

1. The Group was welcomed to this meeting of the APPG for Performing Arts Education and Training by Glyndwr Jones, CDMT Director. Attendees of the meeting were as follows: Lord Aberdare, Lord Clancarty, Anna McMorris MP (Chair), Honor Miller (Office of Anna McMorris MP). Apologies were received from Simon Baynes MP, Lord Clement-Jones, Lord Taylor of Warwick, Baroness Wilcox of Newport, and Lord Vaizey of Didcot.
2. Presentations by CDMT Validated Awarding Organisations representatives
  - 4.1 Mr Jones welcomed a group of senior representatives from CDMT's Validated awarding organisations for the purpose of engaging with Parliamentarians on matters affecting graded examinations in dance, drama and musical theatre. Representatives from these organisations were as follows: Lincoln Abbots, (Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music), Tim Bennett-Hart (RSL Awards), Ginny Brown (Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing), Annette Hufton (National Association of Teachers of Dancing), Miranda Jacobs (New Era Academy), Fiona Knowler (bbodance) and Rachael Meech (CDMT Consultant with specialism in graded examinations sector).
  - 4.2 Representatives shared their experiences of working in the performing arts graded examinations sector, particularly noting that many such activities take place out of school, meaning that those from disadvantaged backgrounds such as low-income families, looked after children, and learners with other challenges, face considerable barriers accessing them.
  - 4.3 Further, it was noted that the place of the performing arts in the mainstream curriculum is far from secure, and participation in associated qualifications available during school hours is dwindling. A review to make GCSEs and A Levels in the performing arts more relevant to young people's aspirations is necessary, along with exploration of ways in which barriers to progression for those for whom a career in the arts and cultural sector represents a viable and valuable option can be removed. The positive washback effects of participating in dance, drama, music and theatre activities which include increased confidence, better educational attainment and mental wellbeing, also demand stronger recognition.
  - 4.4 Discussion at this session called for a robust and imaginative response to this situation, for example, integrating the local networks of performing arts teachers associated with the graded examinations sector with in-school provision itself and the music hubs (including renewed collaboration between the DfE and out-of-school settings) to help broaden and deepen young people's creative experiences.
  - 4.5 Anna McMorris MP, and the other Parliamentarians in attendance, thanked the awarding organisation representatives for sharing so candidly their experiences, and noted that their work is hugely valued as part of the UK's performing arts education sector.
  - 4.6 These points have already been captured by CDMT in its report, 'Securing Access to Performing Arts Education for All: Building a Stronger Future', which was launched at the River Room, House of Lords on 7 September 2023. The report has been circulated widely among Parliamentary networks, and will be used to inform draft Parliamentary Questions in support of better government recognition of the work of CDMT's member institutions.