlight current thinking in music teaching and learning across schools, universities and community settings, offering valuable perspectives for educators, researchers and students alike.

Recent studies explore topics such as lifelong learning through singing, effective approaches to formative assessment in higher education, and stronger alignment between elementary and secondary band programs. To read the latest issue and explore the full collection of articles, visit <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/rsma>

Recently Published: Instrumental Music Education



3 - Credit: Dr Elizabeth Haddon

The new book, [Instrumental Music Education](#), is published on 13 November 2025 by Bloomsbury. This is the work of Dr Elizabeth Haddon, colleagues and students at the University of York, UK, and it has sprung from their research and many discussions about varied aspects of their work as instrumental teachers, thus being grounded in relevant, global pedagogical practice while also involving research and scholarship. There's some truly unique chapters in this volume that the scholars hope will spark further ideas, new research and conversations across countries and cultures between teachers, students, parents and researchers. They are delighted to offer an extra discount using the code GLR BD8 - please have a look at the [preview](#) (showing the prelim pages, introduction and first chapter) and the attached flyer. For any questions, or to share your feedback on the book, please contact Dr Elizabeth Haddon at liz.haddon@york.ac.uk.

UCL iMerc Research Seminar, 21 January 2026

Guest Speaker: Dr Lizabeth Haddon

Topic: Instrumental Music Education - Collaborative Writing



4 - Credit: Dr Elizabeth Haddon

Elizabeth's Abstract:

In this presentation, contributors to the recent book [Instrumental Music Education'](#) (Bloomsbury, 2026) discuss the mechanisms of collaborative writing, and reflect on the ways in which participating in this project has impacted their work and thinking as doctoral students/music education lecturers/instrumental teachers.

Dr Elizabeth Haddon (liz.haddon@york.ac.uk) is Emeritus Reader in Music at the University of York, where she founded and led the MA Music Education: Instrumental and Vocal Teaching. Her research focuses include music pedagogy, mental health and wellbeing, music workshops for refugees and asylum seekers, and her publications include *Making Music in Britain: Interviews with those Behind the Notes* (Ashgate, 2006), and two co-edited volumes with Pam Burnard: *Activating Diverse Musical Creativities: Teaching and Learning in Higher Music Education* (2015) and *Creative Teaching for Creative Learning in Higher Music Education* (Routledge, 2016). Liz continues to be active as a researcher, educator and consultant.

Speaker: Ben Sellers

Topic: UpRising360: Building an Equitable Music-Making offer for Pupils in Special Education Settings



5 - Credit: Ben Sellers

Ben's Abstract:

This presentation shares the ongoing work of MEHEM UpRising, an East Midlands-based, Youth-Music funded project that aims to increase the quality and consistency of music provision for pupils with additional support needs across both mainstream and specialist settings. Areas of focus include curriculum development, inclusive whole-class instrumental

teaching, ensemble provision, and effective music education for pupils with the most complex needs.

We have recently secured funding for a new programme of work, UpRising360, which pilots a new model of in-service practitioner development for instrumental tutors and generalist classroom teachers working in special education schools and enhanced provision settings. Acknowledging the relational and responsive nature of inclusive pedagogy, the model seeks to develop practitioners' skills, knowledge and self-efficacy through processes of co-delivery, mentoring, and participation in communities of practice.

The presentation situates UpRising within an ongoing doctoral study. I will share key learnings from the first five years of the project, introduce an emerging practitioner competency framework, and discuss the potential implications of the project for future approaches to music education in special education settings.

Ben's website: <https://bensellersmusic.com/>

Ben Sellers (ben.sellers.25@ucl.ac.uk) is a UKRI-funded doctoral researcher at the UCL Institute of Education. His research focuses on developing a more equitable music education offer in specialist education settings through in-service development programmes for classroom teachers and instrumental tutors, and the effective adoption of emerging music technologies in education.

With a background as a community musician and trainer, Ben works closely with regional music hubs, orchestras and arts organisation in the UK and internationally to support inclusion in both formal and informal education settings. This includes leading the Music Education Hub East Midlands' UpRising project, curating the UK's first Accessible Music Technology Library in Lancashire, and leading large-scale workforce development projects in Japan and Eastern Turkey.

His PhD is supervised by Prof. Graham Welch and Dr. Austin Griffiths. He holds an MA in Education from Birmingham City University and a BA (hons) in Ethnomusicology from SOAS, University of London.

Congratulations!



6 - Photo Credit: Dr Can Lu



7 - Photo Credit: Dr Can Lu



8 - Photo Credit: Dr Can Lu

Congratulations to Dr Can Lu (can.lu.16@ucl.ac.uk) on the arrival of her second child, a beautiful baby daughter! We wish her and her family much joy, health, and happiness as they welcome this wonderful new born.

Upcoming Event

Please note that our next UCL iMerc research seminar will be on Wednesday, 25 February 2026, 11.00-1.00 GMT. Please mark this date on your diary. If you're interested in sharing your work, we'd love to hear from you. Please feel free to get in touch. Thank you for all your continued engagement!

Contact Us

Visit us on the website at <https://www.imerc.org/>

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