



July 2020

## **Call for Evidence – Impact of Covid-19 - APPG on Apprenticeships**

### **Introduction**

UK Music is the umbrella body representing the interests of the commercial music industry in the United Kingdom (see annex for full list of members). We campaign and lobby for the collective interests of the commercial music industry on behalf of artists, musicians, songwriters and composers, record labels, music publishers, studio producers, managers and music licensing organisations.

UK Music support apprentices in music as a vital way to improve diversity in the music industry. As an alternative route into the industry it is as important as HE and paid internships. We have been engaged in supporting the music industry around the changes under the apprenticeship levy and the introduction of standards. We also engage with a range of other creative and cultural sectors (such as through the Creative Industries Council) to both support and champion apprenticeships.

### **Current situation**

Apprenticeships have been embraced by companies across music from Live Nation and PPL to smaller SMEs. However the smaller companies' capacity to take on apprentices is hampered by the structure of the funding for training under the levy-system and also the lack of support towards wage-costs. Later we provide two case-studies that offer examples of how a little financial support towards the wage-costs in particular can make the difference for small companies when considering whether they can afford to take on an apprentice.

UK Music are currently helping develop three new apprenticeship standards in music as a part of the Creative Career Programme<sup>1</sup> with funding from DCMS. The apprenticeships are: Assistant Recording Engineer; Music Project Planner, and; Music Instrument Technician. These are important to note not only because of the positive response from the industry to their development but also because the delay to the process caused by Covid-19 helps shed some light on the wider issues currently around apprenticeships.

Although all were engaged with enthusiastically before Covid-19 we have found since the virus struck and lockdown has come into effect that the ability of firms to contribute their time to this has been seriously hampered. The workforce in general is facing furlough and unemployment and as such we anticipate a serious knock-on effect will be felt with apprenticeship starts over the coming months.

DiVA a specialist training provider in creative industries apprenticeships noted that vacancies advertised on the government website are [down 85%](#) to the same time last year. They also note that recruitment for new apprentices had been frozen for most companies they work with however all BRIT Trust apprentices (and others training with DiVA) have been offered jobs as they complete their apprenticeships. Most of these were in digital and distribution – both areas of the industry that have remained strong. Although many vacancies for new apprenticeships had been placed on hold over last

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that this is different to the Creative Employment Programme outlined in the case-study below.

couple of months some are slowly being revisited - especially from companies interested in growing diversity. Finally DiVA notes that although apprenticeship activity is by no means near the same levels as pre Covid-19 it has just started to slowly return.

### **Case-study – UK Music’s Creative Employment Programme**

From 2013-2017 Creative & Cultural Skills administered a grant to enable employers in the creative industries to access grants to employ apprentices and interns. UK Music accessed four separate iterations of this grant including leading on three consortium bids. The funding enabled an employer to access up to £1,500 to employ an apprentice or £2k to employ an intern. Certain apprentices also attracted an additional grant of £1k (such as care-leavers).

The scheme across the creative industries was a huge success with circa 4,500 new apprenticeships, traineeships and paid internships created. UK Music helped music companies take on 70 apprentices and paid interns and the scheme was considered a fantastic benefit. Many of these apprentices continued into full-time employment with the company or continued in a different role in the music industry.

### **Case-study – PPL**

PPL is the UK’s music licensing company, making sure over 110,000 performers and recording rightsholders get paid. It’s our job to protect our members’ rights and ensure that their talent is fairly rewarded.

PPL has always been dedicated to creating a diverse workforce, hiring employees with varied backgrounds and providing opportunities for development in the workplace. An apprenticeship with PPL is a fantastic way to get into the business side of the music industry; learning the fundamentals of how royalties are paid whilst gaining some great new transferable skills along the way.

Here are some of the apprenticeships we have delivered at PPL and the key skills gained by each apprentice:

Music Reporting Delivery Assistant - This apprenticeship offered the opportunity to acquire data handling skills as well as the opportunity to learn about how musicians are paid for the performance and broadcast of their recorded music around the world. This apprenticeship also helped improve Microsoft Excel skills by working with large and complex data sets.

Business Analyst - This apprenticeship offered the opportunity to really understand how PPL distributes money to its members. It provided experience on how to use our distribution system and how to calculate distributions as well as how to use software such as SQL and Confluence.

IT Service Desk Assistant - This apprenticeship offered the opportunity to acquire essential IT skills in both hardware and software support. It also allowed the apprentice to gain experience in a large company, learning about multiple areas across the business for whom the IT Service Desk provided support.

### **Case-study - The BPI & The BRIT Trust**

In 2018 labels association the BPI launched [The BRITs Apprentice Scheme](#) to enable people of all backgrounds to enter and experience working in the music industry with the aim of developing career opportunities. Apprenticeships are an important way to help bring in new and diverse talent into the industry and are in line with the Government’s commitment to education, skills and training.

The Scheme gives up to 10 people the opportunity to benefit from quality paid employment and on-the-job training at an independent record label or music company. It will enable successful applicants to develop some of the basic insights and skills needed to develop a career working in music, receiving practical ‘hands on’ mentoring and experience, honing relevant abilities and making key industry contacts.

Funded in large part by industry charity [The BRIT Trust](#), the Scheme is open to individuals of all backgrounds aged 18 and over. Successful applicants will be matched with independent record labels and music companies that are members of the BPI. They will receive specialist training in either business administration or digital marketing – working directly with work colleagues on day to day and strategic tasks, which can range from managing the company’s social media accounts to helping with press & PR, developing creative content opportunities or providing admin management back up. There are additionally monthly learning sessions where all the apprentices come together and which typically feature high profile industry representatives, where the apprentices can network and build on what they are learning whilst also forging a deeper bond amongst themselves. The BPI is also developing plans to provide longer-term mentoring, so that apprentice careers can continue to be tracked and supported even if the apprentices move on from their initial host music companies.

Now coming to the end of its [second wave](#), the Scheme is managed for the BPI by [DiVA](#) – the recruitment and training organisation specialising in business, creative and digital apprenticeships, whose experienced experts have a successful track record in delivering apprentices in the creative industries. Despite the many issues caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdown, the scheme appears to be working well, with the apprentices continuing to contribute to their host companies, and looking forward to developing longer term prospects. The BPI and BRIT Trust hope to make an announcement regarding a third wave of the scheme in due course.

## **Summary**

We have no quantitative evidence on the situation for apprentices in music however Covid-19 has had serious ramifications across the board in employment terms for the music industry and this will have a knock-on effect both immediately and over coming years as we attempt to return to pre-Covid levels of activity. Given the difficulties faced by companies in the music industry and the opportunities with apprentices in terms of diversifying the workforce we believe some kind of assistance towards wage costs would go a long way to counteract the damage being done by Covid. As such we welcome the Chancellor’s announcement of his support package over the next 6 months. We would also encourage this to continue beyond the initial 6 month period.

We have many case-studies of the positive impact apprenticeships can have on companies and individuals in music. However the examples included above of both the Creative Employment Programme and the BRIT Trust apprenticeship scheme also demonstrate that to unlock this potential will often require some kind of financial assistance.

UK Music would welcome the opportunity to feed in further to discussions around the specific needs faced by the music industry and wider creative industries in relation to apprenticeships and is at the disposal of the APPG on Apprenticeships to discuss further.

## Annex

UK Music's membership comprises: -

- AIM – The Association of Independent Music – the trade body for the independent music community, representing over 850 small and medium sized independent record labels and associated music businesses.
- BPI - the trade body of the recorded music industry representing 3 major record labels and over 300 independent record labels.
- FAC – The Featured Artists Coalition represents and promotes the interests of featured recording artists in the music industry.
- The Ivors Academy - The Ivors Academy is an independent association representing professional songwriters and composers. As champions of music creators for over 70 years, the organisation works to support, protect and celebrate music creators including its internationally respected Ivors Awards.
- MMF – Music Managers Forum - representing over 800 UK managers of artists, songwriters and producers across the music industry with global businesses.
- MPG - Music Producers Guild - representing and promoting the interests of all those involved in the production of recorded music – including producers, engineers, mixers, remixers, programmers and mastering engineers.
- MPA - Music Publishers Association - with 260 major and independent music publishers in membership, representing close to 4,000 catalogues across all genres of music.
- Musicians' Union - Representing over 32,000 musicians from all genres, both featured and non-featured.
- PPL is the music licensing company which works on behalf of over 100,000 record companies and performers to license recorded music played in public (at pubs, nightclubs, restaurants, shops, offices and many other business types) and broadcast (TV and radio) in the UK.
- PRS for Music is responsible for the collective licensing of rights in the musical works of 114,000 composers, songwriters and publishers and an international repertoire of 10 million songs.
- UK Live Music Group, representing of the live music sector with a membership consisting of: Agents' Association (AA), Association for Electronic Music (AFEM), Association of Festival Organisers (AFO), Association of Independent Festivals (AIF), Concert Promoters Association (CPA), International Live Music Conference (ILMC), National Arenas Association (NAA), Production Services Association (PSA), Music Venue Trust (MVT), with contributions from PRS Foundation, MU, MMF, FAC and BPI.