

Developing peer-learning programmes in music: group presentations and peer assessment

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The purpose of this paper is to provide an interim report on one aspect of a major project based in the Department of Music at the University of Ulster. The project, 'Peer Learning in Music', builds on the programme of peer assessment which was piloted in a module in performance studies on the BMus course during the academic year 1992–3 and has since become an established feature of the course. The project started in October 1996 and since then peer-learning techniques have been introduced in a range of modules throughout the course, impacting on the teaching and learning methods and the conduct of assessment. Dissemination of the nature of the work and the operation of the programmes is being actively pursued in universities, colleges and conservatories in England and Northern Ireland.

Introduction

Since 1991 we have been involved in several initiatives focusing in particular on musical performance and related issues. The most significant of these was the university-wide project 'Enhancing Student Learning Through Peer Tutoring in Higher Education', funded by the Universities Funding Council under the Flexibility in Course Provision programme. This project embraced a variety of approaches under the headings of peer support, peer tutoring, peer assessment and peer learning (see Griffiths *et al.* 1995). With the support of staff involved in the project we introduced peer assessment of performance in the academic year 1992–3. Following a Quality Teaching Assessment visit in 1995 and the award of an 'excellent' rating for teaching, we had the opportunity to bid for HEFCE funding to develop our work on peer learning.

We define peer learning in broad terms. It is an approach which:

- engages students as active participants in the learning process;
- enriches the learning experience of students;
- creates a more interactive environment;
- encourages questioning, discussion and debate;
- develops skills (both cognitive and generic) which benefit students in their working lives.

In the peer-assessment programme in performance studies, students in groups of four or five have worked together effectively on panels. One of the main benefits of this scheme is the development of teamwork skills (see Hunter and Russ, 1996). Indeed, the success of this programme encouraged us to apply the methodology in the seminars associated with some of the traditional lecture-based modules. We decided to introduce programmes involving peer assessment into selected historical modules in each year of the course in the academic year 1996–7. In two of these modules

(Baroque Studies, in year 1, and Renaissance Studies, in year 2) the seminar presentations are delivered by students working in small groups.¹ When we introduced the peer-assessment programme in performance studies we targeted second-year students. Experience taught us, however, that students are more receptive to innovative methods in their first year than in later years of the course. Initially, the peer-assessment programme in performance met with some resistance from second-year students, because in year 1 they had not been assessed by anyone other than academic staff. When, subsequently, we extended the programme to include first-year performances, the presence of final-year students on the panels was accepted without comment. Our practice, therefore, is to expose students to peer-learning techniques at the earliest possible stage; moreover, this facilitates the embedding of key skills. Although the development of teamwork skills was the main reason for embarking on the semester-one programme in Baroque Studies, there were other persuasive arguments: the approach would help stimulate discussion and debate, encourage creativity and imagination, foster presentation skills and develop proficiency in writing reports.

1996–7 semester 1 seminar programme in Baroque Studies

The tutor involved undertook the division of the first-year cohort into groups of four or five students. (We continue to take responsibility for the formation of groups to ensure that each one represents a range of abilities and mix of personalities. This has been discussed with students and their preference is for the tutor rather than students to take control of this stage of the process.) The division of responsibility within each group was a matter for the students concerned; the members elected a group co-ordinator. Diaries were given to each group and one member took responsibility for keeping a record of meetings and discussions, how they managed particular tasks, how they dealt with problems and difficulties and how they benefited from other seminars. The diaries were not submitted at the end of the module, nor did the tutor see them at any stage; they were solely for the use of each group, to encourage a structured, reflective approach.

Each group delivered one seminar presentation. The assessment focused solely on the oral presentation. (It is worth noting that providing students with the opportunity to develop skills in oral presentation, including learning how to deal effectively with questions, is a useful preparation for a *viva voce* examination.) All groups attended the seminars; those not involved in the presentation were required to conduct assessment. The topic for each seminar was given to everyone in the year group and the assessing groups were encouraged to undertake some preparation to enable them to formulate appropriate questions and contribute to the discussion. In preparation for the seminars we held several preliminary sessions and groups had the opportunity to give trial presentations. We began with an ice-breaker, to engage students in discussion and debate, but also to promote the concept of collaborative learning and to establish a sense of group identity. To outline briefly the nature of the tasks set:

(i) After listening to a recording of a concerto movement by Bach, groups were asked to note one feature that places this work in the Baroque. Once comments were noted, the papers were circulated, other groups supplementing each paper in turn with an additional comment. It was not a matter simply of writing the same comment on each paper; groups were challenged to make different observations and in doing so to take account of what was entered already. When the task was completed the papers were discussed and groups questioned each other on the validity of the various points made.

(ii) Three of the six groups were asked to formulate a written statement about the nature of the work; the remaining groups focused on the performance of the work. The groups tackling the same question then discussed their individual views and collated their comments. The statements prepared by the composite groups were shared and discussed.

The focus of these tasks was a work that would have been known to most if not all of the students. Furthermore, many of them would have held particular views about the nature of the work and its performance and therefore discussion developed without much encouragement. This approach was pursued in a further session before conducting trial seminar presentations. For the latter, each group prepared a five-minute presentation on another concerto movement by Bach; it was left to the individual groups to decide on the focus of their presentation. The other groups assessed each presentation and completed written reports. The report invited comment under several headings:

- Knowledge of the topic.
- Validity of points covered.
- Clarity of explanations.
- Response to questions.
- Other comments.
- Overall assessment.

This session provided valuable feedback for each group that inevitably helped with preparation for the assessed seminars. For each of the assessed seminars the following format was adopted:

- Group presentation: *c.*15 minutes.
- Listening/assessing groups consider the presentation and agree appropriate questions: *c.*10 minutes.
- Questions and discussion: *c.*15 minutes.
- Reports completed: *c.*10 minutes.

(In the time remaining at the end of the session the tutor would, if necessary, provide clarification on any points and respond to queries.) Whilst the listening/assessing groups completed their reports, the presenting group completed an informal report, addressing the following headings:

- Your management of the presentation.
- Feedback from your audience.
- In the light of responses, would you prepare/structure/deliver a similar presentation differently? If so, how?
- Other comments.

This report did not contribute to the assessment. It was helpful, nevertheless, to elicit immediate reaction from the group delivering the presentation. The marks awarded by the listening/ assessing groups were averaged; the resultant mark was subject to moderation by the tutor who monitored the proceedings.

Review

The quality of the presentations improved over the semester. In particular, there was a marked improvement in the management of the presentation and in the way in which all members of the group participated. There was an improvement also in the

level of discussion and confidence in addressing and responding to questions increased. However, questions were often rather general and insufficiently challenging. One thing that did become clear is that the experience of assessing and commenting on presentations delivered early in the semester resulted in more thoroughly prepared presentations at a later stage. Comments on reports completed early in the semester indicate an awareness of the level of knowledge and understanding needed to ensure confident handling of the situation:

- ‘Knowledge demonstrated only by one person in the group. Whether this was a collaboration of ideas we don’t know.’
- ‘Could have provided more background information.’
- ‘Felt they could have covered the points in more depth.’
- ‘Some group members seemed better informed than others.’

The quality of the reporting varied, possibly due in part to the fact that reports were completed within a ten-minute period during the seminar. Nevertheless, it was considered a useful exercise to encourage students to develop skill in providing fairly immediate feedback. On the informal reports, completed by the presenting groups, students were prepared to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their presentations. They recognised the importance of thorough preparation, clarity of delivery, maintaining visual contact with their audience, working as a team, and using a range of resources. Furthermore, they offered perceptive observations on the level of questioning.

At the end of the teaching period students were asked to complete individual evaluation forms; in the main, they acknowledged the benefits of the programme:

- ‘It was helpful having other people to discuss things with.’
- ‘I now understand the peer-assessment ideal . . . a good idea in general.’
- ‘[It] helped develop skills in research, group work and presentation.’
- ‘[Developed] better organisation and leadership skills.’
- ‘Learned a lot and remembered more as we prepared it ourselves.’
- ‘Experience with working in a group situation.’
- ‘Learning from other people’s ideas and views.’
- ‘Discussing things on a regular basis as they happened throughout the semester.’
- ‘Working as part of a team.’

Of the benefits noted, students attached particular importance to the development of team skills. The acknowledgement that ‘[we] learned a lot and remembered more as we prepared it ourselves’ underlines one of our main objectives: to encourage students to develop good learning habits. One concern expressed related to the failure of a member of a group to contribute in any significant way in the preparation of the presentation:

- ‘Sometimes hard to work as a team if all members are not equally motivated.’

Where this happened, some members felt that it was unfair to award the same mark to everyone in the group. No provision had been made to calculate appropriate marks for individual contributions. Drew and Bingham (1997: 141ff and 279ff) recommend that groups should establish a set of ground rules, which might ensure that this kind of difficulty is avoided. Lloyd-Jones and Allen (1997: 74) address the ‘unequal contribution by “free-riders” but feel that resolution of this difficulty ‘rests with the student group to try to sort out by diplomacy, negotiation, encouragement, etc.’ Whilst acknowledging the value of this approach, it was felt that it might be more

expedient to devise a method enabling group members to assess their contribution to the preparation of the presentation against that of their colleagues.² This still placed the onus on the members of the group, thus avoiding unnecessary and possibly unwelcome interference from tutors. It was proposed that each member of the presenting group would complete a self-assessment report on which they identified their contribution to the preparation of the presentation and also allocated marks for each member of the group (see Fig. 1).

Self-assessment

Please assess your contribution to the preparation of the topic in relation to that of the other members of your group.

Did everyone contribute equally? If so, each member of the group should be given 25 per cent. If two members of the group contributed significantly more than their colleagues the distribution of percentage weighting might reflect this in the following allocation: 15 + 15 + 35 + 35.

Allocate a mark for each member of the group. Ensure that the four marks together total 100.

Group members	Assessment
1. (Self)	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
	100

What particular responsibility/task did you undertake during the course of preparation?

Report completed by _____

Fig. 1.

This was accepted by second-year students undertaking seminar presentations in semester 2, 1996–7. Certain other changes were introduced. In Baroque Studies, 10 per cent of the module mark had been allocated for seminar presentations. The remaining 90 per cent covered the assessment of written assignments and a three-hour written examination. In retrospect, the weighting did not reflect the amount of time and effort that the students devoted to the various elements and some

adjustment was inevitable. For the programme of work in Renaissance Studies the weighting of the seminar presentations was increased to 20 per cent.

1996–7 semester 2 seminar programme in Renaissance Studies

Each seminar group was asked to prepare two presentations. Both would be assessed but only the higher mark awarded would contribute towards the module assessment. It was felt that this might encourage some experimentation with the format of the first presentation. Students were urged to avoid the ‘talking-book’ approach, with each member of the group taking it in turn to read a portion of a prepared paper. Alternative approaches, with emphasis on teamwork, were suggested:

- One person introduces the topic and summarises the main points. Other members of the group offer particular viewpoints.
- A panel discussion, with one person acting as chairperson directing questions to other members of the group.
- A discussion conducted by two members of the group, with other members interjecting to underline important points.

One change to the headings used in the seminar report completed by the listening/assessing groups ensured that those delivering the presentation would be given credit for effective realisation of an imaginative approach. The revised report was structured as follows:

- How would you rate the presentation as a group endeavour?
- Knowledge of the topic.
- Clarity of explanations.
- Response to questions.
- Other comments.
- Overall assessment.

The order of the presentations and the choice of topics were determined by the results of a quiz. This seemed to be a fair way of doing this. It was also a useful means of checking what had been assimilated during the early part of the module! The format of the seminar was the same as that used in the first-year module, Baroque Studies (see above). The strengths of each presentation in the first series of seminars were thorough preparation, clear delivery and involvement of all group members. In one seminar, the group involved set up a question-and-answer session. This worked particularly well as a group presentation. The only disappointing aspect of the seminars was the level of questioning. The assessing groups were either reluctant or insufficiently prepared to ask questions. When questions were raised, only rarely did they reflect any real involvement with the topic. In the main, students were seeking clarification on particular points; occasionally, however, probing questions were addressed. Prior to the first series of seminars the groups had engaged in a debate on the Artusi/Monteverdi controversy. ‘Giovanni Maria Artusi, guardian of public decency in matters polyphonic, launched his violent attack on the madrigals of [Monteverdi’s] Books 4 and 5 . . . on the grounds of the unlawfulness of certain dissonant contrapuntal procedures . . . Monteverdi replied with his own manifesto’ (Bianconi, 1987: 25). Three seminar groups prepared a paper in support of the theorist Artusi; three groups prepared a paper in defence of Monteverdi. This generated much more lively discussion than any of the assessed seminars. Perhaps this was inevitable as all groups were focusing on the same topic.

Following each seminar, each member of the presenting group completed a self-assessment report (see above). In two sets of reports students were prepared to give credit to those who had contributed most. The allocation of marks from these reports are detailed in Fig. 2.

Set 1		Assessors				
		1	2	3	4	Average
Marks awarded:	student A	30	30	25	30	28.75
	B	30	30	25	30	28.75
	C	25	20	25	20	22.5
	D	15	20	25	20	20

Set 2		Assessors				
		1	2	3	4	Average
Marks awarded:	student A	30	30	30	30	30
	B	30	30	30	30	30
	C	20	20	20	20	20
	D	20	20	20	20	20

Fig. 2.

It should be noted that the students who produced the latter set of marks discussed their individual contributions together before agreeing on the allocation. This was an unexpected but welcome development. These scores were used to calculate the final unmoderated mark for individual members of each group. The self-assessment reports, therefore, provided assessment of process (see Falchikov, 1993), whilst the peer-assessment reports provided assessment of the end-product.

The unmoderated mark for the group presentation is 60 per cent. The actual mark awarded to each individual member of the presenting group is determined by the collation of the self-assessments. As students A and B have scored more than 25 each they gain 5/100 and 2.5/100 respectively. Students C and D performed less well and consequently lose marks (see Fig. 3).

Example											
4 self-assessment reports						5 peer-assessment reports					
	1	2	3	4	Aver.	1	2	3	4	5	Aver.
A	25	30	30	35	30	65	60	60	60	55	60
B	25	30	30	25	27.5						
C	25	20	20	25	22.5						
D	25	20	20	15	20						

Fig. 3.

The main points noted in the peer-assessment reports were relayed to the students in a feedback session. Further guidelines were provided for the second series of seminars.

The order of presentations and the selection of topics for the second series were determined by the groups' performance in the first series. The most noticeable improvements in the second series were evident in the students' increased confidence in handling the situation, management of the presentation as a group endeavour and use of illustrative material. Not surprisingly, the marks awarded were generally higher than those for the earlier presentations. In the self-assessments completed by each member of the presenting groups all contributions were equally rated. The experience of their peers assessing their performance as less than satisfactory during the first series might have encouraged some to make a greater effort for the second presentation.

Review

The varied programme offered in the Renaissance Studies module received favourable comment on the evaluation forms completed at the end of the teaching period. One student noted that 'It was refreshing to have a debate, seminars and a quiz as opposed to the traditional lecture every week'. In responding to the question 'How have you benefited from the seminar programme?' the comments generally were positive; some of these are quoted below:

- 'Helped me learn . . . to talk to a class without my head in a page.'
- 'It has helped me to co-operate within a group . . . I felt we learned from the first seminar.'
- 'It was fun and interesting to work as a group.'
- 'It is good to work within a group and experience other people's reactions and compare views and opinions . . . they have often noticed things you have overlooked.'
- 'Valuable teaching skill - insight into how much work, preparation and understanding goes into such a small presentation.'
- 'Creates a feeling of teamwork.'
- 'It was good to concentrate on how to present something well.'

Clearly, the sessions proved to be both rewarding and enjoyable; engaging all students in the year group as active participants in the seminars ensures that their learning is enhanced. The information presented in Fig. 4 synthesises the processes that are activated. The relationship between the individual and the relevant peer group is highlighted as this is an important dynamic. Students channel ideas, suggestions, comments and questions through the relevant peer group.

1997–8 semester 1 seminar programme in Baroque Studies

Further refinements were made to the seminar schedule for Baroque Studies and Renaissance Studies in preparation for the academic year 1997–8. Sessions on questioning techniques were incorporated in the preliminary programme. The students were made aware that, when they assumed the role of assessor, they would be given credit for asking appropriate questions. (We are very good at offering reward for correct or informative answers, but being able to ask the right question is just as important.) In Baroque Studies each group had the opportunity to give two trial presentations. Students responded particularly well to the task set for the second series of trial sessions. Teamwork was strong and there was some imagination displayed in the structuring of the presentations. For each of the assessed seminars, two groups prepared presentations on the same topic. These groups therefore were sufficiently well informed to question each other. This was valuable also for the listening/assessing

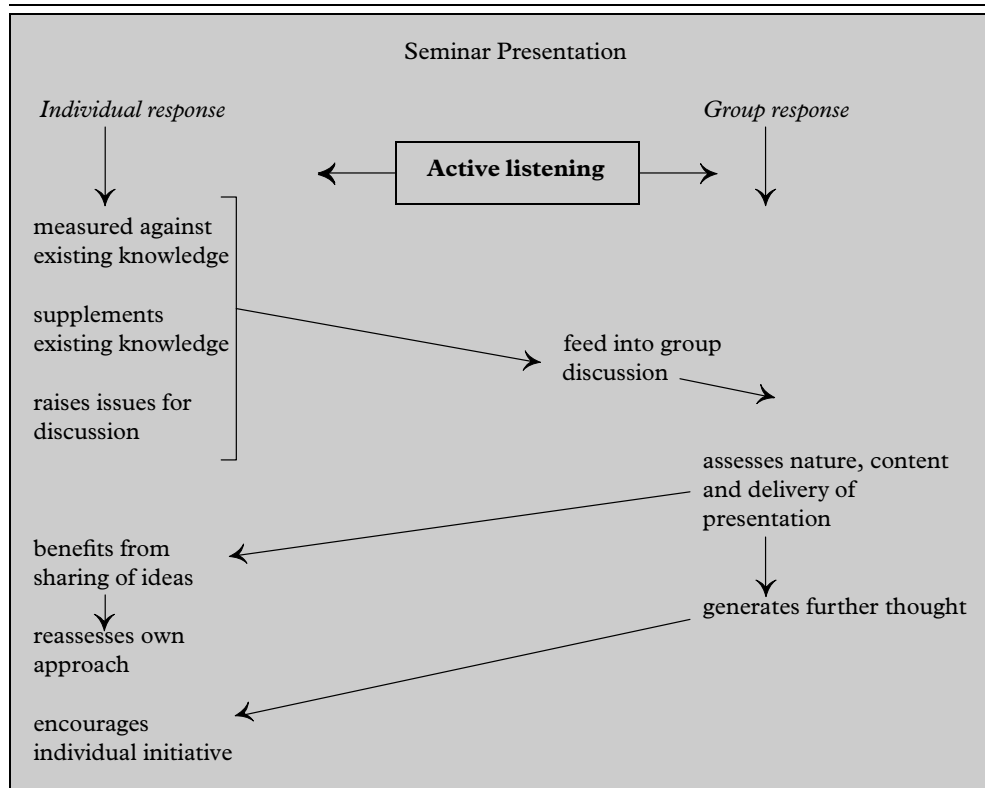


Fig. 4.

groups who then had their opportunity to direct questions to either or both of the presenting groups. The presentations given in these assessed seminars were imaginative, held the attention of the class, and covered the topics set in an informed manner. Furthermore, a different approach was adopted for each presentation; they ranged from a slick 'gameshow' presentation to a well-organised debate. The debate was particularly successful in involving everyone present. The task set for the seminar group was to identify the features that inform the church or chamber designation of a sonata by Corelli. The group divided into two teams of two students, with a fifth acting as chair. One team presented the case for church designation; the other was given the opportunity to ask questions and test the validity of their argument. The roles were then reversed, the second team presenting their case for chamber designation, the first team challenging some of the statements made. The debate was lively, informative and entertaining and engaged the attention of the rest of the class. Before the chair concluded the debate, each member of the class was invited to vote for church or chamber designation on the strength of the arguments presented. This was a novel way of enlisting audience participation. The 'gameshow' presentation was unexpected. The topic required the group concerned to identify significant features in a cantata by Bach. Adopting the 'Blind Date' format, with one student in the role of 'Cilla Black' and two students posing as potential partners, the remaining student selected a partner on the basis of responses to questions relating to significant features in the cantata! These two presentations provided further evidence of the value of the approach in encouraging student innovation and in making learning enjoyable.

On the evaluation reports all those students who responded indicated that they had

benefited from the seminar programme. Most commented on its value in developing teamwork and presentation skills. They acknowledged that the programme also developed skills in listening, researching and communicating. It was noted also that, through the sharing of ideas and benefiting from hearing other points of view, there was an inevitable increase in the general level of knowledge, questioning, discussion and debate. Several students commented on their increased confidence.

1997–8 semester 2 seminar programme in Renaissance Studies

In preparation for the seminars in Renaissance Studies in 1997–8, the assessment criteria were discussed with the students concerned. In the light of the views expressed, a revised report, inviting comment under fourteen headings, was agreed (see below).

Seminar report

Please comment under the following headings as appropriate.

1. How would you rate the presentation as a group endeavour?
2. Was it an imaginative presentation? Did it hold your attention?
3. Did the presentation facilitate your understanding of the topic?
4. Was it well structured?
5. Was it obvious that the members of the group had a good grasp of the topic?
6. Were explanations clear?
7. Was there sufficient detail?
8. Was the delivery well paced?
9. What resources were used? Were these helpful?
10. Were the members of the group able to respond to questions?
11. How informative was the prepared summary (submitted in advance)?
12. What did you particularly like about the presentation?
13. Note one aspect which you think could be improved.
14. Other comments.

In addition to making appropriate comments, assessing groups were asked also to grade the presenting group's performance against questions 1 to 11, using the following scale: excellent/very good/good/satisfactory/fair/weak. (Excellent = 80%+, very good = 70%+, good = 60%+, satisfactory = 50%+, fair = 40%+, weak = 40%–.) The individual gradings were then used to calculate an overall assessment for each presentation (see Fig. 5). Another important change affecting the assessment procedure meant that, instead of the tutor exercising the right to moderate the peer assessment of the group presentation, the tutor's mark was declared and weighted equally with the peer-assessment mark.

Example				
Peer-assessment reports				
1	2	3	4	Average
65	60	55	65	61
Agreed assessment for presenting group:				$\frac{61 + 65}{2} = 63$
				Tutor's assessment: 65

Fig. 5.

This approach demonstrates a willingness to be more open; it also reflects confidence in a system in which students make reliable and informed judgements. Question 11 on the revised report refers to a prepared summary. Each group now prepares a one-page summary (overview) of their presentation and submits it one week in advance of the seminar. The summary is copied to other groups to familiarise them with the treatment of the topic and to enable them to devise appropriate questions. Following the first series of seminars some students requested revised groupings for the second series. Although the request was made largely because of difficulties encountered within certain groups, it was felt that the students would benefit from the experience of working in different teams. This was discussed openly with the year group and changes were made only with the full agreement of the class. Given that second-year students have taken the Baroque Studies module in year 1, it is anticipated that their presentations in the Renaissance Studies module will be more sophisticated. Certainly, the approach adopted (whether it is a spurious meeting of a sub-committee of the Council of Trent considering the infiltration of secular elements within the polyphonic complex, or a rehearsal of madrigals highlighting the significance of chromaticism in relation to text setting, to cite two examples) tends to facilitate the treatment of the topics in a more informed manner than one would expect in year 1.

Conclusions

How do we measure the success of our approach? Perhaps the first point to note is that attendance at seminars has improved since the introduction of peer-assessed presentations. Each individual student is now part of a team and feels an obligation to the others. The approach encourages a stronger sense of commitment than might otherwise be the case. Moreover, the level of concentration is high because each student is an active participant: either they are involved in delivering the presentation or they are required to contribute to the assessment. Allowing the students free rein in determining the nature and structure of the presentations encourages creativity. Inevitably, there is a healthy element of competition: if group A delivers a well-structured, informative, imaginative and, dare one say, entertaining presentation, groups B, C, D and E will at least want to be able to match it.

The approach outlined here, although innovative, is not unique; similar schemes are in operation in a number of universities and colleges. Through the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL) initiative sponsored by the Higher Education Funding Council through the Department of Education in Northern Ireland, we have been able to establish valuable links with colleagues in other institutions where peer-learning programmes are being actively promoted. The analysis of seminar presentations in History at Bath Spa University College, in terms of the benefits perceived by students, confirms our experience in Music at the University of Ulster (see Hyland, 1996). The references to ‘increases in self-confidence, enthusiasm for learning, and academic motivation . . . the experience of assessing others . . . helped them to become more self-critical’ (Hyland, 1996: 214–15f) are worth underlining. The concept of peer learning appears to have reached even the hallowed halls of Oxford University. The headline, ‘Oxford agog at don who abolished essays’, in the *Independent on Sunday* (1998), was accompanied by an article explaining how teamwork and presentation skills are being fostered by one Oxford academic.

Peer-learning techniques have been developed further in the Renaissance Studies module, focusing particularly on negotiation skills. As part of the coursework requirement, students undertake two written assignments. Provisionally, these carry equal marks. However, alternative weighting may be agreed after consultation with the tutor concerned. Furthermore, the title of the second assignment may be negotiated with the tutor; this is largely a question of determining the focus of an essay; it does not provide a loophole for students to avoid tackling a particular topic. This element of flexibility encourages more careful consideration of topics than might otherwise be the case and is the kind of approach that tends to promote deep learning. The consultation and negotiation would be conducted after the completion and assessment of the first assignment. The second assignment may be tackled as a collaborative enterprise, in which case each student would be asked to complete a report, identifying their particular contribution and assessing their input as well as that of their colleagues. The introduction of the various approaches described has been a gradual process; each stage has been discussed with the students concerned. Where do we go from here? There is no great desire to change the culture completely. We believe in a range of approaches in terms of course delivery and the conduct of assessment. Some of the methods are traditional, others innovative. A fundamental premise that underpins our commitment to student involvement in assessment is that taking responsibility for assessment is part of the learning process. Excluding students totally from this stage limits their learning experience. It can be difficult for staff to relinquish their monopoly of assessment; one line of defence is that it requires an experienced hand. But students are required to make judgements; they are constantly evaluating their own progress and passing informal comment on the performance of their peers. Involving them in the assessment of other students is not a new situation, but rather a different kind of situation to which they bring relevant experience.

It will be clear from this overview that setting up and running programmes involving peer assessment is time consuming. But the sacrifice is small when one considers the benefits for the students involved. 'The research evidence on peer-assessment indicates that it can promote critical thinking, the skills of task management, increases in self confidence, responsibility and awareness of group dynamics' (Brown *et al.*, 1997: 173). In our experience, students develop skills in critical listening, research, evaluation, questioning, negotiation, oral presentation, communication and report writing. The implications for the development of teamwork and leadership are self-evident. Furthermore, students gain in confidence and become more aware of their strengths. An inevitable outcome is that they develop a more secure knowledge base and a facility in dealing with subject matter which can help in thinking and writing about music. We, the staff, benefit from the collaborative work. It has encouraged us to reflect on the purpose and nature of assessment. Above all, it creates a positive, open and informed learning environment.

Notes

¹ To place the seminars in context, the delivery of each of the two modules involves four timetabled hours per week throughout one semester: a two-hour class (lecture format, but usually involving some interactive work), a one-hour workshop (devoted mainly to student performance of relevant repertoire and consideration of performance practice issues), and a one-hour seminar. In the seminar programme, the first four sessions are used to prepare the students for the assessed seminars; this preliminary work includes discussion and negotiation of assessment criteria, sessions on questioning techniques, and trial presentations.

² Conway, Kember, Sivan and Wu (1993: 46) note that this introduces an ‘element of competition into what . . . [is] a collaborative process’. They outline an alternative approach. See also Goldfinch and Raeside (1990).

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