

Section 1: Provider Context

1. Guildhall School of Music & Drama ('Guildhall' or 'the School') is a small (c.1,100 higher education students) specialist provider of vocational training degree programmes, with taught degree-awarding powers, located in and owned by the City of London. Guildhall is the only specialist higher education conservatoire¹ in England (and one of the few major European conservatoires) providing advanced level vocational training in music, drama, and production arts within a single institution (*ConservatoiresUK*). Guildhall is the UK's largest provider of specialist music education for children and young people under the age of 18, engaging with over 2,000 'Guildhall Young Artists' (GYA) each year through Junior Guildhall, the Centre for Young Musicians London (CYM), and regional GYA centres in King's Cross, Norwich, and Taunton (*School website*). Guildhall's global reputation for excellence is reflected in the cultural mix of its student body, critical to the vibrancy of the School's learning environment and currently comprising 57 nationalities.
2. The Office for Students (OfS) formally recognises Guildhall as a world-leading specialist institution through its 'World-leading specialist provider funding' allocation, as did the Higher Education Funding Council for England previously. Qualifying criteria include an evidence-based 'genuine and ongoing reputation, nationally and internationally, for teaching in its specialism', and recognition by providers, employers, and funders in the UK and beyond of graduates' knowledge and skills and the 'enduring impact they have on the professions and industries for which they have been prepared' (*World-leading specialist provider funding: Outcome, OfS, p.5, Dec 2022*).
3. Guildhall is ranked as the top provider for Arts, Drama & Music in the 2023 *Complete University Guide*'s league table (moving up from second place in 2022), the top institution for Music in the 2023 *Guardian University Guide*, and sixth highest performing arts institution in the world (*QS World University Rankings, 2022*) (*see references for links*). Guildhall is the top-rated UK conservatoire for overall student satisfaction in the 2022 National Students' Survey (NSS Q27).
4. Guildhall's vision, articulated in the School's 2017-23 Strategic Plan (*School website*), is to sustain 'craft, creativity and learning at the forefront of cultural change'. The School's mission is to 'empower artists to realise their full potential; to develop distinctive artistic citizens who enrich the lives of others and make a positive impact on the world.' In delivering this mission, the School values -
 - the distinctive artistic voice and the transformative power of the artist within society
 - creative practice sustained by exploration, innovation, and entrepreneurship
 - a learning and teaching environment enriched by a diverse creative community
 - partnership and the collaborative spirit in the creation and performance of work
 - opportunities for all to engage with the arts and the pursuit of life-long learning
 - Guildhall's leadership role within an international arts and creative industries sector.

This combination of clear vision, focused mission and key values provides definition to Guildhall's identity and activities. It underpins the relationship between size, subject specialisms, and the quality of graduates' achievements. It also informs the School's learning and teaching culture and

¹ 'Conservatoire' used herein to include equivalent degree-level vocational training in Drama Schools

practices through the provision of learning experiences grounded in embodied professional practice delivered by over 700 expert teacher-practitioners, many with international standing.

5. Guildhall has formal working relationships with leading cultural organisations, including a Creative Alliance with the Barbican Centre and its resident orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and partnerships with the London Symphony Orchestra, and the Royal Opera House, enabling students to work alongside and learn from professional practitioners in world-leading industry environments. Guildhall effectively operates as a conservatoire-arts centre, producing over 300 concerts, stage productions, and live events annually that are both the product of students' learning and the medium through which learning is extended and embedded.

6. Guildhall currently delivers five intensive undergraduate degree programmes, all with profession-focused training at their core, located within three Departments (Drama, Music, and Production Arts). The undergraduate student body is currently made up of 667 full-time students, comprising Music: BMus (4yrs) 469 students; Drama: BA Acting 73 students and BA Acting Studies (4yrs)² Production Arts: BA Production Arts (formerly BA Technical Theatre until 2019) 107 students and BA Digital Design & Production (formerly BA Video Design for Live Performance (VDLP) until 2022) Delivery of the BA Performance and Creative Enterprise (PACE) ended in 2021. The School also delivers a suite of postgraduate programmes (448 students), providing advanced craft training and professional development. Programmes include the Guildhall Artist Masters (with pathways in Performance and Composition), Artist Diploma, Advanced Certificate, MA in Music Therapy, MA in Opera Making & Writing (delivered through a formal partnership with the Royal Opera House), and PGCert Performance Teaching (357 students in total overseen by the Music Department): MA in Collaborative Theatre Production & Design and MA Acting The School's Doctoral programme (78 students), validated by City, University of London, covers all of Guildhall's discipline areas.

7. **TEF23 Methodology:** Guildhall established a 'task and finish' group drawn from teaching, administration, and management staff across the School, led by the Associate Dean of Teaching & Learning. Student comment has informed the development of this submission, through Student Union officers, student representatives, and the annual Whole School Survey (WSS) and NSS. The 'TEF23' group analysed data and evidence from School Annual Programme Evaluation reports, External Examiner reports, minutes from School's Boards and committees, assessment results, consultations with Heads of Department and Senior Managers, and external data available via HESA (e.g., LEO, Graduate Outcomes) and the OfS (e.g., NSS and TEF).

Section 2a: Student experience - academic experience and assessment

8. Teaching at Guildhall focuses on the individual student: on facilitating their growth and development towards becoming a high-quality professional working in Music, Drama, Production Arts, or related industries, through a process of co-created situated learning in which the student has considerable agency. **'Guildhall seems to celebrate the individuality of each actor and empowers them in their own unique identities'** (*Matthew Xia, Artistic Director, Actors Touring Company, 2022: ISTA, Annex B*). For example, BMus students choose the repertoire for assessed solo and student-led ensemble performances and determine the content of composition portfolios; BA Acting students have self-led modules and activities through which they create their own

² The BA Acting Studies programme, jointly owned and delivered by Guildhall and the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing (CAD). CAD delivers years 1 and 4 of the programme in Beijing: Guildhall delivers years 2 and 3 of the programme in London. The programme recruits every other year (i.e., in 2016; 2018; 2020).

performance work for stage and screen; Production Arts and Music students have a range of electives (9 in Production Arts, 30 in BMus) from which they can curate elements of their programmes to support their own self-determined interests. Production Arts students can request a pathway change at the end of year one, subject to appropriate criteria. Music students can propose their own student-led performances, endorsed by the Music Performance Committee and supported by the Music administration team, further extending the opportunities for developing students' entrepreneurial, managerial, and concert promotion skills. **'Staff know the students well. There is a sense of a personalised and tailored learning journey for each student.'** (*External Examiner BA VDLP, 2022*); and **'...every student in effect follows a bespoke programme'** (*External Examiner, BMus, 2022*). **'Guildhall has the most opportunities [of all conservatoires]: you can design the course to how you want it.'** (*2023*).

9. Guildhall Music students' learning experience is focused on developing their artistry and technical craft through intensive, individually tailored study with an expert practitioner-teacher in one-to-one Principal Study lessons (e.g., Strings, Wind, Brass, Percussion, Keyboard, Vocal Studies, Composition, Electronic & Produced Music, and Jazz). Students' Principal Study learning is enhanced through experiential performance and ensemble training ranging from repertoire classes to small chamber ensembles to big band or symphony orchestra. Students' practical learning is supported by a programme of core academic courses culminating in an individual research project, complemented by a range of electives designed to expand and deepen students' artistic interests, and a programme of professional studies that prepare students for the transition to work. Guildhall Actors learn through an intensive ensemble-approach to training, supported by technical skill development group classes, through which students learn how to create performances working together in 'companies'. This reflects industry practice, while the programme nurtures each student's individual artistic identity. BA Production Arts students (on Costume, Design Realisation, Stage Management, or Theatre Technology pathways) and BA Digital Design & Production students learn through team-focused projects, supported by core skill-specific lessons and a range of electives enabling individual combinations of specialist areas of study. Students work together in a stepped fashion on production projects, progressing from assistant roles in the Second Year to being team leaders, designers, and key operators in the Third Year. They develop industry-ready skills as members of a proficient production team. In addition, they develop and present individual work including through a summative Graduation Project (for example presenting digital or physical design outcomes, portfolios, or staged pieces).

10. Guildhall undergraduate students benefit from high contact hours delivered by specialist teaching staff. Most of the School's specialist teachers continue to have active careers as performing, creative and technical artists, nationally and internationally, sharing their lived experience of the professional world with students. Many of the School's teachers also teach at other conservatoires and drama schools in the UK and abroad, bringing a sector-wide perspective to the School. Guildhall maintains the lowest student-to-staff ratios in the UK conservatoire sector: 8:1 in 2021-22, averaged across the School; conservatoire sector ranges from 8.6:1 to 11.1:1 (*Guardian University Guide, 2022*). This low student-teacher ratio facilitates a high degree of individualisation. Drama and Production Arts undergraduates spend approximately 90% of 3,600 programme hours in taught classes or curricular projects that progressively demand autonomy and individual responsibility. BMus students are expected to do a minimum of 3-8 hours per day individual practice, depending on Principal Study instrument, rehearse and perform in the School's professionally led public concerts and projects (minimum 12.5 hours per concert, with 30 and 36

hours respectively for Symphony Orchestra and Opera projects) in addition to 1,680 contact hours over the 4-years of the programme (see *Programme specifications*).

11. The School's assessment and feedback methodology is rooted in industry and pedagogic best practice. Assessment tasks are closely aligned with professional practice regarding technical skill, individual creativity, and collaborative engagement. The core teaching teams undertake formal marking and provision of summative feedback, overseen by module, pathway, and Programme Leaders, and informed (as relevant) by visiting professionals' feedback on student achievement. BMus students' individual and group performances are assessed by expert panels, including (for final degree recitals) specialist External Assessors (separate from Guildhall's External Examiners) approved by both the Music Programme Board and Academic Board on the basis of their standing as leading industry professionals. Acting and Production Arts students are assessed individually and on their performance within an ensemble or production team, with continuous notes from the director and summative feedback given at the end of each production. Visiting professionals involved in productions and live events activities give students 'notes' at the end of rehearsals and performances. Students reflect upon their learning in facilitated review sessions, and teaching staff review each student's work and progress in staff assessment meetings with notes available to all markers as relevant, supporting the final marking and feedback undertaken by the module assessors.

12. Guildhall students receive constant formative feedback, both 'in the moment' in individual lessons, group classes and rehearsals, and at regular intervals throughout their programme. **'Everything is feedback: you will never get as much feedback as you do in a conservatoire.'** (*BMus graduate, 2020: interview 2023*). Tutorial support helps students make sense of the variety of perspectives they receive from others, how to acknowledge this feedback as a critique of their work only (i.e., professional, not personal), and learn how to assimilate challenging feedback while retaining a strong sense of agency, identity, and onward momentum. In a meeting with final year Acting students, the External Examiner cited the **'...strong foundation this gave them as autonomous practitioners'** (*External Examiner, BA Acting, 2020*).

13. Guildhall's External Examiners confirm the appropriateness of grades awarded, fairness of marking, and effectiveness of assessment processes overall. Comments from External Examiner reports include **'...the assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the learning outcomes'** (*BA Acting Studies, 2022*); **'...a rich and diverse assessment experience...effectively tailored to the needs of each module and relevant to professional demands'** (*BMus, 2020*); **'...having taken the time to track and compare with previous cohorts, a great deal of confidence can be taken in the final classifications awarded...'** (*BA Production Arts, 2020*). Students' positive responses to NSS questions 10 (feedback is timely) and 11 (helpful comments) are generally above the benchmark, notwithstanding lower indicators in 2020 due to the pandemic. The responses to questions 8 (criteria used in marking are clear) and 9 (marking and assessment has been fair), while clearly requiring further address, are broadly in line with those from other conservatoires. Guildhall's Teaching and Learning Enhancement Strategy 2022-26 includes a review of marking and assessment criteria starting in 2022-23.

14. Guildhall is rated the top UK conservatoire for overall student satisfaction (NSS 2022, Q27, 87.5%, 'significantly above the benchmark'): Guildhall's NSS 2022 response rate was 74%; the national average was 68.6% (*Guildhall Annual Report, 2021/22*). The School is also rated significantly higher (11.5% and 15.5% respectively) than the whole sector figure (Q27, 76%), within the Design, and creative and performing arts category (Q27, 72%), and for both Music and Drama

subject areas. In addition, the School achieved ‘significantly above the benchmark’ ratings for overall student satisfaction (NSS Q27) during the pandemic years (2020 and 2021) and has consistently improved this aspect since the School’s previous TEF submission (2017-18).

15. Performance training requires an in-person experience: moving performance, rehearsal and assessment activities online during the pandemic lockdown periods raised a number of challenging issues for students and teachers. The TEF2023 data confirms that while, overall, the School performed above the benchmark in assessment and feedback for the period in view, student satisfaction dropped 3 percentage points (ppts) from Year 1 to Year 2 (2020). The NSS 2020 data-gathering period (January-April) preceded the core summer assessments (May-June), impacting on final year students’ responses. External Examiner comments acknowledged the efficacy of the School’s adaptations: **It is highly impressive that, in a complex institution in which practical work forms the centrepiece of all students’ experience, the examination process has carried on and that students have been assessed as fully and professionally as has occurred.**’ (*BMus* 2020); **‘The level of consideration, care and detail applied to this process has been incredible and a lot of credit needs to be given to the course leaders and staff involved as they navigated through each component of study, maintaining their standards whilst making sure no student was disadvantaged’** (*BA Production Arts* 2020); **‘I wholeheartedly commend and congratulate all academic and professional services staff for their exceptional work through an extraordinarily complex and challenging time.’** (*BA Acting* 2020). Student comments from WSS 2021 include, **‘I think Guildhall coped really well with Covid’** (*BA Production Arts Yr1*); **‘During the pandemic and lockdown our teachers went above and beyond to create the year we wanted’** (*BA Production Arts Yr2*); **‘All in all, the staff did a great job this year providing lessons throughout lockdown.’** (*BMus Yr4*). The School’s degree outcomes for the same period also attest to the effectiveness of the alternative assessment arrangements put in place by the School and the support students received throughout this period. The School’s NSS results for assessment and feedback have stabilised and in 2022 were above the benchmark (+2.5ppts).

16. The School’s vocational programmes blend individual, peer-to-peer and class- or workshop-based learning. Specific learning outcomes are typically realised in group settings (for example, orchestral and ensemble playing, theatre and opera performance, and production realisation). This work accelerates the development of graduate attributes: it demands commitment to schedules, attention to detail, sophisticated team-working, and (given the pressures of public performance) requires and builds resilience. Learning is augmented by students’ engagement with academic rigour and critical reflection, and the development of self-reflexive critical and artistic awareness. **‘The overall balance and quality of teaching and learning methods, from individual lessons to large-group activities is a defining characteristic of the student learning experience at the School and a key component in its success.’** (*External Examiner, BMus, 2019*).

17. Guildhall provides students with a wide range of performances, live events, productions, and creative opportunities, varied in scope, genre, and challenge, in which to apply, extend, and consolidate their learning. The Music department runs 25 ensembles annually, many led by external professional conductors, including the Symphony Orchestra & Symphony Chorus, Chamber Orchestra, Ubu Ensemble (contemporary music), Jazz Big Band, Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Choir, Symphonic Wind, Symphonic Brass, Percussion Ensemble, and the Baroque Orchestra. Each year the School mounts over 300 public concerts and final recitals including 14 fully mounted stage productions (8 drama and 6 opera). The Music department runs regular “@ six” and “@ eight” public platforms for student performances, with each Music section providing two or more

events each term. In 2021-22 the School welcomed over 20,000 audience members in person to Guildhall performances, including 115 ticketed and over 200 non-ticketed events (*Marketing department data*). Guildhall performances provide the Production Arts department students with a wide range of learning opportunities activities, including the Acting, Acting Studies, and Opera productions (staged across the School's public-facing theatres and performance studios), the Bauhaus Band project (a mixed-media concert performance), and Guildhall Live Events projects (Guildhall's commercial production company, producing site-specific digitally oriented work for external clients). Student comments include **'The best thing about studying at Guildhall is the huge variety of projects the School offers its students [...] the sense of satisfaction from these projects is one of the best feelings you can get here'** (*BMus Yr3, 2021 prospectus*); **'...the variety of projects was great.'** (*BA Theatre Technology Yr3, 2022: exit interview*). **'It [the Beast of London project] is an exemplary demonstration of professional practice. [...] It's hard to under-emphasize the significance of this in terms of student learning'** (*External Examiner BA VDLP, 2019*).

18. Guildhall students engage with progressive learning challenges throughout their studies, relevant to their intended career paths. Music students are gradually afforded more responsibility in ensembles, taking up leadership roles as appropriate to their abilities. Public performances of student ensembles are managed to ensure that students develop performative skills in a supportive environment. Actors engage progressively with more challenging roles towards industry-facing productions in Year 3. Production Arts students take on increased levels of responsibility across a structured set of challenges and tasks. Second Year students work on major production projects as assistants, under the management of Third Year students, with all work overseen by specialist staff supervisors. In addition to working as designers and team leaders, Third Year students complete an individual long-form Graduation Project geared around a particular challenge or interest. Guildhall's BMus students regularly work alongside postgraduate students in chamber ensembles, orchestras, and group performance activities, for both public-facing and internal training-focused performances. This enables the undergraduate musicians to engage with more advanced postgraduate students within a collaborative, collegiate setting, providing BMus students with potential role models and higher benchmarks in terms of technical proficiency and artistry. This shared experience also encourages undergraduate students' consideration of progression to postgraduate study in due course. **'One thing that stands out on Guildhall's jazz course is that the jazz combos and other ensembles are integrated across all years. This really helps to build a strong network of musicians and is great for making contacts.'** (*BMus Yr3, WSS 2021*).

19. Guildhall alumni often return to the School to teach on short-form projects, such as workshops, supervising student work, or conducting concerts. Each year over 40 alumni work on BA Acting audition panels, and 3 or 4 teach or direct; typically, 5 Production Arts graduates supervise project work; over 50 alumni teach regularly in Music; over 20 graduates also run Guildhall summer schools and evening classes. Alumni also facilitate work opportunities for current and graduating students. The School's learning environment benefits from this fluid exchange between students and alumni, in a mutually supportive environment geared around the realisation of projects and productions. **'As a Guildhall Graduate (2008) I was delighted to have the opportunity to return once established in my career. This has afforded me access to some of the best students and new grads in the industry. I have been fortunate enough to meet, give employment and work experience opportunities to brilliant early career stage managers.'**

Guildhall provides online careers workshop events for alumni,

through its 'Elevate' initiative, and funding for alumni advancement of creative practice and creative careers through its 'Futures Fund': recent recipients include (graduated 2018) establishing a pan-European music collective, and (graduates 2018) creating multimedia theatre promoting mental health and well-being (*School website*).

20. Collaboration is an important element of Guildhall's approach to learning, being fundamental to contemporary performing arts practices and artist training, and the development of the artistic entrepreneurial skills necessary to become cultural leaders, trailblazers and change makers in their chosen fields. Shared electives, departmental workshops, and open masterclasses, facilitate dialogue across subjects and year groups, and help ensure creative diversity, enabling students to break down boundaries across art forms and experiment with new ideas. All Year One students participate in the Cross-School Project, in which students work across disciplines in small groups, with some tutor mentoring, towards a School-wide showing of curated and created performances. The Social Arts Practice electives in BMus years 2-4 provide Music students with progression from the Cross-School Project to collaborative frameworks such as 'Undisciplined', a School-wide initiative through which students can develop funded, student-led interdisciplinary performance projects. The ensemble approach and team-work ethic within Acting and Production Arts ensures these are inherently collaborative spaces but extends further, to students co-creating work with visiting practitioners: examples include Acting students developing a new version of 'Antigone' with Olivier award winning playwright Stef Smith (2018-19), and co-developing 'Parts per Million,' a new play by Gary McNair (2021). **'Highlights of my time at Guildhall are the drama and Opera productions. They bring together actors, musicians, singers, technicians and so much more.'** (*BA Production Arts student, Yr3, 2021: exit interview*); **'The collaboration across departments was so enriching and a place where, as an inclusive practitioner, I could offer a reflection of the changing industry.'** (*freelance Director, 2022: project feedback*).

21. Guildhall values innovation and encourages students to explore and extend artistic and conceptual boundaries. Final year students' responses (2021) to NSS question 5 (relating to 'opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth') were significantly above the benchmark (+9.9ppts). For Production Arts students this engagement arises partly through their involvement in the sequence of meetings that lie behind each production project, from the concept meeting to the 'white card' meeting (in which initial design and staging ideas are mocked up) to the pre-production meeting, to the production review in which students and tutors address the achievements and challenges of each specific project. The production meetings include members of the creative team, many of whom are external professional practitioners, so that the students have direct engagement with the artistic aims, thinking and problem-solving that goes into contemporary professional production realisation. The development of Music students' critical thinking skills is built into strategic points in their curriculum; the BMus Year 3 research project facilitates students' application of critical thinking and research skills to their own musical interests whilst the Independent Performance Project in BMus Year 4 requires students to critically reflect on their own performance production or the evaluation of a pitch for a proposed artistic event. Students' self-determined repertoire choices for their solo final recitals allows them to express their artistic individuality on a public platform. Production Arts students have a dissertation as one of the optional submission modes for their individual Graduation Project, undertaking self-determined research into a specialist area of practice for this module. For example, following extensive research into software and cloud-based design solutions, (BA (Hons) Production Arts, 2021) created **Lightshare**, a web-based tool allowing a lighting designer, programmer and operator located in different spaces or countries to share and adjust the lighting plot for a

production in real-time; (BA (Hons) Production Arts, 2020) researched and designed a 'one size fits all' **Portable Production Desk**, responding to industry calls for improvements in this area, subsequently winning the Association of Theatre Technicians' 2022 Virtual Ideas Award.

22. Guildhall demonstrated its adaptability in sustaining student learning during the Covid19 pandemic. Students' overall satisfaction was significantly above the benchmarks in both the 2020 and 2021 NSS results. In person classes and rehearsals (individual and group) were moved online during lockdown periods, as were seminars and tutorials. The School facilitated students' continued learning by sending equipment to their accommodation, including providing international piano students with keyboards to practice on; costume students were sent sewing machines and fabrics to make costumes that were then sent to performers, who would in turn self-film their costumed performance on their phones for integration into a digital scenography; Acting students were sent video recording equipment enabling them to practice their 'acting for screen' work at home as part of their online lessons. Student comments include, '**...when COVID and lockdown hit, Guildhall School was one of the leaders in moving online and creating virtual works of theatre, opera and music**' (BA Production Arts, NSS 2021). External Examiner comments include '**... students confirmed the regard in which the School and its staff are held and recognised the effort and effectiveness of the adaptations put in place during the two previous years**' (BMus, 2022); and '**The regular dialogue established with students allowed the course to make amendments swiftly and promptly, making it clear throughout what each student needed to achieve to complete their studies whilst offering a range of flexible solutions to allow them to achieve them**' (BA Production Arts, 2021). Pandemic-related programme changes that have been retained include (in BA Production Arts) moving the presentation and seminar classes of the Contextual Studies module online. This has made it easier for students to participate in break-out or small-group discussion, and also encouraged more interaction by way of questions in the 'comments' sidebar. The module is a good example of the more hybrid working culture that has evolved post-pandemic. Production, staff, and review meetings are now hybrid, providing more flexibility in scheduling. Music has retained and expanded its asynchronous online learning experiences. Other retained changes include moving the part-time PG Certificate in Performance Teaching to online delivery, enabling much wider reach and flexibility for students on this programme.

23. A core principle of Guildhall's learning ethos is that students work closely with professional practitioners (e.g., directors, designers, conductors, performers, technical staff) many of whom are leaders in their fields, in addition to the School's regular expert practitioner-teachers. This ensures a profound learning dividend, grounded in close engagement with current practice and a form of peer-working alongside professionals. Recent examples include:

- Music students working with conductors such as Vassily Sinaisky (2018, Conductor Emeritus BBC Philharmonic); Thomas Søndergård (2019, Music Director Royal Scottish National Orchestra & Minnesota Orchestra); Roberto González-Monjas (2019-22, Principal Conductor Musikkollegium Winterthur & Principal Guest Conductor Belgian National Orchestra); Nikki Iles (Jazz Pianist/Composer, 2022); masterclasses including Richard Goode (international pianist & Guildhall School International Chair in Piano Studies, 2017-2019); Ann Murray DBE (2018-2022); Sir Willard White (2019); Judith Weir CBE (2019, Master of the Queen's Music); Dame Imogen Cooper (2021); with Guildhall School alumni Tasmin Little OBE (2021) and Roderick Williams OBE (2022); Yahael Camara Onono (Djembe player), and Julia Bullock, Vocal Studies Artist in Residence 2020-2022.
- Drama and Production Arts students working with creative teams including Lyndsey Turner (Associate Director, National Theatre), Suba Das (Creative Director of Liverpool Everyman &

Playhouse Theatres), Ole Ince (Associate Director Lyric Hammersmith, Royal Court), Vicki Igbokwe (Founder & Creative Director, Uchenna) and Pooja Ghai (Artistic Director, Tamasha Theatre Company), and Ian Rickson (Associate Director National Theatre). Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu, (Young Vic Creative Programme), wrote and directed 'Hyde and Seek', a new commission part-funded by Guildhall's Innovation department, working with students over a two-year development period. The production was given its world premiere by Acting and Production Arts students in the Milton Court Theatre in October 2022.

- Production Arts students working with Zara Hussain, an artist working across genres including digital animation, sculpture, and painting; and Mohammed Ali, a street artist and director of Birmingham-based Soul City Arts. In August 2022, the Guildhall Production Arts and Music departments collaborated with RAM Records, a drum and bass record label, to present 'OrchestRAM', a concert in celebration of the label's 30th anniversary. The project combined contemporary urban music played by the 35-piece Guildhall Session Orchestra, with lights, lasers, and projection to create an immersive musical event that was much celebrated by its audiences across three performances. BMus Electronic & Produced Music students created the arrangements of RAM Record tracks licensed to the School for the purpose, and the sophisticated and complex staging was assistant-production-managed by a Production Arts student. The project transfers to the Barbican Centre's main Concert Hall on 11 March 2023.

24. Guildhall students have career-relevant learning opportunities enabled through carefully cultivated partnerships, associations, and collaborations with professional ensembles, opera and theatre companies, and professional producers. Examples include:

- the School's 'Creative Alliance' with the **Barbican Centre**: this entails a range of co-curated projects and performances, including 40 Barbican concerts a year in the School's Milton Court Concert Hall, that additionally provides students with masterclasses from visiting artists and associate companies. In 2019 and 2020 these included a Barbican Residency by Guildhall alumna Alison Balsom OBE, with Guildhall students providing a stage chorus and working with award-winning director Dominic Dromgoole; 11 Guildhall ensembles/individuals performing in the Barbican's *Sound Unbound* event, supported by Guildhall Production Arts students shadowing Barbican technicians; a side-by-side project (students playing next to professional orchestral players) with the Australian Chamber Orchestra (ACO), '**Guildhall School is one of the most vibrant places on earth. It's bristling and bustling with incredible endeavour. It's alive. And it's great to work with the students.**' (*Richard Tognetti, Artistic Director, ACO: ISTA Annex B*); and a Guildhall chorus joining the BBC Singers and working with director Elkhannah Pulitzer. Many of the artists and ensembles visiting the Barbican provide masterclasses for our students, including the New York Philharmonic (2020) and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (2021). All Guildhall students are automatically members of the Young Barbican ticket scheme, enabling discounted access to Barbican events. '**The close partnership between Guildhall and Barbican as a sector-leading conservatoire and world-class arts centre respectively provides innumerable opportunities for the students each season...the opportunity to showcase the remarkable talents of Guildhall students as part of the Barbican's music programme is hardwired into our working practice.**' (*Huw Humphreys, Head of Music, Barbican, 2022: ISTA Annex B*)
- Guildhall's long-standing relationship with the **London Symphony Orchestra (LSO)**, the Barbican Centre's resident orchestra. LSO players coach BMus students in sectional rehearsals for Symphony Orchestra and Chamber orchestra concerts. Students also have 'side-by-side' public performance opportunities, playing with the LSO. '**...we have found Guildhall School to be one of the most forward-looking specialist music schools in the world, seeking to stay**

ahead of the curve and prioritising their links with the profession in order to best serve their students.' (*Kathryn McDowell, CBE, DL, Managing Director, London Symphony Orchestra, 2022: ISTA Annex B*).

- Guildhall's ongoing collaboration with the BBC Symphony Orchestra's annual *Total Immersion* project, showcasing the work of contemporary composers. Guildhall student performances are integrated into each project; soloists and chamber groups gain the experience of performing live in the jointly curated concerts at the Barbican, also broadcast on BBC Radio 3. **'The levels of performance achieved by the students – as soloist, chamber musicians or ensemble musicians – are excellent, easily meeting national and international professional expectations'** (*Ann MacKay, Chief Producer, BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, 2022: ISTA Annex B*).
- Guildhall has a formal relationship with the Royal Opera House, focused on the School's MA in Opera Making and Writing. The partnership includes a jointly run Composer-in-Residence doctoral studentship, currently held by Oliver Leith (latest work, *Last Days*, 2022) who leads BMus seminars and workshops. The ROH also enables stage management students to spend time with the ROH stage management team.
- Guildhall's close affiliations with professional theatres, West End productions, and theatre technical services companies who provide regular work placements and shadowing opportunities for our students, including the Donmar Warehouse, Moulin Rouge (West End), Smyle Events Company & Festival Republic, Disney Cruise Liners, Tait Automation, and Marcus Hall Props. Angels Costumiers (the world's largest privately owned collection of costumes for film, theatre, and television) mentor Costume Pathway students through the complexities of sourcing, costing, and hiring costumes for productions.
- Guildhall Live Events (GLE), the School's commercial visual design and production company, provides work-based learning opportunities for students working alongside professional creative and technical teams. GLE creates immersive and interactive digital experiences, installations, events, and exhibitions for a range of commercial clients in a variety of settings, including large-scale festivals. Recent examples of projects include **Soul City Arts/Bloomsbury Festival** (2021); **Arrival/Royal Docks** (2022) **Harmony/Culture Mile** (2022); and **Love Light Norwich/The Forum, Norwich**, a collaboration featuring BMus students and City College Norwich graduates (2022). **'The scale and professionalism of work-based learning continues to be outstanding. Students are supported in making decisions and collaborating on projects that are designed for high profile professional contexts. This provides exceptionally effective student learning.'** (*External Examiner, BA VDLP, 2021*).

25. Guildhall's learning and teaching environment is enhanced by staff members' research activity through their discipline-specific expertise, research-informed teaching, and the promotion of student-led research enquiry. Guildhall's submission to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 was rated as 56% 4* (world-leading) overall, making Guildhall the highest-rated music conservatoire in the UK for research and the second-highest drama school (*REF 2021 outcome*). The School doubled its proportion of 4* work in comparison with REF 2014; the School had lagged behind other conservatoires in this measure but is now ahead of all (including prestigious art schools the Slade, Glasgow School of Art and the Royal College of Art) except the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. This is a consequence of Guildhall's strategic expansion of the proportion of staff undertaking research and teaching. Guildhall submitted around 27% of its salaried academic staff to REF 2021; 48% of whom teach BMus students, and 47% of these hold senior positions within Music, both in Principal Study and Academic Studies, and directly inform design and delivery of the BMus curriculum. Senior appointments in Drama and Production Arts

since 2019 have helped extend the research profile of both departments, with the respective department directors submitted to REF. In 2022, the School appointed a 'research-lead' staff member within each department, 'to strengthen the artist-research-teacher nexus for their peers, in particular [...] by championing research-led teaching' (*RKEC minutes, paper 6, Nov 2022*). Twenty-five teaching staff members (including the Principal) are undertaking or have completed doctoral research through the School's funded PhD programme since 2018, of whom 11 (44%) explore performing arts practice-focused topics; 8 (32%) musicological; 4 (16%) pedagogic; and 2 (8%) interpersonal skills development (*Staff Development Committee records, 2022*). Their research directly contributes to curriculum development and enhances currency in teaching approaches. For example, the Head of Theatre Technology pathway is researching changes to vocational teaching practices, working with students on directly connected issues of 'safe space' in training and rehearsal room settings; the Production Arts Costume Lecturer's research on stereotyping and misrepresentation in costuming includes explorations in costume realisation with students in classroom and production settings.

26. Guildhall's Research Department supports academic staff research and scholarship activity through funding for conference attendance and research projects and oversees initiatives that bear directly on Guildhall's expertise in conservatoire teaching and enhance the student experience. For example, the internal funding scheme 'Curriculum initiative', managed by the Research Department, has supported various staff-led projects that have set out to develop teaching provision in innovative ways. Examples include 'Resilience coaching for first-year actors'; 'Developing aural(ia)': 'Creating an effective ear-training software environment'; 'Decolonizing the teaching of classical harmony and counterpoint'; 'Movement and Motion Capture'; and 'The Creative Singer'.

27. The Institute for Social Impact Research in the Performing Arts is a signal feature of Guildhall's academic environment. Established (2020) with the aim of understanding and communicating the ways in which performing artists achieve positive impact in society, the Institute contributes to Guildhall's 'artist in society' learning agenda, in part through dedicated sessions on socially engaged work as part of the BMus Professional Studies modules. The Music & Politics Talks series, open to all students, provide platforms for artists and academics to consider social issues as broad as health and wellbeing, diversity and inclusion, social justice, community building and activism.

Section 2b: Student experience – resources, support, and student engagement

28. Guildhall supports the continued professional development of its staff through a range of initiatives informed by School-wide and departmental strategic needs, staff appraisal, and individual aspiration. New staff teaching more than 100 hours per year are expected to complete the School's online Postgraduate Certificate in Performance Teaching within the first two years of their employment (unless they already have equivalent qualifications or experience), supported by full fee waivers. Programme teams are responsible for briefing visiting professionals regarding module or project intended learning outcomes, content and delivery, modes of assessment, and School protocols. The Music department runs induction sessions for External Assessors participating in final recital panels. In addition to mandatory online City of London training for establishment (salaried) staff, all new staff are invited to an annual 'New Staff Induction Day', providing detail on how the School operates as a whole, its core principles and strategies, the developmental opportunities available to staff, and networking opportunities with colleagues from other departments. Recent participant feedback comments (anonymous) include **'It is the best staff induction I have attended by far'**; **'It exceeded my expectations massively and was very**

engaging' (*SDC records, 2022*); **'Great to hear about the teaching and learning strategy'; 'Good to find out about many of the systems used to support teaching and also the access initiatives'** (*SDC records, 2021*).

29. Establishment staff are able to review their developmental needs formally through annual appraisal, exploring options such as undertaking doctoral study with the School, or attaining Higher Education Academy (HEA) fellowship through the School's bespoke 'Catalyst' programme (accredited by AdvanceHE), both of which the School supports through full or partial fee waivers. The number of staff undertaking Guildhall PhDs has increased by 90% since 2018 of whom 90% received full fee waivers and 10% partial fee waivers. Guildhall has 111 members of staff who have achieved HEA recognition, including 2 Associate Fellows, 87 Fellows, 21 Senior Fellows and 1 Principal Fellow. A further 15 staff members are currently on the Catalyst programme working towards accreditation at Associate Fellow (1), Fellow (9), and Senior Fellow (5) levels (*SDC records, 2022*).

30. Guildhall students receive constant formative feedback: teaching staff can hone their skills in giving positive, constructive, and appropriately tailored feedback through the School's professional Coaching and Mentoring training programmes, accredited by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council. Since 2018, 73 staff members have completed or are completing the programme. Participant feedback (*SDC records, 2022*) includes, **'Composition is a discipline where personal wellbeing often interacts with professional identity and developing a rigorous coaching framework to facilitate and support this kind of pedagogy has drastically improved how I am able to support my students.'** (*BMus teacher1, SDC records 2022*); **'The coaching and mentoring course has been a fantastic opportunity, not only to develop some important skills as a coach, but also to learn more about myself as a teacher and person.'** (*BMus teacher2, SDC records 2022*).

31. Guildhall's Staff Development Committee (SDC) is responsible for distributing funds for School-wide, departmental, and individual professional development opportunities. Recent examples of funded initiatives include Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (EDI) training, Safeguarding and Consent training, Neurodiversity training, and 'Managing Difficult conversations' (2022), about which staff participant feedback (anonymous) includes **'This feels like the start of a very exciting next phase of cultural evolution for the School'; 'I really valued this training'; 'This type of course needs to be experienced by all staff and students alike'** (*SDC records, 2022*). During 2021-22, the Senior Management Team reviewed its strategic approach to whole-School staff development following student experience enhancement initiatives relating to EDI started in 2020 and developed further through 2020-21. The School has invested over £60,000 in EDI training since 2021 delivered by external specialists such as TONIC, Purple Therapy, and School of Sexuality Education, including some matched training to students enabling a collective, whole community understanding of the same frameworks and common points of reference within a shared discourse. Guildhall is currently developing bespoke EDI staff training films (scheduled for 2022-23 release), with film scores composed by BMus students. The School continues to refine its holistic approach to staff development, which (along with an external review of the School's governance arrangements) will align with the new Guildhall Strategic Plan, due in 2023.

32. The School's encourages staff members to share, reflect on, and develop academic practice and pedagogy, particularly within the Catalyst, PGCert, and Coaching and Mentoring programmes, all of which develop communities of academic practice, peer support, and knowledge exchange. Guildhall's Research and Innovation Fund (R&I) supports the exploration and development of innovative practice and pedagogy. The number of R&I funded projects has increased by 56% since

2018, from 14 (2018-19) to 25 (2021-2022), within which 49% of project staff teach undergraduates (*RKEC minutes 2022*). **'Lightbulb'** project funding (also via R&I) supports staff innovation and exchange initiatives such as new ways of working or developing prototypes or products which engage with external partners or audiences. Recent Lightbulb-funded projects include the OrchestRAM event referenced earlier, and the BMus 2 Vocal 'Life Songs' project which is now a formal part of the curriculum. The School further supports the sharing of academic practice through **co-teaching** (e.g., in Music, by teachers of the same instrument co-teaching differing approaches to technique; in Drama, by staff with differing disciplines collaborating on a chosen text); in Production Arts, by cross-department tutoring); **ResearchWorks**, the School's regular public forum for staff research output; and the online **Teaching & Learning Hub**, which provides teaching staff with a further avenue for knowledge exchange, links to relevant research and scholarship, and a discussion forum. Programme Leaders meet together twice termly to consider emerging teaching and learning issues, cascading these down through departmental regular staff meetings.

33. Guildhall provides its students with tailored academic support. The TEF2023 data shows the School as being materially above (+6ppts) the academic support benchmark overall and performing better than benchmark each year since 2019. Individual tutorial support is embedded in all degree programmes, ranging (depending on programme) from regular individual or small group tutorials to bookable 'check-in' sessions requested by students or teaching staff. **'I have felt very supported the whole time I have attended the School [...] the teachers have been extremely supportive.'** (*BA Acting, NSS 2021*); **'I feel ready for a career in music because of the guidance and opportunities I received'** (*BMus, NSS 2020*); **'It has been a great experience, staff are really supportive and helpful, and if you make a mistake, it is not end of the world; it is a fantastic learning environment and I have loved every minute.'** (*BA Production Arts, Yr3, 2021, exit interview*). In Music, Heads, Deputy Heads or Assistant Heads of instrument (depending on department) provide consistency of contact and oversight of each student's development at regular intervals and on request. Music students' individual allocations within ensemble performance activities are closely monitored and managed in order to ensure every student has a progressive learning experience appropriate to their developmental needs. In Drama and Production Arts the Programme Leaders, Pathway Leaders, and department Heads ensure that project and production allocations (i.e., assigning specific industry-aligned roles to students, or casting students in Acting roles) further each student's learning trajectory, needs and interests. Production Arts students have individual start-, mid- and end-of-allocation tutorials with their Personal Tutor to provide orientation and set expectations, monitor progress, and review learning, and a staff supervisor appropriate to specialist areas oversees the work of each student on projects/productions. External Examiner comments include, **'I have been so impressed by the care, skill, imagination, flexibility and passion of the staff and, indeed, the students of this programme'** (*BA Acting, 2022*); **'I have been struck by the level of individual care and attention provided to each student – a reflection of the dedication and expertise of all staff across the School'** (*BMus, 2019*); **'The level of consideration, care and detail [...] has been incredible'** (*BA Production Arts, 2020*).

34. Guildhall is committed to providing a safe, inclusive working environment for its students and staff. The School recognises the importance of understanding the lived experience of students and staff in order to improve everyone's learning and working experience at the School. Guildhall is diversifying its student intake and workforce through a number of initiatives including, for example, the School's Supported Application Scheme; widely representative staffing on audition panels; and advertising posts through specialist fora including Backstage Niche and Stage Sight. The School engages both staff and students in extensive work relating to changing cultural practices. For

example, 'consent training', concerning behaviour and interrelations in work situations (including those that require close physical proximity and/or contact) is provided for all students, and 'intimacy' coaches, addressing scenes and performance situations that depict or depend upon physical intimacy, are contracted for Acting and Opera projects, in line with industry best practice. **'Having worked at various drama schools in the UK, it feels to me that Guildhall is setting the standard for 21st Century drama training and this is to place wellbeing, consent, inclusivity and artistry at the heart of its programme.'** (*Jess Murrain, freelance director, project feedback, 2022*).

35. Guildhall provides additional support for students' academic and welfare needs through its Student Affairs department, delivering a range of services including counselling, health and welfare advice, disability support, learning support for neurodiverse students, financial advice, focused study groups to support students' development of academic skills, accommodation advice and international student support. Most of the Student Affairs team have performing arts backgrounds in addition to relevant support qualifications, enabling the provision of informed performing arts-specific learning support, such as line-learning and sight-reading (e.g., working with scripts); Alexander Technique (posture) and body awareness for musicians; managing self-criticism, feedback, and performance anxiety; and improving stage confidence and presence. **'Thank you for making these workshops happen [...] since a huge part of our work is expressing our experience of life through art'** (*BMus participant, Skills for wellbeing, 2021: Student Affairs annual report 21-22 p3*). Physiotherapy is provided as needed, in line with Guildhall's performing arts specialisms. The Student Affairs team works closely with programme staff to ensure students have access to bespoke, timely support, including the development of individual learning agreements, a process further enabled by teachers' direct knowledge of each individual student. This provision overlaps with tutor-led classes on safe working practices, mental and physical wellbeing in performance contexts, and preparation for performance. Student Affairs provide programme teams with staff training on issues such as dealing with neurodiversity, wellbeing, and performance anxiety. The Student Affairs team also convenes the termly inter-institutional 'Performance Arts Counsellors' group, sharing good practice with peers at other institutions. Students can refer themselves to Student Affairs or be referred by peers or programme staff. Recent anonymised student comments from the annual Whole School Survey (WSS) include **'Student affairs have really helped me this year'** (*BMus, 2022*); **'Counselling with student affairs was amazing and has helped me massively. Thank you!'** (*BA Production Arts, 2022*); and **'The Student Affairs team have been a constant source of support throughout my time at the school, particularly through the challenging circumstances in the pandemic.'** (*BA Production Arts, 2021*).

36. Guildhall students learn in purpose-built teaching, rehearsal and performance venues and facilities. These provide students with high-visibility public platforms on which to demonstrate and consolidate their skills and artistry to public audiences and industry professionals. The School's physical campus comprises two main sites, Silk Street and Milton Court, designed for performing arts training and performance, plus three additional external spaces, the John Hosier annexe, the Brewery, and Sundial Court (student accommodation). The Grade II listed Silk Street building, part of the Barbican complex, includes a 190-seat concert hall, a lecture recital room, a 308-seat theatre, scenic art, prop-making and scenic construction workshops, technical theatre labs, electronic music studios, recording and sound studios, video-editing suites, more than 40 teaching and practice rooms, and the library. The School's more recent (2013) Milton Court site, across the road from Silk Street, includes a high-specification studio theatre, a 223-seat lyric theatre with fully-automated flying system (the only one in the world in a higher education conservatoire), Television studio suite, costume workshops, Computer Aided Design and media post-production facilities,

production offices, flexible teaching and rehearsal spaces, a gymnasium, and the 608-seat Milton Court Concert Hall with state-of-the-art recording facilities. Prioritised for educational use, the concert hall is also used by ensembles including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Academy of Ancient Music, and BBC Singers for rehearsal, recording, and performance.

37. Guildhall's Library provides students with a supportive study environment and one of the most extensive specialised collections of music and drama electronic and print resources in Europe. The Library has a long and continuing legacy of innovation and response to changing student learning needs: the School was the first conservatoire in Europe to digitise its Library catalogue (1994), the first UK conservatoire to offer access to Naxos and Classical Music Online streamed audio resources (2004), the first UK conservatoire to purchase perpetual access to Drama Online (2014), the first and so far only UK conservatoire to offer students access to the music score app, nKoda (2020), and HEPML, a copyright licence permitting copying and scanning of owned print music for teaching and learning purposes (2021). Library staff all have degree-level specialist knowledge in music or drama, and members of staff are qualified librarians with specialisms in academic information services. Guildhall students consistently reported being satisfied with the quality of Library provision pre-pandemic (90% positive responses, WSS data for 2015-2019). The Library team continued to provide an online service during lockdowns, matching the School's normal 56 hours per week opening hours, including onsite provision of 'Reserve and Collect' services throughout the academic year 2020-21. Indicative anonymised feedback from students during this period include: **'You and your team have been fantastic throughout this horrific year, and it's so much appreciated'**; **'Thank you for being so helpful this past year with providing/mailling library scores'**; **'Thanks again for the great service you continue to deliver in trying times!'** (WSS, 2021).

38. Guildhall's digital learning provision facilitates students' autonomous study, including online directed-learning sessions that supplement 'in-person' activities, online tutorial groups, hybrid learning tasks that inform 'in-person' classes, and specialist online learning software such as 'Auralia' (music ear training). Moodle (the School's Learning Management System) enables students to access module details, work through curated online learning modules, and upload coursework, all support by the School's Learning Technologist. The School is at the forefront of using ASIMUT, a specialist digital timetabling software, through which students can book specialist and general practice rooms, schedule rehearsals, and plan self-determined activities. The Music department works regularly with ASIMUT software developers to extend ASIMUT's capabilities to the benefit of other UK and international conservatoires.

39. The School's ground-breaking low-latency digital infrastructure enables students' work to be seen and heard globally. In 2020, informed by the School's determination to provide the best learning experience possible despite the pandemic, Guildhall made its largest investment in recording and broadcast infrastructure to date, installing an audio-visual network capable of capturing teaching and performances simultaneously from over fifty Guildhall venues, rehearsal rooms and classrooms. Students were able to have learning experiences not possible previously: orchestral students performed large scale works, streamed live, performing simultaneously in four different locations (a world first in this context); singing students engaged with professional 'green screen' technologies, enabling the broadcast of new digital operas created by the Opera-Making students. By the end of 2020-21 the School's live-streamed 'Gold Medal' concert had been viewed over 300,000 times on You Tube. During 2021-22 the School added a further 13,500 Guildhall-made videos to its streaming platform bringing the total available to students to nearly 60,000, live streamed over 70 events, and provided on demand broadcast for a further 70 concerts, workshops,

masterclasses, and productions, to a combined online audience of close to half a million views (*AV department data, 2022*). **'The School's eagerness to utilise digital platforms and technology to the full is really impressive to see'** (*BMus, NSS 2021*); **'Guildhall was one of the leaders in moving online and creating virtual works of theatre, opera and music, to a high standard'** (*BA Production Arts, NSS 2021*). The School continues to invest in equipment for student use, including a further £50,000 investment in 2021-22 on student loan equipment, and specialist film-making resources for the BA Acting Screen Acting classes.

40. Students play a significant role in the continuous improvement of Guildhall's provision and artistic output. The curricular environment encourages students to develop individual agency in their artistic outputs, the resultant strength of which enables students to impact on the artistic planning and production of the School's public performances. **'I have a real dialogue with my teacher; deciding on what to work on next is a collaborative process'** (*BMus Yr1, 2022: interview*); **'The talents and curiosity of my students inspire choices of repertoire for public performances'** (*Music Head of Department, 2022: interview*). The BMus curriculum provides students with weekly departmental platforms, facilitated by a senior professor, which support students in the development of their own repertoire and allows for the discussion of contemporary issues; this culminates in the inventiveness of the students' final recitals: **'I was very impressed by the diversity of styles of music performed by the students ... [which] points to an open-minded and well-informed teaching staff right across the board'** (*BMus Jazz External Assessor report, 2022*). Student agency is also developed through curricular projects which intersect with the School's public performances. Production Arts students determine their own work through the Year 1 'Build' project and final year Graduation Project; Acting students are actively encouraged to propose plays for production, and at least one public production per year is informed by this student choice. Music students' close relationship with their Heads of Department allows them to influence programming; a Jazz "Harlem Renaissance" performance was inspired and curated by a final year student; the repertoire of the School's contemporary UBU Ensemble is frequently informed by students' suggestions. The School further supports students' own artistic agency through the provision of performance spaces for student-led events and through mentoring on the interdisciplinary "undisciplined" initiative. For example, "undisciplined" facilitated a final year BA Acting student in developing his one man play, *My Garden of Eden*, into a piece for three actors and three musicians subsequently produced by the School. **'Freedom within the course to focus on the individual nature of my work was liberating and helped me develop my own style'** (*BMus, NSS 2018*).

41. The ease and speed with which students can raise issues with staff, the determination of staff to address these swiftly, and the confidence students have in issues being resolved, often results in issues being resolved prior to reaching formal reporting processes. External Examiners have commented positively on the effectiveness of the School's approach, including **'It's clear that the students have a strong and open relationship with their course leaders, feeling confident that any feedback given is usually received well and often acted upon if appropriate'** (*BA Technical Theatre, 2019*); **'I was very pleased to note in my meeting with students that they felt that their views and concerns were being heard and acted on'** (*BA Acting, 2020*). Student comments include **'We are encouraged to give feedback on the course and reach out to staff members if we need to discuss anything.'** (*BMus, NSS 2021*).

42. The School aligns with sector good practice to empower the student voice. The Academic Board and departmental Programme Boards are not quorate without student representatives and include standing 'Student Matters' agenda items led by these representatives; the Staff Student

Liaison Committee likewise discusses student feedback on School operations. Students have noted that ‘...**the student representative meetings are really important, and I am glad that we are heard by the heads of our departments**’ (*BMus Yr2, WSS 2022*). Board-level discussion is also informed by student feedback through the NSS and the School’s own annual Whole School Survey (WSS), closely modelled on the NSS, enabling the systematic collation of feedback on students’ perception of their experience at Guildhall from all year-groups. Programme teams respond to this feedback via departmental Programme Boards, the Academic Board, and to students through “You Said We Did” notifications to students, outlining how issues raised in the WSS and NSS have been addressed. Examples of “You Said We Did” outcomes include student timetables being added to ASIMUT (*All Programme Boards, Autumn 2019*); upgrades to computer-aided design equipment and software (*Production Arts Programme Board, Autumn 2019*); and the purchase of additional music stands (*Music Programme Board, Autumn 2021*). The Students’ Union parliament includes discussion of the School’s decision-making bodies and reports back to the relevant School board. The School’s programme validation and revalidation processes also actively canvass student opinion: all cohorts on a programme are consulted during the authoring of the programme documents, and it is a requirement that one member of the (re)validating panel is a current student from a different department. Recent examples of student-driven curricular change include:

- Retention of online mode of delivery for Personal and Professional Development 2 module following positive student feedback (*Production Arts programme board, Summer 2022*).
- The introduction of regular student-led open seminar sessions for Electronic and Produced Music students (*BMus programme board, Autumn 2020*).
- Revisions to Production Arts students’ Allocation Action Plan (2022), enabling greater student agency in determining their learning requirements as they move into work placements in their final year. (*Production Arts programme board, Summer 2022*).

“Having been SU President, in regular contact with other conservatoires, and now a postgraduate student at [another conservatoire], in terms of student voice Guildhall is the most listening conservatoire of all, and a safe space in terms of students giving feedback on their experience.” (*interview, 2023*)

43. The most significant example of student voice helping shape the School’s work in recent years concerns the institution-wide engagement with issues relating to equity, diversity and representation. An agenda of cultural change, partly figured by the #MeToo and Black Lives Matter movements, has impacted on many organisations across many sectors, and it has proved particularly challenging to the conservatoire/drama school sector. Guildhall has worked closely with students to identify, articulate and frame a set of responses and initiatives that include an enhanced awareness of EDI issues, how these inform programme content and delivery, choices of repertoire, and the development of working practices of students and staff. Working initially (2020) with BA Acting students on matters of diversity, inclusion and representation, the School has progressively embedded a wide variety of EDI considerations across all aspects of its work, broadening and updating the scope to include neurodiversity, gender identity, mental health issues, sexuality, and anti-racism. This ongoing work is realised artistically and institutionally: for example, the American singer Julia Bullock held a two-year residency at the School; the School has commissioned a series of bespoke training videos that support EDI training specific to artistic institutions; students are also part of the creative team for this project.

Section 3a: Student outcomes - positive outcomes

44. The effectiveness of Guildhall's facilitation of and support for student learning is evident through its students' achievements, from application to graduation. Entry to Guildhall undergraduate programmes is based on applicants' demonstration, at a very high standard, of vocational skill and potential in practice (as distinct from prior academic achievement), through audition, portfolio, and interview: all applicants are seen. Prospective BMus applicants can have 'consultation lessons' with one-to-one teachers, and again post-acceptance, as part of ensuring the allocation of teacher is right for each student's particular developmental needs. Guildhall enables students from a wide range of backgrounds and starting points to succeed in their chosen programme. The School provides well over £2.5 million in scholarships each year (£3.5m in 2022-23 including fee waivers), awarding 637 scholarships in 2021-22, of which 335 awards (52%) supported undergraduate students. The School's **Access and Participation Plan** (2020-25) enables applicants from underrepresented groups to access its programmes through a variety of schemes. The Supported Application Scheme includes application-fee waivers, workshops, advice and guidance, invitations to performances, audition travel bursaries, and on-site tours and orientation sessions to help applicants familiarise themselves with the building prior to auditions and interviews. In 2021-22 the scheme supported 127 undergraduate applicants, 42% of whom were based beyond Greater London. Of the applicants offered a place on their chosen programme, accepted their offer and enrolled at the School in September 2022, a 50% increase on the previous year. **'I have never had this much support as an applicant before; it made me feel heard and looked after.'** (*BA Acting applicant, 2021: Annual Report*). The number of students from underrepresented groups has increased year-on-year by 9.7% (state schools) and 6.1% (low participation neighbourhoods) since 2017 and continued growth is planned for. The Access Bursary fund supported undergraduate students in 2021-22 (£78,000). **'This fund has allowed people like me to be able to study without worries around financial hardship...It's done a lot to help stabilise my life and enable me to give my best at Guildhall in my final year'** (*Access Bursary recipient, interview, 2022*). Other schemes include 111 pre-18 GYA Access Bursaries (£160,000 in 2021-22); 45 Participation Bursaries (£25,235 in 2021-22); Get Ready for Guildhall, helping new entrants prepare for student life; Originate, enabling young actors to develop their acting skills and confidence, **'Originate was eye-opening and challenging. I loved working with Guildhall...to improve my skills and learn more about drama school.'** (*Originate participant, feedback 2022*); and Get Backstage, introducing young people to Production Arts pathways and career possibilities.

45. Guildhall supports students extending their learning through professional work for high-profile arts organisations alongside their studies. Music students work for companies such as Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Buxton Festival Opera, and Clear Channel Entertainment. Companies and individuals can contract student performers for public and private events through the School's External Engagements service, providing students with well over 300 paid learning opportunities each year (2021-22, 333; 2018-19, 356) in choral societies, music societies, music festivals, and private events, as well as enabling students to further extend and embed their performance, communication, and professional skills in a real-world employment setting (*Department records*). Recent contractors include Bath Festival Orchestra, Chineke! Southwark Cathedral, The Royal Society, many of the City of London's Worshipful Companies, and numerous private functions, weddings, and dinners. Production Arts undergraduates often work professionally in the West End as casual technicians and deputies on long-running shows, alongside their studies. The Production Arts department supports this through its Professional

Working Protocols documents, which require sign-off by tutors, enabling students to align their learning with industry practices and standards and expanding students' networking opportunities. All Third Year BA Production Arts students undertake a work placement in the area of the industry they want to work in on graduation. Around 60% of these students go on to work with their placement provider or with a related employer through contacts made or recommendation arising from the placement within the first year of leaving Guildhall. **'We have been so impressed with how Guildhall students have performed whilst on their work placement, we have been able to give them professional work.'** (*National Theatre: ISTA Annex*

B). BA Acting students are permitted to take up offers of professional work during their final year where the work covers the intended learning outcomes, is accessible to assessors, and does not compromise other students' project work: in 2021-22, 40% of Third year Acting students were offered professional contracts while still on the programme (*Director of Drama, 2022: interview*).

46. The School's Guildhall Young Artists (GYA) division provides further opportunities for students to deploy their skills in the workplace. BMus students deliver mini-residency programmes at GYA centres, working to a professional engagement brief for partner schools, colleges and GYA centres, negotiating with their 'clients' to develop a mini-residency and engage/teach/perform within a variety of community and education settings, aligning with requirements for teaching and workshop-leading experience within the BMus elective and Professional Studies modules. Over 36 Music students per annum take part. GYA also provides employment for music and drama undergraduates through its **Guildhall School Graduate Assistant Programme** (currently 6 students, expanding to 10 in 2023-24). Some Guildhall graduates (currently five) go on to be employed as tutors at our GYA centres.

47. Guildhall students' academic standards and achievement are comparable with and often exceed similar programmes elsewhere, including during the pandemic. External Examiner comments include **'It is immensely encouraging that...so many students are capable of producing such superlative work'** (*BMus, 2021*); **'...academic standards and student achievement clearly demonstrate the School's standing as a leading UK institution'** (*BA Acting, 2021*); **'...the standards achieved are at the higher end of what is expected elsewhere.'** (*BA Production Arts, 2022*); **'I was pleased to hear outstanding work from each department'** (*BMus EE1, 2022*); **'...the best practical work produced by final year students is exceptional, and it is immensely impressive that, at such early stages in their performing careers, so many students are capable of producing such excellent work.'** (*BMus EE2, 2022*); **'The School operates at the forefront of its sector, nationally and internationally and this is reflected in the standards expected of and achieved by students.'** (*BMus EE1, 2019*).

48. Guildhall's continuation and completion rates are above sector norms, and above the 'All OfS registered provider' data (by +1.9 and +2.5ppts respectively). The continuation figure indicates an improvement on the School's 2017-18 TEF exercise result (+1.4ppts above benchmark). Guildhall is also materially above benchmark for the latest year, 95.4% (+4.3ppts) and has also improved by +5.8ppts overall since Year 1. The TEF2023 completion data shows that while Guildhall is 'broadly in line with benchmark' for Years 1 to 3, the latest year (Year 4) is 2.9ppts below benchmark. This anomalous result can be traced back to two factors, both relating to the BA Acting Studies programme co-delivered with the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing: (1) A high number of Year 1 Acting Studies students failed to achieve the required IELTS score (5.5) in each cohort (52% of 2016-17; 32% of 2018-19; 28% of 2020-21), resulting in lower numbers entering year 2; (2) the pandemic travel restrictions between the UK and China prohibited the in-person delivery of the programme and led to the School offering students the option to transfer to a similar programme

run by the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing: 75% of the 2018-19 cohort and 22% of the 2020-21 cohort took up the option to transfer. Guildhall and the Central Academy have decided to close the programme, with the final cohort due to graduate in 2024. For comparison purposes, factoring the BA Acting Studies out of the TEF2023 calculations raises Guildhall's continuation rate overall to 95.2% (in line with the latest year result), and completion rate to 93.5%.

49. Guildhall's undergraduate students progress successfully into work or further study: the TEF2023 progression statistics are materially above benchmark (+6.9ppts). Virtually all (96%) of Guildhall's 2020 graduates were working and/or in further study 15 months after completing their programme, (*HESA data 2019-20*), based on 165 responses from 173 alumni. This is an improvement on the equivalent data for 2018-19 wherein 90% of the 172 respondents (cohort of 192) were in work or further study. The majority of Guildhall graduates work in 'highly skilled' employments. In 2019-20, of the 95 graduates recorded by HESA as being in work, 80 (84%) were in 'highly skilled' work, of whom 55 (69%) were 'self-employed' (the predominant employment mode in the performing arts industries). This is an improvement overall on 2018-19: of the 110 graduates recorded as being in work, 90 (82%) were in 'highly skilled' work of whom 70 (78%) were 'self-employed'. Guildhall alumni earn above average salaries in the London region 3 years and 5 years after graduation, and above average in relation to all to other providers who have performing arts students (*LEO data, 2019-20*).

50. Guildhall graduates progressing into the workplace do so predominantly as freelance performers, technicians, artists, and creatives: the portfolio nature of freelance work makes it difficult to summarise 'employment' destinations, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Professional readiness for the highest levels of the performing arts often takes longer than the three years of a traditional degree. Consequently, there is a longer trajectory of career development post-graduation that makes progression to 'employment' within the TEF2023 data window difficult to represent accurately. The indicative examples of graduate 'employment' offered below therefore represent a partial picture, covering only graduates of the years in view for 'progression' (*all from Alumni records, 2018-20*). It is worth noting that most of the live performing arts industry closed in 2020-2021 due to 'lockdowns', with significant impact on job opportunities.

Music: Over one third of Guildhall BMus students gain entry to the Guildhall Artist Masters (GAM) programme (37% in 2020, 34% in 2021, 36% in 2022), increased from 26% in 2018 (*Registry data*). In addition, many international graduates pursue postgraduate advanced training in their home or other country. The School recognises the benefits that continuity of training across first degree and postgraduate platforms brings in terms of extended professional, technical, and academic skills development. The Music department views the BMus and GAM programmes as enabling a 6-year continuum of advanced-level training and development (4yrs BMus + 2yrs GAM): both are being revalidated in parallel during 2022-23 to ensure coherence across programmes. Students can extend that training through the Guildhall Artist Diploma: 10-plus years of training is quite usual. For example, violinist Ionel Manciu joined Guildhall's BMus in 2012, progressed to the GAM programme in 2016, and then onto the Artist Diploma in 2018-2021; Ionel recently secured the position of Leader of the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra. Other students continue their development within the profession; James Fountain, principal trumpet of the London Symphony Orchestra, also joined the BMus programme in 2012 and took his seat in the LSO in 2021. Career pathways vary substantially across Music Principal Studies, indicative examples of which include (from 2018-20 graduates): instrumentalists developing portfolio careers combining orchestral playing (e.g., City of London Soloists, Orchestre de Suisse Romande) with teaching (either privately or at schools, e.g., Eltham College, London), 'gigging' with international pop artists (e.g.,

Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Gregory Porter) or playing in West End musicals (e.g., *Hamilton*, *Six*), community-based music (e.g., *Musician in Residence for Paraorchestra*) or a more entrepreneurial route, founding ensembles or festivals (e.g., Jubilee and Erasmus string quartets, Alderney Chamber Music Festival, Moldo Crescendo Festival in Moldova/Romania); Opera singers, typically after three or four years of postgraduate study, will often take contracts with companies (e.g., English National Opera, Bavarian State Opera) or Young Artist Programmes (e.g., Jette Parke Young Artists' Programme, Royal Opera House, or Dutch National Opera Studio); some graduates expand their careers in music to become music industry managers and administrators (e.g., MWA Management, Sofia International Film Festival).

Drama: Virtually all Guildhall Actors graduate with an agent, a key industry measure of employability (98.7% success average over 2018, 2019, 2020 graduates, based on 91% response rate). Indicative Drama department (2018-2020 graduates) alumni jobs include the following professional roles –

- 2018 Acting: *Sherwood*, *Secrets and Deals*, *Silk* **BBC TV**; *Grantchester*, *Flying Close to the Sun*, *Vera* **ITV**; *Life after Life*, *Catherine the Great* **HBO**; **Compass Collective** Co-founder; *Richard III*, **RSC**; *Our Generation*, *Romeo & Juliet*, **National Theatre**; *Bartholomew Fair*, **Shakespeare's Globe**; **Orange Tree**; *The Comedy about a Bank Robbery*, **Criterion Theatre**.
- 2019 Acting: *Othello*, **Watermill Theatre**; *Stay Close*, *The Irregulars*, *In from the Cold*, *The Witcher*, *Sex Education* **Netflix**, *Chloe* **BBC TV**; *A Christmas Carol* **Old Vic**; *Trouble in Mind*, *Small Island* **National Theatre**; *Domina* **Sky Atlantic**; *The New Look*, **Apple TV+**.
- 2020 Acting: *The Batman*, 'Actors in Training' TV programme **Warner Brothers**; *The Power* **Amazon Prime**, *Romeo and Juliet* (Metcalf Gordon); *World of Curls* **BBC Radio 4**; *The Responder*, *Doctor Who* **BBC TV**; *King Lear*, **Shakespeare's Globe**; *Endeavour* **ITV**; *Blood Knot* **Orange Tree Theatre**; Acting Studies (first graduating cohort): *The Black Wave*, *Legally Romance*, *Tower of Babel*, *The Room* (all film).

Production Arts: On average, over 90% of Guildhall's Production Arts graduates go straight into professional jobs on graduating. Indicative Production Arts department (2018-2020 graduates) alumni jobs include –

- 2018 cohort: **Costume Assistant** *Cabaret* (West End); **Costume Buyer** *Harry Potter & the Cursed Child* (West End); **Head of Running Wardrobe** Young Vic Theatre; **Dyeing & Breaking Down Artist** Bridge Theatre, London; **Deputy Head of Wardrobe** Mark Goucher Productions, *Matthew Bourne's New Adventures*; **Studio Technician** Merlin Entertainment; **Prop Maker** English National Opera; **Props Assistant** MDM Props; **Lighting Programme** *Ed Sheeran International Tour*; **Lighting Technician** Kew Gardens Christmas Lights; **Deputy Head of Production** Battersea Arts Centre; **Lighting Programmer** West End and touring; **Head of Production & Operations** We Are BMF; **Company Manager** English National Ballet; **Stage Manager** English National Ballet, Royal Opera House; **Deputy Stage Manager** English National Ballet; Production Coordinator Transistor Films; **Location Manager** TV/film; **Company Stage Manager** English Touring Opera.
- 2019 cohort: **Costume Assistant** *Ted Lasso* (Apple TV+); *Queens of Mystery* (Acorn TV); *Mudlarks* (BBC TV); **Scenic Artist & Designer** Dewynters; *Taffeta Place* (The Place), freelance; **Production Manager** Smyle Events; **Sound No3** *Harry Potter & the Cursed Child* (West End); **Sound No4** *Mary Poppins* (West End); **Lighting Designer** BEAM architectural lighting design, **Assistant Lighting Technician** Royal Shakespeare Company; **Assistant Stage Manager** Almeida Theatre, Royal Opera House, *Othello* (National Theatre); **Deputy Stage Manager** Hampstead Theatre.

- 2020 cohort: **Costume Assistant** *Newsies* Troubadour Theatre; Opera Holland Park; **Scenic Artist** *The Burnt City* (Punchdrunk); Capital Scenery; **Prop Maker** Propability Ltd; **Video Engineer** *Mel C 2022 tour*; **Deputy Head of Lighting** *Grease* UK tour; **Production Runner** *Masters of the Air* (Apple TV+/HBO); *Killing Eve*, series 4 (BBC TV); **Deputy Stage Manager** Hull Truck Theatre; **Assistant Stage Manager/Puppet technician** *101 Dalmations* (Regents' Park Theatre).

Section 3b: Student outcomes – Educational Gains

51. Guildhall's core educational gains include students having individual artistic agency, exceptional craft skills and knowledges, well-developed transferable and entrepreneurial skills, and professional and personal confidence. Students apply these attributes in pursuit of a further educational gain around having the skills to impact positively on society at large through engaging public performance activities. Students choose Guildhall because the School's programmes align closely with students' vocational aspirations: **'Choosing Guildhall wasn't a difficult decision; it was a perfect fit for me'.** (*BA Technical Theatre, graduated 2020: ISTA Annex C*); **'I came in with an idea of what I wanted and needed and left having been shown the possibilities I held were so much more.'** (*BA Acting, graduated 2018: ISTA Annex C*); **'At Guildhall School, we lead students through the transformative journey of training in music, drama, and production arts. By choosing to join us, you will embark on a demanding, intense, and committed process. In return, you will be empowered to develop your unique creative potential and to put your talent to work at the forefront of cultural change.'** (*Guildhall Prospectus 2023, p3*).

52. Educational gain at Guildhall is secured in two interconnected ways: a stepped learning in and through industry-aligned performance and production outcomes, in quasi-professional settings with exceptionally high production values; and the opportunity for students to develop individual creative agency in the learning journey towards their chosen field of employment. This means that, regardless of the student's level of talent and aptitude on enrolment at the School, Guildhall's learning environment and framework for study enables each student to undergo distinctive development, arising from the mix of specialist staffing, industry-standard facilities and processes, and encouragement of individual expression. This combination is refreshed in curriculum development and programme revalidation exercises; and underpinned by the School's extensive engagement with industry organisations and professional practitioners (with a shifting roster that reflects currency in the field). The students' educational trajectory is thereby one of enhanced competency in a specialist practice; increased confidence in their own work and capabilities; awareness of current professional contexts; and graduate attributes concerning collaboration, cultural sophistication and social responsibility. **'Guildhall has been one of the most beautifully transformative experiences, not only for me as an actor in training, but also as an artist and as an individual. The dramatic training is filled with variety, empowering you as an artist to pursue your career with a confidence that you possess, and the technique and craft to do so.'** (*BA Acting Yr2, WSS, 2022*).

53. All of the School's undergraduate programmes are built around artistic endeavour, industry expectations of workforce competencies, abilities, and attributes, informed by teachers' and visiting artists' knowledge of current and evolving industry standards, practices, and protocols, as well as aligning with nationally agreed graduate-level competencies, abilities and attributes as expressed in the QAA's subject benchmarks. For example, changing industry expectations relating to higher demand for actors with more developed screen acting skills and self-made work skills directly

informed the recent (2021) revalidation of the BA Acting programme. This has in turn created new opportunities for Production Arts students. In preparation for the introduction of screen drama production, a team of staff from Production Arts has undertaken consultancy with leading industry figures (including, for instance, Working Title Films; and of the National Film and Television School), to ensure that we develop and implement industry-standard practices and learning methods.

54. Guildhall's approach to facilitating students' educational gain involves a combination of high intensity training, low staff to student ratio, students constantly working with and getting feedback from professional practitioners, bespoke opportunities for development, close monitoring and tutorial support, profession-aligned facilities supported by professional service teams, students working with industry partners, graduated learning projects that are increasingly workplace focused, and applying learning in placements and external work spaces, all developed through curricular activity. Achieving the industry-aligned learning outcomes detailed in students' programme handbooks facilitates students' acquisition of these educational gains through their artistic activities and evolving professional persona. Students' progress is monitored closely through tutorials, assessment and feedback interventions; the 'bespoke' attributes of each programme enable individualised approaches to learning support. Guildhall students learn through intensive study in which their learning is accelerated, and personal professional confidence strengthened. Repertoire choices are carefully graduated, and project allocations monitored, for each year of study to enable students to meet the intended learning outcomes at each developmental level.

55. The School facilitates students' development of entrepreneurial and career-readiness skills explicitly (e.g., through whole-cohort Professional Studies modules in Music, and Self-Made work in Acting) and implicitly (e.g., through facilitating student-proposed concerts or 'undisciplined' projects). Examples include BA Acting students' career preparation module which includes advice on auditions and casting sessions, agents, unions, tax and accounting, CVs and setting up a professional company. The Drama department has an in-house career consultant, and professional Actors mentor each final year Acting student; Production Arts students take a professional development module which includes help with IT skills, CVs and job applications, interview technique, taxation, and unions. Production Arts students are able to apply their skills to Opera, a learning experience few conservatoires are able to offer; BMus students take modules bespoke to their Principal Study which introduce rudiments of teaching, business, and marketing and professional portfolios, assessed through a critical evaluation of the student's independent performance project and a statement of their professional intentions. Specialist electives are also available for students who wish to develop skills in areas such as music therapy, community music, and teaching for musicians.

56. Guildhall continually focuses on the difference that the School makes, in and of itself, through its particular learning environment, culture and identity, to the students who pass through it. In service of this *Guildhall-specific* educational gain, Guildhall monitors academic achievement and outcomes formally through Assessment Boards, Programme Boards, Annual Programme Evaluation Reports, and the Academic Board. The close working relationship between student and teaching staff enables a deeper appreciation of the student journey and outcome, involving hard-to-measure gains such as distance travelled, improved confidence, and ownership of artistic identity. **'I feel more independent, more able to hold myself in rooms...I feel like an equal when I step into a room, and I think that's an important thing to have in life generally.'** (BA Acting yr3, 2022: interview)

57. On leaving the School Guildhall graduates are typically work-ready and recognisably distinctive among their peers. This is borne out by the many testimonies of employers, as evidenced by following indicative examples (*all ISTA Annex B*): 'As a director, I enjoy working with Guildhall actors more than with graduates from any other training. It impossible to imagine us achieving the range of work we do year-round without the more or less continuous presence of Guildhall graduates in the building, who consistently represent conservatoire training in an exemplary way.'

(**Orange Tree Theatre**); 'Guildhall graduates have been the backbone of companies of actors that I have employed at institutions as varied as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre and the Unicorn. Being a Guildhall graduate gives you a complete understanding of the rigour, intellectual curiosity and discipline required to succeed in today's performing arts industry.' (**Unicorn Theatre**);

'Whenever I audition, I begin by looking at where an actor trained. If that place is Guildhall, I have confidence that the person coming into the room will be prepared, open and engaged. Guildhall is quite simply one of the jewels in the crown of British actor training.'

(**National Theatre**); 'I have employed many students across numerous London theatres from UK colleges and drama schools. ...the [Production Arts] students from Guildhall have a lead on their competitors.' (**Young Vic Theatre**); 'Guildhall School's holistic training for singers is second-to-none, and undoubtedly an industry leader.'

(**Royal Opera House**); '...we have come to look upon the regular contributions the School's musicians (and occasionally its actors) make to our output more as that of colleagues than of students. That we are able to do so, and to broadcast their work on national and international platforms frequently, is due to the excellence and thoroughness of the training they receive as performers, underpinned by an equivalent excellence in research and curation. ...They are amazing!' (**BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, BBC Singers**); 'We have found Guildhall School to be one of the most forward-looking specialist music schools in the world, seeking to stay ahead of the curve and prioritising their links with the profession in order to best serve their students' (**London Symphony Orchestra**).

58. Guildhall's alumni provide additional evidence of educational gain, reflecting on the dividend of their study at Guildhall and how the School accelerated their readiness and capability (*all ISTA Annex C*): '**Studying at the Guildhall School was a transformative experience in terms of acquiring the skills needed to launch a varied freelance career. I was grateful that the tutors were open to different ideas and styles, allowing me to develop an increased knowledge of technique and musical approach which can be applied in a wide range of contexts. To study in a vibrant musical community with a strong focus on live performance is a valuable opportunity which should not be underestimated.**' (BMus 2021); '**The course evolves you as a human being. [...] I started the training looking to become a better actor and I left with more than that – I developed my writing, directing, producing, and acting skills. It gave me a sense of all-roundedness and the maturity to handle anything that is thrown at me.**' (BA Acting 2020); '**Guildhall gave me not just world class instrumental teaching, but a strong grounding in my own identity and the knowledge of how to thrive in my career.**' (BMus 2019); '**Guildhall showed me that Stage Management is more than just practical skills, and the importance of communication and how you work with others.**' (BA Stage Management, 2019: ISTA); '**I think Guildhall is the most progressive conservatoire across the UK.**' (interview).

59. Guildhall has been training sector-leading performers, creatives, practitioners, and technical artists for nearly 150 years, providing its students with multiple opportunities to discover, explore, and consolidate their identities as socially engaged individual artists and practitioners while further developing their industry-relevant craft skills and employability. The Office for Students' recognition of Guildhall as being a 'world-leading' specialist institution is supported by the School's international peers (*all ISTA 2022*): **'The Guildhall School of Music & Drama is known globally as a learning institution of creative excellence and innovation in the Performing Arts. NIDA has identified the Guildhall School of Music & Drama as a quality benchmark partner for embodied learning.'** (National Institute of Dramatic Art, Australia); **'From my perspective as an art educator who has been privileged to work in the profession for the last 45 years, I consider the Guildhall School to be one of the leading institutions of its type in the world. With a world-class faculty, a student body of high quality from throughout the world, a distinguished list of alumni, and a track record of innovation and excellence, Guildhall stands as an exemplar for its kindred institutions.'** (

The Juilliard School); **'For me, it is this seamless blend of training in artistic excellence, combined with a provision to develop awareness of social engaged practice that make the work of the Guildhall School so vital, relevant and innovative. It is these qualities that set it apart from its competitors.'**

Carnegie Hall).

Section 4: References

The following Guildhall documents referenced are accessible via <https://www.gsmd.ac.uk/>

Annual Report 2018-22
REF 2021 outcome

Guildhall Prospectus 2023, 2021
Strategic Plan 2017-23

In addition, the following sources are held on Guildhall's internal intranet:

Alumni records 2018-22	Access & Participation records 2021-22
Department reports (AV, GYA, Marketing) 2022	External Assessor (Music) reports, 2022
External Examiner reports 2019-2022	Interviews with TEF23 team
'ISTA' world-leading application, 2022	Production Arts Exit interview records 2022
Programme Board minutes 2018-2022	Project feedback 2022
Research Knowledge & Exchange minutes 2022	Staff Development Committee 2020-22
Student Affairs Annual report 2022	Whole School Survey results 2018-22

External references:

<https://conservatoiresuk.ac.uk>

World-leading specialist provider funding: Outcome, OfS, p.5, Dec 2022

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/world-leading-specialist-provider-funding-outcome/>

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings/arts-music-institutions

www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2022/sep/24/the-guardian-university-guide-2023-the-rankings

www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2022/performing-arts

NSS, TEF2023, and HESA data sources via OfS and HESA websites.