

Pathways Onto a Music Degree

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Previous work in the department

This project came out of conversations had at the Music Department Decolonisation Reading Group, on secondary education and the background that gives to students, prior to starting a music degree.

We wanted to explore this to better inform these discussions.

Previous work by Music Department Interns:



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What, or who, are the barriers and gatekeepers onto a music degree?
- What role or responsibility do HE institutions have beyond their own walls?

METHODOLOGY

- Theoretical analysis of existing literature to create a visual model of educational power structures.
- Undertaking interviews with first year music students to understand the nuances of individual pathways that are taken onto a music degree.



Theoretical Analysis

HE is a transmitter of norms and values, positioned at the top of a top-down model.

This transmission could be adapted by adopting a flat-model of HE academic territories.

Recognising structures as fluid, and decolonisation as a process of constant renegotiation.

Gap in current analysis: comparison study between students prior expectations and their student experience

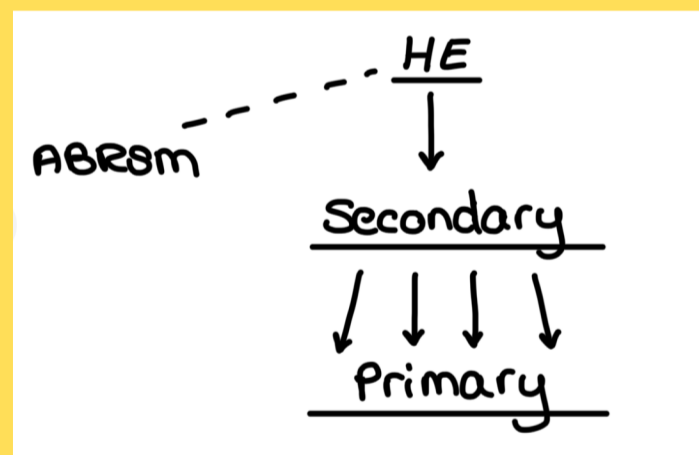


Further Reading:

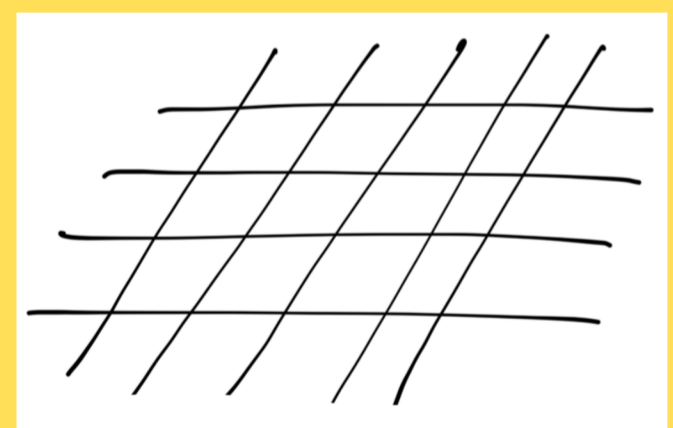


Visual Model Representations

Top-Down Model of Influence



Flat-Model of HE Territory



Interviews

it [Durham] looked like a place where you would do music.

It was definitely not "I liked it at A Level, let's do more of the same"

I made the decision [to do music degree] on the last day of year 12

I actually don't listen to music, I never have

You have made me question, if I listened to Taylor Swift would I have done Music (A Level)

Discursive Practices

KEY TERMS

Educational Colonialism

De/Re-Territorialisation

Findings:

- All had achieved performance grades, but did not see them as important currently.
- Late decision to study music, but possible because of previous engagement with external exam boards.
- Advantage of generational involvement in music societies.
- Non-continuity between A Level Music and university, which is seen as a benefit.

MOVING FORWARD



Recognise the importance of the flat-model within the department.

Share student's voices with staff so that they can understand student's transition onto the course.